USE OF E-JOURNALS AMONG FACULTY MEMBERS AND RESEARCH SCHOLARS OF THE UNIVERSITY OF KERALA

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Abstract

The current investigation is the utilization of e-journals by the academics at the University of Kerala. The study is dependent on data gathered through a very much organized survey. The research shows that a hundred percent of the researchers and faculty members at the University are utilizing e-journals.The top ten most preferred online databases of respondents in Science, Social Science, and Arts subjects are listed separately in the study, necessitates the need of Universities to come across through user needs while subscribing online databases of e-journals.

Keywords : ***E-journals; Electronic journals; Online journals; Electronic resources Faculty members; Research scholars; University of Kerala***

1. Introduction

The application of Information Communication Technologies (ICTs) in libraries and its services has expanded the assortment of online electronic resources such as e-journals, e-books, online databases, e- thesis, etc. Academics in Universities, particularly research researchers and faculty members, search most recent genuine information, and e-journals are the significant source of prompts. E-journals are essential for academic development and publishing in this modern internet era. Electronic journals have progressively become the focal point of research work, and the results are revealed in the form of articles. The use of e-Journals has become essential within the modern educational world because it provides the most authentic latest information and developments in any subject. Numerous factors may influence the utilization of e-journals. The current study is expected to be useful for improving e-journals in the University of Kerala and other comparative, multidisciplinary Universities in India.

2. Literature Review

A study by Naushad Ali & Faizul Nisha, 2011, on the use of e-journals among research scholars at Central Science Library, University of Delhi, observed that 60 percent of researchers are using e-journals weekly for research. Seventy-one percent of them are aware of e-journals, and keyword search is the most popular search technique used by them for searching e-journals and articles. They conceal that the number of e-journals available through the consortia is very constrained in their respective fields, and slow downloading of PDF files is the major problem that would discourage them from using e-journals.

Mini Devi, B, and Vijitha V K: 2013studied the e-journals use by the faculty members of the University of Kerala. The study critically examined the use of e-journals among faculty members of the University of Kerala. Among



them, about 90% of facultymembers were using e-journals. The majority of the faculty members use e-journals for their researchneeds. They preferred e-journals in UGC-INFONET consortia, followed by directly subscribed online databases such as J-gate and JSTOR. For increasing the use of e-journals, some specific practical methodsare suggested in the study.

3. Scope and Limitations of the study

The study range comprehendsthe use of e-journals by the faculty members and research scholars at the University of Kerala. The study undertakes a random selection of research scholars and faculty members of different departments in Science, Social Science, and Arts subjects at the University of Kerala. The sample was also limited to 106 faculty members and research scholars.

4. Objectives of the Study

1) To examine the use of the internet by faculty members and research scholars in the University of Kerala.
2) To determine preferences in the type of periodicals and online periodicals used by the faculty members and research scholars.
3) To compare the use of the print and e-journals by faculty and research scholars.
4) To find out the use of e-journals by the faculty members and research scholars in the University of Kerala.
5) To examine the factors affecting the choice of e-journal over print journals.
6) To trace out the purpose of using e-journals by the faculty members and research scholars.
7) To explore the preference in online databases of e-journals by academics in science, social science, and arts subjects.
8) To determine the role of e-journals in teaching and research.



9) To study the level of satisfaction of users regarding the e-journals available at the University of Kerala.

10) To trace out the problems faced by research scholars and faculty members regarding the use of e-journals.

5. Data and Methodology

The survey using a questionnaire method was resorted to collect data for the study. The data is collected from faculty members and research scholars in different departments of the University of Kerala. A random sample of 106 questionnaires was collected.The data collected are entered in Microsoft Excel and were analyzed using SPSS software

6. Analysis and Interpretation

6.1 Characteristics of Respondents

The Table-1 put on show the distribution of the sample by their characteristics. Based on their characteristics, the whole samples are divided into four parts, including gender, subjects, position, and age group of the respondents. The first part of Table-1 shows the gender status included in the study, and it reveals that those 76 (71.7%) respondents were female, while 30 (28.3%) respondents were male. Regarding subject wise details (Table 1), it's found that 54 (50.9%) respondents were from faculty in science, 30 (28.3%) respondents were from the faculty of social sciences, 22 (20.8%) were from the faculty of arts. Table -1 shows that most respondents, 84 (79%), are research scholars, and only 22 (21%) are faculty members. The last part of the Table-1 shows that only 6 (5.7%) of the respondents are in the age group of 51-60, 6 (5.7%) of the respondents are in the age group of 41-50. The 40 (37.7%) of the respondents are in the age group of 31-40, and more than half of the respondents, 54 (50.9%), are in the age group 21-30.



