GREY LITERATURE AND INDIAN ACADEMIA

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Abstract

It would be more accurate to describe gray or "grey" literature as elusive. Grey materials are ones that are readily available through typical, traditional sales channels, such as bookstores. There is no business intent behind them, no commercial publisher is acting as a middleman, and there is no bibliographic control (like the ISBN and ISSN) to assure standards. Theses, dissertations, projects, government studies, committee reports, news articles, and conference proceedings are only a few examples of grey materials. Gray literature is being valued more highly as a unique and important source of information by academics and scholars. A difficulty and a growing source of worry for librarians is the exponential growth of "gray literature" across the board.

Keywords: Grey Literature, White Papers, Fugitive literature, Luxembourg Convention, NDL.

INTRODUCTION

The term "literature" refers to professionally and informally created content that conveys and stores a significant amount of human knowledge. Literature helps us comprehend how society has changed and developed during the course of the twentieth century, from its early years to the present. Grey literature (GL) spurred several organizations to build up mechanisms to record, keep track of, and share their product as it developed. Although the phrases "gray literature," "grey literature," and "fugitive literature" are all interchangeable, the term "grey literature" is most frequently used to refer to the three. The primary factor is that a source other than publication is responsible for creating the literature.

In the 1970s, the phrase "grey literature" first emerged in academic journals. Due to the predominance of technical, scientific, and economic reports in the materials referred to by the word prior to this era, the phrase was mostly associated with reports. At the same time, other phrases like "informal," "non-conventional," "running away," "invisible," and "half-published" were also used to characterize the literature. Due to the limited homogeneity of the collection of publications, attempts to characterize grey literature are difficult. Materials are differentiated primarily by their most crucial characteristics that set them apart from other categories. (Nahotko)

Since so much of it looks extremely intelligent and is crucial for study and development in many subject areas, grey literature may have some link to the "grey matter" of the brain. Publications that are not distributed commercially or indexed by significant database suppliers are referred to as grey literature. Theses, dissertations, projects, government reports, committee reports, news bulletins, and conference proceedings are just a few examples of grey materials. (Odaro, pp. 2-3)

Based on information made available on the web pages of the Polish Information Processing Centre (OPI) in Warsaw,1 the system designers identified the following types of grey literature (Nahotko) :

1. Scientific, technical, economic, social and other reports developed in national and private institutions.
2. Unpublished conference materials inaccessible via bookstore trade networks.
3. Standards and technical recommendations.
4. Unpublished translations.
5. Papers published in journals issued in a small edition, distributed free of charge, with only local importance.
6. Some official documents.
7. Technical, promotion and advertising documentation.
8. Documents in an electronic form.

A few distinguishing characteristics of grey literature are as follows -

• It is very difficult to identify them
• It is very difficult to get access to them.
• It is very difficult task to locate them.
• Very often, they arrive in the form of limited editions.
• At times, they are inaccessible in bookstores.
• Their bibliography registration is lacking at times.
• Most of the times, they are absent in library collections and catalogues.
• They rarely figure in a publisher's catalogues.
• It is very difficult to acquire them in libraries.
• Often they tend to be unpublished or published with delay.

• At times, they are rapidly distributed.

US Interagency GL Working Group, "Grey Information Functional Plan," January 18, 1995, defines GL as follows: Grey literature is foreign or domestic open source material that usually is available through specialized channels and may not enter normal channels or systems publication, distribution, bibliographic control, or acquisition by booksellers or subscription agents. ("U.S. Interagency Gray Literature Working Group Definition 1995")

Clear, widely acknowledged, or at the very least standard definitions of terms provide the substratum for cognizance engenderment in every field of study. Many unregulated phrases have been employed over time to characterize the phenomenon of grey literature. The erudition, utilization, and application of grey literature have not authentically benefited from this. The Luxembourg Convention, sometimes kenned as the definition of "grey literature," took a dramatic turn in 1997, emphasizing for the first time the supply side of grey literature, that is, its engenderment and publication in both print and electronic modes. This shift from the prior 25 years, which concentrated solely on the supply side and the issues with bibliographic management, indexing, cataloguing, and retrieval, sanctioned grey literature to determinately be visually perceived in its whole context. The definition of grey (or gray) literature accepted during the Third International Conference on Grey Literature in Luxembourg reads " ... that which is produced on all levels of government, academics, business and industry in print and electronic formats, but which is not controlled by commercial publishers" During the Sixth International Conference on Grey literature in New York City, a postscript was recommended to that definition and shortly thereafter added: " i.e. where publishing is not the primary activity of the producing body". (Schöpfel et al.)

