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Use of E-Resources at University of Agricultural Sciences Library Raichur: A Study

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ABSTRACT

This research addressed the e-resources utility at the University of Agricultural Sciences (UAMS) in Raipur, a central Indian city called the UAMS. Information plays an essential role in higher education. E-books, electronic journals and electronic libraries are superior to written books. In the era of Information technology, access to and utilisation of information is very easy. This leads to the higher consumption of electronic information. Digital Information is fetching imperative community, which leads the user community to record progress in their professional activities.

Keywords: e-resources, e-books, e-journals, ICT, Digital age, CeRA consortia

1. Introduction

Today, library systems are in increasing demand for e-resource-based information. The shift from print to e-resources in library collections directly relates to the changing technologies and their effect on libraries. The popularity of online full-text journals and online e-books has increased user demand for incorporating e-resources in libraries. Thus, e-resource integration has become essential to libraries' collection-building efforts.

There are reasons to opt for e-resources over the conventional print media.

- Ever-increasing cost of print journals,
- There is a long gap between publication and availability of e-resources,
- Change in the conversion rates,
- Technology development,

- Easy to access and search e-resources,
- Low searching time in e-resources,
- Varied e-resources such as E-books, E-journals, E-theses, E-dissertations and Online newspapers,
- Databases (both online and offline) - Bibliographic databases and full text,
- List servers,
- e-reports,
- E-clipping etc.

Puspanjali, Jena Deepak Kumar, and Khantia (2012) [1] focused on the attitude of getting services from libraries with an emphasis on e-resources. Rokade (2008) [2] presented users and technology techniques that forced libraries to undertake digitisation and have resource sharing in agricultural universities and ICAR institute libraries.

Information management in university libraries has significantly transformed by introducing electronic information resources [3]. With the help of electronic resources, researchers can collect and use the information they need at any time, keeping up with the latest trends and developments in the field [4]. E- resources serve as a solution to save space and control the flow of information within libraries [5],[6]. Nowadays, libraries are integrating e-resources by purchasing licenses for electronic databases to supplement existing collections to meet users' learning and research needs through timely, reliable and accurate information resources [7].

Electronic resources are digitised and made available for library clients to find and use. Examples of electronic resources include electronic journals, electronic books, electronic databases, indexing and abstracting, reference materials (e.g. bio, dictionary, directory, encyclopedia, etc.), electronic numbers and statistics, electronic images, electronic audio/visual resources, etc. [8] Librarians select, acquire and manage these materials and make them available for library clients. It is essential to measure user satisfaction to improve the services provided by the library and meet user needs. [9]

Studies have been conducted that focus mainly on user awareness and utilisation of electronic resources, particularly databases. These studies examine one or more databases and report the extent of use. Some studies examine specific library use, which helps to understand the factors that impact the utilisation of electronic resources.

2. Research Purpose

In the last two decades, users have tended to resort to them heavily due to their extensive dependence on digital information access, both for personal and professional use. Publishing academic and research information has increased manyfold, resulting in a large output of resources. In the early period, many resources were published in hybrid mode as it took time for users to shift from traditional print to digital resources. This is the period of evolution marked by the change in user attitude and access patterns. This is one kind of dimension to a multitude of factors. There are other issues, such as imbalanced awareness among the user community. Users quickly resort to them in a few places and urban institutions, whereas in rural areas and small institutions, there are differences in perceptions and awareness. Thus, in any e-resource study, the extent of awareness needs to be investigated.

Users may resort to print versions for some needs and digital versions for others. A classic example is reading newspapers in print mode despite the availability of digital newspapers. Thus, the purpose of e-access varies with the type of resource. Among the e-resources, there are many kinds of access models, such as web-using systems or mobile, PDF or HTML access, and many more. Users have variations concerning fulfilling their needs, and we intend to tap into such assimilation. There are many instances where users have difficulties accessing, and these fall into many types. Such problems and issues will be monitored and documented in this work. With this projection, we initiated this study.

