

Usage of E-Resources among Library Users of Agricultural College and Research Institute, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu: A Study

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(Received 27 January 2019; Accepted 1 March 2019; Available online 5 March 2019)

Abstract - This paper attempts to explore the access and usage of electronic resources among the users of Agricultural College and Research Institute (ACRI), Coimbatore. The present study aims at focusing on the use of various electronic information resources, awareness of users, access and use of digital resources by the Library Users in ACRI, Coimbatore. A well-structured questionnaire was distributed among randomly selected 400 Library Users of ACRI, Coimbatore and the data was obtained from the 350 filled in questionnaires received. The data thus collected have been employed for the present study to provide detailed analysis and interpretation.

Keywords: Electronic Resources, Electronic Learning, Awareness of Users, Library Users, Structured Questionnaire

I. INTRODUCTION

Academic libraries need to demonstrate the value of their collections to the stakeholders by focusing on products and services that support e-learning. Apart from repositories of materials and knowledge, now libraries are the key access point to acquire knowledge and skills at a faster rate. Advanced Communication Technology makes access to information more convenient. The electronic resources provide better support to academic activities and research. Recent studies revealed that the article databases and electronic journals have gained momentum among the academic users to seek information in accordance to their needs. At present the availability of books and journals in the electronic format has increased due to the digitalization of printed resources. Most of the academic libraries in higher educational institutions have been offering specific electronic information facilities to their users.

II. AGRICULTURAL COLLEGE AND RESEARCH INSTITUTE, COIMBATORE

The then Governor of Madras Presidency, Sir Arthur Lawley laid the foundation stone for the Madras Agricultural College in Coimbatore on 24th September, 1906. An educational program in agriculture known as Licentiate in Agriculture (L.Ag.) was introduced in the Agricultural College at Coimbatore in 1908 and the very first batch of students was admitted for this course of study. The Agricultural College and Research Institute was inaugurated by Sir Arthur Lawley on July 14, 1909. In 1920, the college was affiliated to the Madras University with the introduction of a new degree course of study in

Agriculture, B.Sc. (Ag.) with eight students and the first batch came out in 1923. Students having passed the Intermediate examination with 11 years of study in school and two years of Intermediate were eligible for entering the Agricultural College. The number of students admitted to the college gradually increased from eight in 1920 to forty eight in 1926.

III. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Elayaraja, T (2017) explored the utilization of Electronic resources by the faculty members of Agriculture Colleges aiming at finding out the awareness of the users, different types of e-resources, frequency of accessing, different purpose of usefulness and benefit of using e-resources by the faculty members. There were 310 study samples taken from the library users of 10 constituent agriculture colleges in Tamilnadu. The data collected were analyzed by using appropriate statistical techniques. It was found that the maximum usage of electronic resources was to keep up-to-date information and the research scholars are totally dependent on the digital formats in every piece of research work not only in the field of agriculture but also in other discipline.

Ahmad, M & Panda, K C (2016) undertook a study on the impact of e-resources on collection development and library services of major research institute in Lucknow. The principle objectives of this study were to identify the impact of e-resources on collection evaluation and library staff pattern including the services of the libraries, collection development policies, possible impact of e-resources and technology on collection development policies in future libraries. Using the survey method data were collected via ordinal scale and non-metric scale for data analysis. The findings of this study reveals the format of information resources has changed from print to electronic during last decades resulting in the decrease in acquisition of print resources in libraries. Emergence of cooperation on collection development in the form of consortia brought a tremendous impact.

Jothi, G & Kabilambigai, S (2016) reviewed the usage of Electronic Resources among Faculty in Selected Engineering Colleges of Namakkal District. The major objectives of the study are to identify the demographics

details of the respondents, place of access, frequency of usage of ICT, rank the search engines and difficulties faced while using ICT tools. The data were gathered from various engineering colleges in Namakkal District of Tamil Nadu and analyzed through statistical software package SPSS v.21. The study concluded the behavior of library staff and physical facilities in the library play a significant role in deciding the level of usage by the respondents.

Santhi, B & Jayaprakas, M (2017) scrutinized the usage of information communication technology among PG and Research Scholars of PRIMS, Periyar University. The main objectives of the study were to know the impact of ICT, present level of awareness, the software they use and problems faced by the respondents while using ICT. The study was undertaken based on survey method using questionnaires to collect data. The questionnaire was designed and administrated randomly to the 158 PG students and 22 research scholars. The data collected was analyzed using simple random sampling techniques. The study investigated about the awareness and utilization of information communication technology among the PG and Research students of PRIMS, Periyar University. The research scholars are heavily dependent on ICT for their research work to keep themselves up-to-date in the field of their study. The study reveals that the research & PG students are using the available ICT satisfactorily.

Chandra *et al.*, (2014) undertook a study on Usage Pattern of E-Resources among Faculty Members in Arts and Science Colleges in Chennai. The study 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.

