

AWARENESS AND USE OF E-JOURNALS AMONG SOCIAL SCIENCE PhD SCHOLARS OF KASHMIR UNIVERSITY

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ABSTRACT -

The purpose of this paper is to determine the level of awareness regarding e-journals among social science PhD scholars of Kashmir University. The paper also aims to highlight the challenges faced by research scholars in the usage of e-journals.

The present study was conducted using a Google questionnaire that was circulated among PhD scholars of Kashmir University. A total sample of 80 scholars was randomly chosen from the faculty of social sciences. Only 63 scholars responded to the survey and therefore the response rate recorded was 78.75%. A well-structured questionnaire was administered among research scholars to collect the primary information about the level of awareness, use of e-journals, challenges as well as other associated factors, keeping in view the objectives of the study.

The findings clearly reveal that all PhD scholars (100%) at Kashmir University are aware of e-journals. Most of them (42.85%) have learned about e-journals from their fellow scholars. Laptops and mobile phones are the prime access points for e-journals. The majority of them (58.73%) use e-journals two to three times a week mainly for the purpose of research. Google is the most widely used search engine for locating information electronically. Keyword is the most popular search strategy for searching e-journals among research scholars. E-journals are preferred by the majority of scholars (85.71%) compared to print journals. However, it is found that slow internet, restricted access to e-journals, and lack of skills are the main challenges that would deter scholars from efficiently using e-journals. Additionally, a lack of knowledge about advanced searching techniques further prevents proper and full usage of e-journals. The study suggests that orientation sessions should be organized from time to time. Apart from this, faster internet facilities and access to more e-journals should be sought.

Keywords : Awareness, Usage, Access, E-journals, Challenges, PhD Scholars

INTRODUCTION

With the advent of globalization in the realm of education, there has been an information explosion (Khan & Ahmad, 2009). Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has changed the face of scholarly communication by facilitating easy and equitable access to knowledge. The developments in information technology have brought ample opportunities for creating and developing electronic information resources, which are considered to be a boon to the research community (Bhatt, 2010). Electronic resources and services have become the most popular tools for research and academic activities (Golwal et al., 2008). Electronic resources (e-resources) have given us the power to get information timely and manage information more effectively and also the means to dissolve barriers and offer equity of access to knowledge and information (Madhusudhan, 2010). The web has influenced the development of new modes of scholarly communication and the e-journal is regarded as the most popular source of undertaking research. Digital technology has given birth to the electronic form of the journal, the e-journal. The e-journal is also known by various synonymous terms, such as online journal, paperless journal, and virtual journal. A journal can be called an e-journal if its contents are produced and stored in electronic form; if these contents can be scanned in a database and retrieved online, it can be called an e-journal (Naushad Ali & Nisha, 2011). The demand for e-journals among the academic and research community has increased over the years; both as a means of rapid desktop access to current research materials and as a way to view past volumes (Sreekumar and Sunitha, 2006). E-

Journals are one of the most preferential tools of trade apart from books (Ariffin & Abu Bakar, 2013). Electronic information sources provide faster and more reliable information (Kumar and Kumar, 2008). E-journals keep abreast of the latest information, provide easier access to a wider range of information; expedite the research process, and improve professional competency. They provide inestimable advantages in being accessible from a computer at any time of day or night, in a convenient way, saving busy research scholars' time and effort (Madhusudhan, 2010).

Research in higher education institutions has been greatly influenced by the quantum of information available (Navjyoti & Vasishta, 2007). Due to wider access and reach, e-journals have become indispensable in research. E-journals have played an important role in information management, creation, and dissemination. (Navjyoti & Vasishta, 2007). The e-journals available in university libraries in India are journals of UGC-Infonet Digital Library Consortium which was launched in 2003, open access journals, and the journals subscribed by the libraries on their own. UGC-Infonet Digital Library Consortium is providing access to current as well as archival access to more than 7000 core and peer-reviewed journals and 10 bibliographical databases. (Kumar & Reddy, 2014) The major barrier for researchers in their use of e-journals is the lack of awareness (Natarajan, 2010); poor internet connectivity (Shukla & Mishra); lack of subscriptions in their field (Chirra & Madhusudhan, 2009); lack of user orientation and training (Singh et al., 2008; Khan & Ahmad, 2009; lack of practical knowledge and skills (Christian & Chauhan, 2012); bandwidth and access to e-resources (Raza and Upadhyay,

