

A Survey of Usage and Awareness of E-Resources Among University Library Users at B.R.A. Bihar University, Muzaffarpur, Bihar

Kaushal Kishor Chaudhary¹, Siddu Kumar², Amit Kishore^{3,*}, Akash Kumar Singh⁴

Abstract

This study investigates the usage and awareness of e-resources among university library users at BRA Bihar University, Muzaffarpur. The primary purpose of the research is to assess how well users are informed about available electronic resources and to evaluate their usage patterns in academic activities. A quantitative survey was conducted among library users to gather data on their awareness of e-resources, their preferences for specific types of resources, and the motivations behind their usage. The survey also explored the barriers that hinder effective engagement with e-resources. Results indicate a high level of awareness regarding e-resources, with 71% of respondents knowledgeable about their use. However, only 63% understood their utility in supporting academic work. E-books emerged as the preferred resource (44%), especially among postgraduate students who predominantly use e-resources for course-related studies (46%) and assignments (32%). Despite the advantages of e-resources, barriers such as technical difficulties (13%) and insufficient training (23%) were prevalent, impacting user engagement. Additionally, the study found that mobile devices (54%) were the most common means of access, highlighting a trend towards mobile accessibility. This research contributes to the existing literature by providing a nuanced understanding of e-resource utilization in academic settings, identifying both the strengths and weaknesses in current library offerings.

Keywords: E-Resources, digital resources, e-journal, e-database, e-books, B.R.A. Bihar university, usage and awareness of e-resources, library user, university library user

INTRODUCTION

In the digital age, the accessibility of information has undergone a significant transformation, largely driven by the proliferation of electronic resources (e-resources). These resources, which include e-books, online journals, databases, and digital archives, have become integral part of academic research and learning. University libraries, as critical hubs of information, play a pivotal role in providing access to these e-resources, thereby facilitating scholarly activities and enhancing the educational experience for students and faculty alike.

*Author for Correspondence

Amit Kishore
E-mail: akishor.82@gmail.com

¹University Librarian, BRA Bihar University, Muzaffarpur, Bihar, India.

²Research Scholar, Dept. of Library and Inf. Science, SKD University, Hanumangarh, Rajasthan, India.

³Librarian, Kendriya Vidyalaya ECR, Samastipur, Bihar, India

⁴Assistant Professor, Dept. of Library and Information Science, SKD University, Hanumangarh, Rajasthan, India.

Received Date: October 08, 2025

Accepted Date: December 16, 2025

Published Date: December 28, 2025

Citation: Kaushal Kishor Chaudhary, Siddu Kumar, Amit Kishore, Akash Kumar Singh. A Survey of Usage and Awareness of E-Resources Among University Library Users at B.R.A. Bihar University, Muzaffarpur, Bihar. Journal of Advancements in Library Sciences. 2025; 12(3): 46–56p.

E-resources, or electronic resources, refer to digital materials accessed via the internet or local networks. These include e-books, online journals, databases, educational websites, multimedia content, and interactive learning tools. E-resources provide students and educators with easy access to

a vast array of information and learning materials from anywhere and at any time. They offer a variety of formats, including text, video, audio, and interactive modules, catering to different learning styles and preferences. E-resources can be updated regularly, ensuring that learners have access to the most current research, news, and educational content. Many e-resources are available for free or at a lower cost compared to traditional textbooks and printed materials. E-resources play a critical role in modern education, enhancing learning opportunities and supporting diverse educational needs. Their integration into curricula can foster a more engaging and effective learning environment for students.

BRA Bihar University, located in Muzaffarpur, Bihar, is committed to supporting its academic community by offering a variety of e-resources through its library. Despite the availability of these digital tools, there remains a pressing need to understand the level of awareness and usage among library users. Awareness encompasses not only knowledge of what resources are available but also how to access and effectively utilize them. This understanding is crucial, as it directly impacts the extent to which users can be benefitted from the resources offered.

This study aims to investigate the usage and awareness of e-resources among university library users at BRA Bihar University. By employing a survey methodology, the research seeks to gather data on user familiarity with available e-resources, frequency of use, and perceived barriers to access. Additionally, the study will explore factors influencing usage patterns, including user demographics and academic discipline.

Understanding the level of awareness and usage of e-resources is essential for library management. The findings of this survey will provide valuable insights that can inform strategies to enhance user engagement, improve resource accessibility, and ultimately foster a more effective learning environment. In this context, the study will contribute to the broader discourse on the role of digital resources in higher education and underscore the importance of libraries in adapting to the evolving informational needs of their users.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The integration of electronic resources (e-resources) in academic libraries has transformed the landscape of information access and utilization in higher education. This literature review explores existing findings related to the usage and awareness of e-resources among university library users, with a focus on survey-based studies and their implications for institutions like B. R. A. Bihar University.