A FEW TYPES OF GREY LITERATURES EXPLAINED

Ramesh Pandita & Shivendra Singh Have Discussed Different Types of Grey Literature in their paper "Grey Literature: A Valuable Untapped Stockpile of Information" which are as follows (pp 53-57)-

• Reports: Generally speaking, it has been found that producing a report is not a difficult endeavor in and of itself; the challenge is in successfully presenting material that has previously been presented or established. The fundamental goal of report writing is to increase the concept's accessibility to the general public without altering the fact's or idea's semantics. Depending on how a particular notion or concept is evaluated, reports can either be entirely non-technical or completely technical. The best manner to show a report is another aspect that requires care, as a drab presentation frequently undermines a proven and commendable truth. A report that is worthwhile to read will always advance that notion in the development of a new thought. A good number of critical evaluations will aid in turning a main source of information into an accepted reality because it is not always a polished notion. It is usually preferable for the report to be produced by the individual who is actively involved in the relevant fields of interest and should be randomly tried with the only purpose of either reaching the deadline or merely fulfilling the formality.

• Government Documents: Government organizations also create a ton of gray material, but ironically, most of the time it is lacking in order to attract attention. In order for the general public to profit from this vast information, those who need it most may use it in the best conceivable ways.

White paper: The majority of the government's and its agencies' production of "grey literature" takes this form. The white paper, which was created by a number of government departments primarily for planning and decision-making, is regarded as the most authoritative and trustworthy source of information. Businesses, technical disciplines, research groups, and politicians, of course, frequently need white papers for use in legislative discussion. Because of their immediate impact on societal setup, white papers issued by research organizations, institutions, etc. are always in high demand. Government organizations should constantly make an attempt to utilize this very important information, with the assistance of commercial partnerships. Agencies are able to pinpoint the information's creators and users so they may better direct this information toward developing new facts. It is crucial for publishers of this content to develop effective information and knowledge management given the assessment of whether or not the target audience is using the information instead of just consuming it.

As the simple release of such material does not imply the job is done, it is equally the responsibility of all government publishing organizations to identify their target audience. They should also make sure that it is being used or put to use by other cross sections of society. This will inevitably assist in making careful and thorough use of the information supplied by various governmental entities, and it is at that point that we can conclude that the information is being used wisely.

a. Proceedings from Conferences, Seminars, and Workshops: Seminars, Conferences, Workshops, Symposia, etc. are nearly everyday events, and on average, it has been seen that something similar continues to take place daily on every significant subject entity or an interdisciplinary basis in one or more corners of the world. A significant loss to the user community results from some calling for papers and

publishing them in proceedings, while others may just arrive and offer a talk. Many conferences don't publish anything at all, while others may merely publish abstracts.

Pandita and Singh have the following recommendations for Proceedings from Conferences, Seminars, and Workshops in their paper-

➢ Recorded cum published
➢ Maintain database of papers presented.
➢ Author name and key words of papers can act as a ready reference
➢ Quality papers, which may be deemed worth value, can be recommended for publication in various journals, as this in itself will help increase the viewership and application of findings.
➢ A database of future conference can be maintained for furtherance of information and knowledge by refining the already conceived ideas in the form grey literature and can be helped out in becoming white literature with the passage of time.

b. Technical Reports: Government agencies produce a significant share of technical reports, which are generally disseminated within professional circles. Technical reports are often produced by all kinds of institutions and organizations. Similar to MNCs, corporate houses, R & D institutions, and public sector enterprises, private and public sector organizations like these play a significant role in preparing the technical reports. These may be published in a variety of internal publications, which are frequently still accessible in institutional repositories, in the form of articles, write-ups, critical notes, etc. Technical reports do contain essential data, such as Author, Title, Number, Series, etc. that may differ significantly based on the forms used by various authorities. Some examples of major U.S government sources along with their numbering system are-

a. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) ,EPA/600/S2-86/051 (EPA)
b. National Institute of Standards and Technology (NIST, formerly the National
c. Bureau of Standards, NBS), PB95-187282 (NTIS accession number
d. Department of Defense (DoD), AD-A417298 (DoD report)
e. Department of Energy (DOE and its predecessors the AEC, ERDA, etc.),
f. SAND-83-2301/2 (DOE report)

Currently, GrayLIT Network has incorporated almost 100,000 scientific and technical publications from the US Departments of Energy, Defense, Environmental Protection Agency, and National Aeronautics and Space Administration. Technical reports often use science to show how a research project is progressing. These reports also serve to verify the findings of the inquiry. Technical reports, like other types of "grey literature," are provided by the organization itself to assess the status in order to serve a variety of reasons, as was previously stated.

