Awareness and use of Open Access Resources among the Research Scholars of Annamalai University, Tamil Nadu : A Study

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Abstract

The paper highlights the results of a study on the utilization of open access resources among research scholars of Annamalai University. Five faculties were selected. The data were collected using questionnaire method. The study focuses on awareness and use of open access resources, time spent, purpose and satisfaction level also have been highlighted

Keywords

Websites; Tirunelveli District; Engineering College; Library; Content Analysis.

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INTRODUCTION

Open access resources are a different kinds. Whatever be the kinds but have influenced all walks of life. Ever since the open access movement came into being in the early of 21st century, the society greatly depends on open access resources for numerous reasons. NISCAIR Online Periodicals Repository (NOPR), Indian Academy of Science Journals, Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAT) and so on are some of the ideal examples that paved way to the researchers and academicians to make use of the rich resources available through the above mentioned repositories at free of cost. In the other hand, the utilization statistics of these resources does not slow encouraging facts. Therefore, the authors intended to asses how far the research scholars of Annamalai University make use of the open access resources and their influence in research.

EARLIER STUDIES

The contribution of academicians, information scientists and research scholars on use open access resources in various directions has yielded invaluable set of research output. The relevant literature available in reviewed here. Bartle and Walton (1996) reported that most of the researchers are not still in favour of using open access journals. The main reason identified by the authors was that the respondents were not aware of the resources available to than at free of cost. Eqbal and Khan (2007) found that 88.24% of science faculties were more aware of open access journals. It was also reported that 69.23% of Engineering Faculty used access Journals for their research work. Foo and Channupatic (2000) found that many researchers are aware of OAJ they give preference for and use it against printed articles which confines the idea that patrons may limit their research to easily available electronic journals. A significant usage of a handful of the most popular titles and extremely low use of the least popularities of OAJs suggests that library users are exhibiting the same sort of journal preferences in the electronic domain academics in developing countries are fast adapting to the internet as a source of information for teaching and research (Ojedokun and Owolabi, 2003; Badu and Markewei, 2005). Smith (2007) identified insufficient band width was a major problem, and the range of open access journals in the respondents field of interest was fairly limited.

OBJECTIVES

The following are the important objectives of the study:

- To study the awareness and use of various open access resources by the research scholars of Annamalai University.
- To know the quantum of time spent and purpose of using open access resources.
- To know the level of satisfaction on usage of open access resources.
- To identify the problems associated with the use of open access resources.

METHODOLOGY

This study attempts to examine the awareness and use of open access resources by the research scholars of Annamalai University. The faculties selected for the study include: 1. Faculty of Arts; 2. Faculty of Science;3. Faculty of Indian Language; 4. Faculty of Engineering and Technology and 5. Faculty of Education. A structured questionnaire was employed to collect the data. A total of 2066 questionnaire were distributed. Of Which 1941 questionnaire duly filled in were received back (Table 1). The questionnaire were self administered.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The data were analyzed based on the objectives of the study. The results on awareness and use of open access resources on research are presented below:

Table 1: Faculty - wise Distribution of Respondents

Sl. No.	Faculty	Total No. of Research Scholars	No. of Questionnaire Distributed	No. of Questionnaire received	Response Rate
1	Faculty of Arts	1010	758	733	96.70
2	Faculty of Science	474	356	331	92.98
3	Faculty of Indian Languages	207	156	131	83.97
4	Faculty of Engineering and Technology	717	538	513	95.35
5	Faculty of Education	343	258	233	90.31
	Total	2751	2066	1941	93.95

Table 1 presents the status of the respondents. As stated earlier, 5 faculties of Annamalai University were undertaken for the study and the data were collected through Random sampling method. The highest response were received from Faculty of Arts sharing 96.70 percent of respondents rates followed by Faculty of Engineering and Technology (95.35%) Faculty of Science (92.98%), Faculty of Education (90.31 %) and Faculty of Indian Languages (83.97%). It is interesting that the least response rate which was records as 83.97 Percent is quite significant

Tables 2: Distribution of Respondents Awareness of Open Access Resources

Sl. No.	Faculty	Aware	%	Unaware	%
1	Faculty of Arts	699	95.36	34	4.64
2	Faculty of Science	310	93.66	21	6.34
3	Indian Languages	120	91.60	11	8.40
4	Engineering and Technology	493	96.10	20	3.90
5	Education	214	91.85	19	8.15
	Total	1836	94.59	105	5.41

Table 2 Presents the result on the awareness of the open access resources among the research scholars of Annamalai University it was found that the research scholars of Faculty of Arts mostly aware of open access resources which amounts to 95.36 percent followed by Faculty of science (93.66%), Faculty of Indian Languages (91,60%), Faculty of Engineering and Technology (96,10%) and faculty of Education (91.85%)

