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Awareness, Use and Usefulness of Electronic Information Resources on the Scientifc staff of the Libraries of ICAR Institutions in South India.

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Abstract :

An attempt is made to study the Awareness, Use and Usefulness of Electronic Information Resources among the Scientifc staff of ICAR Institutions in South India. Survey method and a questionnaire tool was used and results indicated that all the respondents of scientific staff used EIRs in the department followed by used EIRs in library. Among all the EIRs, internet , websites and ETDs are used by all the scientific respondents as the rate 9of 100percent. All scientific respondents of the opinion that internet and ETDs are 100 percent useful to their writing research papers and on going research work/project.

Keywords : Indian Council of Agriculture Research (ICAR), Electronic Information Resources (EIRs), Awareness, Use, Usefulness, Electronic Thesis and Dissertations (ETDs).

Introduction:

India is one of the best agricultural countries in the world. The progress and evolution of agriculture has a positive and predominant effect on the country, with good yields of various types of crops which relies on numerous natural and man-made conditions. Agricultural growth in the country is achieved by Agricultural research. The researches periodically update the information and agricultural trends and revolutions. Generally, the institutions in National Agricultural Research System (NARS) used to procure study materials in the form of printed papers, books, newspapers and magazines. But now, majority of the institutions opt for digital media and e-books through internet and other web-based services, for scientific research and development.

The Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) is an autonomous organisation under the Department of Agricultural Research and Education (DARE), Ministry of Agriculture and Farmers Welfare , Government of India. Formerly known as Imperial Council of Agricultural Research, it was established on 16 July 1929 as a registered society under the Societies Registration Act, 1860 in pursuance of the report of the Royal Commission on Agriculture. The ICAR has its headquarters at New Delhi. The Council is the apex body for co-ordinating, guiding and managing research and education in agriculture including horticulture, fisheries and animal sciences in the entire country. With 101 ICAR institutes and 71 agricultural universities spread across the country this is one of the largest national agricultural systems in the world

The Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) has a well-established network with State Agricultural Universities and government and private institutes; accordingly the Consortium for e-Resources in Agriculture (CeRA) was initiated in November 2007. The main objective of CeRA was to facilitate easy access to scientific journals for scholars and faculty members of National Agricultural Research System. CeRA offers crucial research materials and online journals to scholars for their research and development.

Review of Literature:

Nagaraj and Sujatha (2018) attempt to study the awareness and use of electronic information resources (CeRA) available in the College of Agriculture, Hassan, Karnataka by the Faculty and research scholars. Consortium for e-Resources in Agriculture (CeRA) was initiated by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research. It was focused on researching the methodical literature in the National Agricultural Research System. The consortium grants access to numerous research works, articles and journals. It contains over 3000 journals in the various sections of agricultural sciences. Around 194 journals are related to farm animal's management, animal husbandry and poultry sciences. These journals contain details about animal nourishment, foodstuff, dietary additives, and so on, along with fisheries, horticulture, dairy farms, veterinary discipline, sericulture, aquaculture, among many. This paper

Ananda S K et all (2017) Investigated the use and awareness of Electronic Information Resources among UG & PG students of T John College. The study identifies the awareness of e-information resources among students i.e. 81% opined that they are aware of Electronic Information Resources and 19% opined that they are not aware of Electronic information Resources. Students use E-resources for Project Work i.e.74.07%, followed by preparing class notes 64.19%. The students use EIR for Social Networking i.e. 56.79%, followed by 55.55% for preparing assignments and 43.02% for entertainment purpose.

Priyadharshini, Janakiraman, Subramanian (2015) carried a study on awareness of usage of Electronic Information Resources in Agricultural College and Research Institute, Madurai. Their study revealed that E-resources freely available through internet search engines like Google, Yahoo etc, are used and frequently used e-resources are E-journals 70%; followed by e-books 65% and online databases 50%, while the least preference given to the use of e-achieves and CD-ROM databases 5% which was quiet surprise for researchers.

Pauline Adeniran (2013) study on Usage of electronic resources by undergraduates at the Redeemer's University, Nigeria, revealed that the use of electronic resources has tremendous impact on the academic performances of the undergraduate students of Redeemer's University; however, there is need for them to acquire more skills in the use of electronic resources.