• Thesis and Dissertations: The majority of grey literature is created by higher education institutions. One of the primary activities of these institutes is research. The majority of the research that is done in these institutions is shelved on library stacks, thus society as a whole is unable to profit from it as it should. The majority of research conducted in universities is documented in the form of theses, dissertations, or even project works that are solely based on original research conducted by students of all academic levels. These institutions do research at the bachelor's, master's, M.Phil. and doctoral levels. These universities generate a significant amount of writing, all of which is original and not created by for-profit publishers.

• Pre-Prints:- Most often, research is extended through publications of one kind or another, but the ones that are most frequently approved by the academic community are those that are objective in character, supported by evidence, confirmed, tried, and tested, and are officially accepted for publishing. The publication portion of a research project goes through a peer review procedure to ensure the validity and dependability of the material provided, known as preprints. Preprints are publications that have not yet been subjected to peer review. A preprint is an article that is essentially finished but has not yet been published, whereas a post print is an article that has been peer reviewed and has been published in the journal. Pre-prints are articles that have not yet undergone peer review, while post-prints are publications that have been peer review but have undergone modifications. There is always a sizable mountain of pre-prints accessible with different scholarly groups that still need to cover the material to turn from gray to white. Because these publications are displayed as grey before to review in the form of pre-prints and white following review in the form of post-prints, it is always the timely distribution of information that turns this significant stockpile of knowledge gray.

• Manuscripts: - The most important type of grey literature is manuscripts. Manuscripts were the only format available when printing and publishing technologies were not in use for individuals to record their intellectual output. Even so, if we look about, we will see hundreds of thousands of such manuscripts, but because there aren't many copies made of them, they aren't very useful. The writings written on papyrus sheets are still present in several libraries. The government of India and other governments across the world are digitizing manuscripts only to assist people in taking use of such "grey literature." One such organization in India that is dedicated to the gathering, preservation, and organization of manuscripts is Khuda Bhaksh Oriental Public Library in Patna, which has close to 21000 Oriental manuscripts. In September 2005, work on digitizing roughly 1200 manuscripts in the library began. In February 2003, the Ministry of Tourism and

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Culture, Government of India, launched a nationwide initiative for the digitalization of manuscripts in recognition of the importance and sizeable manuscript preservations in India. India is thought to have the greatest collection of manuscripts in the whole world, numbering close to five million. To make them accessible, the National Mission for Manuscripts seeks to identify, catalog, conserve, and digitize them. Another effort in the direction of manuscript preservation is the National Mission for Manuscripts (NMM). Through manuscript resources and conservation facilities, the mission has already located and begun digitizing manuscripts.
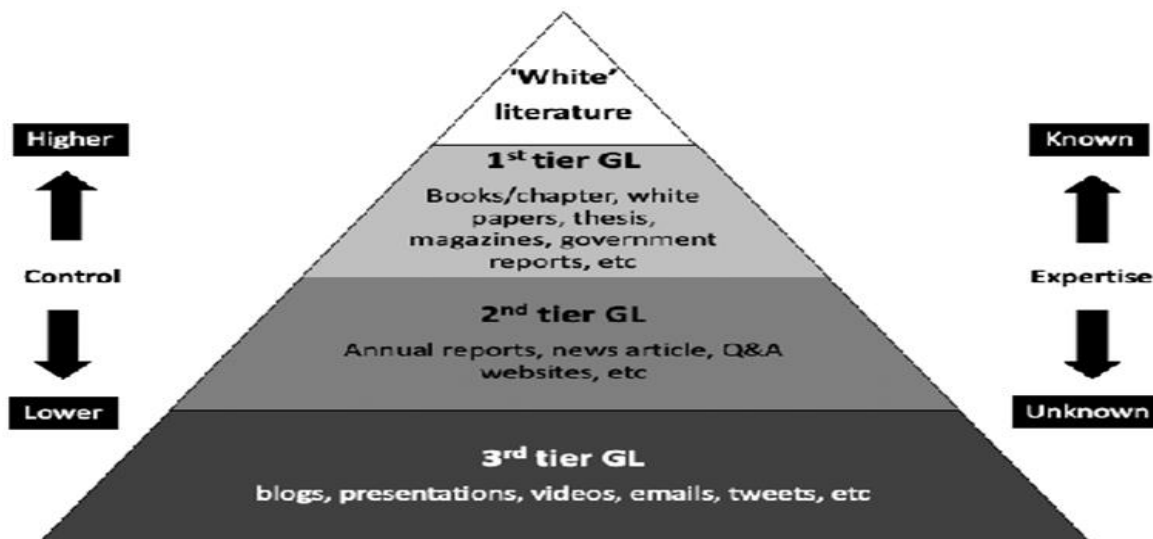
Sources

