

Awareness in usage of e-Resources among users at Agricultural College and Research Institute, Madurai: A case study

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Abstract

This paper describes the awareness, access and use of electronic resources available in the Agricultural College and Research Institute, Madurai. The usages of electronic journals and electronic books have been increased rapidly. The study focused on the use of different types of electronic information resources, awareness of users, access and use of digital resources freely available by the Post Graduate Students, Ph.D Scholars and Faculty Members. This study evaluate the role of Internet in access of e-resources through different search engines (e.g. Google, AltaVista, Msn, Yahoo, etc.), and offline databases in CD/DVD formats that can be accessed without the help of internet.

Keywords: Information, Digital Resources, CeRA, E-books, Access, E-Resources.

1. Introduction

The electronic resources available in the library play a prominent role in facilitating access to the required information to the user. Further one need not go to the library to make use of print formats as the digital resources can be use of any user through On-line access via networks or authentication methods at any time by comfortably. Now web-based electronic resources have become most popular tools in academic research. Electronic Resources is one of the emerging environment in libraries & Information communication in the competitive service. E-Resources usually consist of e-books, e-Journals,

articles, newspaper, thesis, dissertation, databases and CD-ROMs, which are likely to be the alternative to the print media. Emerald, Ebsco, Scopus are some of the examples of online databases. All updated information is published in these e-resources. The familiarity and use of electronic information resources in the libraries for rapid development is necessary and important.

2. Agricultural College and Research Institute, Madurai

Agricultural College and Research Institute, Madurai (AC & RI) is a constituent college of Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, Coimbatore and is situated at twelve kilometers away from the Madurai City on Madurai-Trichy National Highway and just 5km away from Mattuthavani Integrated Bus Station. This campus is the second biggest campus of TNAU accommodating 650 under-graduates, post-graduate students and Ph.D. scholars, and is placed at the foothill of historical monument Yanamalai, a small rocky mountain on the western side. The Tamil Nadu Agricultural University was selected as the best university in India for the year 2000 and Agricultural College and Research Institute, Madurai was adjudged as the College in Tamil Nadu Agricultural University twice during 2002 and 2008.

2.1 Library:

The library was started during the year 1965 in the Main Building of Agricultural College and Research Institute and then it was shifted to the present premises on 28th September 1994. The Modern Library Centre funded by AHRDP as annex to the main library was declared open on 23rd July 2001 for Students Internet Browsing Centre, e-Learning Lab, Network Operation Centre and Placement Cell.

3. Objectives of Study

The purpose of the study is to explore the awareness and usage of consortia-based information and knowledge resources by the post graduate, doctoral students and Faculty members of Agricultural College and Research Institute, Madurai, which is one of the Constituent Colleges of Tamil Nadu Agricultural University. The main objectives are:

- Know the different types of electronic resources available in the TNAU library.
- To study the different types of electronic resources used by the Postgraduate students, doctoral students and Faculty members in the Agricultural College and Research Institute, Madurai.
- To find out the purposes for which the electronic resources are most preferred by the Agricultural Institutions.

4. Scope and Limitation

The study based on the access and use of the information resources by the PG Students, PhD Scholars and Faculty members of Agricultural College and Research Institute, Madurai. The scope of the study is limited to the electronic resources mainly available in Agricultural College and Research Institute, Madurai.

5. Review of Literature

Chandra et al. (2014) conducted a study on Use Pattern of E-Resources among Faculty Members in Arts and Science Colleges in Chennai concluded that most of the respondents were aware of e-resources available in their college library. They have accessed e-resources for their study and research purpose. Majority of the respondents opine that e-resources are useful.

Pauline Adeniran (2013) conducted a study on Usage of electronic resources by undergraduates at the Redeemer's University, Nigeria revealed that the use of electronic resources has tremendous impact on the academic performances of the undergraduate students of Redeemer's University; however, there is need for them to acquire more skills in the use of electronic resources.

Okorie and Agboola (2012) conducted a study on the availability and use of Electronic Resources in Agricultural University Libraries conclude that the advantages of e-resources as a means of easily and rapidly accessing of books, journals, magazines, thesis and images of various types are now widely recognized. Traditional tools are limited by storage and space. But the e-resources have the potential to store much more information at low cost. An important advantage of e-resources to academics is the increase accessibility of information sources that are current and relevant to research, learning and studying at 24 hours a day. For University of Agriculture, Abeokuta, Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike and University of Agriculture, Makurdi, the e-resources has helped to solve the problem of non-availability of information resources in printed format on all the programs being run by the University.

Thanuskodi (2012) finding the use of e-resources by the post graduate students, Research scholars and faculty of arts in the Annamalai University. The study found that the majority of users are aware about the availability of e-resources. The result reveals that 47.78 % of respondents wanted to access only electronic version whereas only 32.78% users wanted to read the printed journals but 19.44% respondents wanted to use both electronic and printed version. Majority of the respondents 76.66% use e-resources for writing papers. The analysis reveals that many of the respondents search e-resources through linking facility available on the library website.