2006); lack of printing facilities, terminals, and trained staff (Ali, 2005). Other major problems they encounter include illiteracy of ICT and its knowledge, disturbance due to frequent power failures, the low speed of the Internet, and lack of a sufficient number of computers (Singh, et al., 2006). As more and more of a library's print journals collection becomes part of the library's electronic collection, it is imperative to train the users on how to navigate and use electronic journals (Jill, 2003)

The present paper aims to look at the awareness and usage of e-journals by research scholars at Kashmir University. The purpose of the study is to know how and why e-journals are accessed as well as other factors associated with them. In addition, the study aims to highlight the challenges faced by research scholars in accessing e-journals.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The purpose of carrying out the review of the literature was to identify different variables and dimensions related to the awareness and usage of e-journals across the world and identify the gaps thereof. In brief, this study presents a review of some works on awareness, usage, and challenges in accessing e-journals in chronological order. Ansari, M.S. (2020) aims to study the use and awareness of e-resources among research scholars of the Faculty of Arts at Banaras Hindu University. The study revealed that most scholars were aware of the e-resources and use them mainly to update their knowledge. Most of them prefer e-resources over conventional ones because of their convenient use, and effective and fast communication. The majority of scholars use e-resources daily. However, lack of technical

knowledge is deemed the biggest problem. The study suggests that a single window system should be devised, awareness should be brought and a dedicated helpdesk should be there to solve the e-resources-related issues.

Gaffar, A., & Gunjal, B. (2019) carried out a study to investigate various aspects such as awareness, access, and usage of e-journals among the research scholars of the National Institute of Technology (NIT) Rourkela, Odisha. The sample constituted 150 research scholars of M. Tech and Ph.D. of NITR using the convenience sampling technique. Data was collected using the questionnaire method. Findings of the study revealed that most of them were aware of e-journals and nearly half of them used them quite frequently. Nearly half of the respondents prefer e-journals to print-on-paper versions; however, 39% of the respondents chose both hard copy and e-journals; only a small proportion utilize print-on-paper editions of journals. The study amply demonstrated the rising popularity of e-journals among academic researchers. Only a few utilize DOAJ; ScienceDirect seems to be the most often used database. Scholars use e-journals for different purposes, though the primary purpose is research. The study also found that nearly half of the respondents (50%) expressed that they face problems in searching and accessing e-journals due to a lack of skills. Lack of adequate information is yet another issue in accessing e-journals.

Manjunatha, G. & Kumar, B.T.S. (2019) in their study tried to know the use of e-journals among faculty members and students. The study pointed out that the respondents are aware of the e-journals, and most of them use e-journals for study and dissertation work. Preference was given

to e-journals over print journals because of their easy accessibility. Most of them access e-journals from libraries. The keyword 'subject' is the most used search strategy for locating e-journals. Though the respondents opined on various advantages of e-journals, however, they also pointed out the challenges they face. The lack of computers was reported as a major problem. The study suggests incorporating orientation programs and training courses for easy access to e-journals by its users.

Lone, S., Mir, A. & Ganie, S. (2017) conducted a study on information-seeking behavior among the research scholars in the faculty of social science, University of Kashmir. A questionnaire-based survey method was adopted for the data collection from 67 research scholars. The study aimed to discover the awareness of researchers regarding services provided by the library, determine the researcher's strategy for searching, identify the different information resources used by research scholars, know the utilization of different library services, and identify the information searching methods adopted while searching for information in the library. The study used a structured questionnaire for data collection and used descriptive statistical measures method for data analysis. The findings of the study revealed that the majority of scholars adopt different search strategies like Boolean, truncation, proximity, and phrase search. 64.1% of scholars preferred web sources over documentary sources. 67.1% of scholars access libraries subscribed journals while 32.8% of scholars access journal articles through personal subscriptions. The study also found that 83.5% of scholars are aware of the various services provided by the library. The scholars do face a

number of problems in their information-seeking activities and the most mentioned problem by the majority (46.2%) of the scholars is that the information is scattered in too many sources and relevant information sources are not available. Other problems include very expensive information sources and a lack of technical support.