Figure 1- The "shades" of grey literature, adapted of Garousi (uploaded by Fernando Kenji Kamei in Researchgate-
https://www.researchgate.net/publication/344083398_On_the_Use_of_Grey_Literature_A_Survey_with_the_Brazilian_Software_Engineering_Research_Community/figures?lo=1)
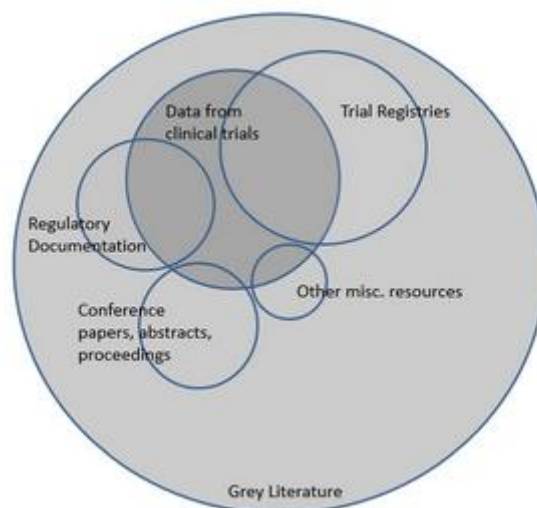

Figure 2 Sources of Grey Literature (https://libguides.vu.nl/greylit)

Grey literature is created by various governmental and private entities as a way to collect, store, and distribute information for both internal use and better reach. Meeting regulatory or other obligations for information exchange or administration, keeping track of information and data on a location or project, giving details on how and why things happened, and many more scenarios are examples of how this might be done.

Information and research professionals generally draw a distinction between ephemera and grey literature ("Grey Literature - the Art and Popular Culture Encyclopedia"). However, there are certain similarities and unquestionably shared tensions between the two mediums, like as problems with bibliographic control. Although they likewise share some of the same issues of control and access, singular written works like manuscripts, archives, and personal correspondence are not typically regarded to belong under the category of grey literature ("Grey Literature - Wikipedia").

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Pisa Declaration on Policy Development for Grey Literature Resources stated-

A wealth of knowledge and information is produced by organizations, governments and industry, covering a wide range of subject areas and professional fields, not controlled by commercial publishing. These publications, data and other materials known as grey literature, are an essential resource in scholarly communication, research, and policy making for business, industry, professional practice, and civil society. Grey literature is recognized as a key source of evidence, argument, innovation, and understanding in many disciplines including science, engineering, health, social sciences, education, the arts and humanities. Grey literature document types in print or electronic formats include among others: research and technical reports, briefings and reviews, evaluations, working papers, conference papers, theses, and multimedia content, representing an important and valuable part of research and information. In order to realize the benefits of research and information for scholarship, government, civil society, education and the economy, We, the signatories to this declaration, call for increased recognition of grey literature's role and value by governments, academics and all stakeholders, particularly its importance for open access to research, open science, innovation, evidence-based policy, and knowledge transfer. (GreyNet International, Grey Literature Network Service)

Grey literature may so lessen publication bias, improve the thoroughness and timeliness of reviews, and provide a fair perspective of the existing evidence. A methodical search for evidence can be significantly hampered by the grey literature's many formats and readership. Grey literature should be included in systematic reviews and reviews of the available evidence since the advantages may exceed the time and resources required to find it. (Paez)

DEVELOPMENT

Gray literature has existed historically from at least the 1920s, especially in Europe and within scientific communities. It is not a phenomenon unique to the late 20th century. For many years, the term "reports literature" was used to describe grey literature. Documents resulting from research and development, notably those from the aviation and aeronautics sectors, were a crucial tool for sharing the findings of experiments around the beginning of the 20th century (Augur).

