

Open Access e-resources and its Usefulness in Today's Changing World: A Study

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ABSTRACT

In today's changing world three components are essential, these are content, context and technology. Nowadays, people search for reliable, authentic and exact e-resources. Many of us always search the resources through Google search engine with a thought that Google will provide us with the most relevant and authoritative resources, which is not always true. There are various categories of e-resources like subscribed e-resources and open access e-resources or consortium e-resources. The information is more now, what kind of information people are accessing are these reliable questions. So here come open-access resources which are freely available on the internet and these resources are very much authentic and reliable. In India, many institutions are providing open access e-resources, National Digital Library is one of the biggest open-access platforms in India where all types of resources are available. Sodhganga is an ETD platform where theses and dissertations are available in electronic format which are freely accessible. This paper highlights the awareness of open-access e-resources, its usefulness and the most useful open-access platform. In this paper, the researcher added a list of a few open-access platforms with the URL link, which might help to easily access these e-resources.

Keywords: E-Books, E-Journals, E-resources, ETD's, Open access

INTRODUCTION

In the current scenario, we need to understand the three components which are extremely important in today's changing world. These are content, context and technology. Content has to be user-centric; the user analysis is very much important; there are different kinds of stakeholders like students, researchers, and academicians. The essential components of context are objectives, scope and coverage. Technology gives us platforms which are device friendly, access management and user-centric. In this digital transmission era, lots of emphases are offered on user-friendly technologies which are coming up. It is very

much easy to access anything through the computer even by our smartphone also. So we can use technology anytime, anywhere as per our need.

Nowadays, people search for reliable, authentic and exact e-resources. The exactness means we do not know whether these are the right source or not, making use of it for our teaching purpose or learning or research. Many of us always search the e-resources through Google search engine. We think that Google is the only way to explore the authentic resources which are not correct every time, Google delivers us all the information accordingly as per our input and the information came from many sources, few of these are

authentic but many of these sources are not trustworthy. When we search something in Google, without any further delay, Google can answer any preposition or any article, which are all not having any precision ratio and recall ratio when we talk about information exploited communities. So to increase our precision ratio and recall ratio that means exactness and relevancy of an information source that information search has to be done properly by using an adequate database through an appropriate medium of search.

There are so many e-resources available which can be categorized in different ways like subscribed e-resources and open access e-resources or consortium e-resources. People are using e-resources anonymously because it's a trend now, the new generation is totally bound with their handheld devices, and they want to know the required information immediately and without checking any relevance and authenticity of the information they just go through it. The information is more now, what kind of information people are accessing are these reliable is a question mark in this current scenario. In that case, open-access resources are very useful, these resources are freely available on the internet and also very much authentic and reliable. Many organizations are providing their e-resources freely accessible. In India National Digital Library (NDL) is one of the biggest open-access platforms where all kinds of e-resources are available free of cost, a user needs to register him/herself, which is free of cost and then they can download e-resources from the NDL platform. Without registration also a user can search the resources available in the NDL platform, likewise, Sodhganga is another open-access platform where all kinds of thesis and dissertations are available in electronic format, anyone can search and download these thesis and dissertation free of cost. In the same way, there are many open-access platforms available, and the resources are fully authentic and trustworthy.

Statement of the Problem

The topic selected for the study is entitled "Open access e-resources and its usefulness in today's

changing world: A study". So far no research has been undertaken related to the topic. The usefulness of open access e-resources by the academic community is unknown. Thus, it is felt necessary by the researchers to conduct a study and analyze the usefulness of the open-access e-resources.

Objectives

- To know the different types of open access e-resources;
- To know the usability of open access e-resources;
- To identify the most used open-access platform.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Keeping in view the objectives of the study, an effort is made to evolve a suitable methodology for the research. Survey method has been used to collect the data. A well-designed questionnaire in Google form has been prepared and sent to the respondents via various social media platforms as well as email. Some sort of telephonic interview has been taken to collect the data.

For the present study sample, a random sampling technique has been used to collect data. After receiving all the responses, data has been tabulated and analysed in MS excel and accordingly, graphs have been prepared.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Muthuvennila and Thanuskodi (2019) conducted a survey on user perception on open access resources among college students in India, and the study provides a panoramic view of the impact of open access resources among LIS PG students in Alagappa University. The students are also willing to use open access resources. The views on utilization show a healthy trend in adopting open access resources. The purpose of using open-access resources is to gain the current information, update knowledge.