Awareness of E-Resources

Awareness of e-resources is pivotal for their effective utilization. Recent studies indicate that many university students remain unaware of the full spectrum of e-resources available to them. For instance, Yadav and Kumar [1] emphasized the need for enhanced awareness campaigns to inform students about available digital resources, which could lead to increased usage. Research indicates that awareness is a critical factor influencing the use of e-resources. Similarly, a study by Sharma and Kaur [2] reported that approximately 60% of students at a northern Indian university were unaware of specific e-resources, suggesting a gap in library communication and orientation efforts. According to Aina [3], students often lack awareness of the full range of digital resources available to them, which can significantly limit their research capabilities. Similarly, a study by Bhattacharyya [4] found that many university students were unaware of specific e-resources offered by their libraries, highlighting the need for improved communication and orientation programs.

Usage Patterns

The usage patterns of e-resources are influenced by various factors, including academic discipline and user preferences. A study by Gupta et al. [5], who highlighted that the frequency of e-resource usage often correlates with the perceived relevance of these resources to students' academic needs. Verma and Sharma [6] found that students in technical fields, such as engineering and medical sciences, utilize e-

resources more frequently than those in the humanities. A study by Tiwari et al. [7] illustrated that while e-books and online journals are commonly accessed, multimedia resources remain underutilized among students. Furthermore, Kaur et al. [8], students who regularly utilized e-resources reported improved research skills and better academic outcomes. Similarly, Gupta and Gupta [9] found a positive correlation between the frequency of e-resource usage and students' overall academic performance. According to a study by Kaur and Kaur [10] reported that engineering and science students were more likely to utilize e-resources than those in the arts and humanities due to the nature of their research needs.

Barriers to Usage

Despite the advantages of e-resources, several barriers inhibit their effective use. A survey by Khan et al. [11] identified technical difficulties, lack of training, and inadequate internet access as significant challenges faced by students. These findings align with those of Khan, who emphasized the importance of providing adequate training sessions to enhance user competence and confidence in utilizing e-resources. Furthermore, Sharma [12] pointed out that many students feel overwhelmed by the vast amount of information available online, which can lead to frustration and decreased usage. Despite the advantages of e-resources, several barriers hinder their effective usage. A survey conducted by Ali and Mahmood [13] identified technical issues, lack of training, and insufficient internet access as significant obstacles faced by students.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study aims to investigate the utilization and understanding of e-resources by university library users at BRA Bihar University, Muzaffarpur, Bihar. Specifically, the research objectives are:

- i. To determine the awareness level of university library users at B.R.A. Bihar University regarding the availability of e-resources.
- ii. To analyze the frequency and types of e-resources accessed by library users, including e-books, online journals, databases, and multimedia resources.
- iii. To explore the factors that affect the usage of e-resources, such as accessibility, user-friendliness, and training.
- iv. To evaluate the perceived impact of e-resource usage on the academic performance and research capabilities of university students.
- v. To identify the barriers faced by library users in accessing and utilizing e-resources effectively.
- vi. To suggest strategies for enhancing awareness and usage of e-resources among library users at B. R. A. Bihar University based on the findings of the survey.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research Design

The study used a descriptive cross-sectional survey design to assess the awareness and usage of e-resources among university library users at BRA Bihar University, Muzaffarpur. This design allows for the collection of quantitative data from a specified population at a single point in time, making it suitable for understanding the current state of awareness and usage patterns.

Population and Sample

The target population includes students, faculty and staff members who use the library at BRA Bihar University. A stratified random sampling method has been used to ensure representation across various demographics, including postgraduate students and research scholars and faculty members from various disciplines. To ensure statistical validity, 220 respondents were selected as a sample which is approximately 20% of the total population.

Data Collection

A structured questionnaire was developed for data collection, which included both closed-ended and open-ended questions. The questionnaire was distributed to library users, and data was collected to address the research objectives. The questionnaire was divided into the following sections:

- *Demographic Information*: Age, gender, academic level, and discipline.
- *Awareness of E-Resources*: Questions assessing knowledge of available e-resources and sources of information.
- *Usage Patterns*: Frequency of access, types of e-resources used (e-books, journals, databases), and preferred formats.
- *Barriers to Usage*: Factors hindering the effective use of e-resources such as technical issues, lack of training, and internet access.
- *Impact on Academic Performance*: Perceptions of how e-resource usage has influenced academic success.