Table 1

Characteristics of Respondents

Characteristics		Frequency	Percentage
Gender	Male	30	28.3
	Female	76	71.7
Subjects	Science	54	50.9
	Social Science	30	28.3
	Humanities	22	20.8
Status of Respondents	Research Scholars	84	79
	Faculty Members	22	21
Age Group	21-30	54	50.9
	31-40	40	37.7
	41-50	6	5.7
	51-60	6	5.7
Total		106	100

6.2 Frequency Internet Use

The use of the internet has quite common nowadays; this study also reveals that 92% (Table-2) ofresearch scholars and faculty members use the internet daily. 9.4 % of respondents use the internet once a week, and 3.8 % use the internet twice a week.

Table-2

Frequency Internet Use

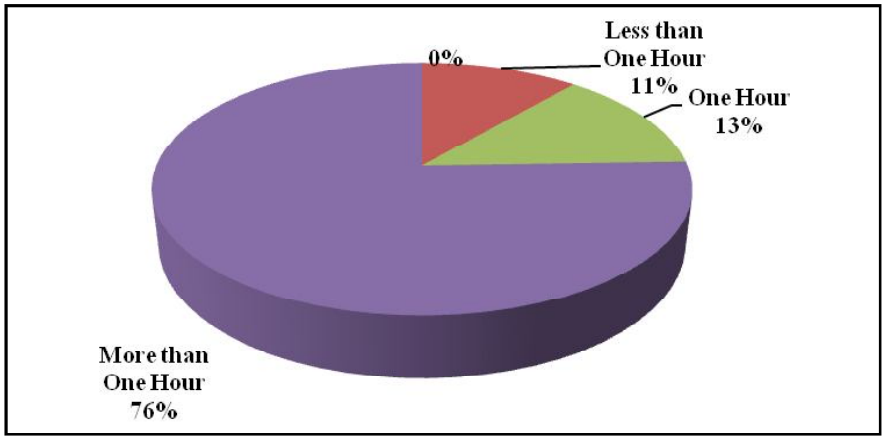
Frequency of internet use	Frequency	Percent
Every Day	92	86.8
Once in a Week	10	9.4
Twice in a Week	4	3.8
Total	**106**	**100.0**

6.3 Time Spent on the Internet

It is clear from the analysis that most of the respondents, 76% (Figure-1), use the internet for more than one hour daily. 13% of the respondents have indicated that they use the internet for less than one hour daily. Only 11% percent of respondents use the internet for less than one hour daily. It reveals the importance of the internet in day to day life.

Figure -1

Time Spent on the Internet



6.3.1 Use of e-journals

The respondents revealed their use of e-journals by giving either of the bipolar answers ('Yes' or 'No'). The analysis exhibits that a cent percent of the research scholars and faculty are using e-journals. These findings are contrary to the earlier studyby Mini Devi, B, and Vijitha V K: 2013 about the use of e-journals by the University of Kerala faculty members. Their research indicates that 88 percent of the respondents are using e-journals, while 12 percent do not use e-journals. The present study discloses that a hundred percent of academicians are using e-journals; point out its importance in the academic community.

6.4 Method of reading of e-journals

The respondent's way of reading e-journals is revealed in Table-3. Most of the respondents (77.4%) 'frequently' save the article in the computer/ pen drive/C.D. and read it later and 11.3 % of respondents do it 'occasionally.' The equal percent of respondents 5.7% 'rarely' and 'never' save the article in the computer/pen drive/C.D. and read it later. The next 'frequently'used method of reading the e-journal article is taking a print of the e-journal article and read it then (41.5%), and 34% of the respondents' occasionally' do it. 17% of respondents 'rarely' and 7.5% 'never' take the e-journal article and read it later. Only 39.6% of respondents frequently' read the article from the desktop, and 34% 'occasionally' do it. 19.4% of the respondents' rarely' and another 17% of respondents never read the article from the desktop.



Table-3

Method of reading of e-journals

Preference regarding the use of E-journals	Frequently	Occasionally	Rarely	Never
Save the article in the computer/ Pendrive/C.D. and read it later	77.4	11.3	5.7	5.7
To take a print of e-journal article and read it later	41.5	34.0	17.0	7.5
Read the article from the desktop	39.6	34.0	19.4	17.0

6.5 Preference in online databases of e-journals

The respondents reported ranking the most preferred online databases of e-journals they used. The 24 online databases were listed in the questionnaire, and the respondents were asked to rank their preferred online database of e-journals. Based on the analysis top ten most preferred online Databases of respondents in Science, Social Science, and Arts subjects are listed separately in Table-4 and Table-5.