Table 3Illustratesthe time spent by the respondents for accessing open access resources for information gathering, information sharing and research. Faculty wise analysis indicates that 38.34 percent of the research scholars from Faculty of Arts spent about 11-15 hours a month followed by 16-20 hours a month (31.65%) ; 5-10 hours a month (18.42%) and more than 21 hours a month (11.60%). 41.39 percent of the research scholars from Faculty of Science spent about 11-15 hours a month followed by 16-20

hours a month (24.47%), 5-10 hours a month (20.54%) and more than 21 hours a month (13.60%). 42.75 percent of the research scholars from Faculty of Indian Language spent about 11-15 hours a month followed by 5-10 hours a month (17.16%), more a than 21 hours a month (13.74%) and 16-20 hours a month (9.60%). 36.65 percent of the research scholars from Faculty of Engineering and Technology spent about 11-15 hours a month followed by 16-20 hours a month (23.98%), more than 21 hours a month (20.27%), and 5-10 hours a month (19.10%) and 55.79 percent of the research scholars from Faculty of Education spent about 11-15 hours a month followed by 16-20 hours in a month (18.03%), 5-10 hours a month (17-17%) and more than 21 hours a month (9.01%).

On the whole, it was observed that 18.75 percent of the research scholars spent about 5-10 hours a month followed by 11-15 hours a month (40.80%), 16-20 hours a month (26.38%) and more than 21 hours a month (14.06%).

Table 3: Faculty wise Distribution of Respondents Time spent on using Open Access Resources

Time spent	No. of Respondents					Total
	Arts	Science	Indianlanguages	Engineering and Technology	Education	
5-10 hrs a Month	135(18.42)	68(20.54)	23(17.56)	98(19.10)	40(17.17)	364(18.75)
11-15hrs aMonth	281(38.34)	137(41.39)	56(42.75)	188(36.65)	130(55.79)	792(40.80)
16-20 hrs a onth	232(31.65)	81(24.47)	34(9.60)	123(23.98)	42(18.03)	512(26.38)
> 21 hrs a Month	85(11.60)	45(13.60)	18(13.74)	104(20.27)	21(9.01)	273(14.06)
Total	733(37.76)	331(17.05)	131(6.75)	513(26.43)	233(12.00)	1941(100)

Figures in parentheses denote percentage

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Table 4: Faculty wise Distribution of Respondents Purpose of use of Open Access Resources

Purpose	Arts	Science	Indian Languages	Engineering and Technology	Education	Total
Research	698(95.23)	302(91.24)	121(92.37)	495(96.49)	220(94.42)	1836(94.59)
General Reading	492(67.12)	172(51.96)	61(44.56)	402(78.36)	110(47.21)	1237(63.73)
Information Sharing	392(53.48)	134(38.37)	51(38.93)	376(73.29)	98(42.06)	1051(54.15)
Information Gathering	354(48.29)	127(40.48)	58(44.27)	342(66.67)	82(35.19)	963(49.61)
Repackaging	128(17.46)	78(29.61)	31(23.66)	132(25.73)	43(18.45)	432(22.26
up-to-date information	598(81.58)	272(82.18)	102(77.86)	472(92.00)	198(84.97)	1642(84.60)

Note: The Percentages is exceeded to more than 100% because of multiple choice options

Table 4 indicates the purpose of using open access resources. About 1836 (94.59) respondents used open access resources for research purpose, followed by 1642 (84.60%) respondents who used for keeping up-to-date information ; 1237 (63.73%) respondents used for general reading ; 1051 (54.15%) respondents used for information sharing ; 963 (49.61%) respondents used for information gathering and 432 (22.26%) respondents used open access resources for repackaging.

As far as the faculty-wise break-up of research scholars of Annamalai University, about 698 (95.33%) respondents from Faculty of Arts; 495 (96.42%) Respondents from Faculty of Engineering and Technology 220 (94.42%) respondents from Faculty of Education ; 121 (92.37%) respondents from Faculty of Indian languages and 302 (91.24%) respondents from Faculty of Science used open access resources for research purpose.

Overall analysis revealed that 94. 59 percent of the respondents made use of open access resources for research followed by keeping up-to-date information (84.60); general reading (63.73%); information gathering (49.61%) and repackaging (22.26%). It is therefore interesting that open access resources were used for research and keeping up-to-date information to a large extent.