Limitations

This study may be limited by the self-reported nature of the survey, which can introduce bias. Additionally, the study will focus solely on B. R. A. Bihar University, which may limit the generalizability of the findings to other institutions.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Demographic and Academic Profile of the Respondents

The demographic analysis shows a diverse respondent pool at BRA Bihar University, indicating that the library serves a wide range of users, including undergraduates (22%), postgraduates (33%), research scholars (31%), and faculty members (14%). This diversity is important for understanding the varying needs and preferences for e-resources across different academic levels Figure 1.

The academic disciplines represented reveal a strong emphasis on social sciences (36%), followed closely by sciences (31%) and humanities (22%). This suggests that the library may need to tailor its e-resource offerings to cater more effectively to the specific needs of these disciplines Figure 2.

The gender distribution is relatively balanced, with 47% female and 53% male participants, which supports inclusive access to library resources Figure 3. This ratio indicates a slight male predominance but remains close to parity, showcasing an inclusive approach to access library resources.

A significant portion of respondents, specifically 63%, falls within the youthful age group of 18–25 years. This finding underscores the critical need for libraries to engage younger users effectively. Since this demographic represents a substantial segment of the user base, it is essential for libraries to provide relevant e-resources tailored to their interests and informational needs Figure 4.

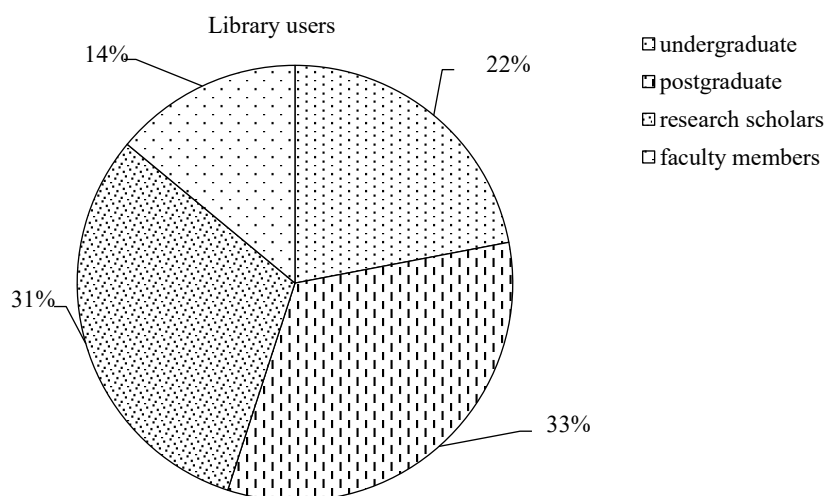


Figure 1. Diverse group of Respondent.

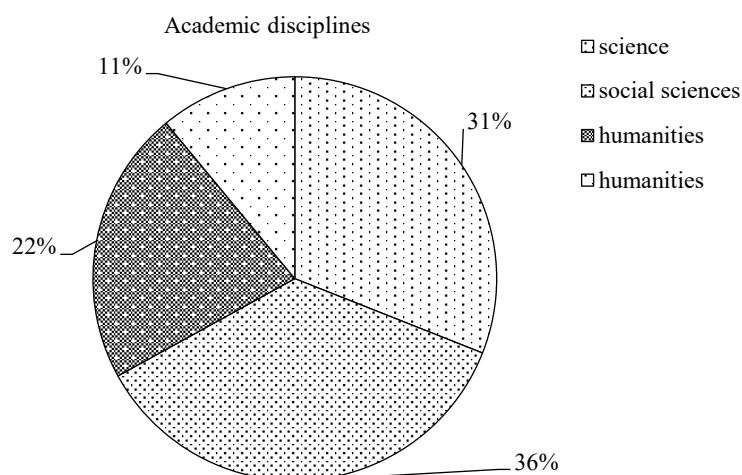


Figure 2. Academic disciplines of Respondent.

