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Awareness and Use of E-Journals by the Research Scholars and Faculty Members in the Department of Political Science of Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh: A Study

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Awareness and Use of E-Journals by the Research Scholars and Faculty Members in the Department of Political Science of Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh: A Study

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Abstract: *Electronic-journals are playing an essential role in today's digital world for higher academic education and institutions. The aim of the study was to ascertain the level of awareness and use of e-journals by the research scholars and faculty members in the department of political science of Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh. A well structured questionnaire was prepared for the research scholars and faculty members of political science to gather data related to the use of e-journals. The study revealed that most of the research scholars and faculty members were aware of e-journals and largely uses them for reference purposes in their research work. The results shows that majority of the respondents of both type prefer electronic form of journals. Majority of research scholars (62%) and faculty members (73%) in the department preferred pdf format for reading e-journals. It was also found that lack of training and slow downloading were the main hurdle in the proper utilization of e-journals. The present study suggested that more access terminals should be provided to the research scholars and faculty members and user orientation programmes should be introduced to enhance the e-journal service effectively and efficiently in the department of political science of Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh.*

Keywords - Awareness, Use, E-Journal, Political Science, Maulana Azad Library, Aligarh Muslim University.

1. Introduction

Electronic media is the pivot for all electronic resources in general and e-journals in particular in today's digital world. 21st century is known as the "Paperless Society" due to this growth and advancement of electronic publishing. Applications of Information Communication Technology (ICT) in libraries and information centres have a positive impact in changing the library environment. With the application of this new technology, different services have been introduced by the libraries. E-mail, online retrieval, networking, multimedia and internet are important technologies which are being used for faster access to information. Internet particularly 'World Wide Web' (WWW) with support of powerful hardware, software and networking technology has made the delivery of information very easy. Many publishers are taking advantage of WWW as a global route through which they offer large number of their publications to the scholarly community at world level. Internet or web is providing much of free e-resources like e-books, e-journals etc. through consortia, databases and open source software.

The Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) occupies a unique position amongst premier universities and institutions of higher learning of the Indian sub-continent; and Maulana Azad

Library is the central university library which is one of the major library of the world; famous for its invaluable collections of manuscripts, rare books and artefacts available in oriental languages (Qureshi, 1989). M. A. Library currently holds more than 14 lakhs volumes of books and subscribes to popular research journals and databases. Library has been modernized to provide computerized services to the university community at large with the provision for on campus wide access to online catalogue, online journals, e-books and other digital resources. The department of political science comes under the faculty of social science. The department of history and politics was established in 1922 in Aligarh Muslim University. It became a separate and independent department in 1948. Since 1967, the department has been publishing a research journal, named "Indian Journal of Politics," [ISSN: 0303 - 9957] which has been indexed in the current contents and abstracted in the 'International Political Science Abstracts' (Paris). Since 1948, more than 70 books and monographs have been published by the faculty members.

2. Electronic Journals or e-journal

E-journals are also known as electronic journals or electronic serials. These are the scholarly journals or intellectual magazines that can be accessed via electronic transmission. In practice, this means that they are usually published on the Web. They are a specialized form of electronic document. They have the purpose of providing material for academic research and study and formatted approximately like journal articles in traditional form or printed journals. Being in electronic form, articles sometimes contain metadata that can be entered into specialized databases such as DOAJ or OACI, as well as the databases and search engines for the academic discipline concerned.

An electronic journal is a journal for which the full end product is available on optical disk, over a network or any other electronic form, strictly a journal in which the entire process is carried out electronically. In other words, an electronic journal is one where writing, editing, refereeing and distribution of item are carried out electronically without paper intermediaries (Harrod's Librarian Glossary, 2005). An electronic journal is a publication, often scholarly, that is made accessible in a computerized format and distributed over the internet (Young, 2004). It may be in hard or soft form printed journal refers to conventional print edition published and distributed as hard copies, on the other hand online journals refers to a journal whose primary means of delivery to subscribes in through computer files.

Thus, it can be concluded that the terms "e-journals" and "electronic journals" are used interchangeably to designate what may also be called "online journals," "electronic serials" or "e-serials," "electronic periodicals," "zines" or "e-zines" or "webzines." In the simplest terms, an electronic journal; meets the bibliographic definition of a serial; is accessible through a computer; and has the features of a journal, magazine or newsletter. For the most part, electronic journals are available through the Internet usually but not necessarily through the web (Curtis and Scheschy, 2005).