Tajafari, M. (2014) in the study aimed to assess the accessibility and use of e-journals by research scholars at Iranian University libraries. Questionnaire method was adopted for data collection and a total of 1380 research scholars participated in the survey. The findings of the study revealed that the level of e-journals awareness and accessibility at university libraries in Iran was high. The majority of research scholars possessed the skill to use e-journals. Although research scholars belonging to Basic Sciences used e-journals the most, since it met their information needs more than any other discipline. The study also revealed that 82% of the respondents encountered problems while accessing and using e-journals. Poor connectivity, lack of internet facilities, inadequate terminals, lack of orientation, and poor skills were some of the problems they encountered.

Nisha, F., & Ali, N. (2013) in their study tried to examine the use of e-journals by the users of IIT Delhi and Delhi University. Survey method was used to determine e-journal awareness and usage. A stratified random sample method was used for the selection of respondents. Data was conducted through a structured questionnaire taking a random sample of 300 users (PG and PhD) from different disciplines of IIT Delhi and Delhi University libraries and the response rate was 66.66 percent. The findings showed that the

majority of users are aware of e-journals and that they utilize them not only to expand and update their knowledge but also to gather pertinent information for their academic and research endeavours. The survey also discovered that the primary uses of e-journals are to publish research articles and manuscripts, publish assignments, presentations, and seminars, as well as primarily to update one's own knowledge. The study also identifies a number of fundamental issues, particularly with the usage of electronic journals. Most IIT Delhi and Delhi University users identified slow downloading as a serious issue. Other mechanical shortcomings related to accessing e-journals included the absence of a specific issue, a lack of training, and restricted access to terminals.

Raza and Upadhyay (2006) in their work aimed to examine the usage of e-journals by the researchers at Aligarh Muslim University by using the questionnaire method to collect the data. A sample size of 52 scholars was taken. The study revealed that all the researchers in AMU are aware of e-journals. Many research scholars are consulting e-journals from their departmental labs and computer centers, not only for research purposes but also to update their own knowledge. Majority of them use e-journals daily and prefer to read the full text on the screen. However, the study also revealed several inherent problems, including lack of training, slow downloading, and internet connectivity issues as barriers to using e-journals.

While numerous research has been carried out to understand the awareness and use of e-resources in India, however very few studies are available in the context of Kashmir. Additionally, there is a lack of research on discipline-specific user

groups, such as students, researchers, or professionals in specific fields. Understanding the unique needs and challenges faced by different user groups could help in developing targeted strategies to improve e-journal access and use for each group. There is also a lack of research on the impact of e-journal use on research efficiency. The study will thus considerably advance our understanding by pointing out potential areas for enhancing information access. This can entail improving e-journal accessibility or providing training to scholars on how to utilize e-journals efficiently, which in turn can enhance the quality of research. The study may also encourage digital literacy among PhD scholars since it becomes crucial to possess the requisite digital literacy abilities to access and utilize these resources, especially as e-journals gain relevance. The study can help to identify areas where digital literacy training can be provided to boost the research skills of scholars by determining the level of awareness and use of e-journals. The study will also aid in identifying difficulties PhD social science students encounter while accessing online articles. These issues can be resolved and e-journal access improved using the information provided. The study is important because it can assist to improve information access, raise awareness of the issues researchers experience when accessing electronic journals, and encourage digital literacy. This information can be used to improve the research environment at the university and promote better research outcomes.

STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The use of electronic resources has become increasingly popular among researchers in recent years. With the increasing availability of digital

resources, e-journals have emerged as a key informational resource for academics. Electronic journals have revolutionized the way scholars access and use information as they offer an efficient and affordable means to collect a significant volume of scholarly literature from different fields and geographical areas. However, the effectiveness of e-journals is dependent on the level of awareness and use among the target audience. While many universities have made a wide variety of e-journals available, it is unknown whether PhD candidates in social sciences at Kashmir University are aware of the availability and usefulness of e-journals, and whether they are effectively utilizing them. In this context, the present study aimed to explore the awareness and use of e-journals among social science PhD scholars at Kashmir University. This study will also explore the barriers that prevent scholars from using e-journals and the potential benefits of increasing e-journal usage. The study aims to provide recommendations for improving facilities and resources related to the usage of e-journals, ultimately enhancing the research efficiency and output of PhD scholars. The study also aims to address this gap in knowledge by investigating the current level of awareness, frequency of use, and sources of information about e-journals among social science PhD scholars at Kashmir University, as well as the challenges they face in accessing and effectively utilizing these resources.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To explore the awareness of e-journals among social science PhD scholars of Kashmir University.
- To find out the sources to learn about e-journals among social science PhD scholars of Kashmir University.
- To determine the frequency of e-journals usage and the reasons for using them.
- To find out the perception of scholars regarding the influence of e-journals on research efficiency.
- To know the challenges faced by PhD scholars of Kashmir University in accessing e-journals.
- To suggest suitable ways for improving facilities related to the usage of e-journals.

SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The present study focuses on the awareness and use of e-journals by research scholars. The study area is restricted to social science PhD scholars of the Kashmir University, J&K, only. The findings of the study may not be generalized to other universities or faculties. Hence, the scope of the paper could further be extended to various faculties across different universities, drawing on comparative analysis. Sample size can also be increased to ensure the representativeness of the population under study. While e-journals have been around for some time, there are constantly new technologies emerging that have the potential to impact e-resource access and use. There is a need for research on the impact of emerging technologies, such as artificial intelligence or virtual reality, on e-resource access and use, as well as the potential of these technologies to enhance the learning and research experience.

METHODOLOGY

The universe of the study constituted the PhD scholars of Kashmir University belonging to the faculty of social sciences which includes 7 departments viz., Sociology, Political Science, Social Work, History, Library & Information Sciences, Media Education Research Center, and Islamic Studies and 3 research centers viz., Institute of Kashmir Studies, Centre of Central Asian Studies, and Shaikh-Ul-Aalam Centre for Multidisciplinary Studies. The total no. of PhD scholars enrolled in these departments is 337 as per the university statistics on 15.05.2022.

A Google survey-based questionnaire was designed to collect primary data, keeping into consideration the objectives of the study. The survey consisted of questions on the level of awareness, use of e-journals, challenges as well as other factors associated with the usage of e-journals. Both open and close-ended questions were incorporated. A total sample of 80 scholars was randomly chosen from the faculty of social sciences which is 23.7% of the total population. Only 63 scholars responded to the survey and therefore the response rate recorded was 78.75%.

Questionnaires were sent through e-mails in the month of July and the fieldwork lasted for 15 days. 40 responses were received within 10 days, the researcher waited for 5 more days but no response was recorded. A reminder was sent to those who did not respond and by the mid-august, 23 more responses were received. The link was closed for further responses by the end of August. The responses furnished till then were used for data analysis in order to achieve the objectives. Themes derived from the review of the literature and the data formed the basis of the analysis. The

data was later presented in the form of tables and figures.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

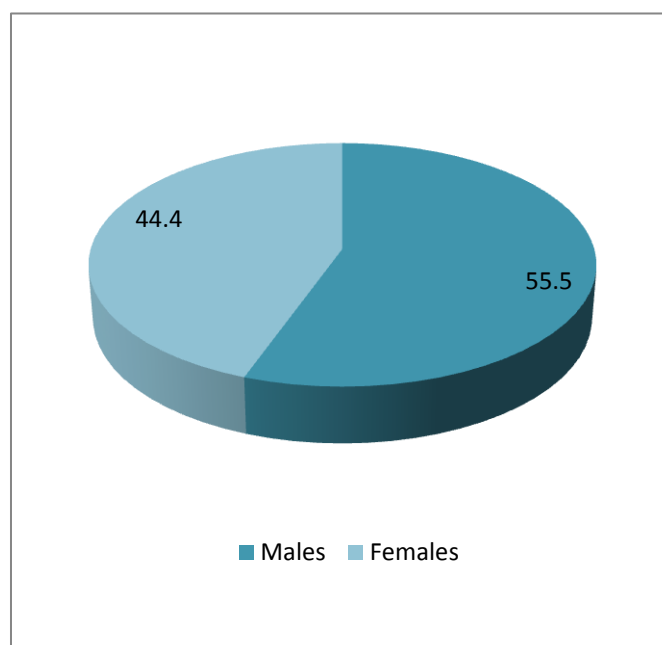
Data provided by the respondents is presented under the following headings:

Demographic Information

Sex distribution of the respondents

35 scholars (55.5%), who responded to the survey, were male, followed by 28 (44.4 %) female research scholars as depicted in fig. 1.