3. Data Sources

University of Agricultural Sciences Library Raichur is the data source for the institutions and the

users attached to this institution from the study group. We randomly select the target user population, and a model is designed. We institute a highly structured questionnaire with a planned set of questions, and based on it, the study is conducted.

3.1. Methodology

The study survey was conducted using a structured questionnaire that was personally distributed. 60 research scholars were surveyed, but only 50 responses were analysed for the present study. This size seems random, so we proceed with this kind of data.

Questionnaires were issued directly without using any intermediary agent or bot. The questionnaire responses were entirely received without failure. The responses are codified into a result that gets cumulated for decision-making.

4. Data Analysis

E-resources are accessed based on awareness of availability and understanding of the structure. 45 users were asked how they knew about resource availability. The responses are produced in Table 1.

Awareness about e-resources	No of users	Percentage %
Orientation by library staff	**35**	**70%**
Friends /Colleagues	**05**	**10%**
Library Broachers	**05**	**10%**
Library Website	**05**	**10%**
Total	**45**	**100%**

Table 1. Awareness about e-resources

The study indicates in Table and Figure 1 that 70% of respondents received e-resources through orientation by library staff, 10% through friends/colleagues, 10% through library broachers, and 10% through library staff. Most of the studied users understand the availability of professionals who can guide them in the right direction.

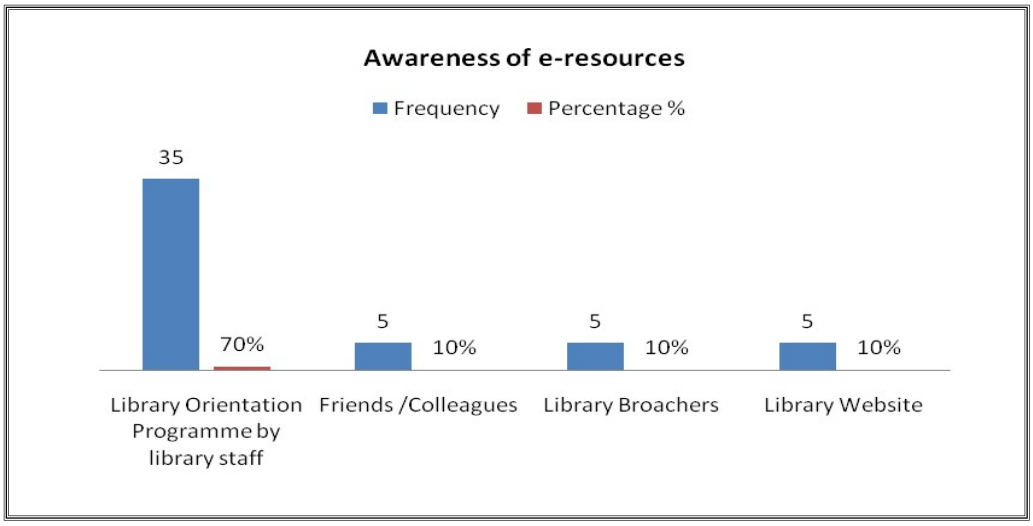

Figure 1. Use of e-resources

The next step is to find the frequency in which e-resources are accessed. This indicates how often the users use information. In the current era of digital-only access, if they do not use e-resources, then their information use is likely to be less. Here, the term used indicates both personal digital resources and library-based digital information access. Table 2 indicates the use frequency.

e-resources	Frequency	Percentage%
Daily	8	16%
2-3 times a week	19	38%
Weekly Once	6	12%
Once in Month	13	26%
Occasionally	4	8%

Table 2. E-resources use frequency

Table 2 shows e-resources use frequency, where 38% of the respondents accessed 2-3 times a week, 26% of respondents used them once a month, 16% of respondents on a daily basis, 12% of respondents used them weekly once, and 8% of respondents used them occasionally. Nealy, more than half of the investigated users have more access, whereas one-third account for infrequent access, and less than 10% are non-e-resource users.