3. Review of Literature

Raza and Upadhyay (2006) found that all most researcher were aware about the e-journals. The study also revealed several problems, including lack of training and slow downloading. Madhusudhan (2008) study reveals that e-journals perform an increasingly important role in research at DLIS, University of Delhi. Khan and Ahmad (2009) survey revealed that most of the research scholars are aware of the availability of e-journals and largely use them for reference purposes in their research work. Gupta (2011) study analyze that the respondents are more attracted towards e-journals than print journals. Khan (2012) study showed that majority of research scholars and students are aware of e-journals. Faizul and Naushed (2013) described that majority of the respondents are aware about electronic journals and using them for building and updating their knowledge and for collecting relevant materials for their study and research purpose. Study also reveals several inherent problems especially with the use of e-journals e.g. slow downloading as revealed by maximum IIT Delhi and Delhi University users.

Singh & Kataria (2015) found that majority respondents access e-journals for their research work and most of them get the link of e-journals through the UGC-INFONET website. Majority of the respondents feel that very few e-journals are available in their subject and faced problem due to lack of orientation and training in the context of accessing e-journals and low internet speed respectively. The study suggested the need of orientation program or refresher course for library professionals and library homepage or website should provide users access to the individual journal's name subjctwise by hyperlinks, which will help in avoiding the hassle of remembering the password or the URL. Khan (2016) study found that the respondents of economics department use more e-journals in comparison to political science department. Most of the respondents are aware about e-journals available in the library and satisfied with journal subscribed by the library. Boakye (2017) revealed that the level of awareness of electronic journals was very high but level of access was too poor. Study also found some problems related to access electronic journals such as slow Internet, unstable network and power cuts etc. Natarajan (2017) study reveals that slow downloading is the major obstacle while using e-resources. More terminals and internet connectivity with high speed are required to enhance the usage of e-resources.

Sohail, Maksood & Salauddin (2018) study observed that e-journals are the most important for the academic and research community. Many users are suggesting subscribing more e-journals of reputed publishers. Lack of orientation and training and poor IT infrastructure are the major constraints among respondents in the use of e-journals. This study also depict that majority of users are aware about e-journals and UGC-INFONET Digital Consortium and frequently use it. This study also reveals that the users of the University of Delhi are more satisfied with the access of e-journals and e-databases in the library in the comparison of the users of Jamia Millia Islamia. In addition, library users indicated their disappointments with library staff that are not helpful to the users while they are accessing e-journal consortium. This study helps to improve the facilities and services related to e-journals in higher educational institution's libraries.

Bansode & Gaikwad (2019) study found that majority of the respondents (91.07%) use e-journals for writing thesis. The study also revealed that most of the users (70.96%) prefer e-journals rather than print. Several hurdles such as slow downloading, non-connectivity of the databases and lack of literacy programs are some common problems faced by the users while accessing e-journals. Singh, Garg & Sharma (2019) study found that all the faculty members and research scholars were aware about e-journals and majority of the respondents use e-journals on daily basis. IEEE was the most preferred e-database by faculty members (30%) and research scholars (40%) respectively. Major barrier to the respondents is lack of internet connectivity or Wi-Fi while using e-journals. Tanwar and Malik (2019) study found that e-journals were favoured and preferred by Research Scholars in the universities of Haryana and Delhi. Study also revealed that both print format journals and e-journals have given equal importance in the universities of Haryana and Delhi among research scholars and faculty members.

Naeem and Siddique (2020) study revealed that majority of the respondents were aware of print and electronic journals and actively engaged in browsing online journals on daily basis. However, faculty members faced the difficulties in accessing the required journals. They also have problems of accessing back volumes of print journals. Majority of the users could not get off campus access of e-journals. The purposes of using journals were to remain updated in teaching, supervising, research writing of theses and papers. Samson (2021) investigated that majority of the respondents are aware of e-journals available in the university and the use of the e-journal by the academic staff members contributes 91% to research and teaching in the university.

4. Advantages of e-journals

Following are the advantages of e-journals that the printed journals cannot offer:

• Customization	• Can be saved digitally
• Full text searching or navigation	• No physical processing
• Speed of access	• Multimedia facility
• Speed and cost of publication	• Save physical storage
• Integration with other work	• Tremendous Search capabilities
• Economical	• Multiple simultaneous accesses
• Hypertext links	• Less paper & Availability.

