

# AWARENESS AND USE OF OPEN ACCESS ELECTRONIC INFORMATION RESOURCES BY UNIVERSITY STUDENTS: A STUDY

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## Abstract

The main purpose of this study is to investigate the awareness and utilization of open access electronic information resources and related issues among post graduate students of Mangalore University. A questionnaire-based survey method has been used in this research. A total of 180 questionnaires distributed but 152 were returned duly filled in as a sample. The findings shows that 72(47.36%) of respondents frequently used e-books/ e-journals, 58(38.15%) of respondents acquired their open access e-resource usage skill through teachers/research supervisors, 98(64.47%) of the respondents stated that they are satisfied with open access e-resources. The result of the study shows that majority of students are aware of open access e-resources.

**Key words:** Electronic Resources, Open Access, Awareness, PG students.

## Introduction

Advances in Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) have effected in the extensive obtainable, accessible and efficient distribution of information resources (Baro, 2011). In the fast- cultivating and ever- increasing information explosion it is extremely complicated to retrieve precise information without squandering time (Thanuskodi, 2014).The Internet has turn into an information superhighway including all kinds of information resources such as books, theses, dissertations, journals, magazines, records and manuscripts (Zazzau, 2007). With the advent of information technology and e-publishing access to information on a local, regional, national and international basis, by defeating the conventional obstacles of time and space has occur to easy(Walmiki and Ramakrishnegowda,2009). The electronic resources are systems in which information is stored electronically and made accessible through electronic systems and computer networks (Das, 2013).The fundamental term of open access is the electronically accessibility to scholarly literature for users at free of cost and without any technical obstacles (Rassiya and Chinnasamy, 2014). Growths in information and communication technologies (ICTs) have been cited as between the key features that have catalyzed the appearance of open access(Emojorho and others, 2012). The purpose of this study is to

identify how open access electronic information resources are utilized by PG students in Mangalore University.

### **Meaning and Definition**

Electronic resources are the electronic version of information, stored electronically and made accessible through electronic systems and computer networks, which can access from anyplace, anytime without time and geographical limit. These are available in different forms like e-books, online databases, CD-ROMs, digital libraries, online journal magazine, e-learning tutors, Internet resources, scholarly web resources etc. (Sudhier, and Seethalekshmi, 2011)

IFLA (2012) defines electronic resources as “to those materials that require computer access whether through a personal computer, main frame, or handheld mobile device. They may either be accessed remotely via the internet or locally”. Some of the most frequently encountered types are :E-journals, E-books, Full-text (aggregated) databases, Indexing and abstracting databases, reference databases (bibliographies, dictionaries, directories, encyclopaedias, etc), Numeric and statistical databases-images, E-audio/visual resources .

Reitz defined electronic resource as “material consisting of data and/or computer program (s) encoded for reading and manipulation by a computer, by the use of a peripheral device directly connected to the computer, such as a CD-ROM drive, or remotely via a network, such as the Internet.” According to her the category includes bibliographic databases, software applications, institutional repositories, electronic texts, websites, collections of e-journals, e-books, etc. (Reitz, 2004).

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

Jogan, (2015) in their paper entitled “Access, Awareness and Use of Electronic Resources by Post Graduate Students in Gulbarga University”. This study inspects postgraduate students’ views on the access, awareness and usage in facilitating their research and their satisfaction with the sources and services currently provided. The findings of this study shows that the majority (90.1%) of respondents acknowledged the important role of library in facilitating research, and 72.5% of the respondents were satisfied with the current role being played by the libraries.

Sharad Kumar (2014) conducted a study on Use of Electronic Resources by Post Graduate Students and Research Scholars of the Banaras Hindu University: A Study. The study found that the majority of users (37.47%) are frequently using e-resources for teaching and research purpose. The study reveals that 93.84 % of users are aware about the e-resources and most of them aware through Internet. The study also highlighted that (57.14%) of the users spend time less than one hour to access e-resources.

A study conducted by Oghenetega (2013) on the Usage and Awareness of E-Resources by Lecturers in Two Selected Nigerian Universities. The population of the study consists of lecturers from the Federal University, Otuoke and the Western Delta University, Oghara. In this study majority 70 (47%) of respondents indicated that major purpose of

using e-resources is for research work. Majority 91 (61%) of the respondents very satisfied with the level of e-resources used in the University.