IV. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main objectives of the study are

1. To examine the usage frequency of e-resources by the library users of ACRI, Coimbatore.
2. To identify the places where the library users of ACRI, Coimbatore frequently access e-resources.
3. To find out the various kinds of e-resources being widely accessed by the users.
4. To know about the usefulness of e-resources to the beneficiaries accessing e-resources.
5. To explore the satisfactory level over e-resources by the library users of ACRI, Coimbatore.

V. METHODOLOGY

In this study survey method was adopted through administering a well-structured questionnaire among library users to collect the necessary primary data, keeping in view the objectives of the study. The data was collected and analyzed from the 350 filled in valid questionnaires out of

400 questionnaires administered to randomly selected library users of ACRI, Coimbatore.

VI. DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

Analysis of data collected through questionnaires and interpretation is given below:

TABLE I FREQUENCY OF ACCESSING E-RESOURCES

S. No.	Description	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Once in a month	19	5.43
2	Less than once in a month	30	8.58
3	Once in a fortnight	62	17.71
4	Once in a week	76	21.71
5	Every day	163	46.57
TOTAL		350	100.00

Source: Primary data

Table I shows that 46.57 percentage of Library users of ACRI, Coimbatore (163 respondents) access e-resources everyday followed by 21.71 percentage (76 respondents) accessing e-resources once in a week, 17.71 percentage (62 respondents) accessing e-resources once in a fortnight, 8.58 percentage (30 respondents) accessing e-resources less than once in a month and 5.43 percentage (19 respondents) accessing e-resources once in a month. The data reveals that 68.21 percentage of the library users of ACRI, Coimbatore access e-resources at least once in week whereas 17.71 percentage of library users access e-resources once in a fortnight. It is also understood that 14.01 percentage of library users access e-resources at least once in a month.

TABLE II PLACES WHERE E-RESOURCES ARE ACCESSED*

S. No.	Places	No of Respondents	Percentage
1	Library	322	92
2	Hostel	210	60
3	Computer Lab	105	30
4	Department	70	20
5	Other Places	42	12

*Multiple choices were given to respondents to register their answers
Source: Primary data

Table II reveals that 92 percentage (322 respondents) of library users access e-resources in the library of ACRI, Coimbatore followed by 60 percentage (210 respondents) of them accessing e-resources at the hostel, 30 percentage (105 respondents) accessing e-resources at computer lab, 20 percentage (70 respondents) accessing e-resources at their corresponding Departments and 12 percentage (42 respondents) accessing e-resources other places. The data reveals that most of the respondents (88%) access e-resources at the ACRI campus, Coimbatore.

TABLE III USE OF DIFFERENT TYPES OF E-RESOURCES*

S. No.	E-Resources	Respondents	Percentage
1	e-journals	297	84.86
2	e-books	133	38.00
3	e-news paper	164	46.86
4	e-magazines	119	34
5	e-abstracts CD	56	16
6	e-library catalogue	42	12.00
7	Online databases	31	8.89

*Multiple choices were given to respondents to register their answers
Source: Primary data

Table III indicates that 84.86 percentage of (297) the respondents prefer accessing e-journals followed by 46 percentage (164 respondents) preferring e-newspapers, 38 percentage (133 respondents) preferring e-books, 34 percentage (119 respondents) preferring e-magazines, 16 percentage (56 respondents) preferring e-abstracts CD, 12 percentage (42 respondents) preferring e-library catalogue and 8.89 percentage (31 respondents) preferring online data bases. The data reveals that 80.86 percent of respondents prefer reading e-newspapers and e-magazines.

TABLE IV USEFULNESS OF E-RESOURCES

S. No.	Usefulness	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Very Useful	140	40
2	Useful	168	48
3	Average	028	08
4	Not Useful	014	04
Total		350	100

Source: Primary data

The data shown in Table IV indicates 48 percentage of the (140) respondents ensures that the e-resources are useful followed by 40 percentage (168 respondents) leaving their view “Very Useful” , 8 percentage (28 respondents) with the remark, “Average” and 4 percentage (14 respondents) registering their view “Not Useful”. It is learnt from the study that 88 percent of respondents feel the e-resources available to them are useful whereas negligible size of respondents express that e-resources are not useful.

Here, Table V reveals that 62 percent (217 respondents) of the library users of ACRI, Coimbatore state that they are satisfied with the e-resources available to them whereas 38 percent (133 respondents) are not satisfied with the e-resources.

TABLE V SATISFACTION OVER E-RESOURCES

S. No.	Satisfactory Level	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Satisfied	217	62
2	Unsatisfied	133	38
Total		350	100

Source: Primary data

The study suggests that the library authorities must take necessary steps to bring the considerable number of users who are not satisfied with the e-resources into their fold by providing the e-resources they require.

VII. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Electronic information sources and the advent of Internet have extensively become important tools for effective teaching and research. Libraries must systematically automate their system and acquire e-resources. The library authorities need to organize appropriate user education programs to train students in the use of e-resources. It is highly essential that library authorities should allocate more funds for e-resources. The library consortia are expected to have collective bargaining with publishers and make available more e-resources at lower cost. The effective communication in micro level and macro level through excellent infrastructure is also needed to make use the available e-resources.

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