Okorie and Agboola (2012) study on the availability and use of Electronic Resources in Agricultural University Libraries conclude that the advantages of e-resources as a means of easily and rapidly accessing of books, journals, magazines, thesis and images of various types are now widely recognized. Traditional tools are limited by storage and space. But the e-resources have the potential to store much more information at low cost. An important advantage of e-resources to academics is the increasing accessibility of information sources that are current and relevant to research, learning and studying at 24 hours a day. For University of Agriculture, Abeokuta, Michael Okpara University of Agriculture, Umudike and University of Agriculture, Makurdi, the e-resources has helped to solve the problem of non-availability of information resources in printed format on all the programs being run by the University.

Objectives:

1. To study the awareness of Electronic Information Resources by scientific staff of ICAR libraries.
2. To study the purpose of use of Electronic Information Resources by scientific staff of ICAR libraries.
3. To study use of Electronic Information Resources by scientific staff of ICAR libraries.
4. To study usefulness of Electronic Information Resources by scientific staff of ICAR libraries.

Methodology:

Table 1: Distribution of questionnaires

	Population	Sample required	Questionnaires Distributed	Questionnaires Received	Response Rate	Population V/S. Received
Scientific	906	278	320	294	91.88%	32.45%

Table 1. Shows the distribution of questionnaires, amongst the staff, who are working as a scientific staff in various ICAR institutions in South India. The respondents were selected on the basis of "required sample size table" from the research advisor (2006), with a margin of error at five percent and confident level at 95 percent.

The present study was carried out by Survey method by using Questionnaire tool for data collection. A structured questionnaire was prepared in view of objectives. The total number of scientific staff from all the 21 ICAR institutions located in South India was 906. According to the sample table, the required number of filled in questionnaires were 278. Anticipating non-response, the questionnaires distributed were more than required, i.e. 320. 294 filled in questionnaires (91.88%) were received in response.

Results and Discussions.

Table 2: Education qualification wise distribution of the respondents:

Scientific Staff		
Education Qualifications	**No.**	**%**
Under Graduate (UG)	0	0.00
Post Graduate (PG)	29	9.86
Doctor of Philosophy (PhD)	265	90.14
Total	294	100.00

Table no. 2 gives the information regarding the education qualification of the respondents. Sample covered under the study being Scientific staff of ICAR institutions, it is clear from the table that majority of the respondents are with higher degree PhD (90.14%), Postgraduates (9.86%).

Thus, this table provides the data regarding the distribution of the respondents based on their education qualification, UG, PG and PhD in their subject of interest.

Table 3: Awareness of EIRs among Scientific respondents :

Sl. No.	EIRs	Not at all aware		Very little aware		To some extent aware		Sufficiently Extent aware		To full extent aware		Total
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.
1	E Book*	0	0.00	0	0.00	34	11.56	48	16.33	212	72.11	294
2	E-Journals*	0	0.00	0	0.00	20	6.80	27	9.18	247	84.01	294
3	E-Newspapers*	0	0.00	0	0.00	16	5.44	31	10.54	247	84.01	294
4	E-Zines*	0	0.00	0	0.00	47	15.99	63	21.43	184	62.59	294
5	E-Reference sources*	0	0.00	0	0.00	10	3.40	37	12.59	247	84.01	294
6	E-Databases*	0	0.00	0	0.00	37	12.59	28	9.52	229	77.89	294
7	ETDs*	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	47	15.99	247	84.01	294
8	E-Proceedings*	0	0.00	0	0.00	47	15.99	84	28.57	163	55.44	294
9	Consortia	0	0.00	0	0.00	28	9.52	19	6.46	247	84.01	294
10	OPAC*	0	0.00	0	0.00	26	8.84	21	7.14	247	84.01	294
11	Websites	0	0.00	0	0.00	25	8.50	22	7.48	247	84.01	294
12	Internet	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	15.65	294	100.00	294

* E-Book : Electronic Book, *E-Journals : Electronic Journals, *E-Newspapers : Electronic Newspapers,* E-Zines : Electronic Journals, *E-Reference sources : Electronic Reference sources, *E-Databases : Electronic Databases, *ETDs: Electronic Thesis and Dissertations, *E-Proceedings : Electronic Proceedings, *OPAC: Online Public Access Catalogue.

