AWARENESS AND USE OF E-RESOURCES AMONG THE USERS OF LIBRARY OF PUNJABI UNIVERSITY PATIALA: A CASE STUDY

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The advancement in computer application and the Internet during the past few decades has brought a great revolution. The present study focuses on the awareness and it's usage of e-resources by the users subscribed by the Punjabi University, Patiala. The study reveals the problems while using e-resources as well as the satisfaction level of the students. The outcome of the study shows that there should be a personal database of the Library, Internet Connectivity, Speed and Adequate Infrastructure; additional no. of e-resources should also be subscribed. The study also brings out the preferences and significance of e-resources for undergraduates, postgraduates and research scholars.

Keywords: E-resources, Punjabi University, E-Books, Information Technology, Internet

INTRODUCTION

Information technology has been one of the leading drivers of globalization. The emergence of information technology is the most significant development in scholarly communication. Internet has brought out sea changes in resources and services which can be used from anywhere at any time. It clears the boundaries and time barriers which obstruct the scholars and information seekers to use the information for their academic and other purposes. Massive scholarly literature is publishing these days, out of which most of the literature is available online and dependency on e-resources is increasing day by day. Various reasons and factors like easy availability, accessibility, cost-effectiveness and time-saving attract users towards e-resources. Therefore, due to the demand and the need of the users, universities and libraries are adopting technology and subscribing to e-resources.

E-RESOURCES

E-resources are the electronic representation of information that is available in various forms. Electronic resources deliver the collection of information as full text Databases, E-journals, Image Collection, Multimedia in the form of CDs, Tape, Internet, Web Technology etc.

E-resources include e-journals, e-discussions, e-news, data archives, e-mail online chatting, etc.

Ani and Ahiauzu (2008) rightly states that "the transition from print to electronic medium apart from resulting in a growth of electronic information, has provided users with new tools and applications for information seeking and retrieval. Electronic resources are invaluable research tools that complement the print-based resources in a traditional library setting".

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The purpose of the study was to check the awareness & utilization of e-resources by the students and to analyze the dependency on e-resources, challenges & problems faced by them and their level of satisfaction during the use of e-resources.

REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

Makori (2015) studied the micro factors that influenced the usage of electronic information resources by the postgraduate students in the institutions of higher learning in Kenya. The study reveals that electronic information resources are extremely important in the success of research, teaching, learning, academic administration and resource support in any university's library. Kuri *et. al.* (2016) conducted a survey to find the awareness and use of e-resources by the students, research scholars and faculty members of various disciplines of Vishveshwarya Technical University (VTU) of Karnataka State, India. The author suggested that scientific search engines should be designed on the basis of individual disciplines and the library staff should conduct formal training/orientation programmes to overcome the obstacles and effective utilization of e-resources.

Tamrakar and Garg (2016) conducted a survey to measure the extent and usage of e-resources by the PG students, Research Scholars and Faculty Members at Indian Institute of Technology, Guwahati, India. The study concludes that most of the users are able to explore the e-resources related to their area of interest and the library should institutionalize its performance assessment by users approach. Adeleke and Nwalo (2017) studied the availability; awareness and use of e-resources by the Postgraduates at the University of Ibadan, Nigeria. The results indicated that internet was ranked the most available and used in the university. The authors revealed that interrupted power supply, lack of searching and IT skills as the barriers to the use of e-resources.

Garg *et. al.* (2017) conducted a study of postgraduate students of business schools in Nagpur, Maharashtra (India) to develop and validate a scale involving the factors affecting the usage of e-resources. The study identified five factors affecting the usage of e-resources: Training Modes, Awareness, Influencers, Utilitarian Benefits, Experiential & Hedonic benefits. Natarajan (2017) investigated the usage of e-resources and services by the students of Information Science at the Social Science Library of Jimma University, Ethiopia. The study found that awareness about e-resources and services increased the usage of e-journals, but easy accessibility and availability of e-resources at various places of campus decreased the library visits of the users. Sohail and Ahmed (2017) revealed the interest of users and problems related to the usage of e-resources by the students and faculty members at Fiji National University,

Oceana. The authors suggested that e-resources and services need to be utilized properly and services should be renewed frequently, keeping in view the changing requirements of the users.

Tlakula and Fombad (2017) explored the level of usage of e-resources by the undergraduate students at the University of Venda, South Africa. A qualitative research methodology was adopted, and semi-structured interviews were conducted with each participant to get in-depth information. The authors found that the level of usage of resources by the undergraduate students was elementary and their awareness about e-resources was low. Yebowaah and Plockey (2017) investigated the usage of electronic resources by the lecturers of the University for Development Studies, Wa campus, Ghana. The authors recommended the efforts to improve the usage of e-resources, ways of creating user awareness, training/workshops for users and staff, and responding to the challenges of confronting utilization. Soni *et. al.* (2018) conducted a survey which aimed to find out the challenges, benefits, and progress gained by library and information science research scholars of Jiwaji University Gwalior (India) while accessing the e-resources. The authors suggested that librarians should make the homepage of library and special training sessions on demand should also be organised to improve the usage.