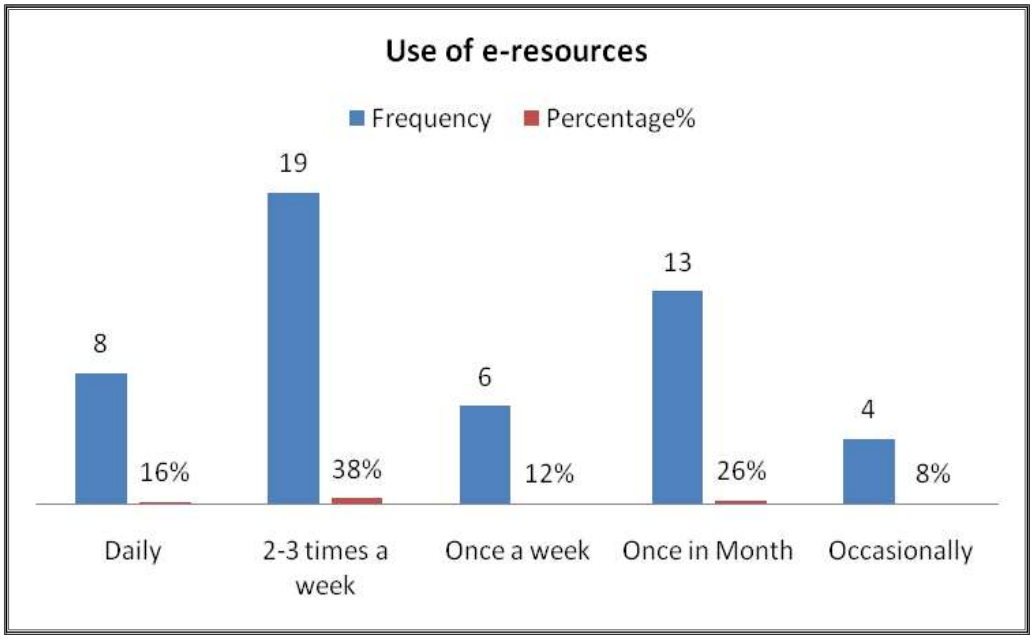

Figure 2. E-resources use frequency

What is the mode of access is an interesting investigation that measures the role of intermediaries and the awareness of the users about e-resources.

Methods	Frequency	Percentage %
Library Website	44	88%
Consortia	39	78%
Aggregators	31	62%
Trial and Error	19	38%
Online free e-resources	30	60%

Table 3. Mode of accessing e-resources

Table 3 revealed the results of the mode they used to tap the e-resources. 88% of respondents accessed e-resources through library websites, 78% of respondents accessed e-resources from consortia, 62% of respondents accessed e-resources through aggregators, 60% of respondents accessed through free online e-resources, 38% of respondents accessed e-resources through trial and error. We can note that the responses are the selection of multiple variables as one respondent can select two or more answers; hence, the total percentage exceeds 100. The two prominent media that increase e-resource access are library websites and consortia, which increase digital access.

