Utilization of Electronic Resources by the Researchers of University of Agricultural and Horticultural Sciences, Shivamogga: A study

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Abstract - The current study was conducted to assess the usage of electronic resources by researcher scholars and scientists of University of Agricultural and Horticultural Sciences, Shivamogga and to verify how electronic resources are helpful to agricultural researchers. The study was carried out through a structured questionnaire by taking representative sample of researcher scholars and scientists. The results revealed the electronic are quite useful to agricultural scientists and these are good alternatives compared conventional print resources or hard copies. Digitalization of agricultural university libraries is quite useful for dissemination of knowledge among agricultural scientists.

Keywords: Agricultural Sciences, Electronic resources, Researchers, Scientists

Introduction

Advancement in the area Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) and their usages in the libraries of universities and research organizations have led to proper and speedy dissemination of knowledge. ICT utilization has brought about revolution in the proper collection, processing, storage, retrieval and communication of knowledge, literature and information by the libraries (Kumar and Kumar, 2010; Tripathi and Jeevan, 2013). Elecronic resources are the electronic representation of information. Electronic resources such as electronic journals (e-journals), electronic books (e-books), and electronic databases (e-databases) are three major categories e-resources of major libraries in higher education and research institutes. Majority of the universities and institutes are now equipping with e-resources and agricultural universities in India are reorganizing themselves in this direction.

Need for the study

Agricultural universities and research institutes are having the responsibilities to promote teaching, learning, research and extension activities in the area agricultural sciences. University of Agricultural and Horticultural Sciences, Shivamogga (UAHS) is one of the young agricultural universities in Karnataka which is involved in teaching undergraduate, post-graduate, diploma, doctoral and post-doctoral courses in the field agriculture, horticulture, forestry and other areas. The jurisdiction area of UAHS, Shivamogga covers the districts of Shivamogga, Chikkamagaluru, Udupi, Dakshina Kannada, Kodagu, Davanagere, and Chitradurga. In the background of this, UAS, Dharwad was chosen to evaluate the impact of e-resources among the agricultural researchers/ scientists.

Objectives of the study

- To examine the awareness of e-resources among agricultural researchers

- To analyze how e-resources are utilized by agricultural researchers to carry out research and involve in extension activities
- To assess the problems faced by the agricultural researchers in accessing and utilization of e-resources
- To find out the ways and means for improving the collection of e-resources in agricultural university libraries

Methodology

Agricultural research scholars and scientists were the target population in the current study. The survey has been conducted by using questionnaire to collect the data in order to achieve the above mentioned objectives. Questionnaire was distributed among 200 agricultural research scholars and scientists of UAHS, Shivamogga and out of 400 questionnaires supplied 360 respondents who thoroughly answered varied quires data was used for analysis.

Analysis and interpretation

Gender wise distribution of respondents

The gender wise distribution of respondents is given in Table 1, of the total 360 correspondents surveyed 256 (71.11%) were male and 110 (28.89%) were female respondents. The data suggest that majority of agricultural researchers were male dominant community and this might be due to agricultural research is mostly field oriented than laboratory oriented.

Table 1 Gender wise population of respondents

Gender	Respondents	Percentage
Male	256	71.11
Female	110	28.89
Total	360	100.00

Awareness about e-resources by respondents

The data on awareness of e-resources by agricultural researchers are presented in Table 2. The data reveals that 232 (90.62%) of males and 84 (80.76%) of females are aware e-resources. It was observed that male respondents are more aware about e-resources than females.

Table 2 Awareness of e-resources

Gender	Aware	Not aware
Male	232 (90.62%)	24 (9.38%)
Female	84 (80.76%)	20 (19.24%)
Total	316 (87.77%)	44 (12.23%)

Preference of type of e-resources

The data obtained by the respondents on preference level of e-resources is presented in Table 3. About 104 (47.78%) agricultural researchers preferred the e-resources only in electronic format, whereas 118 (32.78%) preferred the print format of e-resources.