Bala *et al.* (2018) in their study “Awareness of Open Access Resources among the Researchers of Punjab Agricultural University, Ludhiana” has explored that research articles, theses and e-books are extensively used open-access resources for course and research work. They mentioned that there is a need for proper training and online tutorials which can be helpful in overcoming the problems faced by researchers in using OARs.

Habiba and Chowdhury (2012) conducted a study on “Use of electronic resources and its impact: a study of Dhaka University Library users” where they analysed the status of e-resources facilities and services provided by the Dhaka University Library (DUL). Their study discussed the purpose of using e-resources, its overall benefits, subject coverage status, user satisfaction and the problems that are faced by DUL users while accessing e-resources and perceived impact of e-resources on users.

Velmurugan (2011) in his research “Open access resources and its significance – An Introduction” has mentioned that Open Access Resources (OAR) is an essential part of the user community. OAR helps the users to get their required resource freely; the best part is that these resources are authentic. The study covered an introduction to open access resources, types of open access resources, availability of open access journals. This paper mainly discussed the role and usefulness of the concepts of open access and open access resources.

Sasireka *et al.* (2011) in the study use of E-resources in the digital condition amongst engineering institutions in Tamil Nadu (India) has stated that the quality of engineering institutions is measured in terms of digital collections, e-resources, networking component, ICT tools etc. Most of the engineering institutions in Tamil Nadu are investing huge amounts for digital resources. The study found the Online journals (88.3%) and e-journals (77.1%) are the most preferred digital

resources. Most of the institutions are preferring consortiums for subscribing e-resources.

E-RESOURCES

E-resources are those resources which are available in electronic format either offline or online. Online e-resources can be accessible (24x7) with the help of a computer or any other smart device like a smartphone, tablet, iPad from anywhere at any time, without a trip to the library. There should be an internet connection to access the online e-resources remotely.

Open Access e-resources

Open access is free, immediate permanent online access to the full text of research articles from anywhere anytime. Open access is not similar to the public domain, and most open access originators do retain their copyrights along with them. Open access is part of a continuum ranging from totally closed, subscription/purchase only access to fully open, no barrier publishing. Open access is not related to the quality of materials or the peer-review/non-peer-review status of the publications.

Open access differs from the open-source or open licensed, in that the primary use of open access materials will be viewing or reading. In contrast, open-source materials are available for the modification of the underlying software or text.

The American Research Libraries (ARL) association task force defines open access as “a cost-effective way to disseminate and use information. It is an alternative to the traditional subscription-based publishing model made possible by new digital technologies and networked communication”.

Why Open Access?

- Open access enhances visibility and impact of one's own work as open access articles are

downloaded and cited more frequently than articles from non-open access journals

- Free access to scientific knowledge, information and data strengthen the basis for knowledge transfer.
- Developing countries and small or specialized research institutions and corporations have access to all open access articles.

Open Access Resources

- E-Books
- E-Journals
- ETD (Electronic Thesis and Dissertation)
- Databases
- Online Learning Tools
- Patent Databases
- Digital Library
- Subject Gateways
- Union Catalogue
- Coursewares
- Video Lectures
- Search Engines
- Open Source Plagiarism Checking Software

Colours of Open Access

There are four different colours of open access like

- Blue-These can archive post-print, but not pre-print.
- Green-These papers can archive both pre-print and post-print.
- Yellow-Archive is allowed pre-print, but not post-print.
- White-Absolutely no archiving allowed, pre or post-print.

Advantages of Open Access e-resources

- Greater visibility and accessibility.
- Authoritative information.
- Free of cost resources.
- Rapid and more efficient progress of scholarly research.
- Better assessment, better monitoring and better management of science.

Disadvantages of Open Access e-resources

- Inadequate infrastructure facilities sometimes creates a problem to access the resources.
- Poor internet connectivity is also an obstacle to access resources.
- Lack of knowledge about open access platforms.
- Not all types of information available in open access e-resources.
- Lack of financial resources to produce quality research.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

A total of 1572 responses has been collected from three major groups. The researcher has analyzed all the data and depicted it through graph for easy understanding.