The largest influence on report literature, nevertheless, came from World War Two's onslaught, which turned it into a vital tool for communication. The invention of technologically complex weapons, from sophisticated tanks to the atomic bomb, was a defining feature of that conflict. Accurate and quick communications become essential as a result of these scientific advancements. The technical report was widely utilized to convey information (White and Crawford).

In the decades that followed, the amazing quantity of scientific and technological research that had been accumulated to enhance both military and communication systems continued. According to Augur-

"one thing that made grey literature so attractive and attained its importance as a separate medium of communication was because of an initial need for security or confidentiality classification which prevents documents being published in the conventional manner"

Dominic Farace and Joachim Schöpfel have distinguished five periods for the development of research and the development on grey literature.

1. They begin with the years leading up to 1979 in which numerous uncontrolled terms such as ephemera, fringe literature, fugitive literature, non-conventional literature, non-published literature, report literature, research outputs, small-circulation literature, unconventional literature, unpublished literature, etcetera were coined to capture the growing phenomenon.

2. The period 1980-1990 covered the development and launch of national and international programs on grey literature (1985 is the year in which the European network EAGLE was created).

3. 1990-2000 included the creation of GreyNet, the Grey Literature Network Service (1993 is the year in which the first international conference on grey literature was convened).

4. The years 2003-2005 covered the re-launch of the Grey Literature Network Service showcasing new projects in the context of the explosion of digital resources, the movement for open access to scientific and technical information, and the Web2.0 (these research results were presented at GL conferences in Amsterdam 2003, New York 2004, and Nancy 2005. This growth occurred notwithstanding the fact that EAGLE and its SIGLE database (System for Information on Grey Literature in Europe) was discontinued in 2005.

5. The current timeframe from 2006 onward is one in which new cooperative research initiatives in the aftermath of EAGLE-SIGLE are on the rise. One of the recent projects is the OpenSIGLE project, an initiative powered by INIST (France) to provide access to former SIGLE records in an open source context.

6. In the spring of 2008, GreyNet signed on to the OpenSIGLE Repository in order to preserve and make openly available research results originating in the International Conference Series on Grey Literature. And, in so doing, the Open-SIGLE Repository has become the intersection of more than 25 years of bibliographic information on grey literature with 15 years of research in the field. Another initiative is the collaboration of researchers in the field of grey literature on institutional levels involving cross-country and international partnerships. And yet another recent initiative was the pilot for a distance learning course on grey literature for

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(post)graduate students, one that was accredited by the University of New Orleans (UNO) and which is now available to other academic institutions.

INDIAN ACADEMIA

Universities and other institutions of higher education are major sources of grey literature (GL). At universities, the majority of the educational process is dependent on numerous written essays and other tasks. Typically, a written thesis or dissertation is produced at the end of the process to demonstrate the graduate's research skills and in-depth subject knowledge.

No matter where it comes from, what language it is written in, where it was published, or how easily it can be accessed, all knowledge is crucial to maintaining life on earth. There are many ways to get information in the modern world, but one of them—despite being the most common—remains the least well-organized and underutilized source of data. This fundamental source of knowledge is just as significant as any other type of information, or what we refer to as Grey Literature. (Pandita and Singh,52)

A student who successfully completes a degree program based on a thesis is awarded a certificate as proof that they are qualified to enter the social workforce or the employment market in a specific position. The academic institution still has the thesis as evidence of its preparedness. Because they were accessible through university libraries, theses were normally believed of as library materials. They were added to collections, cataloged, stored, and made accessible to users by libraries. They constituted typical GL stuff since it was difficult to locate and get. Because there was sometimes just single record of a thesis, libraries also served as archives. Although research also adds to the grey literature that comes from universities, these publications make up the vast majority of it and are the ones that are most associated with all institutions of higher education. Universities rank among the top producers of GL due of their size. Several of the theses, or at least portions of them, are published in books and journal articles as well as in congress materials and non-grey publications. However, the bulk of them and their content continues to be classified as "grey literature," with all the associated challenges for users in terms of accessibility and usability. Theses typically fall under the category of "grey literature," which is distinguished by its difficulty in finding.