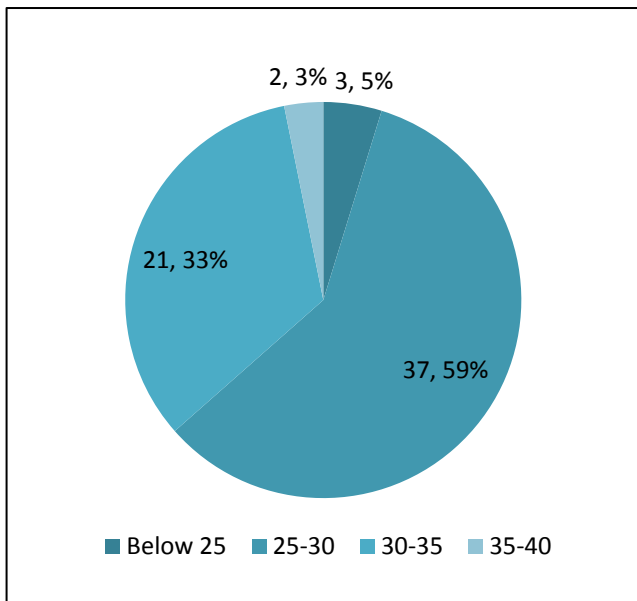
Fig. 1: Sex distribution of the respondents



Age of respondents

Most of the respondents (58.7%) belonged to the age group of 25-30, followed by (33.3%) in the age group of 30-35. 3 respondents (4.7%) belonged to the age group below 25 and only 2 respondents (3.17%) were from the age group 35-40.

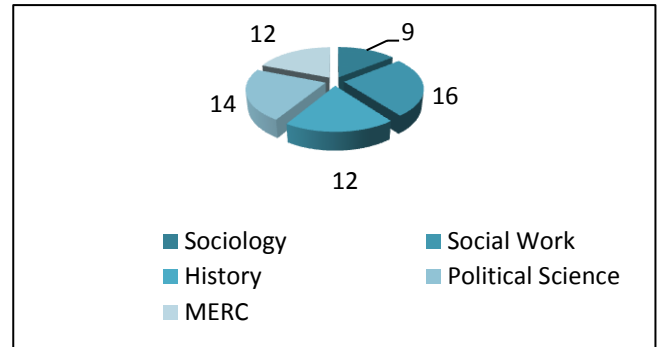
Fig. 2: Age distribution of the respondents



Respondents’ Department

Since the researcher has taken into consideration the faculty of social sciences in Kashmir University, 9 (14.2%) scholars from the Sociology department, 16 (25.39%) from Social Work, 12 (19.04%) from History, 14 (22.22%) from Political Science and 12 (19.04%) from MERC responded to the survey and hence formed the sample of the study as depicted in fig.2. The distribution of respondents is as under:

Fig. 3: Respondents’ Department



Awareness about e-journals

Research scholars were asked whether they know about e-journals and all respondents (100%) had knowledge about the accessibility to e-journals which are indispensable for research. 63.4% of respondents answered that they are aware of the e-journal consortium and the UGC Infonet Digital Library Consortium accessible through Kashmir University’s E-resource center whereas 36.5% of users are unaware of it (see Table VIII). Only one-third of respondents (33.3%) had knowledge about the remote access facility to e-journals. 47.6% of respondents were aware of other e-resources facilitated by the library, whereas 52.3% were unaware of them. Most of the non-users depend upon open-access e-journals or rely on websites like Sci-hub to retrieve the date.

Table 1 : Awareness of using e-journals

Awareness of using e-journals	No. of respondents	Percentage
Yes	63	100
No	0	0
Total	63	100

Awareness	Library Facility	Aware	Not Aware
	E-Journal Consortium	63.4%	36.5%
	Remote Access	33.33%	66.66%
	Other e-resources	47.6%	52.3%

Source to Learn about e-journals

Various sources through which scholars came across e-journals are indicated in Table 2. From the table, it is clear that a large number of

respondents (42.85%) came to know about e-journals through fellow scholars. Formal courses and workshops are found to be an important source (28.57%), followed by the university website, library staff, and professors (14.28%).

