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Access and Use of Consortium for e-Resources in Agriculture (CeRA) by the Research Scholars and Post Graduate Students of the KRC College of Horticulture, Arabhavi, UHS Bagalkot

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Abstract

In the electronic information age, consortiums are gaining more importance. The consortia movement has entered libraries and has received attention from the information-producing community. CeRA consortium is a tremendously great effort on the part of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) to propose single-window access to e-resources to State Agricultural Universities (SAU)/ICAR institutes all over India. CeRA subscribed to e-Resources and create/facilitate an e-environment and e-access culture for faculty, scientists, research scholars, and students in the National Agricultural Research and Education System. The current study attempts to understand the access and use of CeRA among the researchers and PG students of the KRC College of Horticulture, Arabhavi (UHS, Bagalkot). The study has exposed that all the respondents are aware of CeRA and know its importance.

Keywords: CeRA, e-Resources, Consortium, Agriculture, Horticulture, Research scholars, Students.

1. INTRODUCTION

The library consortium in today's digital age for quite different from past years. the technology's impacts on all aspects of research, education, and extension activities are discernable in today's digital revolution. The main cause is that the resources that are

shared in today's consortium environment as predominantly in e-forms viz., e-journals, e-books, e-databases, etc. Hence, the technology-associated tools to support sharing the electronic resources are also important components for the success of any consortium. In India, various consortiums such as FORSA, CSIR, E-ShodhSindhu (Merged three consortium initiatives such as INDEST, UGC-INFONET, N-LIST), CeRA, IIM, HELMET, and VTU consortium have been developed to share, and exchange electronic information resources. In this regard, the development of mastery on the utilization of e-resources consortium is one of the vital requirements for the teaching community and research scholars for better performance in their role of education/teaching, research, and extension activities.

Agricultural development in the country is achieved through agricultural education, research, extension, and other agriculture/allied sectors. In this direction, several efforts have been initiated by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research, which has an established well network with the government, State Agricultural Universities, and agricultural research institutes. Accordingly with the support of ICAR under the project of the National Agricultural Innovation Programme (NAIP) in November 2007 established the CeRA consortium. The present study aims to create awareness and use of the CeRA consortium among researchers and PG students of KRC College of Horticulture, Arabhavi.

2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

- The study observed that respondents frequently used the CeRA consortium and also revealed that respondents faced while using CeRA was the non-availability of many important resources. The study recommended that strengthening CeRA services should add more resources (Kalbande et al., 2012).
- The study explored that the utilization of electronic journals has increased and is frequently accessed as compared to printed journals, which also explored that most of the faculty have accepted the resources in e-form. Faculty stated that searching e-journals/e-resources at their respective departments as well as the library and the use of e-journals mainly supports their research need (Dhingra, 2013).

- The study shows that respondents of the PA University are using a greater number of e-resources available within CeRA and also clearly indicates that respondents are satisfied with CeRA. Studies suggest the university should conduct an orientation programme related to CeRA regularly and it helps increase the number of CeRA users (Kaur & Singh, 2016).
- In another study conducted by Madhu in 2018 revealed that most of the respondents (69.57%) used CeRA consortia resources and few (30.43%) not used the CeRA consortia. It found that Annual Reviews, Springer Link, ISHS, and Science Direct were regularly accessed databases through CeRA among the scientists (Madhu, 2018).
- The study found that the library and department is the key hub where faculty members and research scholars frequently access the e-journals and are in need of orientation programmes with respect to the make use of CeRA e-journal to succeed the complications while using CeRA resources (Nagaraju & Sujatha, 2018).
- The study revealed that the CeRA consortium usage trend increased among scholars. Indianjournals.com has been a widely used e-resource among the accessible various e-journals/e-databases in the CeRA by respondents for their respective research studies (Krishna, 2019)
- Another study revealed that Agricultural University Library is the place with much access/searches to CeRA consortium by respondents and maximum of the respondents used of CeRA for their research work. Respondents demanded print copy of journals in accumulation to electronic journals. In CeRA availability of back volumes only 10 years as archive (Rathod et al., 2020).

3. Consortium for e-Resources in Agriculture (CeRA)

The CeRA consortium is mainly focused on agricultural/horticultural and allied sciences libraries under the Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) for National Agricultural Research and Education System (NARES) Libraries. With the support of the ICAR under the project of the National Agricultural Innovation Programme (NAIP) has in November 2007 established the CeRA Consortium and successfully launched on April 2008. At present 152

Consortium members consist of agricultural institutes-ICAR and Central/State Agricultural Universities. The main objective of CeRA was to subscribe to e-Resources and create/facilitate an e-environment and e-access culture for faculty/scientists and research scholars in the NARES System. CeRA provided facilities through IP authentication, remote access facility, and a system of document delivery requests (ICAR, 2022).