6.5.1 Preference in online databases of e-journals in Science subjects

Among the 106 total respondents in the study, more than half of the respondents (54) were from the science faculty. The top ten used online databases of e-journals by the respondents in science subjects are shown in Table-4. Out of these top ten online databases of e-journals used by the respondents in science subjects, Science Direct database ranks first with the lowest mean of 2.78, American Chemical Society online database ranks 2nd with a mean of 3.25, and Springer online database ranks 3rd with a mean 3.89.



Table-4

Top ten preferred in online databases of e-journals in Science subjects

Online database of e-journals	Mean	Rank
Science Direct	2.78	1
American Chemical Society	3.25	2
Springer Online	3.89	3
American Institute of Physics	4.33	4
Oxford University Press	4.41	5
J-Gate	4.44	6
Royal Society of Chemistry	4.59	7
J-STOR	4.78	8
Cambridge University Press	5.41	9
Web of Science	5.44	10

6.5.2 Preference in online databases of e-journals in social sciences and Arts Subjects

The study's total respondents are 106, and out of these respondents, 52 respondents were from Social Sciences and Arts subjects. The respondents from Social Sciences and Arts subjects generally use similar online databases, so they are listed in the common category. The top ten online databases of e-journals used by the respondents in Social Science and Arts subjects are shown in Table-5. Out of these top ten online databases of e-journals used by the respondents in Social Science and Arts subjects, Oxford University Press online database ranks first with the lowest mean 2.11. J-STOR online database ranks 2nd with a mean of 2.15, and Cambridge University Press Online database ranks 3rd with a mean of 2.73.



Table -5

Top ten preferred online databases of e-journals in Social Sciences and Arts Subjects

Online database of e-journals	Mean	Rank
Oxford University Press	2.11	1
J-STOR	2.15	2
Cambridge University Press	2.73	3
Economic and Political Review	3.38	4
Taylor and Francis Online Journals	4.31	5
Project Muse	4.73	6
Springer Online	5.23	7
Indian Journals.com	5.38	8
J-Gate	6.19	9
Annual Reviews	7.69	10

6.6 E-Journals and University of Kerala

The use of e-journals is essential for the University's research scholars and faculty members for their research, teaching, and other academic activities.

6.6.1 User Satisfaction of e-journals at Kerala University

Table -6 shows the respondents' level of satisfaction with e-journals available in the Kerala University Library System. The study indicates that nearly forty percent (39.6%) of the respondents are 'satisfied,' and only 1.9% of respondents are only 'very much satisfied' with the e-journals available in the Kerala university library system. More than forty percent (41.5%) are 'somewhat satisfied.' Just above thirteen percentage (13.2) are 'dissatisfied.'



Very few of the respondents (3.8%) are 'very much dissatisfied' with e-journals available in Kerala University Library System. These findings are contrary to the earlier study byKhaiser Nikam and Pramodini B; 2007 about the use of e-journals and database by the University of Mysore's kaiser academic community reveals nearly 50% of respondents' and 18%Mysore's academic community respondents are 'somewhat satisfied.' About 24% of respondents are 'not satisfied.' Only a few respondents are 2% of respondents 'highly satisfied,' and 5% are 'moderately satisfied.'

Table -6

User Satisfactions of e-journals in Kerala University

User Satisfactions of e-journals in Kerala University	Percent
Very much satisfied	1.9
Satisfied	39.6
Somewhat satisfied	41.5
Dissatisfied	13.2
Very much dissatisfied	3.8
Total	**100**

6.6.2 Adequacy of e-journals in Kerala University Library System

Table-7 conceals that 50.9% of the respondents 'agree' and 7.5% 'strongly agree' that the Kerala University Library system provides adequate access to e-journals. The 28.3% of respondents 'disagree' and 11.3% 'strongly disagree'agree that Kerala university library offers sufficient access to e-journals.