Kumar and Singh (2011) conducted a study on Access and use of electronic information resources by scientists of National Physical Laboratory in India: A case study. The purpose of this to determine the usefulness of e-resources to the scientists of National Physical Laboratory, New Delhi, India and their skills in using various search methods and techniques to access and utilize these resources. The survey was conducted with the help of a questionnaire and personal interview.

### **About Mangalore University**

*Mangalore University* was set upon September 10, 1980. University Campus, Mangalagangothri, is located on a picturesque hillock, spread over 350 acres of land, 20 kms away from Mangalore city, enjoying the bounties of nature providing an ideal atmosphere for higher education. It has more than 25 postgraduate departments in the campus offering higher education in various disciplines. Provide Excellent Academic, Physical, Administrative, infrastructural and Moral ambience. Promote quality and excellence in teaching learning and research.

### **Methodology**

This study of the research used questionnaire-based survey method in order to achieve the above objectives. For this purpose a well structured questionnaire was designed to collect the data from the PG students of Mangalore University. 180 questionnaires were distributed in Postgraduate students out of which 152 duly filled in questionnaires were received back. The collected data were classified, analyzed and tabulated by using statistical methods. This study covers Post Graduate students in various departments of Mangalore University. The study was limited to Post Graduate of Mangalore University main campus.

### **Objectives**

An objective of the present study is to;

- Discover the use and awareness of open access e-resources by the PG students of Mangalore University.
- Identify the purpose of the use of open access e-resources by PG students.
- Find out the frequency of online resources used by PG students
- Identify the difficulties encountered by the users while accessing open access e-resources.
- Suggest improvement measures based on the findings of the study.

### **Data Analysis and Interpretation**

#### **Table 1: Gender wise distribution of respondents**

Gender	No. of Respondents	Percent
Male	72	47.37%
Female	80	52.63%
<b>Total</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

From Table 1 it was shown that 72(47.37%) of respondents were male while 80(52.63%) were females.

**Table 2: Awareness of Open Access E-Resource usage Skills**

Awareness	No. of Respondents	Percent
Shelf/Friends/Colleagues	54	35.52%
Teachers/Research Supervisors	58	38.15%
Library orientation programmes	32	21.05%
External Sources	08	05.28%
<b>Total</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

Table -2 indicates that majority 58(38.15%) of respondents acquired their open access e-resource usage skill through teachers/research supervisors, followed by 54(35.52%) through shelf/friends/colleagues, 32(21.05%) library orientation programmes. Only 19(10.56%) acquired skills from external sources'.

**Table 3: Prefer place of accessing Open Access E-Resources**

Place	No. of Respondents	Percent
Department	64	42.10%
Hostel	32	21.06%
Anywhere in the campus	56	36.84%
<b>Total</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

Respondents were stated the place where they are usually access e-resources. 64(42.10%) of the respondents responded to accessing e-resources in their department, whereas 56(36.84%) of the respondents did access in the anywhere in the campus, 32(21.06%) of respondents responded accessing e- resources in the residential hostel.

**Table 4: Frequency of using Open Access E- Resources**

Frequency	No. of Respondents	Percent
Daily	72	47.36%
Twice in a week	38	25.00%
Once in a week	22	14.47%
As and when I required	20	13.17%
<b>Total</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

The above table explains that 72 (47.36%) of the respondents use open access e-resources daily, followed by 38(25.00%) twice in a week, 22(14.47%) weekly, and 20(13.17%) of the respondents use as and when they required.

**Table 5: Types of E-Resources frequently used**

E-Resources	No. Of Respondents	Percent
E-books/ E-journals	72	47.36%
Online Databases	54	35.52%
E-Newspapers	12	07.89%
E-reference sources	14	09.23%
Total		

The above table highlights that 72(47.36%) of respondents frequently used e-books/ e-journals, followed by 54(35.52%) of respondents online databases, 14(09.23%) e-reference sources and only 12(07.89%) of respondents use for e- newspapers.