Kavithanjali (2019) examined the importance, types, issues and challenges of e-resources. The study concludes that e-resources are convenient to use, obtainable at a reasonable cost and can be accessed from anywhere and many users can use concurrently. The databases are most advantageous to utilize and to put into the academic excellence and achievement of its user community. Subha and Natarajan (2019) explored the awareness, availability and the usability of e-resources by the faculty members of Arts & Science Colleges in Erode District, Tamil Nadu (India). The survey method and questionnaire as a data collection tool were used in the study. The results revealed that almost all the users were aware about the e-resources and access of all kinds of e-resources.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The study was restricted to the users of Bhai Kahn Singh Nabha Library of Punjabi University Patiala, in which undergraduate & postgraduate students and research scholars were taken for the study. This paper examines the awareness and usage of various e-resources by the users of the library. The study highlights the preferences & significance of e-resources and also reveals problems faced while using e-resources and also to study about the satisfaction level among the undergraduates, postgraduates and research scholars.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To know the awareness and usage of e-resources by the users of library.
2. To know the frequency and purpose of using e-resources by the users.
3. To find out the kinds of e-resources preferred by the users.
4. To identify the reasons and challenges associated with the users' usage of e-resources.
5. To study the level of satisfaction of users about the availability and coverage of e-resources.
6. To suggest suitable recommendations to improve the facilities and services related to the usage of e-resources.

METHODOLOGY

The study has adopted a quantitative approach through the usage of survey design. It was not practical to survey the entire population of the users of university library. So, it was decided that only students and research scholars would be taken for the study. The total population of library users on an average was 480 approximately per day which includes graduates, post graduates and research scholars and the data was taken from daily entry register record of users of the library. It is not possible to study the whole population because of the time and cost constraints. A simple random sampling method was used with a total 120 copies of questionnaires were distributed to the students present in the Library of Punjabi University, Patiala.

Distribution of copies of questionnaires to the students

Disciplines	No. of copies of questionnaire distributed	No. Of questionnaires received
Research Scholars	40	37
Postgraduates	40	33
Undergraduates	40	30
Total	120	100

Among which 100 were completed and received representing 83.33% response rate. The data were analyzed statistically and presented in tables.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSIONS

Table 1: Gender-wise distribution of students

Course	Male	Female	No. of Respondents
Research Scholars	20	17	37
Postgraduates	18	15	33
Undergraduates	14	16	30
Total no. of respondents	52	48	100

Table 2: Awareness about e-resources

Awareness	No. of Respondents
Yes	87
No	13
Total	100

Table 3: Sources of awareness about e-resources

Sources	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Through library visit	33	37.94 %
Through friends	25	28.74 %
Through Library Staff	16	18.39 %
Library Website	08	9.19 %
Teachers	05	5.74 %
Total	87	100 %

The table 3 implies that respondents became aware of the availability of e-resources of Library through different mediums. Library visits and friends (37.93 % and 28.73 %) respectively, are the main sources by which students came to know about e-resources. 18.39 % got aware with the help of library staff 9.19 % through the library website and only 5.74 % of students got aware by their teachers. The finding of the study shows that efforts made by library staff and other facilitators are not up to the mark, so there is a need to organize orientation programs to aware the students about e-resources.

Table 4: Frequency of access e-resources

Frequency of Access	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Daily	32	36.78 %
Weekly	30	34.48 %
Fortnightly	13	14.95 %
Monthly	08	9.19 %
Occasionally	04	4.60 %
Total	87	100 %

The table 4 shows the frequency of use of e-resources by the students. Majority of the respondents show that 32 (36.78%) students use e-resources everyday, followed by 34.48% weekly, 14.94% fortnightly, 9.19% monthly and only 4 students use e-resources occasionally.

Table 5: Use of different types of e-resources

E-resources	No. of Respondents	Percentage
E-Journals	37	42.53 %
E-Books	30	34.48 %
E-Theses/Dissertation	19	21.83 %
E-Databases	18	20.68 %
All e-resources	13	14.94 %

The table 5 depicts the use of different e-resources by the students. Majority shows that 42.53% and 34.48% students use e-journals and e-books respectively. The use of e-theses/dissertations and e-databases are almost same, i.e. 21.83% and 20.68% respectively. Only 14.94% students use all these e-resources.