Table 5:Faculty wise Distribution of Respondents preference sources open Access Resources

Faculty	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14	15
Arts	128 (17.46)	538 (73.40)	665 (90.72)	415 (59.35)	678 (92.44)	102 (13.92)	288 (39.29)	601 (81.99)	101 (13.78)	91 (12.41)	101 (13.78)	25 (3.41)	32 (4.37)	375 (51.16)	39 (5.32)
Science	75 (22.66)	205 (61.93)	298 (90.03)	205 (61.93)	263 (79.46)	58 (17.52)	172 (51.69)	272 (82.18)	68 (20.54)	47 (14.20)	74 (22.36)	31 (9.37)	28 (8.46)	187 (56.50)	24 (7.25)
Indian Languages	**31** (23.66)	85 (64.89)	108 (82.44)	82 (62.60)	87 (66.41)	45 (34.35)	71 (54.20)	81 (61.83)	28 (21.37)	21 (16.03)	32 (24.43)	20 (15.27)	18 (13.74)	67 (51.15)	15 (11.45)
Engineering and Technology	115 (22.42)	355 (69.20)	488 (95.13)	318 (61.99)	402 (78.35)	114 (22.22)	315 (61.40)	407 (79.34)	92 (17.93)	87 (16.96)	110 (21.44)	45 (8.77)	41 (7.99)	401 (78.71)	41 (7.99)
Education	79 (33.91)	138 (59.23)	215 (92.27)	115 (49.36)	175 (75.11)	119 (51.07)	108 (46.35)	147 (63.09)	41 (17.60)	30 (12.88)	38 (16.31)	18 (7.73)	15 (6.44)	87 (37.34)	20 (8.58)
Total	428 (22.05)	1321 (68.06)	1774 (91.40)	1135 (58.48)	1605 (82.69)	438 (22.57)	954 (49.15)	1508 (77.69)	330 (17.00)	276 (14.22)	355 (18.29)	139 (7.16)	134 (6.90)	1117 (57.55)	139 (7.16)

Open course were ; 2 E- books ;3 E- Journal 4. Institutional Repositories ; 5. Electronic Theses and Dissertations ; 6. Online Tutorial ; 7. Open Access Digital Libraries; 8. online Reference Tools ; 9. Reference Management Tools; 10. Plagiarism detection Tools; 11. Journal Selection Tools ; 12. Manuscript Editing Tools ; 13. Open Archives ;14. Subject Gateways ; 15. Citation Measurement Tools

There are fifteen different open access resources identified, which are useful to teaching, learning and research. Out of these fifteen Sources, the investigator attempted to indentify the preferred sources among the research scholars from Annamalai University. As can be seen in Table 5 E-Journals were found to be the most preferred sources compared to other sources with a percentage share of 91.40 percent. The other preferred sources were Electronic Thesis and Dissertations (82.69%), Online Reference Tools (77.69%); E-books (68.06%); Institutional Repositories (58.48); Subject Gate ways (57.55%); Open access Digital Libraries (49.15%);Online Tutorials (22.57%); open Course ware (22.05%); Journal Selection tools (18.29%); Reference Management Tools (17.00%), Plagiarism Detection Tools (14.22%); Manuscript. Editing tools (7.16%); Citation measurement Tools (7.16%) and open Archives (6.90%).

As far as the faculty –wise break-up of respondents on the preferred open access resources about 488 (95.13%) Research Scholarsfrom Faculty of Engineering and Technology and 215 (92.27%)Research Scholars from Faculty of Education preferred E- Journals.

Table 6: Faculty wise Distribution of Level of Satisfaction Among the Respondents in Access open Access Resources**.**

Faculty	Extremely Satisfied	Very Satisfied	Moderate	Dissatisfied	Extremely Dissatisfied	Total
Arts	89(12.14)	198(27.01)	371(50.61)	54(7.37)	21(2.86)	733(37.76)
Science	41(12.39)	94(28.40)	152(45.92)	32(9.67)	12(3.63)	331(17.05)
Indian Languages	18(13.74)	34(25.95)	60(45.80)	13(9.92)	6(4.58)	131(6.75)
Engineering and Technology	61(11.90)	162(31.58)	268(52.24)	15(2.92)	7(1.36)	513(24.43)
Education	28(12.02)	60(25.75)	135(57.94)	8(3.43)	2(0.86)	233(12.00)
Total	237(12.21)	548(28.23)	986(50.86)	122(6.29)	48(2.47)	1941(100)

Figures in parentheses denote percentage

Table 6 illustrates the level of satisfaction among the respondents in accessing open access resources for gathering information and research purposes. Faculty wise analysis indicates that 12.14 percent of the research scholars from Faculty of Arts were extremely satisfied followed by very satisfied (27.01%); moderate (50.61%); dissatisfied (7.37%) and extremely dissatisfied (2.86%); 12.31 percent of the research scholars from Faculty of Science were extremely satisfied followed by very satisfied