**Table 6: The Purpose of Using Open Access E-Resources**

Purpose	No. of Respondents	Percent
To gain current information	14	09.23%
To support research work/ Projects	54	35.52%
For study	72	47.36%
To update knowledge	12	07.89%
<b>Total</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

From the above table revealed that 72(47.36%) of respondents using E-resources for the study purpose, whereas 54(35.52%) to support research work/ Projects, 14(09.23%) of respondents to gain current information and 12(07.89%) of respondents using E-resources for purpose to update knowledge.

**Table 7: Advantages of Using Open Access E-Resources.**

Advantages	No. of Respondents	Percent
Articles can be accessed online free of charge	93	61.20%
Timesaving	07	04.60%
More Informative	12	07.89%
Open Access provides larger potential evidence	09	05.92%
Ease of access	31	20.39%
<b>Total</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

From the above table shows the responses of PG students about advantages for using open access electronic resources 93(61.20%) articles can be accessed online free of charge, 31(20.39%) of respondents about reasons for using electronic resources for ease of access, 12(07.89%) for more informative, and 07(04.60%) timesaving.

**Table 8: Level of satisfaction with Open Access E-Resources**

Level of satisfaction	No. of Respondents	Percent
Fully satisfied	23	15.14%
Satisfied	98	64.47%

Partially satisfied	28	18.42%
Satisfied to a little extent	02	01.32%
Not satisfied	01	0.65%
<b>Total</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

It is observed from the above table that majority 98(64.47%) of the respondents stated that they are satisfied with open access e-resources, while 23(15.14%) fully satisfied, 28(18.42%) partially satisfied and only 01(0.65%) of the respondents responded that they are not satisfied with open access e-resources.

**Table 9: Problems encountered while Accessing E-Resources**

Problems	No. of Respondents	Percent
Lack of internet access speed	61	40.13%
Few computers with internet facilities	13	08.55%
Overload of information on the Internet	24	15.78%
Lack of computer skills	22	14.47%
Difficult in finding relevant information	32	21.07%
<b>Total</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>100.00%</b>

The above table indicates the responses of respondents regarding the problems while accessing open access e-resources. 61(40.13%) of respondents have faced the major problem of slow internet access, while 32(21.07%) are difficult in finding relevant information, 24(15.78%) overload of information on the Internet, 22(14.47%) lack of computer skills and 13(08.55%) of respondents reported few computers with internet facilities.

### Findings

- Out of 152 respondents, 72(47.37%) of respondents were male while 80(52.63%) were females.
- About 58(38.15%) of respondents acquired their open access e-resource usage skill through teachers/research supervisors and only 19(10.56%) acquired skills from external sources.
- It was found from the study 64(42.10%) of the respondents responded to accessing e-resources in their department, 32(21.06%) of respondents responded accessing e-resources in the residential hostel.
- About 72 (47.36%) of the respondents use open access e-resources daily, followed by 38(25.00%) twice in a week, 22(14.47%) weekly,
- Most 72(47.36%) of respondents frequently used e-books/ e-journals, followed by 54(35.52%) of respondents online databases, 14(09.23%) e-reference sources.
- While examining the purpose of using Open Access E-Resources, it was found that 72(47.36%) of respondents using Open Access E-resources for the study purpose, whereas 54(35.52%) to support research work/ Projects, and 12(07.89%) of respondents using E-resources for purpose to update knowledge.

- It was found from the study the responses of PG students about advantages for using open access electronic resources 93(61.20%)articles can be accessed online free of charge, 31(20.39%) of respondents about reasons for using electronic resources for ease of access.
- While coming to address problems faced by the respondents for accessing Open Access E-resources it was found that 61(40.13%) of respondents have faced the major problem of slow internet access, while 32(21.07%) are difficult in finding relevant information, 22(14.47%) lack of computer skills.

### Conclusion and Recommendations

These days enormous growth of information and communication technology has appeared as most significant medium for storage and retrieval of information. E-Resources are currently rising as essential source of information for all current and emerging considerations and thoughts imminent into survival in the area of teaching, learning and research. The result of the study shows that majority of students are aware of open access e-resources. Based on the findings of the study the following suggestions are made the University library should facilitate internet connection speed for instant and bulky data at a time. It is suggested that the University library should arrange various user awareness programme /orientation and training programs to educate the learners how to use the open access e-resources to achieve their educational goals. At present open access e-resources are of very important so the teachers/staff support the students for the use of electronic information resources, and to create more awareness on open access e- resources.

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