DOCUMENTS ORGANISATION STRATEGIES OF OPEN UNIVERSITY MALAYSIA (OUM) POSTGRADUATE STUDENTS

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Overview

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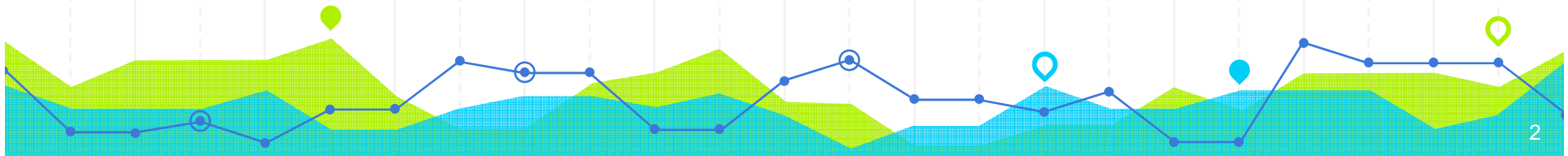
Introduction

- This study aims to investigate student document organisation strategies in their desktops primarily.

- The most common document management system used by students on their desktops is the hierarchical folder system integrated within their computer operating system.

- However, this is not an ideal situation for most students, as they are unsure where the document is located as the documents are saved indiscriminately in multiple folders on their desktops.

- Personal Information Management (PIM) is an interesting research field exploring individual's activities of acquisition, organisation, maintenance, retrieval and sharing of documents.
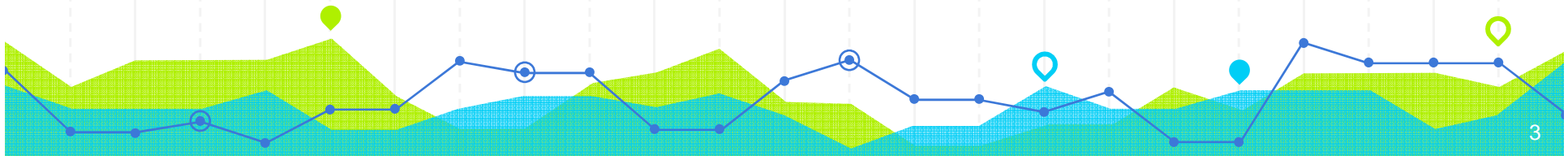
Related Works

- Bergman, have defined three main activities for Personal Information Management: keeping, finding/re-finding, and organising.

- Keeping activities affect information input, whereas finding/re-finding activities affect information output.

- The activity that affects information storage includes information maintenance and organisation, which is the focus of this study.
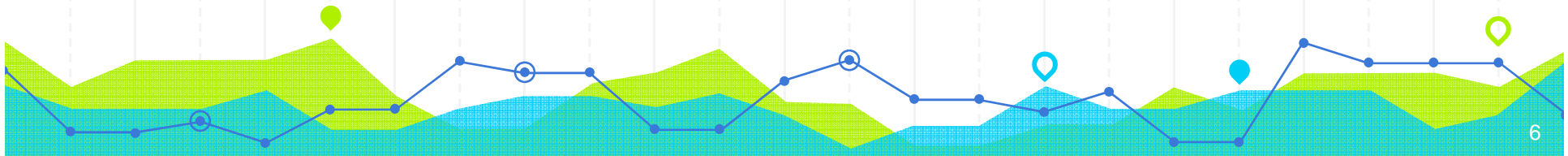
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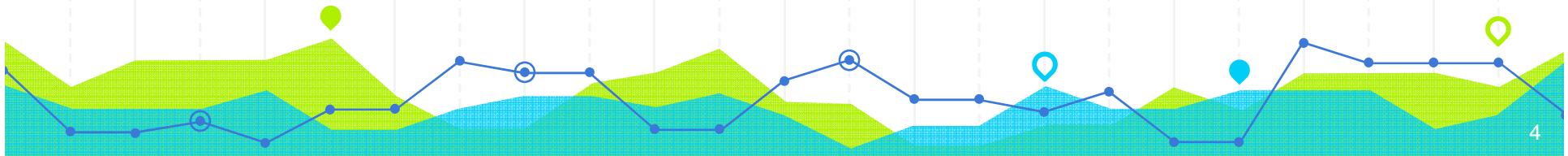
Methodology

- ◉ We investigated students' document organisation strategies in their desktops primarily by administering a questionnaire, and collecting the results.

- ◉ Our study method consists of an online questionnaire with 13 questions.

- ◉ This questionnaire was administered using Google Forms with the link to the online form sent through email to all students currently enrolled at Open University Malaysia in the Masters and PhD programmes.

