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Use of Consortium of E- Resources in Agriculture (CeRA) by the Faculty Members of University of Agricultural Sciences Dharwad: A Study

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ABSTRACT: *The research study is consortia based information dissemination in University of Agricultural Sciences, Dharwad by the faculty members using through jgateplus.com in the consortium of e-resources in agriculture which is provided by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research, National Agricultural Innovation Project. It is very good resources for the State Agricultural Universities and Central Agricultural institute users of India. A research study was conducted among using questionnaire method through data collection among the faculty members of four constituents' colleges of UAS dharwad to identify the trend of using consortium e-journals. The purpose of usability, usefulness of CeRA and attitude towards the consortia journals in the skill sets have been used in brief in this study.*

Keywords: *Agriculture, e resources, CeRA*

Introduction

Agriculture is one of the prime economies of every country and also the national and International economic development. It is the backbone of India and its role predominantly known as Agrarian country and the growth of Agriculture is reflected in various yields in different crops. So, timely dissemination of knowledge plays an important role like what are the latest varieties of crops available, how to take care of seeds, germination, etc. For all this research is needed and research results should be disseminated right information, to the right user and at the right time in the quotation of father of Library Science in India.

An oral communication has been an integral part of interaction in all civilization. With the development of ICT, the process of communication has expanded over time, like earlier information was available only in print mode, now a day's maximum number of online information on from various devices i.e. computer, laptop, mobile phone and other electronic gadgets. The advanced applications of Information and Communication



Technology have revolutionized the whole process of information production, storage, dissemination and retrieval. Today's most of the information in all fields is available electronically on online 24x7. In the fields of agriculture a number of advancements regarding the information sharing have been made by the ICT like Web Online Public Access Catalogue, Union catalogue, Institutional repositories, Web portal, etc. Journals, whether in print or an electronic format, constitute an important part of a library collection as these are the most important vehicle for global scholarly communication. Due to the growth and expansion of the internet, e-journals are becoming important information sources for users.

Review of Literature

In recent years, there has been an increasing amount of literature on the use of e-journals by different kind of user surveys such as conducted by Brennan *et.al.* (2002) in their study at the University of Illinois, Chicago revealed that all the faculty members, read electronic journals at least weekly and many used them on daily basis. They stated that the users of e-journals accepted them because they see more advantages of e-journals including time saving, ease of use and powerful searching capabilities.

Bar-Ilan (2003) conducted a study of the academic staff on their use of databases and electronic journals in the Israeli universities. The major findings were that the electronic sources usage was already prevalent among the respondents and more than 50% found the electronic services essential. Most of the respondents (91.7 %) were satisfied with the services provided to them. In the Indian context a study conducted by Mounissamy *et al.* (2005) on research scholars and faculty members of National Institute of Technology, Tiruchirappalli reveals that 33% of faculty members and 67% of researchers frequently access the electronic journals for different purposes. Among them 53.4% of the respondents' access 1-3 journals in a month, 26.1% of the respondents access 3-6 electronic journals in a month, 12.5% access 6-10 electronic journals and 8% access above 10 journals in a month.

Madhusudhan (2008) analysed the study on Use of UGC-Infonet ejournals by research scholars and students of the University of Delhi, Delhi', opined that it appears to be some need for academics to be provided with training in using e-journals. The result showed



that most of the (72%) respondents are accessing ejournals through department computer laboratories, 47% accessed from central library. 73% of respondents agreed that print journals are important for the foreseeable future. And 64% of the respondents strongly attest to the fact that they need proper training/orientation for searching e-journals. Among them 75% respondents stated that they are accessing UGC Infonet e-journals for current and up-to-date information.

Sankar, M (2019) conducted a study on the consortium journals with reference to agriculture and the study revealed that most of the research papers are available in electronic format, and it will be accessed via different online databases based on the publishers. Consortium for electronic Resources in Agriculture (CeRA Consortium) was developed exclusively for the literatures belong to subjects of the different fields. The results of the study explores the content analysis of the CeRA Consortium for e-resources in agriculture. This paper investigates to find out the subject wise, topmost publishers, topmost publishing countries, and category wise in the resources in the agriculture and related discipline. The study deals from the consortium for e-resources in agriculture in the Jgateplus.com site, and results in information analysis also been taken up to identify the research output of agricultural and allied sciences.

Profile of Consortium for e-Resource in Agriculture (CeRA)

CeRA was launched successfully on 30 April 2008. The main objectives of CeRA Access was initially given to 124 institution though IP addresses, out of 124 institution, 114 institution successfully received access though IP addresses, but institutes located in remote areas got access through user name & password. It covers agriculture, Allied Science and veterinary Science, fisheries crop Science, computer Science, soil , animal science Currently 147 institutions in NARS have 24x7 online accesses to important journals in CeRA platform through IP authentication. Thomson Web of Science for Science Citation Index (SCI) has been made available to the Lead Institute (IARI), but the facility is available to all members of CeRA in the State Agricultural Universities and Central Agricultural Institutes of India.