Table 3 Preference of type of e-resources

Type	Number	Percentage
Electronic format	172	47.78
Print format	118	32.78
Both electronic and print format	70	19.44
Total	360	100.00

Frequency of use of e-resources

Data on usage of e-resources by respondents is presented Table 4. One hundred seventy six (48.88%) respondents are of the opinion that they use the e-resources once in a week, 84 (26.34%) use every day, 76 (21.12%) use weekly twice, followed by 24 (6.66%) respondents use once in a month. E-resource usage trend by the respondents shows that e-resources are quite helpful for their research work.

Table 4 Frequency of use of e-resources

Frequency of use of E-resources	Number	Percentage
Everyday	84	26.34
Weekly twice	76	21.12
Once a week	176	48.88
Once a month	24	6.66
Total	360	100

Purpose of using e-resources

One hundred twenty six (35.00%) respondents opined that they use e-resources for research work, followed by 31.94% use e-resources for study purpose and 13.05% for writing research papers. Similarly, 6.66% of researchers use e-resources for updating their subject knowledge (Table 5).

Table 5 Purpose of using e-resources

Purpose	Number	Percentage
For study purpose	115	31.94
To update subject knowledge	48	13.33
For teaching	24	6.66
For research work	126	35.00
For writing papers	47	13.05

Location of accessing e-resources
It is evident from the data that, majority of researchers access e-resources in the departmental library (50.55%), followed by 45.11% of researchers access the e-resources in the central library and 3.33% of researchers use cyber café centers for accessing e-resources.

Table 6 Location of accessing e-resources

Location	Number	Percentage
Central library	166	46.11
Department library	182	50.55
Cyber cafe	12	3.33

Problems faced by the respondents while accessing e-resources

Respondents were interrogated to give their opinion on problems faced by them while accessing e-resources and the data is presented Table 9. Two hundred sixteen (68.35%) of respondents faced delay in accessing the relevant information due lower internet speed, 101 (28.05%) of respondents experienced difficulty in accessing relevant information, 43 (11.94%) of respondents perceived lack proper information technology knowledge to access the information using e-resources.

Table 7 Problems faced by the respondents while accessing e-resources

Problems faced by respondents	Number	Percentage
Slow internet speed	216	68.35
Difficulty in finding relevant information	101	28.05
Lack of information technology knowledge	43	11.94
Total	360	100

Opinion about e-resources

The data presented in Table 8 indicates that, 182 (50.55%) of the respondents felt that e-resources are useful for their research activities and they are highly satisfied, 129 (35.83%) respondents opined e-resources are good enough for their studies and research, 49 (13.61%) of respondents gave average as response on e-resources usage.

Table 8 Opinion about usefulness of e-resources

Opinion about usefulness of e-resources	Respondents	Percentage
Excellent	182	50.55
Good	129	35.83
Average	49	13.61
Total	360	100

Findings of the study

This survey data reveals that majority of researchers i.e., 90.62% of male and 80.76% of females of University of Agricultural and Horticultural Sciences, Shivamogga are aware of e-resources. Considerable number of researchers preferred to use e-resources in electronic format (47.78%) and 32.78% of researchers need e-resources in print form. Majority of researchers use e-resources once in a month (48.88%) followed by 26.24% of researchers use every day, 21.12% researcher use weekly twice. Researcher of University of Agricultural and Horticultural Sciences, Shivamogga use e-resources for research purpose and 31.94% use for study purpose, 13.33% for updating knowledge in the field, and 13.05% for teaching. Researchers prefer to get e-resources in the departmental library (50.55%) and 46.11% collect e-resources in central library.

Problems faced by agricultural researchers to access e-resources are slow internet speed (68.35). 50.55% of respondents opine that e-resources are excellent source of information, 35.83% are considered e-resources are good source of information. The current survey opinion of agricultural scientists also corroborates with the opinion of medical (Farahi and Gandhi, 2011) researchers. Similar to the present findings Hadagali and Kumbar (2011), Husaain and Ansari (2010) conducted survey and their results also support the usefulness of e-resources in academics and research.

Recommendations and conclusion

It is evident from the current study that e-resources should be integral part of University and college libraries and are useful in accessing information. It is recommended the authorities of University of agricultural and horticultural sciences, Shivamogga to facilitate high-speed computer terminals at university library, departments, and research institutes. The library web page should be designed in such a way that it should provide information and guidelines for utilization of e-resources. University library personnel should conduct short term training course on ways, means and procedures to access e-resources.

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