(28.40%), moderate (45.92%); dissatisfied (9.67%); and extremely dissatisfied (3.63%) 13.74 percent of the research scholars from Faculty of Indian languages were extremely satisfied followed by very satisfied (25.95%); moderate (45.80%) dissatisfied (9.92%) and extremely dissatisfied (4.58%) 11.90 percent of the research scholars from Faculty of Engineering and Technology were extremely satisfied followed by very satisfied (31.58%), moderate (52.24%), dissatisfied (2.92%) and extremely dissatisfied (1.36%) and 12.02 percent of the research scholars from Faculty of Education were extremely satisfied followed by very satisfied (25.75%), Moderate (57.94%), dissatisfied (3.43%) and extremely dissatisfied (0.86%).

On the whole, it was observed that 12.21 percent of the research scholars were extremely satisfied with the use of open access resources for research and information gathering followed by very satisfied (28.23%) moderate (50.80%), dissatisfied (6.29%) and extremely dissatisfied (20.47%).

Table 7: Faculty-wise Distribution of Respondents Problems faced in Accessing Open Access Resources

Problems Faced	No. of Respondents					Total
	Arts	Science	Indian Language	Engineering Technology	Education	
Lack of speed	449(61.26)	278(83.99)	107(81.68)	425(82.85)	205(87.98)	1464(75.43)
Non-Availability of full text	271(36.97)	197(59.52)	78(59.54)	307(59.84)	102(43.78)	955(49.20)
Inactive links	215(29.33)	201(60.73)	64(48.85)	210(40.94)	115(49.36)	805(41.47)
Inadequate searchFacility	379(51.71)	164(49.55)	81(61.83)	139(27.10)	134(57.51)	897(46.21)
Lack of interest	294(40.11)	138(41.69)	68(51.91)	143(27.88)	128(54.94)	771(39.72)
Lack of subject cove rage	287(39.15)	242(73.11)	71(54.20)	131(25.54)	141(60.52)	872(44.93)
Lack of Time	302(41.20)	250(75.53)	86(65.65)	310(60.43)	150(64.38)	1098(56.57)
Lack of search skills	288(39.29)	171(51.66)	60(45.80)	124(24.17)	138(59.23)	781(40.24)
Non-user friendly	364(49.66)	158(47.73)	57(43.51)	198(38.60)	125(53.65)	902(46.47)
Slow and hidden eedback	405(55.25)	205(61.93)	49(37.40)	201(39.18)	130(55.79)	990(51.00)
Lack of up-to-date information	205(27.97)	105(31.72)	47(35.88)	120(23.39)	95(48.77)	572(29.47)

Table 7 It is quite natural that any system or the source meant for the benefit of large number of audience will have its own advantages and disadvantages. In view of this, it was attempted to identify the constraints faced, if any while accessing the open access resources by the research scholars of Annamalai University. The result is highlighted in table 7. The result indicates that 1464 (75.43%) research scholars opined that lack of speed was a major constraint faced by the respondents followed by lack of time 1098 (56.57%), slow and hidden feedback 990 (51.00%),Non availability of full text 955 (4.92%), Non – user friendly 902 (46.47%), Inadequate search facility 897 (46.21%), lack of subject coverage 872 (44.93%), Inactive links 805 (41.47%) lack of search skills 781 (40.24%), lack of interest 771 (39.72%) and lack of up-to-date information 572 (29.47%).

As far as the faculty –wise break-up of respondents on the problems faced in accessing open access resources, about 87.98 percent of research scholars from Faculty of Education, 83.99 percent of research Scholars from faculty of Science, 82-85 Percent of research scholars from Faculty Engineering and Technology, 81. 68 percent of research scholars from Faculty of Indian languages and 61.26 percent of research scholars from Faculty of Arts faced problem of lack of speed in accessing open access resources.

On the whole, it was observed that the problems faced by the respondents vary in terms of their faculty. However, the major problems, irrespective of the faculty, identified were lack of speed , lack of time, slow and hidden feedback, Non-availability of full text, Non-user friendly and inadequate search facility.

FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

The study conducted to access the use of open access resources by the research scholars of Annamalai University led to the followings findings:

- Research scholars from Annamalai University are well aware of different categories of open access resources (94.59).
- The most prominent sources are e-journals, electronic theses and dissertations, e-books.
- 40.80 percent of the research scholars spent about 11-15 hours a month.
- 94.59 percent of the respondents made use of open access resources for research purpose.
- 50.86 percent of the respondents were moderate level satisfied.
- 74.43 percent of the research scholars opined that lack of speed was a major constraint faced by the respondents.

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