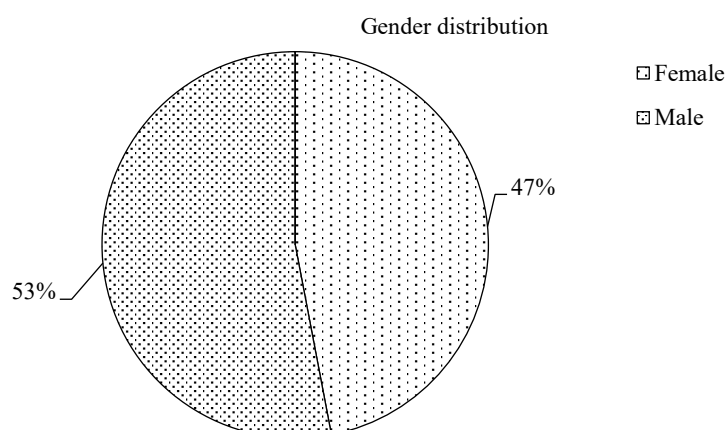


Figure 3. Gender distribution of Respondent.

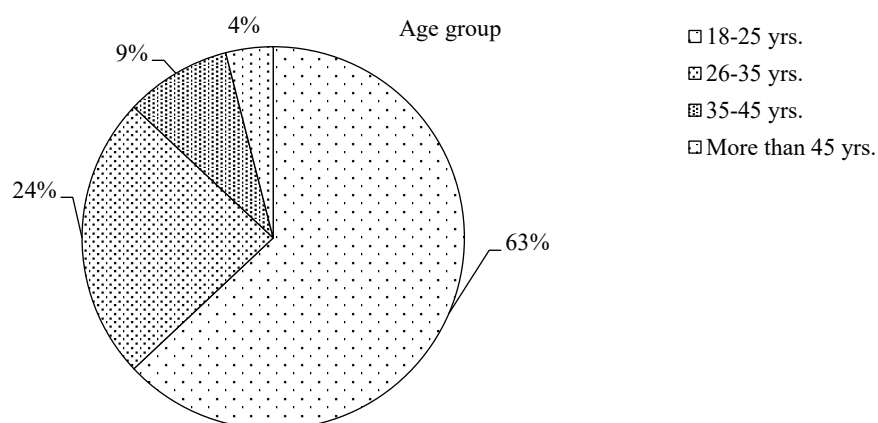


Figure 4. Age group of Respondent.

Awareness and Utilization of E-Resources

Awareness levels regarding e-resources are notably high, with 71% of respondents indicating they are aware of how to use these resources effectively Figure 5. This high level of awareness suggests that libraries have successfully communicated the availability and utility of e-resources to their patrons. However, it also presents an opportunity for libraries to further educate users on maximizing the benefits of these resources.

However, only 63% reported knowledge of their utility, suggesting that while users are familiar with e-resources, there is still room for improvement in their understanding of how these resources can support their academic work Figure 6.

The analysis of usage patterns indicates that e-books are the most preferred type of e-resource (44%), particularly among postgraduate students. This preference highlights a divergence in resource usage based on academic level, with postgraduate users leaning towards e-books for their studies Figure 7.

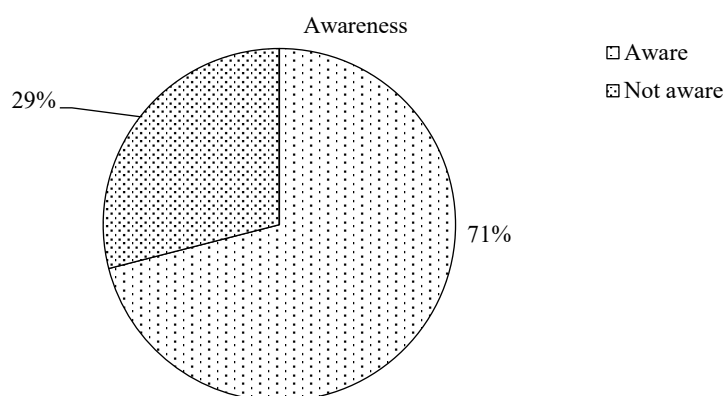


Figure 5. Awareness of E-Resources.

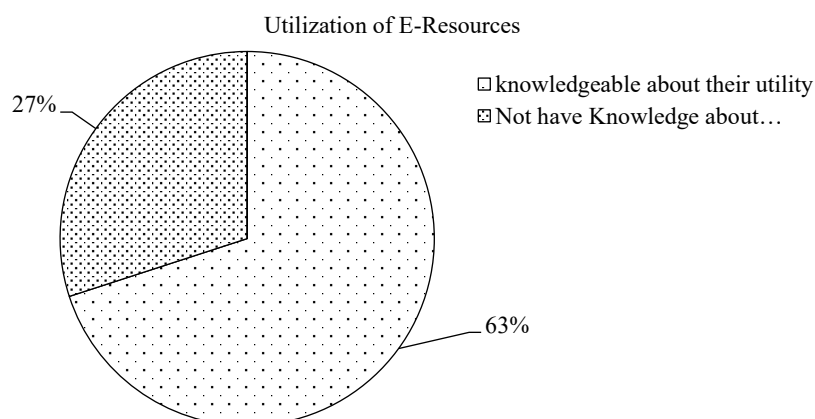


Figure 6. Utilization of E-Resources.

