

A Study on Faculty Awareness, Usage, and Satisfaction of E-Resources for Professional Growth in Western Maharashtra Colleges

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ABSTRACT

In the era of digital transformation, electronic resources (e-resources) play a pivotal role in academic and professional development. This study aims to evaluate the awareness, usage patterns, and satisfaction levels of faculty members regarding e-resources in colleges across Western Maharashtra. The research adopts a descriptive survey method and gathers data from faculty members of Arts, Commerce, Science, and Professional colleges affiliated with recognized universities in the region. The study investigates the types of e-resources accessed, frequency of usage, purposes for which they are used (teaching, research, self-learning), and the perceived benefits and challenges faced. Findings reveal that while awareness of basic e-resources like e-journals and databases is relatively high, consistent and advanced usage remains limited due to factors such as inadequate training, lack of infrastructure, and limited digital literacy. Despite these challenges, most faculty members express moderate to high levels of satisfaction, especially with regard to the relevance, accessibility, and usefulness of e-resources in enhancing their academic performance and career growth. The study concludes with recommendations for institutional support, training programs, and improved digital infrastructure to enhance effective utilization of e-resources for faculty development.

Keywords:-E-Resources, User Awareness, Resource Utilization, Faculty Development, Western

INTRODUCTION:

In the age of rapid technological advancement and digital learning, electronic resources (e-resources) have emerged as indispensable tools for teaching, research, and continuous professional development in higher education. The traditional boundaries of information access have expanded with the integration of digital libraries, online databases, e-journals, e-books, and institutional repositories, offering educators unprecedented opportunities to enhance their academic competencies.

Faculty members in colleges play a critical role not only in imparting knowledge but also in pursuing scholarly activities, curriculum development, and staying updated in their respective fields. E-resources serve as a dynamic platform for such intellectual engagement, enabling access to the latest research, global knowledge, and subject-specific updates. However, the extent to which these resources are known, accessed, and effectively used by faculty members varies across institutions and regions, often influenced by infrastructural, institutional, and personal factors.

Western Maharashtra, being a diverse educational hub with numerous colleges affiliated to prominent universities, presents a unique context to study faculty behavior towards e-resources. While universities and government agencies invest significantly in digital library initiatives such as INFLIBNET, N-LIST, and e-ShodhSindhu, the actual impact of these services on faculty development remains underexplored.

This study, therefore, seeks to assess the level of awareness, patterns of utilization, and degree of satisfaction of faculty members regarding e-resources in colleges across Western Maharashtra. Understanding these dimensions is essential for policy formulation, training design, and infrastructure planning aimed at maximizing the value of e-resources in academic institutions.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Various researchers have examined the awareness and utilization of e-resources by academic. Dadzie (2005) found that university faculty in Ghana had limited awareness of e-resources. In India, Ansari and Zuberi (2010) reported growing awareness but uneven usage. Madhusudhan (2010) found that faculty used e-resources mainly for research. Patil and Parameshwar (2009) observed that science faculty used e-resources more frequently than arts and commerce faculty. Satisfaction studies by Kumbar and Hadagali (2015) highlighted user challenges, including poor internet and lack of training. Sharma (2013) emphasized the importance of digital literacy in improving e-resource usage. However, few studies have focused specifically on Western Maharashtra, creating a gap that this study aims to address.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

1. To examine the level of awareness among faculty members regarding e-resources.
2. To analyze the extent and pattern of utilization of e-resources for academic and professional purposes.

3. To evaluate the satisfaction level of faculty with the accessibility and quality of e resources.
4. To identify barriers and challenges in the effective use of e-resources.
5. To recommend measures for improving the use and effectiveness of e-resources in faculty development.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This study uses a descriptive survey design. The population comprises faculty members from Arts, Commerce, Science, and Professional colleges in Western Maharashtra. Using stratified random sampling, 200 faculty members from 20 colleges were selected. A structured questionnaire was used to collect data, consisting of sections on demographics, awareness, usage, satisfaction, and barriers. Data were collected via physical distribution and Google Forms. Analysis was done using Excel and SPSS, employing statistical tools such as frequencies, percentages, mean scores, and charts. The study is geographically limited to Western Maharashtra and is based on self-reported responses.