It is observed from table 3 that, internet is the EIR of which all the scientific respondents are aware to a full extent (100%), this is followed by ETDs, which 84.01 percent of the scientific respondents are fully aware and 15.99 percent are aware to sufficient extent.

Further it is also observed from the table 3 that more than 90% of the scientific respondents are aware to a full and sufficient extent of E-Reference sources (84.01% full extent; 12.59% sufficient extent), E-News paper (84.01% full extent; 10.54% sufficient extent), E-Journals (84.01% full extent; 09.18% sufficient extent), websites Research,(84.01% full extent; 07.48% sufficient extent), OPAC (84.01% full extent; 07.14% sufficient extent); and consortia (84.01% full extent; 06.46% sufficient extent).

Thus it is seen that internet and ETDs are EIRs which all the scientific respondents are aware to a full and sufficient extent. Internet is a information resource which provides access to the latest, up to date and global information. It is also means for accessing all the EIRs. Further ETDs provide access to the latest research in a detailed manner. The scientific respondents involved in research need latest information. Thus awareness of these two resources are justified.

Table 4 : Use of EIRs among scientific staff:

Yes		No		Total	
No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
294	100	0	0	294	100

The table no. 4 depicts that all the respondents (100%) use the EIRs.

Table 5 : Purpose of use of EIRs:

Sl. No.	Purposes	Scientific (N=294)	
		No.	%
1	Writing research paper	259	88.10
2	Ongoing research work/project	259	88.10
3	Knowledge enhancement	294	100.00
4	Subject specific information	294	100.00
5	Continuing professional development	294	100.00

The above table reveals the main purpose of using the EIRs by scientific respondents. The table no.5 shows that the major purpose of use of EIRs is knowledge enhancement, subject specific information and continuing professional development with the rate 100%. Further, more than four-fifth of the scientific respondents use EIRs for the purpose of writing research papers (88.10%), ongoing research work/project (88.10%).

It is clear from the table no. 5 scientific respondents use EIRs for the purpose of knowledge enhancement, because knowledge is more powerful tool in the modern era.

Table 6 : Use of EIRs of scientific respondents:

Sl. No.	EIRs	Never		Rarely		Sometime		Most of the time		Always		Total (N=294)
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.
1	E Book	0	0.00	0	0.00	55	18.71	88	29.93	151	51.36	294
2	E-Journals	0	0.00	0	0.00	1	0.34	42	14.29	251	85.37	294
3	E-Newspapers	0	0.00	0	0.00	45	15.31	96	32.65	153	52.04	294
4	E-Zines	0	0.00	0	0.00	21	7.14	113	38.44	160	54.42	294
5	E-Reference sources	0	0.00	0	0.00	12	4.08	33	11.22	249	84.69	294
6	E-Databases	0	0.00	0	0.00	34	11.56	66	22.45	194	65.99	294
7	ETDs	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	47	15.99	247	84.01	294
8	E-Proceedings	0	0.00	0	0.00	17	5.78	84	28.57	193	65.65	294
9	Consortia	0	0.00	0	0.00	1	0.34	35	11.90	258	87.76	294
10	OPAC	0	0.00	0	0.00	26	8.84	32	10.88	236	80.27	294
11	Websites	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	43	14.63	251	85.37	294
12	Internet	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	21	7.14	273	92.86	294

It is observed from table no. 5, dealing with the purpose of using EIRs, that the major purpose of using EIRs by scientific respondents is knowledge enhancement, subject specific information, continuing professional development. In this case EIRs play a vital role to meet user needs and requirements.

Table no.6 indicates that, among all the EIRs, internet , websites and ETDs are used by all the scientific respondents. Internet is used by all the respondents under study[always (92.86); most of the time (7.14%)], websites 100%[always (85.33%); most of the times (14.63%)] and ETDs 100% (always (84.01%); most of the time (15.99%)].

The other major EIRs used by above 90% of scientific respondents to always and most of the time are, consortia (always 87.76%; most of the time 11.90), E-Journals (always 85.37%; most of the time 14.29%), E-Reference sources (always 84.69%; most of the time 11.22%), E-Proceedings (always 65.65%; most of the time 28.57%), E-Zines (always 54.42 %; most of the time 38.44%) and OPAC (always 80.27%; most of the time 10.88%).