Over 2900 institutions dedicated to research and development exist in India, and many of them have many laboratories. It has 310 institutions with more than 73,000 faculty members, 60,516 researchers, 816,335 postgraduates, and 7,862,588 graduates among its student body. In India, annual spending on research & development is fifty billion rupees. It ranks third in the world for scientific and technological manpower. It produces 3% of the publications produced worldwide. Additionally, 3,000–4,000 active scientists are thought to be working in roughly 2000 laboratories throughout India. These organizations produce a large volume of internal research publications, such as presentations, technical papers, manuals, progress reports, etc. Such documents include extremely useful and frequently in-depth information, such as observations, conclusions, analyses, and primary data, which occasionally serve as the laboratory' principal research output and intellectual capital. The researchers outside of that specific organization cannot access these articles. (Tripathi et al.)

There are twelve open universities in India. The vast majority of grey literature is produced by these open institutions, including theses, dissertations, and working papers as well as technical reports, bulletins, self-help books, audio and video content, and radio broadcasts. These documents include very important and frequently in-depth information, such as optical discernments, findings, analyses, and primary data, which make up the intellectual capital of the institutions. Outside of that specific university, scientists and academics cannot access these articles (Tripathi and Jeevan).

The country's production should be documented and made available to society. India is one of the largest producers of GL in all areas. If the research output of the institutions and organizations is available at single-window search, it can help the intellectual community of all fields. It is important to note here that the NDLI is doing a remarkable job to integrate not only the research output but also the other learning resources in forms such as text image, audio, image, video, simulation, applications and animations in different file formats.

NDLI is India's largest learning repository media. The purpose of this study was to measure the different parameters of GL. Moreover, no such study was carried out before. The study analyzes the propensity of GL, its form, types, subject category, sources and languages. The findings have revealed that GL are available in various forms, where text being the most popular among others. Eric and Shodganga are the notable sources from which NDLI has archived an extensive collection of grey resources, i.e., 0.70 million and 0.20 million respectively. The content was analyzed for languages, where English and Finnish languages play a major role in the contribution of GL. Maximum contents in the NDLI including reports, theses, patents and synopses are of open access, i.e. 57.04 per cent, followed by limited access to 34.62 per cent resources. (Moid et al.)

The Central Library at JNU maintains a collection of more than 18,000 theses and dissertations that were digitized by an outside organization after a contract was awarded through a two-step bidding process. The digitizing project received financial support from INFLIBNETCentre. The project was finished in 18 months. The fulltext of the theses is available on the Intranet, and the bibliographic information is accessible through

OPAC; attempts are being made to make them accessible online. On the Shodhganga site, Central Library has already posted 4722 theses. (Narasaiah et al. , 8)

CONCLUSION

Grey literature is, in essence, documents that are not published or not available on a standardized and regulated platform like mainstream research publications are, e.g.: Peer-reviewed journals, published abstracts, etc. However, they are available in formats that are not traditionally considered to be "publishable" or due to some reasons, remain unpublished. Therefore, the search for grey literature may entail the identification and regular usage of several tools and search engines such as SCOPUS, Embase, CINAHL, and Google Scholar. This might seem like an unconventional method for retrieval of data for research purposes, however, due to reasons such as less availability of information over a particular subject and lack of regulated access towards journals makes grey literature one of the most significant aspects of several studies. grey literature is a unique set of data that can be used as a potent tool for a wide range of studies. However, grey literature has its fair share of drawbacks, the greatest of them being that it is a time-consuming process. Saleh et al. in 2014 concluded that the median time spent searching all resources was 471 minutes, and of those, a median of 85 minutes was spent searching for grey literature. ("Grey Literature Searching for Health Sciences Systematic Reviews: A Prospective Study of Time Spent and Resources Utilized") Apart from that, there is no gold standard method for searching grey literature, nor is there a defined methodology for the same, which makes it all the more difficult. (Paez) However, that being said, grey literature continues to remain an important source of information in methodologies as well as reviews.

Grey literature is, in fact, a useful, underutilized, and significant resource that frequently goes untapped due to a lack of attention. People are more aware of the literature offered by commercial publishers, but it is necessary to assist them in becoming more aware of this significant repository of knowledge as well. (Pandita and Singh,59)

Grey literature, or locally generated material, is gaining importance as a source of data in the academic community. It serves as an essential primary source of information for research and decision-making as well as a crucial platform for the exchange of ideas in the academic community. Grey literature must be used by Indian professors to make their courses more pertinent to regional need. No project or other intervention may be successful without knowledge pertinent to the local circumstances and conditions, it must be highlighted. In order for the study findings to be utilized to addressing problems in that particular context, research output addressing challenges that are endemic to the country must be made widely available.

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