The emerging information and communication technologies have made drastic changes in the information needs and information seeking behaviour of the users. Due tremendous publications and interdisciplinary the information needs of the users of the agriculture libraries have become multiplex. The role of the librarians working in these Universities should have a clear understanding of their user's needs and their information seeking behaviour. The use of CeRA needs to be verified by the library authorities. In aspect of the above condition, the present study appears to be of looming necessity in particular university library where there is an urgent need to improve web based library services and to cater the need of its users.

Objectives of the Study

The following objectives were finalized

- To analyze the awareness of users about the e-resources of CeRA e- journals among faculty members
- To find out frequency of using CeRA e-journals by the faculty members
- To know the purpose of using CeRA e- journals by the faculty members
- To find out the Strategy of Improving Respondents' Research Activity through CeRA e-journals
- To know the receipt of Articles through Document Delivery System
- To know the Attitude towards usefulness of CeRA e- journals

Methodology

Present study has been made by surveying the usage of the e-journals of CeRA-Consortium among the faculty of University of Agricultural Sciences, Dharwad which has four constituent colleges, viz. College of Agriculture Dharwad, College of Agriculture Vijayapur, College Forestry, Sirsi, College of Agriculture, Hanumanamatti. This study is primarily concerned with the consortium access approach to information and to compare their information needs which can ultimately determine the usefulness of information from libraries for academic community of agriculture and its related disciplines. A total number of 150 faculties were selected using simple random sampling out of which 142 members



responded. The data were collected by using questionnaire method and analyzed using appropriate statistical techniques were used to make meaningful interpretation for fulfilling the research objectives. The total number of respondents from each constituent colleges have been given in table 1.

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents by the respective faculty members of Colleges

Sl.No.	College wise respondents	n	%
1	College of Agriculture , Dharwad	92	64.79
2	College of Agriculture , Vijayapur	34	23.94
3	College of Forestry , Sirsi	12	8.45
4	College of Agriculture , Hanumanamatti	4	2.82
	Total	142	100

It is clearly found that highest number of users (64.79%) belonged to the faculty of the College of Agriculture, Dharwad followed by the faculty in the College of Agriculture, Vijayapura (23.94 %). The College of Forestry, Sirsi constitute only 8.45% of the respondents and the remaining 2.82 % belonged to faculty of College of Agriculture, Hanumanamatti. Hence the faculty in the College of Agriculture, Dharwad are the frequent of users of CeRA compared to other three category of faculty members of other colleges.

Table 2: Designation Wise Distribution of Respondents

Sl.No.	Designation	n	%
1	Assistant Professor	79	55.63
2	Associate Professor	48	33.81
3	Professor	15	10.56
	Total	142	100

While categorizing the designation wise distribution of the respondents, it was found that majority of the respondents (55.63%) were Assistant Professors followed by Associate Professors (33.81%) and Professors constitute only 10.56 %. It is observed that Assistant Professors are more in numbers who have responded for the study.



Awareness of users about the e-resources of CeRA e- journals

It is noted that there are different sources through which the faculty comes to know about the availability of e-journals. These include library website, library professionals, colleagues, advertisements or through web surfing. Table 2 indicates the response of the users regarding the source through which they got information about the availability of e-journals.

Table 3: Distribution of respondents based on the awareness of users about the e-resources of CeRA

Sl.No.	Sources of Information	n	%
1	Library Website	21	14.79
2	Library Professionals	95	66.90
3	Internet surfing	5	3.52
4	Friends/ Colleague	16	11.27
5	Advertisements	5	3.52
	Total	142	100

Among the total number of respondents, 66.90% stated that they are getting information about the e-journals in their fields through library professionals. The remaining respondents are getting information from University/library websites (14.79%), friends and colleagues (11.27%) and an equal percentage of the respondents (3.52 %) are getting information from Internet surfing and advertisements.

Table 4: Frequency of Using CeRA e-journals by the Faculty members

Sl.No.	College wise respondents	Daily	2-3times a week	Once in a week	Occasionally	Less Often	Not at all	Total
1	COA , Dharwad	8	15	10	21	32	6	92
2	COA, Vijayapur	4	7	6	8	3	6	34
3	COF , Sirsi	2	3	2	4	1	-	12
4	COA,Hanumanamatti	-	-	2	-	2	-	4
	Total	14 (9.86)	25 (17.61)	20 (14.08)	33 (23.23)	38 (26.77)	12 (8.45)	142 (100)



It is found that the respondents are using CeRA less often (26.77 %) and occasionally (23.23%). And 17.61 % of the respondents are using CeRA 2-3 times a week followed by 14.08 % of the respondents who are using it once in a week. Only 9.86 % of the respondents are using the CeRA e journals daily and 8.45 % of the respondents are not at all using the platform. Hence it is concluded that the frequency of use of CeRA is very minimal among the faculty which is not a healthy trend in using the e-journals consortia.