5. Disadvantages of e-journals

Following are the some disadvantages of e-journals are:

• Difficulty in reading on computer screens	• Frustrating interfaces
• Reliance on equipment's	• Requirement to log on
• Complexities for acquisition	• Higher cost & Lower quality

6. Mode of accessing e-journals

Following are the different types of mode or model to accessing e-journals through publishers:

- ➢ **Free Access:** Most of the cases, free access is available to the electronic version of a journal with the print journal subscription.
- ➢ **Exclusive Subscription:** Library can subscribe to all the e-journals through publishers without purchasing print journals.
- ➢ **Selective Access:** Library can select e-journals of users need providing by the publishers and pays for them as per agreed terms and conditions.
- ➢ **Consortia Access:** Access to all the e-journals is very expensive by the individual library or institutions and can not afford to subscribed all; therefore, a consortium of institutions or libraries with common interests and requirements subscribed the same and this is known as 'economic model' for the wider accessibility and development of a strong information base for the user community.

7. Objectives of the study

The main objective of the study is to know the level of use and awareness of e-journals by the scholars and faculty members in the department of political science. However, other objectives of the study are following:

1. To find out different types of e-journals available for the scholars and faculty members of department of political science at Aligarh Muslim University;
2. To study the purpose and frequency of using the electronic journals by the research scholars and faculty member of the department of Political Science;
3. To know the place from where faculty members and research scholars access e-journals;
4. To find out the most relevant used journals by faculty members and research scholars;
5. To study the problems faced by the faculty members and research scholars in accessing e-journals and their study level satisfaction.

8. Scope of the study

The main purpose of the study entitled "Awareness and use of e-journals by the research scholars and faculty members in the Department of Political Science of Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh: a study" is to find the awareness and usage of e-journals in the department of political science of AMU, Aligarh. The researcher identifies following major delimitations of the study:

1. The study consists of only the e-journals users e.g. faculty members and research scholars;
2. The geographical area is delimited to the department of political science, AMU, Aligarh only.

9. Data Analysis and Interpretation

This paper deals with data analysis interpretation of data from the Department of Political Science of Aligarh Muslim University. Total 70 questionnaires were distributed among Research Scholars and Faculty Members, out of them a total 55 questionnaires were received back. All 55 questionnaires were included for the analysis and interpretation of data.

9.1 Distribution & collection of questionnaires

Table 1: Distribution & Collection of Questionnaire.

Category	Questionnaire Distributed	Questionnaire Received	Percentage
Research Scholar	50	40	80
Faculty Member	20	15	75
Total	70	55	78.50

The table 1 shows that 50 questionnaires were distributed to research scholars and 20 questionnaires were distributed to the faculty members. Out of which 40 questionnaires were returned back from scholars and 15 from faculty members which constitute 80% and 75% of the total received questionnaires separately. While total 70 questionnaires were distributed to research scholars and faculty members, out of which 55 questionnaires were returned back which constitute response rate 78.50% of total distributed questionnaires. The researcher has selected all received questionnaires for analysis.

9.2 Library Visit

Table 2: Visit to Library

Frequency	Research Scholars (In %)	Faculty Member (In %)
Daily	57.5	6.68
Weekly	27.5	66.66
Monthly	10	20
Occasionally	05	6.66
Never	00	00
Total	100	100

The above table 2 represents that 57.5% research scholar visit to library on daily basis followed by 6.68% faculty members. 27.5% research scholars visit to library weekly while 66.66% faculty members visit to library weekly. 10% research scholars visit to library monthly followed by 20% faculty members. Only 5% research scholars and 6.66% faculty members visit to library occasionally. Thus, all the respondents visit to library.

9.3 Journals Preference

Table 3: Form of journal preferred.

Form of Journal	Research Scholar (%)	Faculty Member (%)
Electronic	17.5	6.66
Print	7.5	26.67
Both	75	66.67
Total	100	100

The above table shows that in the department of political science 17.5% research scholars preferred electronic form of journal, 7.5% preferred print form and 75% use both forms of journals. 6.66% faculty members are using electronic journal, 26.67% print journals and 66.67% are using both the forms of journals.

9.4 Place of accessing e-journals

Table 4: Place of accessing e-journals.

Place	Research Scholars (%)	Faculty Members (%)
Department	12.5	33.33
Computer Center	17.5	6.67
University Library	35	20
Personal Computer/Home	7.5	20
Cyber Library	27.5	20
Total	100	100

The Analysis of table 4 shows that majority of research scholars' access e-journals through university library. In this department 12.5% research scholars use department lab, 17.5% use computer centre, 27.5% students prefer to go cyber library and 7.5% use personal computer for accessing e-journals.