Table-7

Adequacy of e-journals in Kerala University Library System

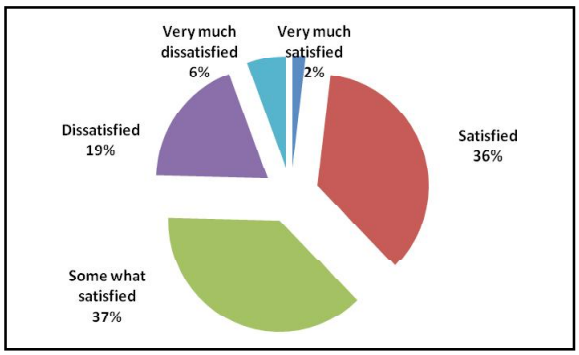
Adequate No. of e-journals in Kerala University Library System	Percent
Agree	50.9
Strongly agree	7.5
Disagree	28.3
Strongly disagree	11.3
Don't know	1.9
Total	**100**

6.6.3 Adequacy of E-journals in Subject area

The University of Kerala has sixteen faculties and forty-two Departments of teaching and research in a wide range of subjects. Hence, meeting the e-journal requirements of all departments is a difficult task. Figure- 2 shows the level of satisfaction among the respondents with e-journals available in their subject area. The analysis conceals that 36% of respondents are 'satisfied,' and 2% of respondents are 'very much satisfied' with the present e-journals collection in their subject area. It's followed by 37% of respondents who are 'somewhat satisfied.' 19% of respondents are 'dissatisfied,' and 6% are 'very much dissatisfied.'

Figure-2

Adequacy of e-journals in the Subject area

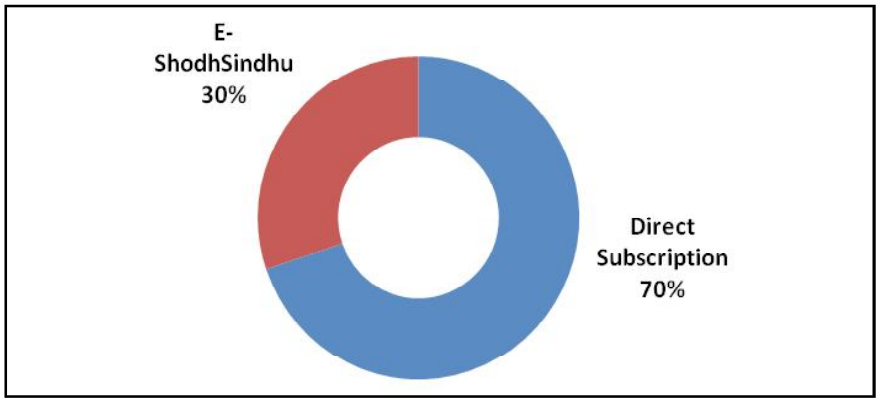


6.6.3 E-journal subscription preferred in University of Kerala

The analysis given in Figure-3 discloses that most faculty members and research scholars (70%) in the University of Kerala prefer direct subscriptions of e-journals. Only 30% of them prefer subscriptions of e-journals through E-shodsindhulibrary consortium for universities by INFIBNET, UGC.

Figure-3

E-journal subscription preferred in University of Kerala



6.7 Need For Training Program

Table-8 reveals that an equal percent of 39.6% of respondents strongly agree' and 'agree' that they need adequate training to use e-journals. 13.2% of the respondents 'disagree' with the requirement for the training program, and only 1.9% 'strongly disagrees.' 5.7% of the respondents 'don't know' the necessity of the training program. An introductory orientation/training program by the library staff will defiantly help to gain familiarity with e-journals subscribed by the library. This study substantiated with the survey of Rajanikanta S T and Ramasesh C P; 2012 about the use of e-journals by the academics in medical institutions in Bangalore stated the need for orientation/training program to access online journals. Among the entire population, 352 members of faculty representing 38.1% need training to a

great extent, and 33.6% opines that they need intensive training programs that are to be organized from time to time.Therefore, it is recommended that training programs be held from time to time, enabling the faculty and research scholars to access e-journals comfortably.

Table-8

Need for Training Program

Need for Training Program	Percent
Strongly agree	39.6
Agree	39.6
Disagree	13.2
Strongly disagree	1.9
Don't know	5.7

6.8 Librarian's role in the use of e-journals

The librarians can offer adequate bibliographic instructions and assistance to use e-journals effectively. It is clearly shown from Table-9 that the majority of the respondents, 64.2% 'strongly agree' and 28.30% 'agree' that the librarian can provide necessary bibliographic instruction and assistance for effective use of e-journals.