4. About the K.R.C. College of Horticulture, Arabhavi

The college was established in 1994 and is presently located at Arabhavi belongs to Gokak Taluka, Belagavi district in Karnataka, India. It was established to strengthen teaching, research and transfer of technology to the farmers of North Karnataka. Now, it has been functioning as a constituent college of University of Horticultural Sciences, Bagalkot. The KRCCH has been offered a undergraduate, postgraduate and PhD programme. At present, there are 41 teachers and 350 students are for the institute and the Dean of the college is responsible for all administrative and developmental initiatives.

4.1. About the K.R.C.C.H. Library

It is well known, at present the K.R.C.C.H library has a collection of 16,400 books and also, the library has been subscribing to over 55 National and 08 International periodicals related to horticulture, agriculture and allied subjects. Also, the library has an institutional membership with the CeRA Consortium and ARIS-Agricultural Research Information Systems which can facilitate and helps to access electronic containing information of e-Journals and e-Books. Along with that, the library has contained 780 theses. The library provides facilities such as photocopying of scientific papers, a compilation of bibliographies and inter-library loans, etc., services to their users.

5. OBJECTIVES

1. To assess the awareness and level of understanding of CeRA consortium among the respondents.
2. To understand the purpose of use of CeRA consortium by the respondents.
3. To determine the frequency of use of CeRA consortium by the respondents.
4. To identify the satisfaction of respondents while using CeRA consortium.
5. To investigate the problems faced by the respondents in accessing CeRA consortium.

6. SCOPE AND LIMITATION

The present study is carried out with a focussed scope and is limited to knowing and understanding the access and use of CeRA among the randomly selected samples of KRC College of Horticulture, Arabhavi (UHS, Bagalkot). The samples of this study are chosen in view of the element of ICAR and University of Horticultural Sciences, Bagalkot.

7. METHODOLOGY

The adopted the survey with structured questionnaire methodology. The questionnaire was circulated randomly amongst the selected samples category of research scholars and students. Out of 140 samples selected randomly, 130 responses were received with the response rate of 92.86%. In addition to the questionnaire method, respondents were also interviewed to provide more clarity on the questions and record correct response. The collected data is further analysed, tabulated, and interpreted.

8. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Gender wise distribution

From the Table1 revealed that out of 130 respondents, 79(60.77%) are female and 51(39.23%) are male and it's shows that in the present study female respondents are more.

The Table 1 also depicts that 31(67.39%) of research scholar and 48(57.14%) PG students are female. 36 (42.86%) PG students and 15(32.61%) of research scholars are male.

Table-1: Gender-wise distribution.

Gender	Research Scholars (N=46)	PG Students (N=84)	Total (N=130)
Male	15(32.61%)	36 (42.86%)	51(39.23%)
Female	31(67.39%)	48(57.14%)	79(60.77%)

Awareness of CeRA Consortium.

Table 2 indicates that all of the respondents, 127 (97.69%) say 'Yes' and 3(2.31%) of respondents say 'No' regarding awareness of CeRA.

Table 2 also indicates that 100% of the researchers aware of the CeRA consortium. 81(96.43%) of PG students aware of CeRA consortium and only 3(3.57%) of PG students not aware of CeRA consortium.

Table-2: Awareness of CeRA among respondents

Opinion	Research Scholars (N=46)	PG Students (N=84)	Total (N=130)
Yes	46(100%)	81(96.43%)	127 (97.69%)
No	0(0%)	3(3.57%)	3(2.31%)

Sources of Awareness of CeRA

Table 3 shows that 124(95.38%) respondents expressed 'Library Website/ Notice Board' as the main source to get information about CeRA consortium, 58(44.62%) respondents mentioned 'Library Professional', while 54(41.54%) respondents stated 'Friends/Colleagues', and only 5(3.85%) of them revealed 'Internet'. It is clearly indicated that Library Website/ Notice Board and Library Professionals are the key resource to get information on CeRA consortium.

Table 3: Sources of awareness about CeRA

Sources	Research Scholars (N=46)	PG Students (N=84)	Total (N=130)
Library Website/ Notice Board	46(100%)	78(92.86%)	124(95.38%)
Library Professional	34(73.91%)	24(28.57%)	58(44.62%)
Friends/Colleagues	0(0%)	54(64.29%)	54(41.54%)
Internet	0(0%)	5(5.95%)	5(3.85%)
Advertisement	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)

Multiple Choice Question

Places of CeRA access

From the Table-4 observed that most 124(95.38%) of the respondents access CeRA consortium from 'Library', 71(54.62%) access CeRA consortium from 'Department', 57(43.85%) access CeRA consortium from 'Computer lab', 14(10.77%) access CeRA consortium from 'Hostel' and only 2(1.54%) access CeRA consortium from 'Home'.