Table 7: Usefulness of EIRs among scientific respondents:

Sl. No..	EIRs	Not at all useful		Not very useful		Somewhat useful		Useful		Highly useful		Total (N=294)
		No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	
1	E Book	0	0.00	0	0.00	84	28.57	76	25.85	134	45.58	294
2	E-Journals	0	0.00	0	0.00	1	0.34	78	26.53	215	73.13	294
3	E-Newspapers	0	0.00	0	0.00	83	28.23	72	24.49	139	47.28	294
4	E-Zines	0	0.00	0	0.00	47	15.99	108	36.73	139	47.28	294
5	E-Reference sources	0	0.00	0	0.00	29	9.86	47	15.99	218	74.15	294
6	E-Databases	0	0.00	0	0.00	46	15.65	84	28.57	164	55.78	294
7	ETDs	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	60	20.41	234	79.59	294
8	E-Proceedings	0	0.00	0	0.00	56	19.05	51	17.35	187	63.61	294
9	Consortia	0	0.00	0	0.00	6	2.04	41	13.95	247	84.01	294
10	OPAC	0	0.00	0	0.00	34	11.56	44	14.97	216	73.47	294
11	Websites	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	52	17.69	242	82.31	294
12	Internet	0	0.00	0	0.00	0	0.00	26	8.84	268	91.16	294

The table no. 7 depicts that all scientific respondents are opinion that internet (highly useful 91.16% ; useful 8.84%), websites (highly useful 82.31% ; useful 17.69%) and ETDs (highly useful 79.59% ; 20.41%) are 100 percent useful in their writing research papers and on going research work/project. The other important EIRs rated more than 90% by scientific respondents are E-Journals [99.66% (highly useful 73.13% ; useful 26.53%)], consortia [97.96% (highly useful 84.01% ; useful 13.95%)], E-Reference sources [91.14% (highly useful 74.15% ; useful 15.99%)]. The scientific respondents are of the opinion that all the EIRs are more than 70% useful in their day to day professional work.

It is also observed from the table that nearly three-fourths of scientific respondents rate the E-Book [71.43 (highly useful 48.55%, useful 28.85%)] and E-News papers [71.77% (47.28% ; 24.49%)] are useful.

Major findings:

1. The majority of scientific staff are with higher degree, i.e. Ph D (90.14%).
2. Internet is the EIR, of which all the scientific respondents are aware to a full extent (100%), this is followed by ETDs, which 84.01 percent of the scientific respondents are fully aware.
3. The major purpose of use of EIRs is knowledge enhancement, subject specific information and continuing professional development with the rate of 100%.
4. Among all the EIRs, internet , websites and ETDs are used by all the scientific respondents. Internet is 100 %[always (92.86); most of the time (7.14%)], websites 100%[always (85.33%); most of the times (14.63%)] and ETDs 100% (always (84.01%); most of the time (15.99%)].
5. All scientific respondents are of the opinion that internet (highly useful 91.16% ; useful 8.84%), websites (highly useful 82.31% ; useful 17.69%) and ETDs (highly useful 79.59% ; 20.41%) are 100 percent useful to their writing research papers and on going research work/project.

Conclusion :

ICAR is research oriented. As such, scientific staff are involved in research activities, which needs up dated information. That can be provided by EIRs, since they have a global reach and can be up dated frequently. It is observed from present study, all the scientific respondents are aware about the EIRs available in ICAR institutions among those EIRs, internet is the EIR of which all the scientific respondents are aware to a full extent. Among all the EIRs, internet, websites and ETDs are used by all the scientific respondents for major purposes of knowledge enhancement, subject specific information and continuing their professional development.All the scientific respondents are opinion that internet , websites and ETDs are 100 percent and other important EIRs , i.e. E-Joirnals, consortia and E- Reference sources are rated more than 90 percent useful to their writing research papers and ongoing research work/project.So all the scientific respondents are well aware, and always use of EIRs for different purposes and many EIRs are highly useful in their day to day life for improvement in the quality of scientific publications, teaching and research guidance.

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