- ◉ In total, 128 students completed the 10 minute survey in a span of 7 weeks. Our sample includes Master's students (n=102), and PhD students (n=26).
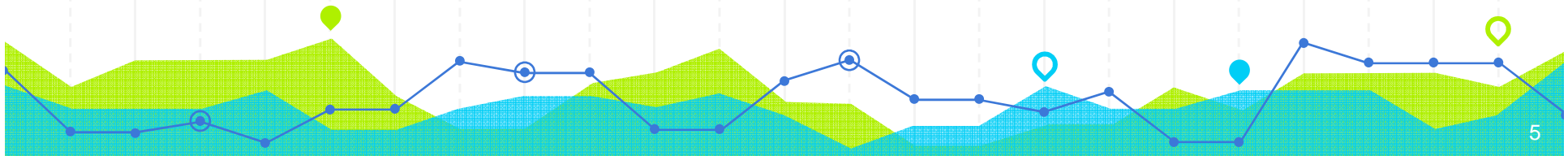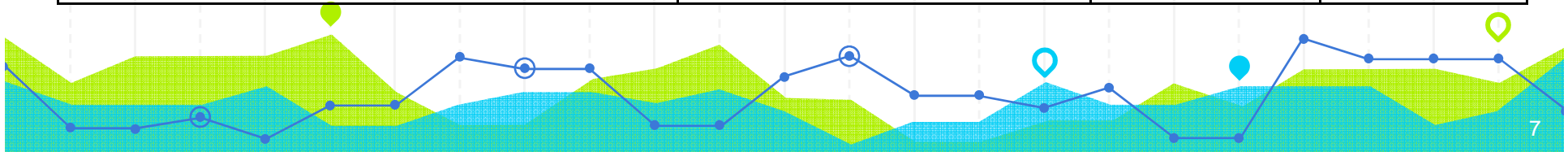
Methodology: Data Analysis

- ◉ The collected quantitative data was analysed using descriptive analysis in SPSS.

- ◉ Data analysis was done with the aim of investigating students' organisation strategies.

- ◉ Table 1 presents the categorisation to the participants as F1 and F2 as *foldering* and O1 and O2 as *organisation*.

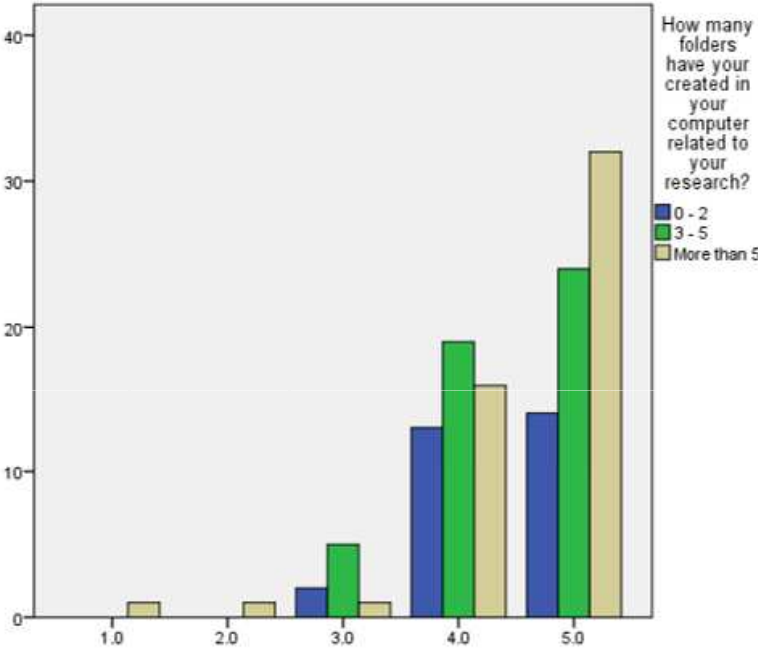| Question ID	Question	Category
F1	Folder names are easy to create.	FOLDERING
F2	It is easy to assign my files to the folders that I create.	
O1	I am satisfied with my document organisation structure.	ORGANISATION
O2	My files on the computer are well organised.	