Table 6: Use of databases and e-resources

Databases and e-resources	No. of Respondents	Percentage
JSTOR	35	40.23 %
Taylor & Francis	21	24.13 %
Springer Link	17	19.54 %
Oxford University Press	13	14.94 %
American Chemical Society	11	12.64 %
Economic & Political Weekly	09	10.34 %
MathSciNet	07	8.04 %
ISID e-resources	06	6.89 %
JGate Plus	05	5.74 %

The table 6 shows that the greater part of students i.e. 40.23% use JSTOR, whereas, 24.13% and 19.54% students use Taylor & Francis and Springer Link respectively, followed by 14.94% use Oxford University Press, 12.64% use

American Chemical Society, 10.34% use Economic & Political Weekly, 8.04% use MathSciNet, 6.89% use ISID. As table 1 shows that most respondents are research scholars, there is an unexpected result that only 5.74% of respondents are familiar with JGate Plus.

Table 7: Most preferred Source of e-information

E-Resources	No. of Respondents	Percentage
E-Journals	35	40.23 %
E-Books	33	37.93 %
E-Theses/Dissertation	24	27.58 %
E-Databases	18	20.68 %
All e-resources	13	14.94 %

The table 7 reveals that most of the respondents i.e. 40.23% and 37.93% preferred e-journals and e-books respectively to fulfil their academic needs, followed by 27.58% who favours e-theses/dissertations and 20.68% of students depends on e-databases. Only 14.94% of students preferably use all these e-resources.

Table 8: Benefits of e-resources over conventional documents

Reasons	No. of Respondents	Percentage
More Informative	48	55.17 %
Ease/Convenience of use	46	52.87 %
Time-Saving	42	48.27 %
More preferred	24	27.58 %
Less Expensive	17	19.54 %

The table 8 reveals that majority of students i.e. 55.17% found that e-resources are more informative. 52.87% and 48.27% of students opined that e-resources are conveniently in use

and are time-saving respectively, 27.58% of students advocate that e-resources are more preferred compared to printed resources. The remaining 19.54% of the students found them less expensive.

Table 9: Problems faced while accessing/using e-resources

Problems	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Slow speed of the Internet	38	43.68 %
Difficulty in finding relevant information	37	42.53 %
Infrastructure not suitable	07	8.04 %
Library timing not suitable	04	4.60 %
Library staff not supportive	02	2.30 %

The table 9 reveals the problems faced by the students during access to e-resources. The table shows that the majority of students i.e. 43.68% and 42.53% complained about slow speed of the Internet and trouble in finding relevant information respectively, 8.04% stated that the infrastructure is not suitable to fulfil their needs, 4.60% responded that library timing is not suitable for them and 2.30% revealed that library staff is not co-operative. As they expected from the staff to aware them about new services and sources in the library, but the results are contrary to their expectations.

Table 10: Overall Satisfaction level of using E-resources and Services

Level of Satisfaction	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Satisfied	27	31.04 %
Very Satisfied	24	27.58 %
Extremely Satisfied	16	18.39 %
Partially Satisfied	13	14.95 %
Dissatisfied	07	8.04 %
Total	**87**	**100 %**

Table 10 depicts that majority of the students, 31.04% were satisfied with the subscribed e-resources and services, followed by 27.58% were very satisfied, 18.39% were extremely satisfied, 14.95% were partially satisfied. Only 8.04% of students were dissatisfied, but it cannot be ignored.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

E-resources have impact on the resources and services as well as dependency of the users. The present study helps in finding out the problems occurred during the access of e-resources. The study would helpful for the different types of users that they can get better access and more subscribed journals related to their field. In the light of the findings, university library can improve its infrastructure and services.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that majority of the students are aware of e-resources. Use of e-resources is frequent among the Undergraduates, Postgraduates and Research Scholars. To a greater extent, research scholars are relying on e-resources to access relevant information. But still, there are some students who are unaware of e-resources subscribed by the university. No doubt that the university is paying a huge amount for the subscription of e-resources, but it is the duty of library staff to make the students aware of e-resources. Some of the students are not fully satisfied with the existing e-resources as e-journals related to their subject are not fully accessible or not subscribed to the university. Some other issues are also there as there should be more library timings for female candidates, personal database of the library should be

maintained, Internet connectivity, and speed, inadequate infrastructure; more e-resources should also be subscribed. In the light of the findings of this study, it is suggested that the library staff should make efforts and organize some training & orientation programs for the students to create awareness about subscribed e-resources. Infrastructure should also be improved as per the requirements of students and researchers. So, there is a need to improve the facilities and efforts should be made to overcome these problems.

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