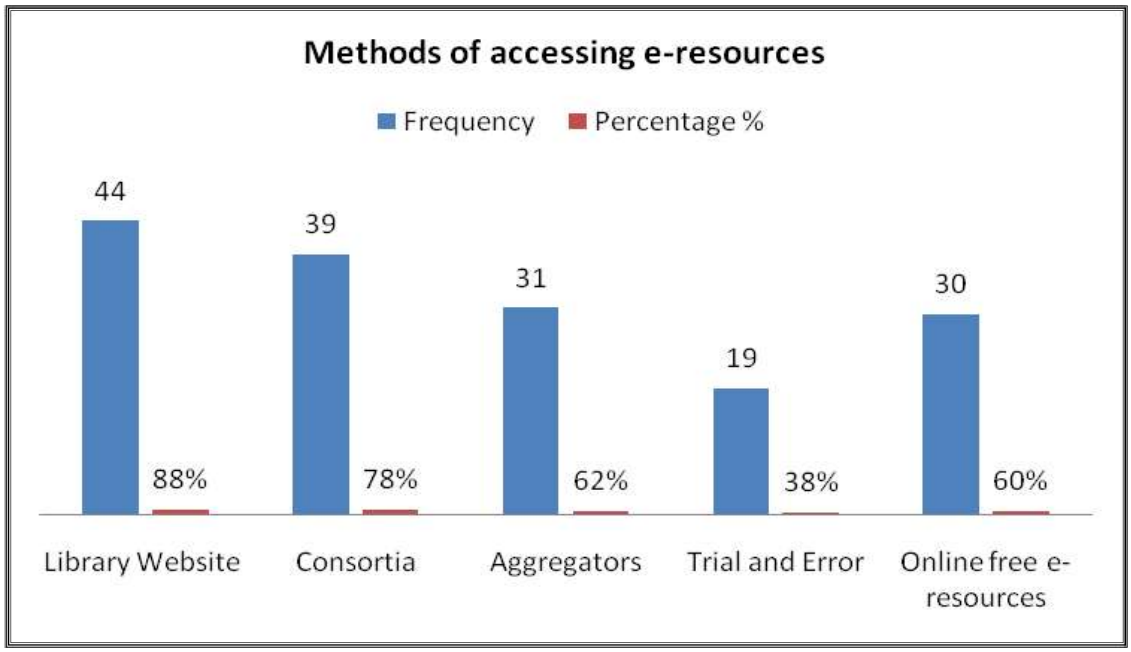

Figure 3. Method of information access

Why and for what purpose do the end-users rely on information access? This is a significant point to study. There are logical reasons for information access, and the users reveal the specific reasons, which help to plan an e-resources management system.

Purpose	Frequency	Percentage %
For research work	47	94%
For publishing research Article	39	78%
To keep updated in Research	23	46%
For Literature Review	31	62%
For studying coursework	29	58%

Table 4. Purpose of access

Table 4 shows that 94% of respondents for research work, 78% of respondents to publishing research articles, 62% of respondents opted for literature review, 58% of respondents revealed the purpose of studying course work, and 46%% respondents updated the research.

