



A Study of Various aspects of Digital Literacy among Research Scholars of Agricultural Universities of Maharashtra State

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1.0 Abstract

The phenomenon of information explosion has transformed all the spheres of our life and education in general and library services in particular are not an exception. Rather the most notable revolution occurred in the library services as the core library services is information management. However, the people using these services are not always quite familiar with the skills necessary to locate, acquire and use the desired information. Hence, this study was conducted to determine the digital literacy skills of the research students of agricultural colleges of Maharashtra State. The study was conducted using descriptive research design, wherein data was obtained from the research students of Agriculture Colleges of Maharashtra State using simple random sampling technique. The collected data was analysed with the aid SPSS 18.0 Software. The study results showed that majority of the students of Agriculture Colleges of Maharashtra State are partially aware about various e-resources available in library, they utilize e-resources only weekly and use search engines for collecting information.

Keywords: Library services, Digital Literacy Skills, Agricultural Colleges, e-resources

2.0 Introduction

With the advent of globalization in the realm of education, there has been information explosion and the current period is recognized as the information age. To add to this the the internet boom in India has become one of the major contributors to the information generation as well as utility that has resulted in tremendous economic growth of the country. The use of internet has increased more than 11 times in the last seven years and this rise has led to the growth of cybercafés and internet parlors throughout India with easy accessibility and cost effective services helped by the enhanced speed of the internet. Not just the aspects related to the economic activities but also the library and information landscape has transformed with the onset of the digital era and today traditional libraries have changed their roles to serve as “Knowledge Centers” with priority on value added electronic information services.

To day the world over digital literacy is a key component to acquire knowledge. Digital Literacy is the awareness, attitude and ability of individuals to appropriately use digital tools and facilities to identify access, manage, integrate, analyze the digital resources and create media. The literacy also includes the

ability to read and interpret media, to reproduce data and images through digital manipulation, and to evaluate and apply new knowledge gained from digital environments. It (digital literacy) is also the process of teaching and learning about technology and the use of it. It is the ability to use information and communication technologies to find, evaluate, create, and communicate information, requiring both cognitive and technical skills. The ability to understand and use information available in multiple formats from a wide range of sources is an important skill in this era. A student's ability to perform tasks effectively in a digital environment are very important these days rather the person's career today depends on these skills. In view of the above this study was carried out to study various digital literacy skills and abilities of research students of agricultural universities of Maharashtra State.

3.0 Research Methodology

3.1 Research Design

This study is carried out in Maharashtra State of India by using a descriptive research design.

3.2 Sample Size of the study

In the present study data was collected from 258 research students of Agriculture Colleges of Maharashtra State using simple random sampling technique.

3.3 Primary data collection

In this study the primary data was collected using a short structured research instrument i.e. a questionnaire. Prior to data collection reliability and validity of this questionnaire was evaluated and the data was obtained using online survey method (using Google form).

3.4 Secondary Data

The secondary data for this study was collected from various National and International Magazines, Research Journals, Books of the reputed authors, internet and other sources and relevant internet sources.

3.5 Statistical Analysis of Data

Analysis of the data was carried out with the help of various statistical tests. All the statistical analysis was carried out by using SPSS 18.0 Software. The descriptive statistics, such as frequency, mode, percentage, etc were determined from the collected data. The 'Chi-Square' test was used as an inferential statistical test.

4.0 Results of the Study

4.1 Awareness about various e-resources available in library

Table 1: Awareness about various e-resources available in library

Response	Nos.	Per
Fully aware	42	16.3
Partially aware	179	69.4
Not aware	37	14.3
Total	258	100.0

Chi-square 151; df: 2, p<0.05; Table Value: 5.99

Above table 1 presents information pertaining to awareness of students of agriculture colleges of Maharashtra State about various e-resources available in library. 16.3% students are fully aware about

various e-resources available in library while 69.4% students are partially aware about it. However, 14.3% students are not aware about various e-resources available in library.