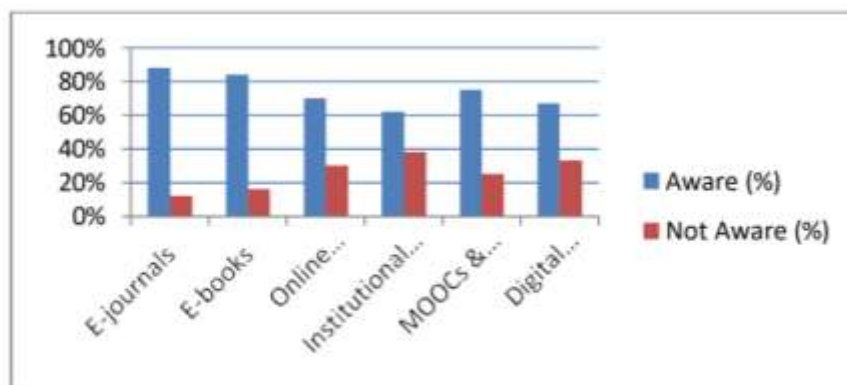
SCOP AND LIMITATION

The study focuses on faculty members from Arts, Commerce, Science, and Professional colleges affiliated with universities in Western Maharashtra, examining their awareness, usage, and satisfaction with e-resources for academic and professional development. It includes data from 200 faculty members across 20 colleges, covering both urban and rural areas to provide a comprehensive view of e-resource utilization in the region. The study aims to offer insights for improving e-resource services and faculty training programs. However, it is limited geographically to Western Maharashtra and does not include perspectives from students, librarians, or administrative staff. The sample size, though adequate, may not fully represent the entire faculty population, and the findings are based on self-reported responses, which may involve biases. Additionally, the study does not address technological factors such as internet speed or external initiatives like INFLIBNET or e- ShodhSindhu that may influence e-resource access and usage

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

Table1: Awareness of E-Resources among Faculty Members

Type of E-Resource	Aware (%)	Not Aware (%)
E-journals	88%	12%
E-books	84%	16%
Online Databases	70%	30%
Institutional Repositories	62%	38%
MOOCs & Online Courses	75%	25%
Digital Libraries (e.g. NDL)	67%	33%



Awareness of E-Resources among Faculty Members

The data shows that faculty members have high awareness of basic e-resources such as e journals (88%) and e-books (84%), which are commonly used in academic environments. However, awareness decreases for more specialized tools like online databases (70%), institutional repositories (62%), and national-level platforms like digital libraries (67%). This suggests that while general awareness is strong, there is a need to raise awareness and conduct orientation sessions on advanced or less-promoted e-resources to enhance their utilization.

Table 2: Frequency of E-Resource Usage

Usage Frequency	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Rarely	Never
For Teaching	28%	36%	20%	12%	4%
For Research	32%	34%	18%	12%	4%
For Self-Development	25%	38%	22%	10%	5%

Faculty members use e-resources most frequently for research (32% daily) and teaching (28% daily), indicating their essential role in academic duties. Weekly usage is also high across all categories, showing regular engagement. However, usage for self-development is slightly lower in comparison, which implies that while e-resources support professional responsibilities well; their potential for personal academic growth is underutilized. Institutions can promote lifelong learning by encouraging more individual exploration of e-resources.

Table 3: Satisfaction with E-Resources

Criteria	Highly Satisfied	Satisfied	Neutral	Dissatisfied	Highly Dissatisfied
Accessibility	30%	44%	18%	6%	2%
Relevance of Content	34%	40%	16%	8%	2%
Speed and Performance	22%	38%	26%	10%	4%
Technical Support and Training	18%	32%	28%	16%	6%

Overall satisfaction with e-resources is moderate to high, especially in terms of accessibility (74% satisfied or highly satisfied) and content relevance (74%). However, satisfaction drops in areas like technical support (only 50% satisfied or highly satisfied) and system performance. These findings highlight that while the quality and availability of content are appreciated, technical challenges and lack of user assistance hinder the overall experience. Addressing these issues could significantly improve user satisfaction.

Table 4: Barriers to E-Resource Usage

Barrier	Percentage of Respondents Affected
Lack of Training and Orientation	52%
Poor Internet Connectivity	47%
Limited Access to Subscribed Content	39%
Time Constraints	33%
Lack of Institutional Support	28%

The most significant barriers identified by faculty are the lack of training and orientation (52%) and poor internet connectivity (47%), both of which directly affect the ability to access and use e-resources effectively. Additional issues like limited access to subscribed content (39%) and time constraints (33%) further restrict optimal usage. These findings suggest that improving infrastructure and offering regular training and awareness programs could help overcome these limitations and improve overall resource utilization.

CONCLUSION

The study reveals that faculty members in colleges across Western Maharashtra possess a good level of awareness and moderately frequent usage of e-resources, particularly for research and teaching purposes. E-journals and e-books are the most well-known and commonly used resources, while awareness of institutional repositories and digital libraries remains limited. Faculty members showed positive satisfaction with the accessibility and relevance of e resources, indicating their importance in academic work and professional development. However, the lower satisfaction with technical support and infrastructural issues suggests that while the resources are available, they are not being utilized to their full potential due to practical constraints.

Major barriers such as lack of training, poor internet connectivity, and limited access to certain subscribed resources hinder effective and consistent use of e-resources. To enhance the impact of digital resources in higher education, institutions need to invest in technical infrastructure, provide regular user training programs, and ensure adequate support services. Strengthening these areas will enable faculty to integrate e-resources more efficiently into their academic and research activities, ultimately supporting continuous professional growth and improving the overall quality of higher education in the region.

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