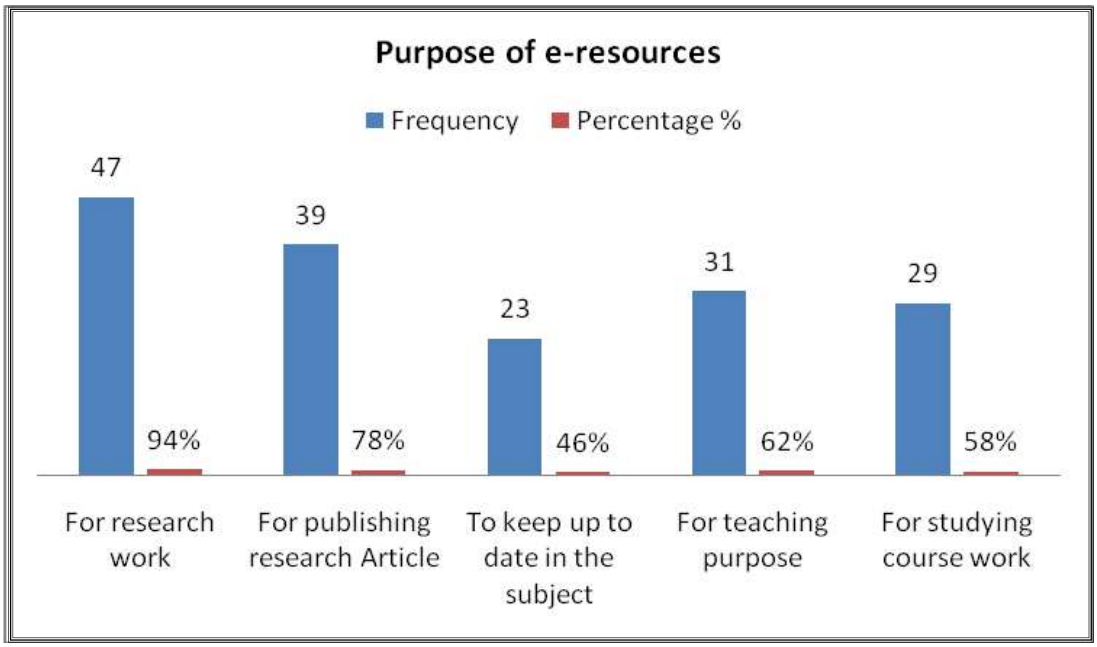

Figure 4. Purpose of e-resources access

Most users who use digital resources are researchers who are regular users. One clear indication that emerges in this data is the significance of research, which promotes information use. More research warrants frequent access, and these two variables are highly correlated.

Table 5 shows that 60% of the e-resources respondents are highly satisfied with the CeRA consortia, followed by 20% who are satisfied, 8% who are neutral, and 06% who are highly dissatisfied.

40% are with the Agri Database, 24% are with it, 16% are neutral, 12% are dissatisfied, and 8% are with it.

Satisfaction of e-resources	Highly satisfied	Satisfied	Highly Dissatisfied	Dissatisfied	Neutral
CeRA Consortia	30(60%)	10(20%)	3(06%)	3(06%)	4(08%)
Agri Database	20(40%)	12(24%)	4(08%)	6(12%)	8(16%)

Table 5. Satisfaction of e-resources

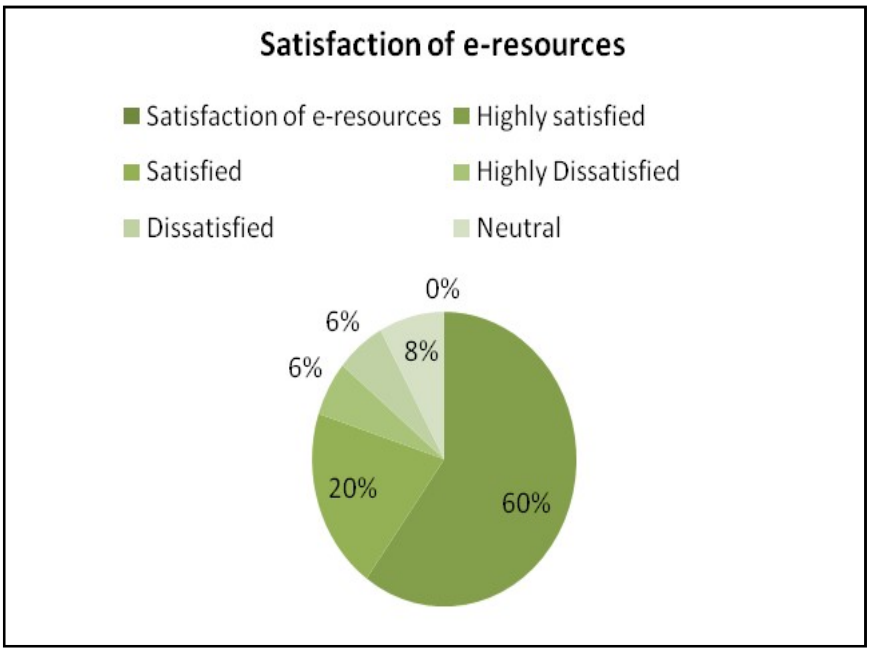

Figure 5. Satisfaction of e-resources use

How users feel about their use of resources is a point worth studying. Most of the studied users are content with what they consume and assimilate. It is noted that not all information resources are easily accessible to users, even if all are available in digital format. Many information pieces lie in restricted access, and not all information available is valuable to the end-users.

Table 6 found problems faced by users of e-resources. The majority, 66%, said there was not enough coverage, 54% said it takes too long to view/ download pages, 46% said the server was down, 42% said it was difficult to find relevant information, and 38% said they had limited computers.