6. Methodology

The study conducted among the PG Students, Ph.D scholars and Faculty members of Agricultural College and Research Institute, Madurai. Survey method of data collection followed. Data mainly collected using a pre-structured interview schedule. 137 copies of questionnaire were distributed and 117 filled in copies of questionnaire were received. The data collected from tabulated, critically analyzed and expected in percentage.

Distribution of questionnaires to various categories of users

Sl.No	Categories	Questionnaire Distributed	Responses received
1	PG students	67	67
2	PhD scholars and	20	20
3	Faculty members	50	30
Total		137	117

7. Analysis and Interpretations

The data presented in Table 2 indicate the respondents of PG Students, Ph.D Scholars and Faculty Members in AC&RI, Madurai.

Sl.No	Respondents	Nos.
1	PG	67
2	PhD	20
3	Faculty Members	30
Total		117

Table 2 Respondent in AC&RI, Madurai

7.1 Use of electronic resources.

Even though there are plenty of e-resource available in different types and forms, the users preferred to some specific types of e-resources. The study sought to identify those types of e-resources.

7.1.1 PG Students

S.No	Use of electronic resources	Frequently		Rarely		Not at all	
		PG	%	PG	%	PG	%
1	E-resources freely available through internet using search engines like google ,Yahoo etc	54	80.6	11	16.4	02	02.9
2	E - journals	28	41.8	36	53.7	03	04.5
3	E-books	31	46.3	28	41.8	08	11.9
4	E-Data archives	06	08.9	33	49.3	28	41.8
5	E-Magazines	21	31.3	36	53.7	10	14.9
6	E-Thesis and dissertations	13	19.4	37	55.2	17	25.4
7	E-News papers	42	62.7	20	29.9	05	07.5
8	E-Dictionaries	31	46.3	26	38.8	10	14.9
9	E-Encyclopaedia	24	35.8	29	43.3	14	20.9
10	CD-ROM data bases	09	13.4	21	31.3	37	55.2
11	Online databases	18	26.9	30	44.8	19	28.4
12	Others	-	-	-	-	-	-

Table 3.1 Use of electronic resources by PG students

The distribution of respondents according to the use of electronic resources by the PG students are shown in Table 3.1.

It reveals that PG students (80.6%) are frequently used only freely available e-resources followed by e-news papers (62.7%). 55.2% of PG students are not used CD-ROM databases followed by 41.8% of PG students are not used E-Data archives. Only 8.9% of PG students are using e-Data archives.

It is clearly understood that the PG students are not aware of the e-resources available in the Agricultural field.

7.1.2 PhD Scholars

The distribution of respondents according to the Use of electronic resources of PhD Scholars in Table 3.2

S.No	Use of electronic resources	Frequently		Rarely		Not at all	
		PhD	%	PhD	%	PhD	%
1	E-resources freely available through internet using search engines like google ,Yahoo etc	10	50	10	50	-	-
2	E – journals	14	70	06	30	-	-
3	E-books	13	65	06	30	01	05
4	E-Data archives	01	05	13	65	06	30
5	E-Magazines	06	30	09	45	05	25
6	E-Thesis and dissertations	04	20	15	75	01	05
7	E-News papers	06	30	11	55	03	15
8	E-Dictionaries	-	-	18	90	02	10
9	E-Encyclopaedia	05	25	12	60	03	15
10	CD-ROM data bases	01	05	13	65	06	30
11	Online databases	10	50	07	35	03	15
12	Others	-	-	-	-	-	-

Table 3.2 Use of electronic resources by PhD Scholars

This table shows that 70% of PhD scholars are using e-journals followed by (65%) scholars are using e-books and 50% of scholars are using freely available e-resources. Only 5% of the scholars are using CD-ROM databases. It is clearly understood that the scholars are using only online resources currently available in Agricultural field rather than offline databases.

7.1.3 Faculty Members

The distribution of respondents according to the use of electronic resources of Faculty Members in Table 3.3

S.No	Use of electronic resources	Frequently		Rarely		Not at all	
		FM	%	FM	%	FM	%
1	E-resources freely available through internet using search engines like google ,Yahoo etc	28	93.3	02	6.7	-	-
2	E - journals	22	73.3	08	26.7	-	-
3	E-books	16	53.3	11	36.7	03	10.0
4	E-Data archives	02	6.7	22	73.3	06	20.0
5	E-Magazines	10	33.3	18	60.3	02	6.7
6	E-Thesis and dissertations	12	40.3	16	53.3	02	6.7

7	E-News papers	09	30.0	16	53.3	05	16.7
8	E-Dictionaries	15	50.0	13	43.3	02	06.7
9	E-Encyclopaedia	06	20.0	21	70.00	03	10.0
10	CD-ROM data bases	02	6.7	19	63.3	09	30.0
11	Online databases	16	53.3	12	40.0	02	06.7
12	Others	-	-	-	-	-	-

Table 3.3 Use of electronic resources by Faculty Members

It is understood that almost all faculty members were using E-resources freely available through internet search engines like google, Yahoo etc, and they used frequently E-journals (70%); followed by e-books (65%) and online databases (50%), while the least preference given to the use of e-achievers and CD ROM databases (5%).