Results

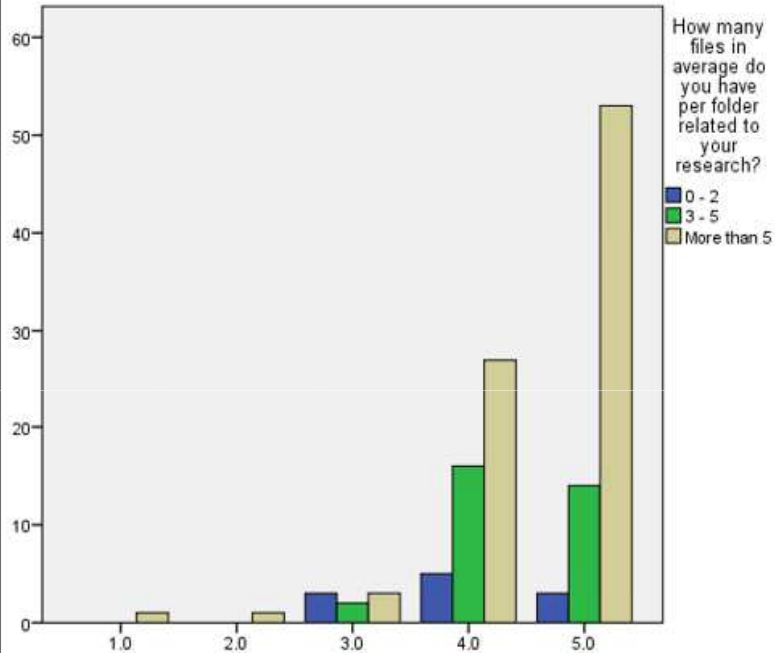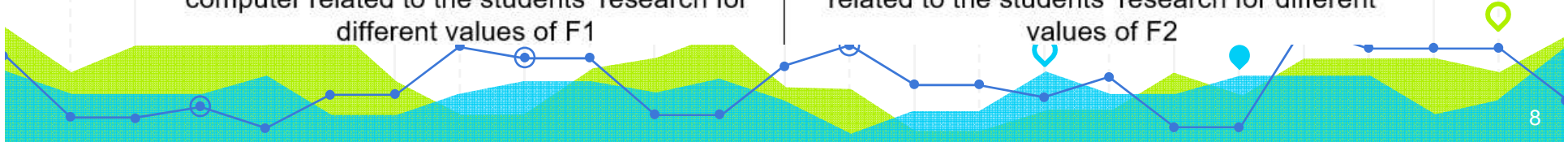|		Frequency	Percent
How many folders have you created in your computer related to your research?	0 - 2	29	22.7
	3 - 5	48	37.5
	More than 5	51	39.8
How many files in average do you have per folder related to your research?	0 - 2	11	8.6
	3 - 5	32	25.0
	More than 5	85	66.4
Where do you store your documents related to your research?	Create new folder	79	61.7
	Desktop/ My Documents/ Download	32	25.0
	Existing folders	17	13.3

Results

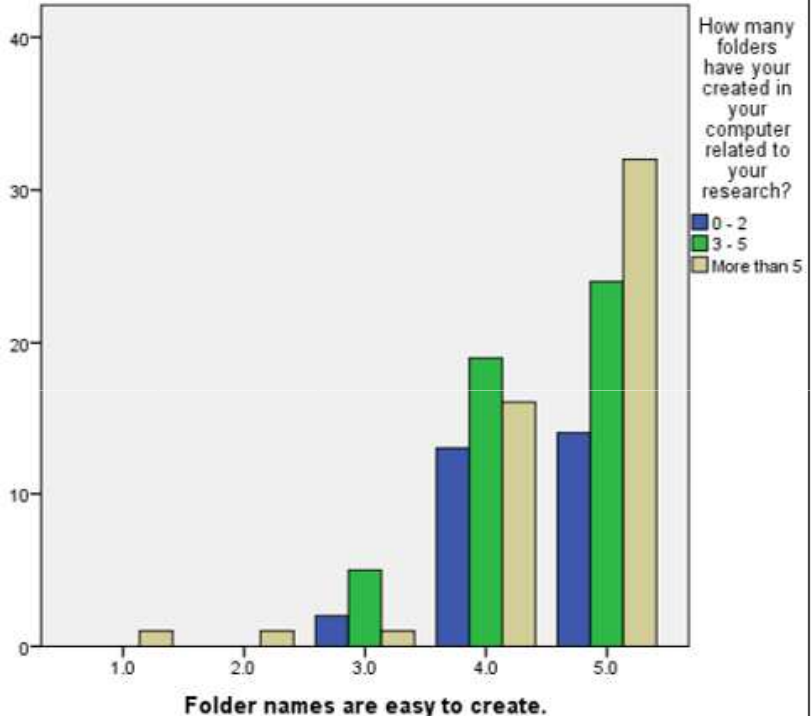Figure 1 - Number of folders created in the computer related to the students' research for different values of F1
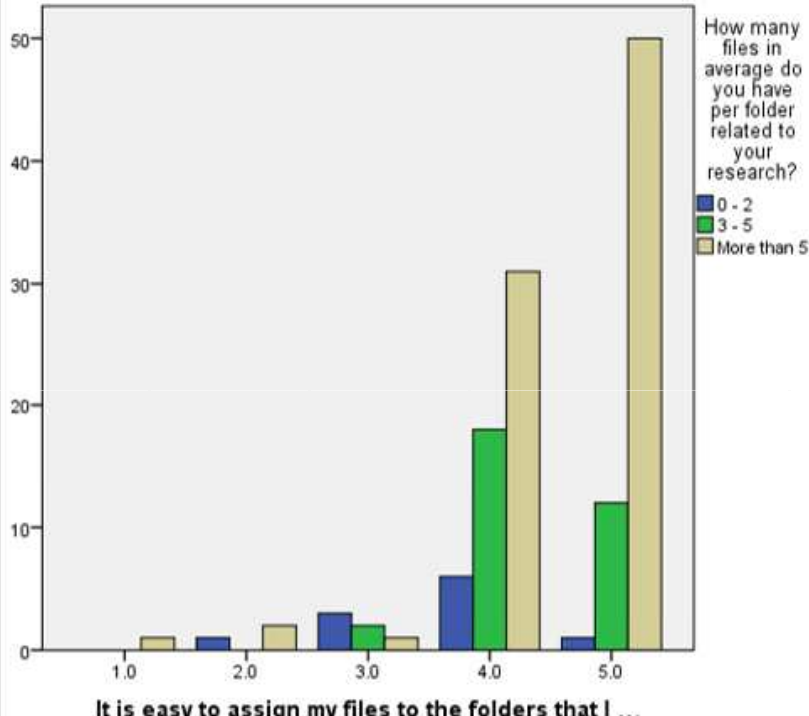