While analysing the resources about the difficulties, we infer that the biggest cause or difficulty is the incomprehensive coverage of information in the available resources, which makes us plan the future digital information systems.

Problems	Frequency	Percentage %
Not enough coverage	33	66%
Limited computers	19	38%
To find relevant information	21	42%
It takes too long to view / download pages	27	54%
Server Down	23	46%

Table 6. Problems faced in using e-resources

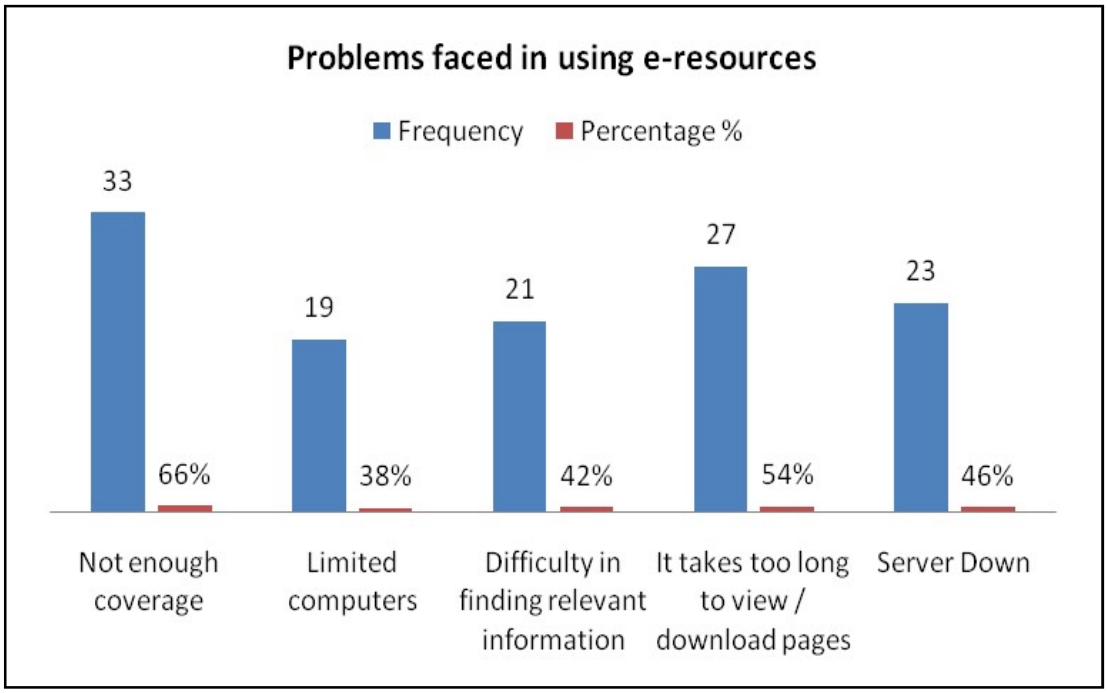

Figure 6. Problems faced during e-resources use

5. Conclusion

We witnessed a high level of digital skills among the studied users, and they are characterised by the high volume of digital device usage, web-based actions, information foraging, and assessment. At the same time, moderate resource use is marked in the analysed responses. Some variables that have an impact and should be optimised include the comprehensive availability, training on e-resources use, knowledgeable staff members and digital access policy of the institutions.

The end-user's preferences should be added to the policy framework to build the digital collection.

Marginalised low-volume users should be invited to use the digital collection, and collections should ultimately reflect the users' requirements (Oseghale 2023). The end-users may increase their level and volume of access if knowledge about availability increases and internet use is promoted. Collection continuity and stability have a major impact on resource use, which is a significant issue.

The research study found that library website features must be added, which should be easily accessible at all times. Agricultural University library helps society. It plays a very important role in changing day-to-day life. Therefore, researchers need to update information that can be accessed through CeRA consortia and agricultural databases. Librarians should be motivated to use e-resources for their research activities. In the last few decades, there has been tremendous interest shown by library and information service professionals in the use of e-resources to provide better access to information users.

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