The analysis reveals that E-resources freely available through internet, e-books and e-journals carry much importance for research and academic assignments.

7.2 Access and use of electronic resources

The users were asked to express their opinion regarding the preference of use of e-resources available in their institution library.

7.2.1 PG Students

The distribution of PG students according to their method of access and use of electronic resources is showing in table 4.1.

Sl. No	Digital resources	Most Preferred		Occasionally		Never	
		PG	%	PG	%	PG	%
1	Internet based resources freely available through ICAR, DRDO, IDOSI (International Digital Organization for Scientific Information), EJPAU (Electronic Journal for Polish Agricultural Universities)	36	53.7	28	41.8	03	04.5
2	Resources available through CeRA	34	50.8	24	35.8	09	13.4
3	Resources available through E-books Springerlink, CABI, Wiley and Black etc	36	53.7	26	38.8	05	07.5
4	Resources Subscribed online through TNAU libraries	41	61.2	22	32.8	04	05.9
5	CD-ROM database resources available in your institution library	16	23.9	20	29.9	31	46.3
6	Others if any	-	-	-	-	-	-

Table 4.1 Access and use of digital resources by PG Students

It reveals that PG students pay high preference to the use of Resources Subscribed online through TNAU libraries (61.2%) followed by Internet based resources freely available through ICAR, DRDO, IDOSI and Resources available through E-books Springerlink, CABI, Wiley and Black Well etc (53.7%) and Resources available through CeRA (50.8%)

7.2.2 Ph.D Scholars

The distribution of Ph.D scholars according to their method of access and use of electronic resources is shown in table 4.2.

S.No	Digital resources	Most Preferred		Occasionally		Never	
		PhD	%	PhD	%	PhD	%
1	Internet based resources freely available through ICAR, DRDO, IDOSI (International Digital Organization for Scientific Information), EJPAU (Electronic Journal for Polish Agricultural Universities)	13	65	06	30	01	05
2	Resources available through CeRA	18	90	02	10	-	-
3	Resources available through E-books Springer link, CABI, Wiley and Black etc	14	70	06	30	-	-
4	Resources Subscribed online through TNAU libraries	12	60	06	30	02	10
5	CD-ROM database resources available in your institution library	02	10	11	55	07	35
6	Others if any	-	-	-	-	-	-

Table 4.2 Access and use of digital resources by Ph.D Scholars

It reveals all scholars used resources available through CeRA (90% mostly preferred and 10% occasionally) used. All scholars used resources available through E-books Springer link, CABI, Wiley and Black etc., (70 % mostly preferred and 30 % occasionally)

7.2.3 Faculty Members

The distribution of Faculty members according to their method of access and use of electronic resources is showing in table 4.3.

S.No	Digital resources	Most Preferred		Occasionally		Never	
		FM	%	FM	%	FM	%
1	Internet based resources freely available through ICAR, DRDO, IDOSI (International Digital Organization for Scientific Information), EJPAU (Electronic Journal for Polish Agricultural Universities)	17	56.7	11	36.7	02	6.7
2	Resources available through CeRA	15	50.0	14	46.7	01	3.3
3	Resources available through E-books Springer link, CABI, Wiley and Black etc	20	66.7	10	33.3	-	-
4	Resources Subscribed online through TNAU libraries	19	63.3	09	30.0	02	6.7
5	CD-ROM database resources available in your institution library	05	16.7	20	66.7	05	16.7
6	Others if any	03	10.0	-	-	-	-

Table 4.3 Access and use of digital resources by Faculty members

The analysis reveals that Internet based resources freely available through ICAR, DRDO, IDOSI, e-books e-journals and Resources Subscribed online

through TNAU libraries were the most widely used resources by the users in AC&RI, Madurai.

8. Findings

- The study concluded that almost all respondents have fully awareness about the available e-resources, such as freely available through internet, e-journals, e-books, e-data archives, e-magazines, e-thesis and dissertations, e-newspapers, e-dictionaries, e-encyclopaedia, CD-ROM databases and online databases.
- It has been found that all PhD scholars and Faculty members were using mainly e-resources freely available through internet search engines like google, Yahoo etc., and E – journals.
- It has been observed that Most of the PhD scholars used digital resources available through CeRA, digital resources available through E-books Springer link, CABI, Wiley and Black etc., and resources subscribed online TNAU libraries.

9. Conclusion

The users have knowledge about availability of electronic resources. Many users need to know the complete potential of the electronic resources. Accordingly, the libraries have to evolve more scientific methods to develop a standard collection of E-resources along with print documents assessing the requirements of the users' community. It is concluded that electronic resources which are subscribed are being used effectively.

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