Figure 2 - Number files in average per folder related to the students' research for different values of F2

Results

Figure 3 - Number of folders created in the computer related to the students' research for different values of F1

Figure 4 - Number files in average per folder related to the students' research for different values of F2
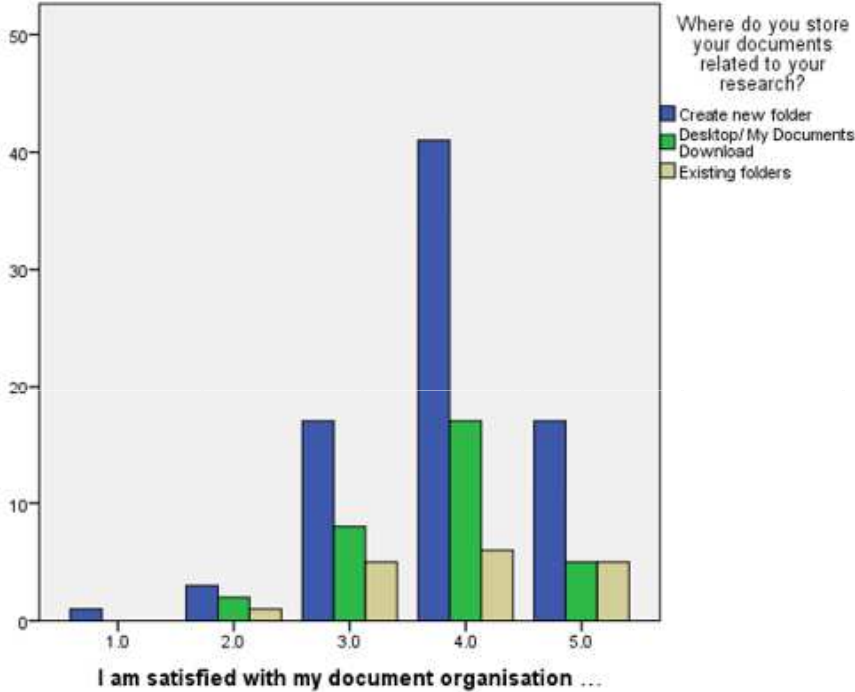
Results