Table 2 : Source to learn about e-journals

Source to learn about e-journals	No. of respondents	Percentage
Fellow Scholars	27	42.85
Course/Workshop	18	28.57
University Website	9	14.28
Library staff/Professor	9	14.28
Total	63	100 (approx..)

Medium of access

Research scholars were asked about the preferable medium to access e-journals. 58.7% of respondents accessed e-journals from their

laptops, followed by smartphones (30.15%), Central Library’s browsing center (6.34%), and departmental computers (4.76%).

Table 3 : Medium of Access

Medium of access	No. of respondents	Percentage
Laptops	37	58.7
Smartphones	19	30.15
Library’s browsing Center	4	6.34
Departmental computers	3	4.76
Cyber café	0	0
Total	63	100 (approx..)

Purpose of using e-journals

Research Scholars use e-journals for a variety of reasons, as shown in Table 4. They are primarily used for research work (viz., literature search, finding relevant information in the area of

specialization, thesis writing); and to write research papers or articles. They are used to enhance domain knowledge, followed by preparation for seminars and presentations.

Table 4 : Purpose of using e-journals

Purpose	No. of respondents	Percentage
Doctoral Research	63	100
To write research papers/articles	59	93.65

Enhance domain knowledge	46	73.01
Seminars/Presentations	23	36.50
<i>Note: Multiple responses were permitted</i>		

Frequency of e-journal usage

When enquiring about the frequency of e-journal usage among the research scholars, it was found that all the scholars make use of e-journals.

25.39% claimed to use them daily, 58.73% used them two to three times a week, 15.87% used them two to three times a month, and none used e-journals occasionally.

Table 5 : Frequency of e-journal usage

Frequency	No. of respondents	Percentage
Daily	16	25.39
Two to three times a week	37	58.73
Two to three times a month	10	15.87
Occasionally	0	0
Never	0	0
Total	63	100

Preferred access point for searching e-journals

Research scholars were asked about the preferred access points for searching e-journals. The study reveals that 69.8% do generic searches on

Google. Google Scholar, ResearchGate, Microsoft Academic were the most preferred academic databases used by them. It was followed by Library e-journals (30.15%).

Table 6 : Preferred access point for searching e-journals.

Preferred access point	No. of respondents	Percentage
Google	44	69.8
Library's e-resources	19	30.15
Total	63	100

Search strategy

The most popular search strategy adopted by the research scholars was keywords, with 41.2% of respondents preferring this method. The second

most favoured option was Phrase search (31.7%), followed by Boolean searching (15.87%), truncation (7.93%), and citation searching (3.17%)

Table 7 : Search Strategy

Search Strategy	No. of respondents	Percentage
Keywords	26	41.2
Phrase Searching	20	31.7
Boolean Search	10	15.87
Truncation/wildcard search	5	7.93
Citation Search	2	3.17
Total	63	100

Preference of online journals over printed journals

An attempt was made to identify the type of journals that scholars prefer to use, such as print only or electronic only, or whether they want to access both types of journal. The result reveals that majority of them (85.71%) prefer online journals since e-journals give quicker and easier access to a plethora of literature than print journals. 4.76% prefer printed journals, and 9.52% wish to access printed as well as electronic forms of journals.

Scholars were asked whether they read on-screen or prefer to download, print, and read. It was found that nearly half of the respondents (40% approx.) read full-text articles on-screen and rest 60% (approx.) read the articles after printing them out. The preference for hard copy is evident since reading on-screen can be tiring. Eyestrain from reading and computer use, according to Ajayi and Akindojutimi (2005), can impair vision. Also, many people derive intrinsic pleasure in reading print.

Table 8 : Preference of online journals over printed journals

Type of Journal	No. of respondents	Percentage
Electronic	54	85.71
Printed	03	4.76
Both	06	9.52
Total	63	100

Table 9 : Reading mode of e-journal

Preferred reading mode	No. of respondents	Percentage
Print form	25	39.6
On-screen	38	60.31
Total	63	100

Influence of e-journals on research efficiency

E-journals are pivotal for research particularly for PhD scholars, given the time constraint. Research

scholars were asked whether access to e-journals improves their research efficiency and most of them answered in the affirmative. The reasons are

that it provides faster access to information; saves a lot of time and energy; is easy to use; provides access to a wide range of information; up-to-date information; and has no time-space constraint.