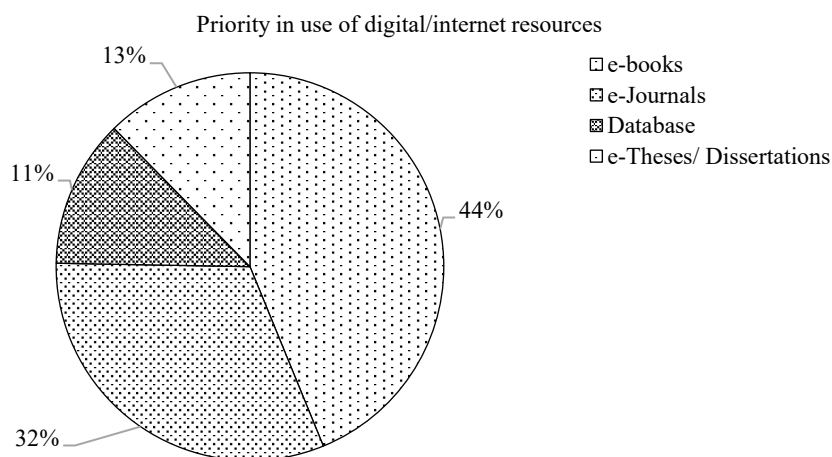


Figure 7. Priority in the use of e resources.

In addition, the primary motivations for using e-resources include course-related studies (46%) and assignment/project work (32%), underscoring the role of e-resources in supporting academic tasks rather than research activities Figure 8.

Figure number 9 show the reasons for giving preference to electronic resources over printed (traditional) documents. The reasons for favoring electronic resources over traditional printed documents show that time-saving is the leading factor (32%), followed by the informative nature of e-resources (24%). Cost-effectiveness (21%), user satisfaction (14%), and reliability (9%) also contribute to students' preferences, though to a lesser extent.

Usage Patterns

Usage pattern analysis revealed that the time spent accessing e-resources varied significantly among respondents. Approximately 50% engaged with e-resources for less than one hour per week, 39% utilized e-resources for one to three hours weekly, while only 11% reported spending more than three hours per week primarily among postgraduate students and faculty members Figure 10.

The preferred devices for accessing e-resources included personal laptops (29%) and mobile devices (54%), reflecting a trend toward mobile accessibility. Additionally, the analysis indicated that academic requirements significantly influenced usage patterns, with students often using e-resources for assignments and research purposes. The usage was further correlated with academic performance, as those who reported regular use of e-resources tended to achieve higher grades Figure 11.

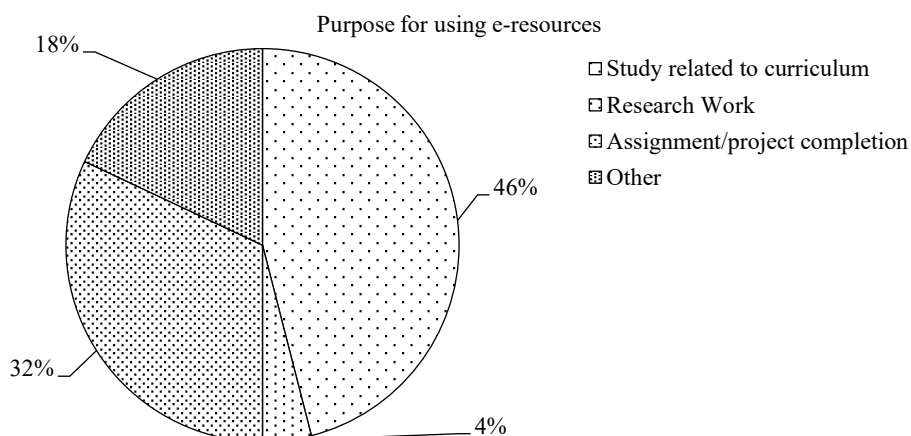


Figure 8. Priority in the purpose for using e-resources.