The above Figure 1 shows that 59.86% of the respondents are from the student category followed by 22.39% are research scholars and 17.75% respondents are academicians.

97.13% academicians are well aware of open access e-resources while 90.06% of research scholars are aware of open access e-resources followed by 77.15% of students. 22.85% of students replied that they are not aware of open access e-resources, but a very few respondents in Figure 2 from research scholars and academicians replied that they are not mindful about open access e-resources.

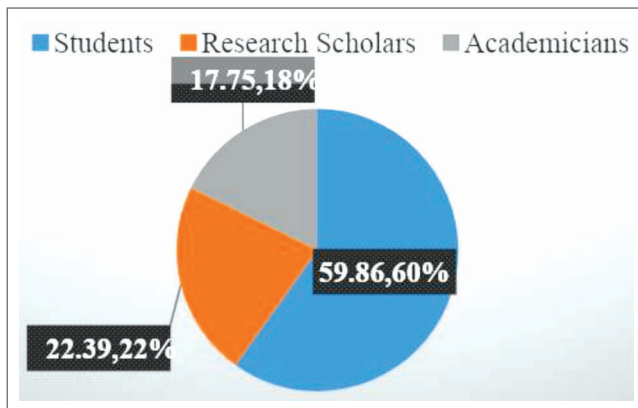


Figure 1: Category wise respondents (N=1572)

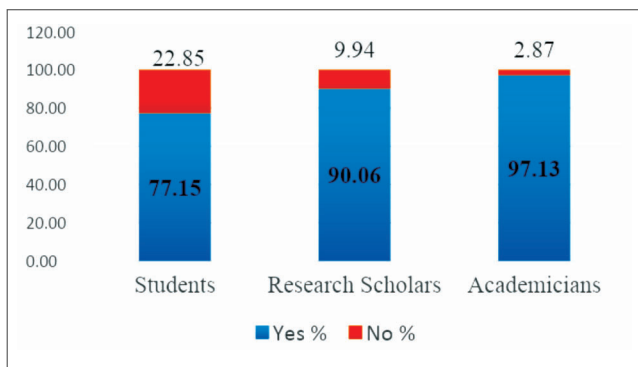
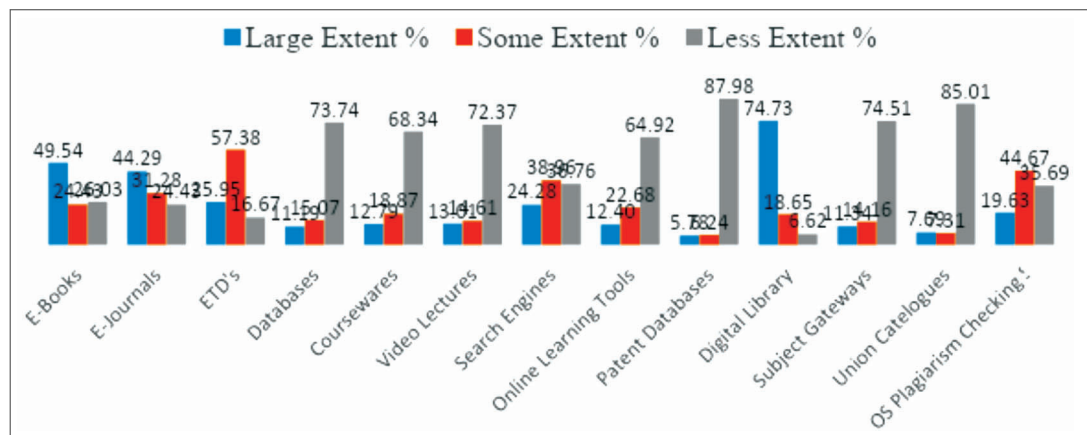


Figure 2: Awareness of open access e-resources (N: Students = 941; Research Scholars = 352; Academicians = 279)

It is clear from the responses shown in the above Figure 3 that the awareness level on large extent for digital libraries is 74.73%, 49.54% for e-books, 44.29% for e-journals, 25.95% for ETD's, 24.28% for search engines and 19.63% replied for open-source plagiarism checking software. 57.38% answered that they are

Figure 3: Awareness of various types of open access e-resources (N=1314)



aware of ETD's to some extent, 44.67% replied for open-source plagiarism checking software, 31.28% for e-journals and 24.43% for e-books. While 87.98% respondents answered that they are less aware of patent databases followed by 85.01% replied for union catalogue, 73.74% for databases, 72.37 replied for video lecture, 68.34% for coursewares and 64.92% for online teaching tools.