4.2 Frequency of use e-resources

Table 2: Frequency of use e-resources

Frequency of e-resource use	Nos.	Per
Daily	25	9.7
Weekly	123	47.7
Fortnightly	40	15.5
Seldom	47	18.2
Never	23	8.9
Total	258	100.0

Chi-square 131.38; df: 4, p<0.05; Table Value:9.49

Above table 2 presents information pertaining to frequency of use of e-resources by students of agriculture colleges of Maharashtra State. 9.7% students daily use e-resources while 47.7% students use it on weekly basis. However, 15.5% students use e-resources fortnightly and 18.2% students rarely use e-resources. Further 8.9% students do not use e-resources.

4.3 Mode of instruction used to acquire digital literacy skills

Table 3: Mode of instruction used to acquire digital literacy skills

	Nos.	Per
Seminar/ workshops	52	20.2
Training programs	134	51.9
Computer assisted instruction	38	14.7
Specific course	26	10.1
Other	8	3.1
Total	258	100.0

Chi-square 184.713; df: 4, p<0.05; Table Value: 9.49

Above table 3 presents information pertaining to mode of instruction used by students of agriculture colleges of Maharashtra State to acquire digital literacy skills. 20.2% students use seminar/workshops while 51.9% students use training programs. However, 14.7% students use computer assisted instructions and 10.1% students used specific course to acquire digital literacy skills. Further 3.1% students used other modes to acquire digital literacy skills.

4.4 Search tools used for collecting information

Table 4: Search tools used for collecting information

Search tools	Nos.	Per
Search engine	209	81.0
Subject gateways	98	38.0
Digital library	43	16.7
Institutional Repository	76	29.5

Online Bibliographic databases	108	41.9
Web portals	169	65.5

Above table 4 presents information pertaining to search tools used by students of agriculture colleges of Maharashtra State for collecting information. 81.0% students use search engines for collecting information while 38.0% students use subject gateways. However, 16.7% students use digital library and 29.5% students use institutional repository. Further 41.9% students used online bibliographic databases and 65.5% students use web portals for collecting information.

4.5 Preferred location to access e-resources

Table 5: Preferred location to access e-resources

Preferred place	Nos.	Per
Hostel	41	15.9
Cyber café	9	3.5
Home	59	22.9
College Library	149	57.8
Total	258	100.0

Chi-square 167.488; **df:** 3, **p**<0.05; **Table Value:**7.82

Above table 5 presents information pertaining to location preferred by students of agriculture colleges of Maharashtra State to access e-resources. 15.9% students access e-resources at their hostel while 3.5% students access e-resources at cyber cafe. However, 22.9% students access e-resources at home and 57.8% students access e-resources in the college library.

4.6 Type of e-resources used in the college library

Table 6: Type of e-resources used in the college library

Type of e-resource	Nos.	Per
e-books	139	53.9
e-journals	219	84.9
e-reference sources	62	24.0
Website	258	100.0
e-Newspaper	107	41.5
Bibliographic and citation databases	52	20.2
e-theses and dissertations	29	11.2
Institutional repositories	122	47.3

Above table 6 presents information pertaining to type of e-resources used in the agriculture colleges of Maharashtra State. 53.9% college library uses e-books while 84.9% colleges use e-journals. However, 24.0%, 100.0%, 41.5% and 20.2% colleges use e-reference sources, website, e-newspaper and bibliographic and citation databases respectively. Further 11.2% colleges use e-theses and dissertations and 47.3% colleges use institutional repositories.

5.0 Conclusions

5.1 Awareness about various e-resources available in library

- From the study results it is evident that most ($p < 0.05$) of the students of agriculture colleges of Maharashtra State are partially aware about various e-resources available in library.

5.2 Frequency of use e-resources

- From the study results it is evident that most ($p < 0.05$) of the students of agriculture colleges of Maharashtra State weekly use e-resources.

5.3 Mode of instruction used to acquire digital literacy skills

- From the study results it is evident that most ($p < 0.05$) of the students of agriculture colleges of Maharashtra State attended training program to acquire digital literacy skills.

5.4 Search tools used for collecting information

- From the study results it is evident that most ($p < 0.05$) of the students of agriculture colleges of Maharashtra State use search engines for collecting information.

5.5 Preferred location to access e-resources

- From the study results it is evident that most ($p < 0.05$) of the students of agriculture colleges of Maharashtra State access e-resources in the college library.

5.6 Type of e-resources used in the college library

- From the study results it is evident that most of the agriculture colleges libraries of Maharashtra State use website and e-journals.

6.0 References

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