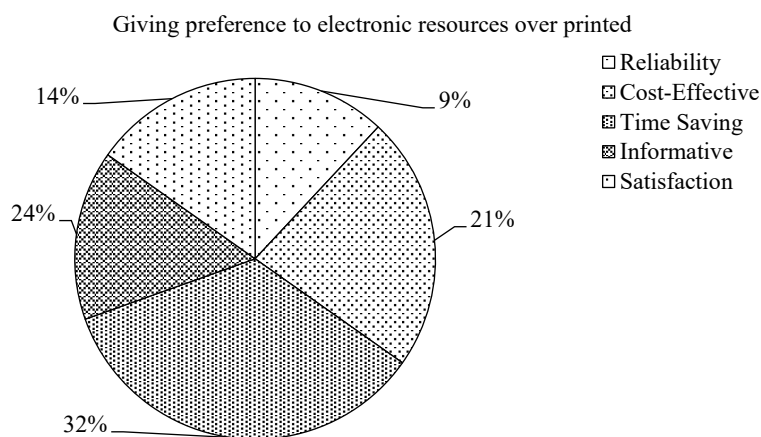


Figure 9. Giving preference to electronic resources over printed.

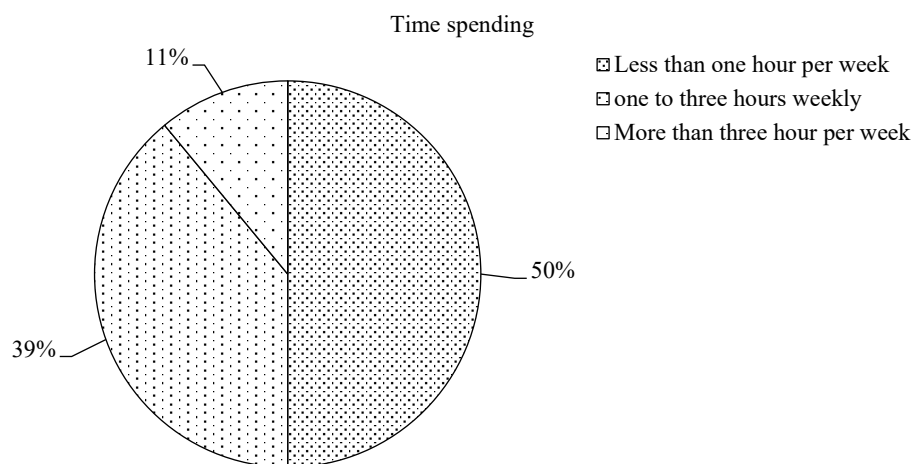


Figure 10. Time spending to accessing e-resources.

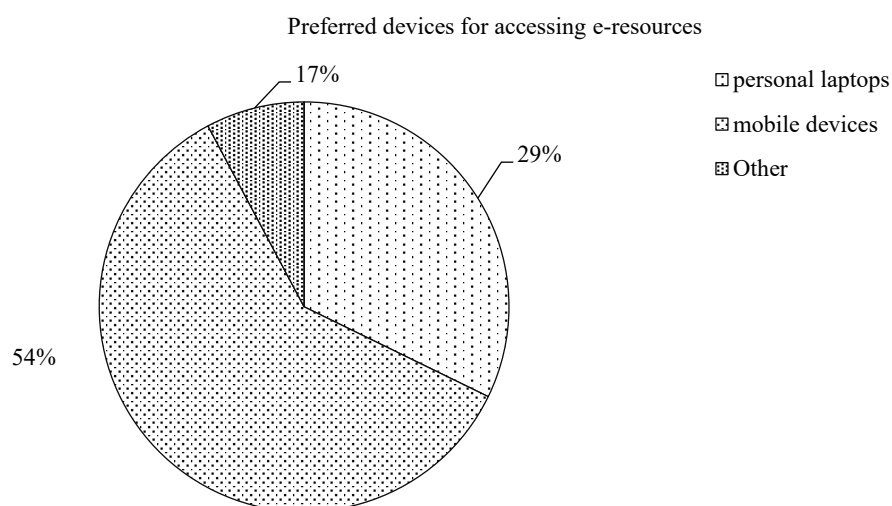


Figure 11. Preferred devices for accessing e-resources.