77.55% of the students replied that they use the open access e-resources for preparing notes, 58.95% answered in Figure 4 that they use open access e-resources for project purpose, and 47.52% responded for current awareness. While 80.76% of research scholars replied that they use open access e-resources for writing articles, 75.39% replied for research work, 55.52% for updating knowledge and 53.51% for preparing notes. 87.08% academicians replied that they use open access e-resources for teaching purposes followed by 64.21% for project purpose, 62.36% for research work, 53.51% replied for preparing notes and 49.82% replied for current awareness.

Multiple responses have been taken for the above Figure 5, and it has been found that 77.40% respondents use e-books as an open access e-resource, 72.98% use e-journals, 68.34% use to search digital libraries and 35.39% search for ETD's. A very less no of respondents replied that they use union catalogue and patent databases.

Figure 4: Purpose of using open access e-resources (N: Students = 726; Research Scholar = 317; Academician = 271)

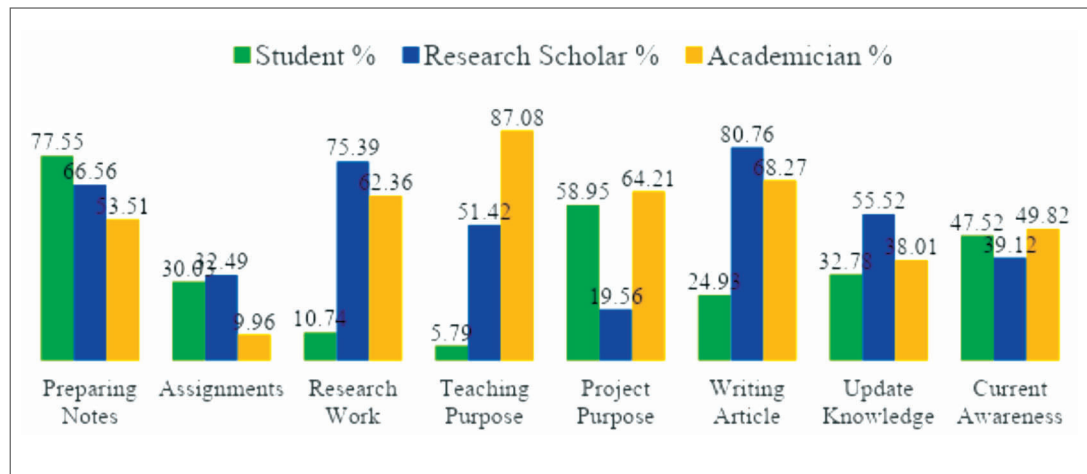


Figure 5: Mostly used open access e-resources (N=1314) (Multiple choice)