Table 9 : Influence of e-journals on research efficiency

Influence	No. of respondents	Percentage
Faster access to information	63	100
Easy to use	63	100
Saves time and energy	63	100
No time-space constraint	63	100
Wide range of information	63	100
Up-to-date information	63	100
<i>Note: Multiple responses were permitted</i>		

Challenges pertaining to the use of e-journals

Respondents were asked what problems they face while using e-journals. According to the respondents, the major addressable problems are low internet speed (65.07%). The problem of slow access to e-journals impedes the research

scholars’ access and use of e-journals. Restricted access due to high subscription costs is yet another difficulty in accessing e-journals. Lack of training also hinders the use of e-journals as shown in table below:

Table 10 : Challenges in using e-journals

Challenges in using e-journals	No. of respondents	Percentage
Slow internet	41	65.07
Restricted access to e-journals/Difficulty in accessing full-text articles	33	52.3
Difficulty in retrieving relevant data	26	41.2
Non-availability of e-journals relevant to my information needs	18	28.5
Lack of knowledge about advanced search techniques	40	63.49
Insufficient training/guidance	37	58.7
<i>Note: Multiple responses were permitted</i>		

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

- Most of the scholars were aware of e-journals and their accessibility through the central library’s e-journal consortium. However, only a quarter (33.33%) was aware of the remote access facility provided to the scholars.
- Fellow scholars were the prime source through which 42.85% of respondents knew about e-journals, followed by courses/workshops, university website, and library staff/professors.

- Majority of respondents (58.7%) accessed e-journals from their laptops, followed by smartphones (30.15%), Central Library's browsing center (6.34%), and departmental computers (4.76 percent).
- Study revealed that e-journals are mostly used for research work (100%), to write research papers/articles, and to enhance domain knowledge, followed by preparation for seminars and presentations.
- It was found that 25.39% of respondents used them daily, 58.73% used them two to three times a week, and 15.87% used them two to three times a month.
- Google was the most preferred access point (69.8%), followed by Library e-journals (30.15%).
- Keyword was the most popular search strategy employed by the scholars (41.2%). The second most favoured option was phrase search (31.7%), followed by boolean search (15.87%), truncation/wildcard search (7.93%) and citation search (3.17%).
- Majority of them (85.71%) prefer online journals, 4.76% prefer printed journals, and 9.52% wish to access printed as well as electronic form of journals. Nearly half of the respondents (40%) read full-text articles on-screen and the rest 60% read the articles after printing them out.
- All the respondents believed that e-journals improve their research efficiency as it saves a lot of time and provides faster access to resources.
- It is found that slow internet, restricted access to e-journals, and lack of skills are the main challenges that would deter scholars from efficiently using e-journals. Additionally, lack of knowledge about advanced searching techniques further hinders the use of e-journals.

SUGGESTIONS

- An orientation cum awareness course on the proper use of e-resources, particularly e-journals should be introduced at Kashmir University as part of the PhD program. This will educate them about what e-resources are available in the library and how to make optimum use of these resources in their academic work.
- IT infrastructure and internet connectivity should be improved in order to enhance the use of e-journals. Faster and reliable connectivity should be made the prime focus. To achieve this, high-speed bandwidth is needed. This will help users save time and will also address the issue of slow downloading.
- Training should be provided from time to time about the advanced techniques and search strategies, through which retrieving skills can be improved.
- The number of journals available through consortia should be increased to cater to the varied needs of researchers in their area of specialization.
- Feedback should be taken periodically to assess the needs of doctoral students and to ascertain the challenges they face in searching e-journals.

CONCLUSION

The present study seeks to examine the level of awareness about e-journals and the challenges in their usage by the PhD scholars of Kashmir University. The study reveals that all researchers

are aware of e-journals. Most of them access e-journals two to three times a week and mainly for the purpose of research. The most popular access point for searching e-journals is Google and keyword is the most used search strategy. Though e-journals are preferred over the traditional print format, this does not indicate that researchers do not face challenges in the usage of e-journals. Slow internet, restricted access to e-journals, and lack of skills are the main constraints. Hence, it is recommended that a high-speed internet connection should be sought. The Library should subscribe to more e-journals and orientation cum awareness sessions should be organized from time to time.

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