In the same position, majority of faculty members in the department of political science access e-journals through departmental lab. 20% faculty members use university library, 6.67% use computer centre, 20% prefers to go cyber library, and 20% use personal computer for accessing e-journals. Cyber library is the place of the majority of members of accessing e-journals in the department.

9.5 Search engine used

Table 5: Most used search engine.

Search Engine	Research Scholars (%)	Faculty Members (%)
Google	67.5	53.33
Yahoo	17.5	20
MSN	5	6.68
Alta Vista	2.5	6.66
Any Other	7.5	13.33
Total	100	100

The table 5 shows that in the department of political science 67.5% respondents who are research scholars use Google, 17.5% use Yahoo, 5% use MSN, 2.5% use AltaVista and any other method use 7.5% for searching e-journals, whereas in the same department 53.33% faculty members use Google, 20% use Yahoo, 6.68% use MSN, 6.66% AltaVista and 13.33% any other method uses for searching e-journals. Google is found the most usable search engine by both type of respondent for accessing e-journals.

9.6 Format prefer to download e-journals

Table 6: Preferred format to download e-journals.

Format	PDF (%)	DOC (%)	HTML (%)	XML (%)	Printed copy (%)
Research Scholars	62	13	7	0	18
Faculty Members	73	13	7	0	7

It can be observed from the above table that in the department, the highest percentage of faculty members and research scholars preferred pdf format of journal for reading rather than doc, html and print. 7% of respondents use html format, 13% use doc format while 18% & 7% use print. 62% of Research scholars like pdf format in the department, 73% faculty members use pdf format.

9.7 Frequency of using e-journals

Table 7: Frequency of using e-journals.

Frequency	Sometimes (%)	Frequently (%)	Always (%)	Rarely (%)	Never (%)
Faculty Members	47	33	13	7	0
Research Scholars	42	35	22	0	0

The above table shows that 47% faculty members uses e-journals sometime, followed by 42% research scholars while 33% faculty members use frequently followed by 35% research scholars. 13% faculty members use always followed by 22% research scholars. Only 7% faculty members use e-journals rarely.

9.8 Purpose of Using E-Journals

Table 8: Purpose of using e-journals.

Purpose	Research Need (%)	Education (%)	Writing Articles (%)	Teaching Assignment (%)	Current Information (%)
Research Scholars	92	17	40	0	32
Faculty Members	53	33	47	47	27

The table 8 shows that 92% research scholars use e-journal for the purpose of research need, followed by 53% faculty members while 17% research scholars use for education, followed by 33% faculty members. 40% research scholars use e-journals for the purpose of writing article, followed by 7% faculty members while 32% research scholars use e-journals for the purpose of current information, followed by 27% faculty members. Only 47% faculty members use e-journals for the purpose of teaching assignment.

9.9 Problems Faced When Using E-Journals

Table 9: Problems faced when using e-journals.

Problem	Searching (%)	Slow Speed (%)	Down Loading (%)	Lack of Training (%)	Printing (%)
Research Scholars	15	20	17	22	7
Faculty Members	20	46	7	13	7

The table 9 shows that 15% research scholars face problem in searching e-journals followed by 20% faculty members while 20% research scholars face problem because of slow speed followed by 46% faculty members. 17% and 22% research scholars face problem in downloading and lack of training followed by 7% and 13% faculty members. 7% research scholars and 7% faculty members face problem in printing. Majority of the respondent are facing the problem of accessing e-journals in the department.

9.10 Consortia Used
Table 10: E-journal consortia used.

Consortium	UGC-INFONET (%)	CSIR (%)	J-GATE (%)	INDEST (%)	Any Other (%)
Research Scholars	43	17	13	7	20
Faculty Members	47	7	20	13	13

The table 10 shows that 43% research scholars use UGC-INFONET followed by 47% faculty members, 17% scholars use CSIR followed by 7% faculty members, 13% use J-GATE followed by 20% faculty members. 7% use INDEST followed by 13%, only 20% scholars and 13% faculty members use any others consortia for accessing e-journals. Majority of the respondents in the department are aware about the e-journal consortium, and using UGC-Infonet as e-journal consortium.