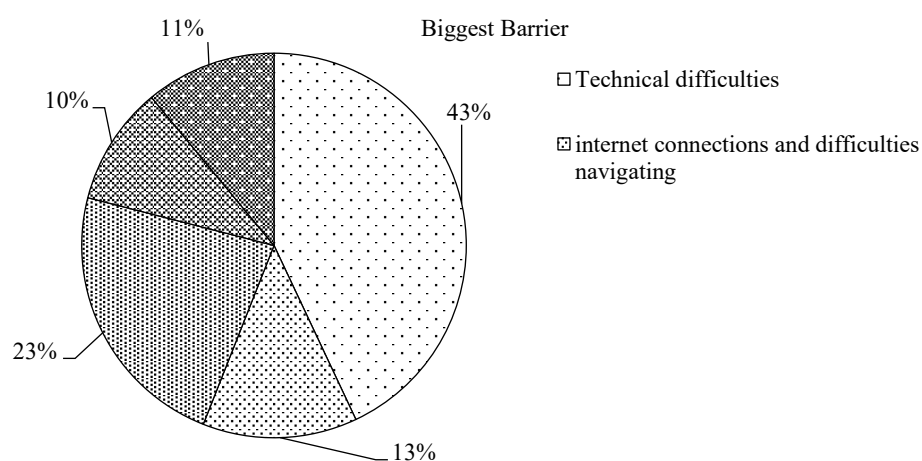


Figure 12. The biggest barrier in using e-resources.

Barriers to Usage

Figure 12 shows that despite the potential benefits of e-resources, various barriers hindered their effective use. Technical difficulties were the most commonly cited challenge, with 13% of respondents

experiencing issues such as slow internet connections and difficulties navigating online platforms. Additionally, a lack of training on how to effectively utilize e-resources was reported by 23% of respondents as a significant barrier. Many users expressed feelings of overwhelm due to the vast amount of information available, which contributed to a reluctance to engage with e-resources. Other barriers included insufficient access to necessary hardware (10%) and a lack of awareness of the specific e-resources available (11%).

IMPORTANT FINDINGS AND SUGGESTIONS

Important Findings

- While 71% of respondents are aware of e-resources, only 63% understand their utility in supporting academic work. This discrepancy indicates that awareness does not necessarily translate into effective use or comprehension of how these resources can aid studies.
- E-books emerge as the most preferred e-resource (44%), particularly among postgraduate students. This suggests that academic level significantly influences resource preferences, with advanced students favoring e-books for deeper engagement with their studies.
- The predominant motivations for using e-resources are course-related studies (46%) and assignments (32%). This highlights that students primarily utilize these resources to meet immediate academic tasks rather than for broader research activities.
- Key reasons for favoring electronic resources include time savings (32%) and their informative nature (24%). Other reasons like cost-effectiveness (21%) and user satisfaction (14%) also play a role, but to a lesser extent.
- Time spent on e-resources varies, with approximately 50% of respondents using them for less than one hour per week. Only 11% reported using e-resources for more than three hours weekly, indicating a potential underutilization among a significant portion of users, especially outside postgraduate students and faculty.
- Most users prefer accessing e-resources via mobile devices (54%), followed by personal laptops (29%), reflecting a shift towards mobile accessibility in academic settings.
- Technical difficulties (13%) and a lack of training (23%) are significant barriers to effective engagement with e-resources. Many users feel overwhelmed by the vast amount of information, leading to hesitancy in utilizing these resources fully.

Suggestions

- Libraries should implement comprehensive training sessions focused on how to effectively utilize e-resources. This could include workshops, online tutorials, and one-on-one assistance to improve users' confidence and ability to leverage these tools for academic success.
- Develop targeted communication strategies to raise awareness about the specific utility of e-resources, particularly emphasizing their application in research and academic work. This could help bridge the gap between awareness and understanding.
- Given the preference for e-books among postgraduate students, libraries should expand their e-book collections and actively promote these resources to this demographic, ensuring they are easily accessible.
- Libraries should work to minimize technical barriers by improving internet connectivity and providing robust support for navigating online platforms. Regular maintenance and updates can help ensure smooth access to e-resources.
- Strategies to encourage more frequent use could include integrating e-resources into curricula and assignments, thus motivating students to engage with these tools more consistently.

RESULT AND DISCUSSION

The findings of this study highlight a significant gap between awareness and effective utilization of e-resources in academic settings. While a robust 71% of respondents are aware of e-resources and their basic functionalities, only 63% understand how these resources can specifically support their academic

work. This discrepancy points to a critical need for libraries to enhance their educational outreach. Targeted training programs could bridge this gap, ensuring that users not only know about the resources available but also understand their practical applications for academic success.

The preference for e-books, particularly among postgraduate students, underscores the importance of tailoring library services to meet the specific needs of different user groups. As these students lean heavily on e-books for their studies, libraries should consider expanding their e-book collections and promoting these resources more vigorously within this demographic. This targeted approach could enhance user satisfaction and engagement.