Table – 9

Librarian's role in the use of e-journals

Librarian's role for effective of use e-journals	Percent
Strongly agree	28.30
Agree	64.2
Disagree	1.89
Strongly disagree	1.89
Don't know	3.77
Total	**100**

6.9 Problems in using E-Journals

Table 10 reveals the different problems associated with the use of e-journals. Respondents marked theissues related to the use of e-journals. It is clear

from Table-21 that half of the respondents conceal the 'most' facedproblem regarding the use is the non-availability of a sufficient number of computers with internet connection in the department/library. The 2nd 'most' problem faced by the respondents (48%) is the e-journal access provided in the University of Kerala is available through INFLIBNET, UGC library consortium E-SodhSindhu with provides only limited access to several online databases of e-journals. Lack of training programs is the next 'most' priority problem faced by the respondents (19.8%). Slow to view and download (18.87%), lack of technical support (15.09%), and e-Journals are too complicated to use (3.77%) are other 'most' priority problems faced by the respondents.

Table – 10

Problems in using E-Journals

Problems in using E-Journals	Most	Often	Some times	Some what	Least
Slow to view and download.	20 (18.87)	34 (32.07)	40 (37.74)	8 (7.55)	4 (3.77)
E-Journals are too complicated to use	4 (3.77)	12 (11.33)	22 (20.75)	20 (18.87)	40 (45.28)
It is difficult to locate articles / information	14 (13.21)	22 (20.75)	34 (32.07)	20 (18.87)	16 (15.09)
Lack of technical support	16 (15.09)	14 (13.21)	18 (16.98)	24 (22.64)	34 (32.08)
Lack of training programs.	21 (19.81)	26 (24.52)	20 (18.87)	19 (17.92)	20 (18.86)
Online databases provided in the E-SodhSindhu consortium offers only limited access	48 (45.28)	35 (33.02)	20 (18.87)	3 (2.87)	-
Non-availability of sufficient number computer with internet connection in the department/library	53 (50)	10 (9.43)	11 (10.38)	14 (13.21)	18 (16.98)
Others problems	2 (1.89)	2 (1.89)	3 (2.87)	-	99 (93.40)



7. Findings and Suggestions

The majority of the respondents, 92%, use the internet daily, and 76% use the internet for more than one hour daily. Internet usage in India is increasing at a higher rate, andIndia ranks 2nd position in terms of internetusers according to the internet world stats survey in 2019 (Internet Word Stats June 30, 2020). The increase in the use of the internet and online e-resources had influenced the Indian academic community. It is clearly revealed in the present study that a hundred percent of the research scholars and faculty in University are using e-journals is a good sign regarding the use of e-journals.

The top ten most preferred online databases of respondents in Science, Social Science, and Arts subjects are listed separately. The study will help the university library authority come across through user needs while subscribing to online databases of e-journals. Nearly forty percent of respondents are 'satisfied,' and more than forty percent are only 'somewhat satisfied' reveals the importance of some improvement in collecting e-journals and online databases of e-journals in Kerala University Library System.

Kerala University is a multidisciplinary university with a broad range of subjects, so meeting all subjects' e-journal requirements is a difficult task.The study reveals that 37% of respondents are 'somewhat satisfied' and 19% of respondents are 'dissatisfied' regarding e-journals available in their subject area. The University can collect the requirements of e-journals from the departments before the subscription of e-journals. The university library does not have a subject-wise catalog of e-journals. To overcome this problem, the university library website or library blog can provide a list of e-journals subscribed in subject wise and act as a directory to the academics.

The majority of the faculty members and research scholars (70%) in the University of Kerala prefer direct subscriptions of e-journals. Only 30%



prefer subscriptions of e-journals through the E-shodhsindhu consortium. The online databases available in E-shodhsindhu provide only limited access to e-journals. So the University may consider more direct subscriptions of online databases of e-journals.

The survey conceals an equal percentage of 39.6% of respondents 'strongly agree' and 'agree' the need for adequate training to use e-journals. The majority of the respondents, 64.2%, 'strongly agree,' and 28.30% 'agree' that the librarian can assist in the effective use of e-journals. The library orientation programs will give awareness about the e-journals available in the respondents' desired subject e-journals.

The half percent of respondents conceal the 'most' faced problems regarding the use of e-journals are the non-availability of sufficient number computers with internet connection in the department/library. The 48% of respondents feel that e-journal access provided in the University of Kerala is available through INFLIBNET, UGC library consortium E-SodhSindhu with provides only limited access.

Conclusion

In the modern education system, e-resources, especially e-journals and online databases, have expanded faster. So the universities in India are compelled to adjust to new advancements in the education system and increment the subscription to e-journals. So in this epoch of instant global communication and access to worldwide information, the universities in Kerala have to provide more and more access to e-resources, especially e-journals, and academics have to utilize the electronic resources for their academic and professional development.



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