Table 5: purpose of Using CeRA e-journals by the faculty members

Category of Respondents		Purpose of Using CeRA e-journals			
Sl.No.		Research Work	Publishing article	Up to date Knowledge in Subject area	Total
1	COA , Dharwad	21	55	16	92
2	COA , Vijayapur	8	21	5	34
3	COF , Sirsi	3	7	2	12
4	COA , Hanumanamatti	1	2	1	4
	Total	33(23.24)	85(59.86)	24(16.90)	142(100)

Purpose of using CeRA is described in Table 5. It is shown that nearly sixty percentage of the respondents (59.86%) are using CeRA consortium for searching related literature to publish articles followed by 23.24% of the respondents who are using for the purpose of research and the remaining (16.90%) were using the consortia for updating their knowledge in their subject area. Hence searching information for publishing articles appears to be the prime motive of the faculty which is trend of seeking academic information.

Table 6: Strategy of improving research activity through CeRA

Sl.No.	Options	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	Total
1	CeRA e-journals save the time by searching article faster and easier	98	23	16	5	142
2	Accessing good quality articles from CeRA e-journals	72	47	15	8	142
3	Authentic information relating to specific subject article through CeRA e-journal	33	17	50	42	142



4	Multiple users can have access at a time in CeRA.	68	45	19	10	142
5	Easy to use e-journals and we can create our own mini library	12	20	53	57	142

How do the respondents react to the strategy of improving research activity to CeRA is reflected in Table 6. It is revealed from the table that ‘CeRA e-journals save the time by searching article faster and easier’ is strongly agreed by maximum of 98 respondents followed by 23 respondents who had just agree which is a good sign of supporting for the development of a consortium. However, ‘Accessing good quality articles from CeRA e-journals’ concept is strongly agree by 72 respondents and agree by 47 respondents. And 68 respondents strongly agree to the statement ‘Multiple users can have access at a time in CeRA’ followed by 45 respondents who had agreed.

Table 7: Receipt of Articles through Document Delivery System by the faculty members

Sl.No	Respondents	100%	75%	50%	0%	Never Requested	Total
1	COA , Dharwad	17	15	11	3	46	92
2	COA , Vijayapur	12	5	3	1	13	34
3	COF , Sirsi	3	2	1	-	6	12
4	COA , Hanumanamatti	2	2	-	-	-	4
	Total	34 (23.94)	24 (16.90)	15 (10.57)	4 (2.81)	65 (45.78)	142 (100)

Receipt of photocopy of journal articles is an important aspect of good arrangement which has been made through CeRA. By that arrangement the users of CeRA can make a request to the participating library where the article is available and the photocopy of the articles are supplied to the concerned faculty by post. Here a question is asked whether they are satisfied with the delivery of articles which is reflected in Table 7. It is found that 34 (23.94%) of the faculty are fully satisfied with 100% receipt of the photocopy of articles followed by 24 (16.90%) with 75% of receipt of articles delivered to them. Here it is very disheartening to mention that a majority of faculty .i.e. 65 (45.78) have never requested the article from the CeRA.



Table 8: Faculty members attitude towards Usefulness of e-Journals through CeRA

Sl.No.	Category of Respondents	Very useful	usefull	Somewhat useful	Not useful	Total
1	COA , Dharwad	79	8	5	-	92
2	COA , Vijayapur	28	6	-	-	34
3	COF , Sirsi	10	2	-	-	12
4	COA, Hanumanamatti	3	1	-	-	4
	Total	120(84.50)	17(11.98)	5(3.52)	-	142(100)

It was decided to put a question on the attitude of the faculty towards the use of e-journals through CeRA on improving electronic environment of the library which is reflected in the Table 8. It is interesting to note that 120(84.50%) respondents prefer to say ‘very useful’ followed by 17(11.98%) as useful and 5 (3.52%) as ‘somewhat useful’ category. It is found that none has given to ‘not useful category’. It is concluded that the faculty members of the university are quite impressive on the availability of CeRA which has really improved the electronic environment of the university.

Conclusion

A scientist usually uses scientific journal literature as the most preferred source of information for their Research and Development work and for publication. Information explosion has made drastic changes in the process of information dissemination. E-journals are an invaluable source of up to date scholarly information at a reduced cost and provide many exciting opportunities and potentials for user community and academic libraries. The study conducted in UASD is the mirror of mixed trends of use of CeRA e-journals, the faculty in the agricultural university are the regular users of CeRA. The frequency of use of CeRA is very minimal among the faculty which is not a blooming trend in using the e-journals consortia. It is revealed that faculty uses the consortium to search information for publishing articles which appears to be a healthy trend of seeking academic and scientific information. It is concluded that the faculty members of the university are quite happy on the availability of CeRA which has really improved the e-environment of the university. But, marrow of the CeRA is not relish by the faculty members as their use is minimal which is not a good habit of information gathering in agricultural university.



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