Figure 5 - Locations of stored documents related to the students' research for different values of O1
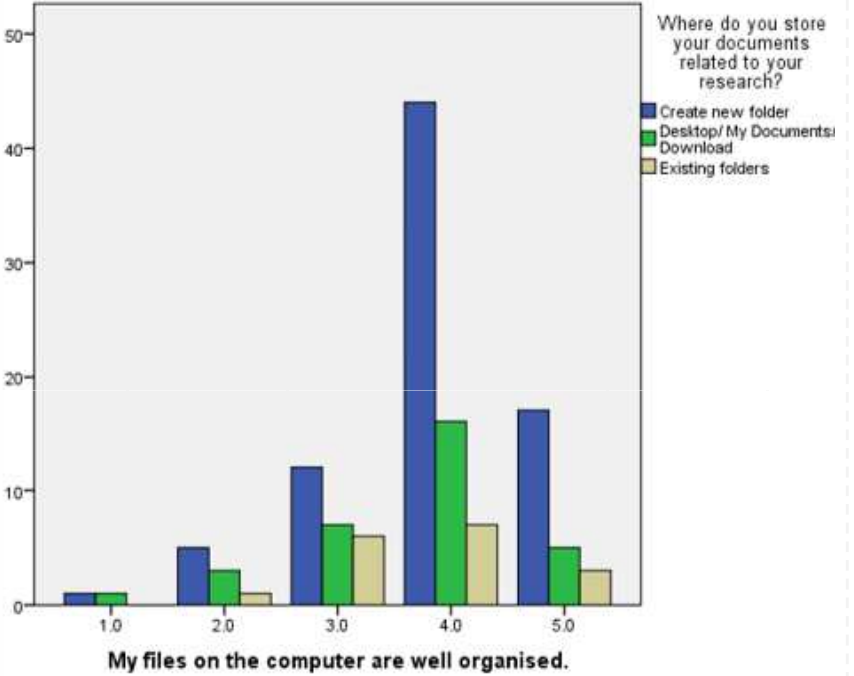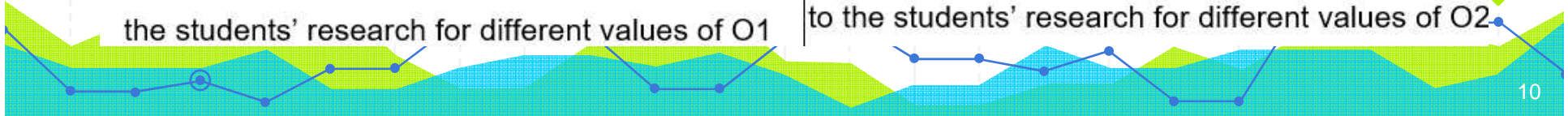

Figure 6 - Locations of stored documents related to the students' research for different values of O2
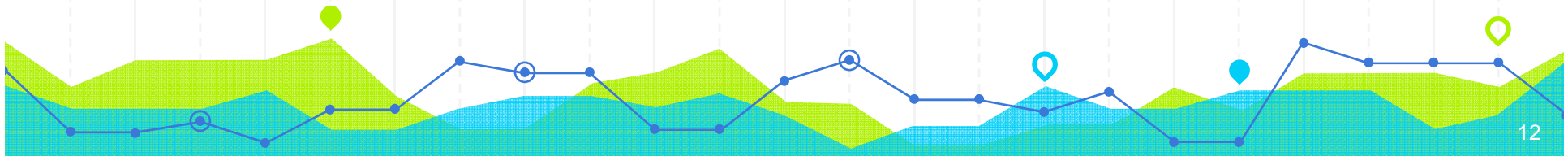
Discussion and Implications

◉ The participants were grouped into two major organisational category which is piling and filing.

◉ The filers were more satisfied in their document organisation in their desktops.

◉ Therefore, the more properly organised they were in their document organisation skills, the more easier and faster they would retrieve the document when needed later.
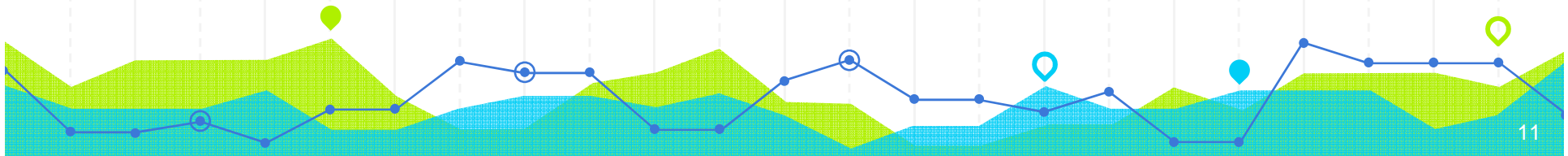
Conclusion and Recommendations

◉ Our results show that while there are elements of organisational skills used by students in order to create and use folders to find their documents easily, there is still room for improvement.

◉ In our next paper, we aim to investigate the number of files and folders in each of the student's desktops in order to enhance our understanding of students' Personal Information Management activities and reveal how student actually manage personal information items in their desktops.

Q & A