The motivations behind e-resource usage reveal that students primarily engage with these tools for course-related tasks and assignments rather than for broader research purposes. This suggests that libraries might benefit from integrating e-resources into the curriculum more explicitly, encouraging students to explore their full potential for research and learning beyond immediate academic requirements.

Despite the benefits of e-resources, barriers such as technical difficulties and a lack of training significantly hinder their effective use. Addressing these barriers is essential for improving user engagement. Libraries should invest in user support services, including troubleshooting assistance and comprehensive training sessions, to empower users to navigate e-resources confidently. Furthermore, initiatives aimed at improving internet connectivity and providing access to necessary hardware will be critical in overcoming these challenges.

CONCLUSION

The study on the use and awareness of e-resources among research scholars in the Faculty of Social Sciences at BRA Bihar University, Muzaffarpur, Bihar, provides valuable insights into the digital transformation of scholarly communication. The study identifies key areas where libraries can enhance their offerings, including tailored training programs, expanded e-book collections, and strategies to integrate e-resources into academic curricula more effectively. The findings reveal a high level of awareness and regular use of e-resources, particularly e-journals and online databases, among the research scholars. However, the study also highlights the need for continued efforts to address the challenges and barriers that hinder the effective utilization of these digital resources. The key factors influencing the use and awareness of e-resources, such as access and availability, IT infrastructure and support, awareness and training, disciplinary differences, and institutional policies and strategies, should be the focus of targeted interventions.

The findings of this study provide a pathway for libraries to evolve and adapt their services in a rapidly changing digital landscape, ensuring they meet the diverse needs of their patrons effectively. By implementing the recommended strategies, including improving access and availability, enhancing IT infrastructure and support, implementing targeted training and awareness programs, promoting disciplinary-specific approaches, formulating institutional policies and strategies, and fostering collaborative initiatives, BRA Bihar University can empower its research scholars to fully leverage the benefits of e-resources.

REFERENCES

1. R. Yadav and A. Kumar, "Enhancing awareness of e-resources among university students: A call for action," *International Journal of Library and Information Science*, vol. 15, no. 1, pp. 25–35, 2023.
2. R. Sharma, "Information overload and its impact on student usage of electronic resources," *Journal of Academic Librarianship*, vol. 46, no. 1, pp. 102–108, 2020.
3. L. O. Aina, "Awareness and use of electronic resources by undergraduate students in Nigeria: A case study of the University of Ibadan," *Library Philosophy and Practice*, pp. 1–15, 2006.

4. S. Bhattacharyya, "Awareness and use of e-resources by university students: A study of selected universities in India," *International Journal of Information Science*, vol. 6, no. 4, pp. 89–95, 2015.
5. A. Gupta and R. Gupta, "Impact of e-resources on academic performance of students in higher education: A case study of selected universities," *Journal of Academic Librarianship*, vol. 45, no. 2, pp. 134–140, 2019.
6. A. Verma and P. Sharma, "E-resource usage among technical and non-technical students: A comparative analysis," *Journal of Information Science*, vol. 47, no. 4, pp. 523–532, 2021.
7. P. Tiwari, S. Kumar, and R. Singh, "Utilization of multimedia resources among university students: An exploratory study," *Desidoc Journal of Library & Information Technology*, vol. 39, no. 3, pp. 145–150, 2019.
8. R. Kaur, S. Sharma, and R. Gupta, "The impact of e-resources on students' research skills and academic performance: A study of Indian universities," *Journal of Information Science*, vol. 46, no. 3, pp. 293–304, 2020.
9. R. Gupta, A. Kaur, and S. Sharma, "Correlation between e-resource usage and academic performance among university students," *Journal of Educational Technology Systems*, vol. 51, no. 1, pp. 45–59, 2023.
10. R. Kaur and S. Kaur, "Utilization of e-resources among engineering and science students: A comparative study," *Library Herald*, vol. 55, no. 4, pp. 311–319, 2017.
11. A. Khan, "Enhancing user competence in accessing e-resources: A case for training sessions in academic libraries," *Library Management*, vol. 42, no. 5, pp. 327–335, 2021.
12. S. Sharma and R. Kaur, "E-resources awareness among university students: A study of northern India," *Journal of Educational Media & Library Sciences*, vol. 59, no. 3, pp. 213–229, 2022.
13. N. Ali and K. Mahmood, "Challenges faced by students in accessing e-resources: A survey of universities in Pakistan," *Journal of Library Administration*, vol. 63, no. 2, pp. 151–166, 2023.