9.11 Awareness about number of e-journals
Table 11: Awareness about number of e-journals.

Number of Journals	1 To 2 (%)	2 To 5 (%)	More Than 5 (%)	No Journal (%)
Research Scholars	37	32	26	5
Faculty Members	7	40	53	0

The table number 11 represents that 37% research scholars are aware about 1 to 2 journals in their discipline followed by the 7% faculty members and 32% research scholars are aware about 2 to 5 followed by 40% faculty members. 25% research scholars knows about more than 5 numbers of e-journals followed by 53% faculty members. Only 5% research scholars do not know about the number of e-journals.

9.12 Opinion about e-journals

Table 12: Opinion about e-journals access, read & use.

Opinion	Most Helpful (%)	Helpful (%)	Not Helpful (%)
Research Scholars	33	67	0
Faculty Members	27	73	0

The above table 12 shows that 33% Research scholars say e-journals are most helpful followed by 27% Faculty members while 67% Research scholars opinion are e-journals is very helpful in accessing, reading and using followed by 73% Faculty members. No one says that e-journal is not helpful.

9.13 Searching Techniques:

Table 13: Searching techniques for e-journals.

Search Technique	Research Scholars (%)	Faculty Members (%)
Boolean Operator	12.5	13.33
Truncation	2.5	20
Phrases	72.5	33.33
Field	7.5	26.68
Wild	0	6.66
Any Other	5	0
Total	100	100

The above table represents that the majority of the respondents are using phrases techniques for searching e-journals e.g. 72.5% and 33.33%. 12.5% research scholars are using Boolean operator search followed by 13.33% faculty members. 2.5% research scholars are using Truncation search followed by 20% faculty members and 7.5% research scholars are using Field search followed by 26.68% faculty members. Only 6.66% faculty members are using Wild search and only 5% research scholars are used any other search technique in political science, AMU, Aligarh.

9.14 Mostly used e-journals

Table 14: Mostly used e-journals.

Journal	Research Scholars (%)	Faculty Members (%)
Indian Journal of Politics	60	100
Strategic Studies	25	40
Asian Survey	20	60
Economic & Political Weekly	40	55
Journal of IIPA	35.5	90
Journal of Politics	40	50

Human Rights Quarterly	10	22
Journals of Pub. Adm. & Governance	30	65
Political Science Quarterly	25	45

(Multiple Answers)

Above table shows that the most used journals by the research scholars and faculty members is Indian Journal of Politics that is published by the Department of Political Science, AMU, Aligarh since 1967 followed by the Economic & Political Weekly and Journal of Politics by the research scholars and Journal of IIPA by the faculty members.

Findings, Suggestions and Conclusion

Findings

The following are the major findings of the study:

1. Majority of the research scholars and faculty members are aware of e-journals and access them in department of political science at Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh.
2. Majority of the research scholars and faculty members prefer electronic form of journals i.e. 75% and 66.67% respectively.
3. Majority of research scholars and faculty members access e-journals through university library.
4. High majority of research scholars and faculty members in the department preferred pdf format for use and read e-journals i.e. 62% and 73% respectively.
5. Google is the most used search engine by the research scholars (67.5%) and faculty members (53.33%) respectively.
6. Majority of the research scholars facing problem due to lack of training and faculty members because of slow speed in the department when using e-journals.
7. Majority of the respondents are using UGC-INFONET consortium for accessing e-journals.

Suggestions

On the bases of data analysis and opinions of the respondents, the present study recommends the following suggestions:

1. High speed internet connectivity facility should be provided by the concerned authority.
2. Increase the number of e-journals to satisfy the needs of scholars and faculty members.
3. Well trained staff should be there to assist and full utilization of e-journals by the respondents.
4. Increase the number of access terminals to use the e-journal service effectively and efficiently to the faculty and research scholars.
5. The departmental libraries in collaboration with university library should organize regular workshops to enhance the usage of e-journals.

Conclusion

The present study sought to examine the use of electronic journals by the research scholars and faculty members in the department of political science of Aligarh Muslim University, and the results found that most of the objectives are meant satisfactory. The study reveals that majority of the research scholars and faculty members are aware of e-journals. It is also found from the survey that maximum research scholars of department of political science access e-journals through university library and faculty members from the department. A major portion of research scholars and faculty members search article through search engines, because they find it easy to use.

The study also found pdf to be the most important format for reading journal articles. Respondents of department of political science prefer relevance, depth in search result of journal articles. Slow speed, internet connectivity and lack of training were found to the major problems faced by the research scholars and faculty members of department in accessing e-journals. Majority of the respondents feel that user training is useful for increasing the usage of e-journals among the research scholars and faculty members. They feel e-journals are economical, time savvy, easy accessible and easy for archival.

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