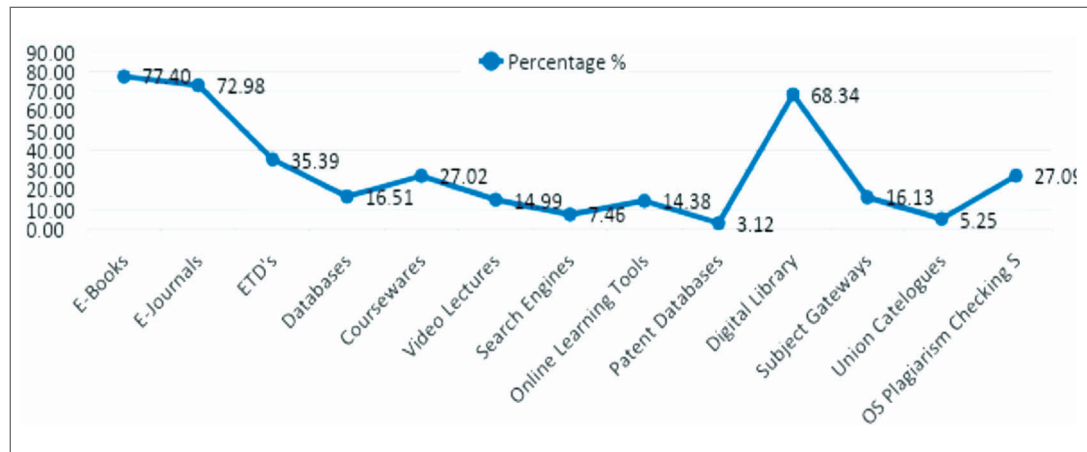
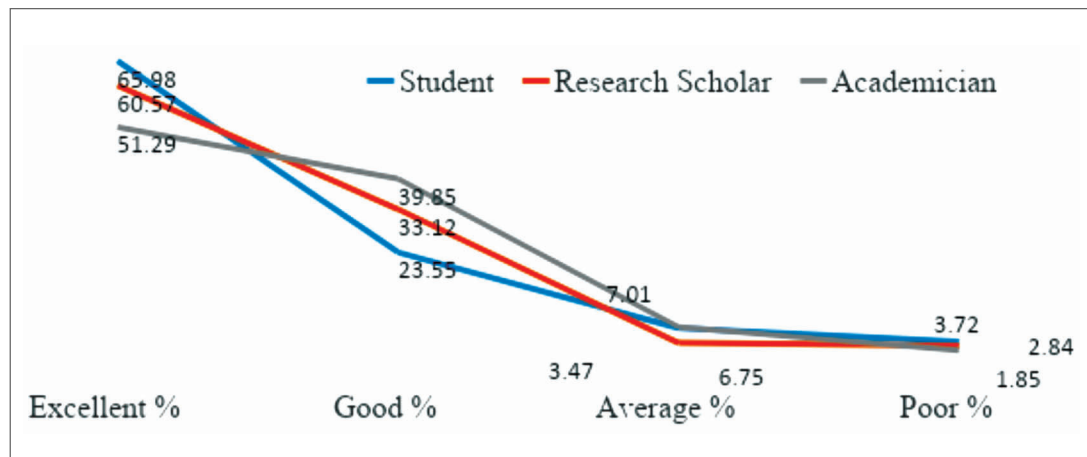


Figure 6: Opinion on use of open access e-resources (N: Students = 726; Research Scholar = 317; Academician = 271)



The opinion of using open access e-resources by the students, research scholars and academicians are shown in the above Figure 6. 65.98% of students replied that they find open access e-resources excellent, 60.57% of research scholars and 51.29% of academics also replied that it fulfils their purpose. A very few respondents replied that open access e-resources are poor.

MAJOR FINDINGS

- √ Awareness levels of open access e-resources are very high among the students, research scholars and academicians.
- √ Most of the respondents are well aware of open access e-books, e-journals, ETD's and digital library.
- √ Patent database and union catalogue are lesser-known open access e-resources.
- √ Students are mostly using open access e-resources for preparing notes and preparing projects while research scholars mostly use this for writing articles, research work and for preparing notes. Academicians mostly use it for teaching purposes, writing articles and project purposes.
- √ E-books are the most used open access e-resources, followed by e-journals, digital libraries and ETD's.
- √ Open access e-resources are excellent for use as these are freely available on the internet, and information are trustworthy.

SUGGESTIONS

- More awareness of open access e-resources among the students is necessary.
- Resources are freely available, but we should use the resources very carefully.
- The resources should not be miss-used.
- Govt. should take more initiative to promote open access e-resources and try to provide the facility to access it from the remote area.

CONCLUSION

The study provides a panoramic view of the usefulness of open access e-resources. The use of open access e-resources is boosting up due to the easy accessibility of resources which are readily available on the internet. Knowledge of the authentic source of these e-resources is essential. In this paper, the researcher has compiled a list of open access e-resources and checked the relevancy of the sources. In today's changing world information is everything, and also information are freely available everywhere. Still, all those information are not trustworthy as all these are not authentic so for authentic information one has to find a relevant source of information, for that open access platform is the best source where most of the information are trustworthy, and most importantly these are free of cost.

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