Table 4 also observed that 100% of the research scholars and 92.86% of the PG students' access CeRA consortium from 'Library' and it's clearly shows that the library is the key accessible gateway to CeRA consortium.

Table 4: Places to access CeRA

Places	Research Scholars (N=46)	PG Students	Total (N=130)
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		(N=84)	
Library	46(100%)	78(92.86%)	124(95.38%))
Department	28(60.87%)	43(51.19%)	71(54.62%)
Computer lab	25(54.35%)	32(38.10%)	57(43.85%)
Hostel	10(21.74%)	4(4.76%)	14(10.77%)
Home	0(0%)	2(2.38%)	2(1.54%)

Multiple Choice Question

Frequency of use of CeRA-Consortium

Table-5 shows that 70(53.85%) respondents are using CeRA consortium 'daily', 53(40.77%) 'several times in a week', 4(3.07%) 'occasionally', 2(1.54%) once in a week', and only 1(0.77%) are using once in a month.

Table 5 also shows that most 38(82.61%) of the research scholars are using CeRA consortium daily and 45(53.57%) PG students are using several times in a week. Followed by 32(38.10%) PG students are using daily and 8(17.39%) research scholars are using several times in a week.

Table 5: Frequency of use of CeRA-Consortium

Frequency	Research Scholars (N=46)	PG Students (N=84)	Total (N=130)
Daily	38(82.61%)	32(38.10%)	70(53.85%)
Several times in a week	8(17.39%)	45(53.57%)	53(40.77%)
Once in a week	0(0%)	2(2.38%)	2(1.54%)
Once in a month	0(0%)	1(1.19%)	1(0.77%)
Occasionally	0(0%)	4(4.76%)	4(3.07%)

Purpose of Use of CeRA-Consortium

The Table 6 depicts that all 130(100%) of respondents use CeRA consortium with the prime purpose of improving their research work, followed by 61(46.92%) of respondents 'Publishing Article/Books', about 19 (14.61%) use 'for their teaching' purpose, 3(2.31 %) use 'to keep up to date in subject area', and 1(0.77%) of respondents use 'others' purpose.

Table 6 also depicts that 46(100%) of research scholars and 84(100%) of PG students are use CeRA consortium for their research work purpose, followed by 38(82.61%) of research scholar and 23(27.38%) of PG students use consortium for publishing articles/books.

Table 6: Purpose of Use of CeRA-Consortium

Purpose	Research Scholars (N=46)	PG Students (N=84)	Total (N=130)
Research work	46(100%)	84(100%)	130(100%)
Publishing Article/Books	38(82.61%)	23(27.38%)	61(46.92%)
For Teaching	17(36.96%)	2(2.38%)	19 (14.61%)
Keep up to date in subject area	1(2.17%)	3(3.57%)	3(2.31%)
Others	0(0%)	1(1.19%)	1(0.77%)

Preferred search methods

Table 7 shows that about 123(94.62%) respondents prefer keyword wise search to retrieve articles/information in the CeRA consortium, followed by 85(65.38%) to author, 68(52.31%) to subject', 48(36.92%) to title, and only 2(1.54%) to publishers.

Table 7 also depicts that 46(100%) of research scholars and 77(91.67%) PG students prefer keyword wise search to retrieve articles/information in the CeRA consortium, followed by 38(82.61%) research scholars and 47(55.95%) PG students prefer author wise.

Table 7: Preferred search methods

Search methods	Research Scholars (N=46)	PG Students (N=84)	Total (N=130)
Author	38(82.61%)	47(55.95%)	85(65.38%)
Title	36(78.26%)	12(14.29%)	48(36.92%)
Keyword	46(100%)	77(91.67%)	123(94.62%)
Subject	23(50%)	45(53.57%)	68(52.31%)
Publishers	1(2.17%)	1(1.19%)	2(1.54%)

Preferred subject areas of CeRA

Table 8 shows the preferred subject areas of CeRA among respondents. Table 8 shows that majority 129(99.2%) of respondents give preferred to 'Agriculture & Biological Sciences'

subject area of CeRA and followed by 121(93.1%) preferred to ‘Basic Sciences’, 13(10%) to ‘Biomedical Sciences’ and only 1(0.77%) preferred to ‘Arts & Humanities’, ‘Engineering & Technology (JET)’, and ‘Social & Management Sciences’.

Table 8: Preferred subject areas of CeRA

Subject areas	Research Scholars (N=46)	PG Students (N=84)	Total (N=130)
Agriculture & Biological Sciences	46(100%)	83(98.81%)	129(99.2%)
Arts & Humanities	0(0%)	1(1.19%)	1(0.77%)
Basic Sciences	46(100%)	75(89.29%)	121(93.1%)
Biomedical Sciences	5(10.87%)	8(9.52%)	13(10%)
Engineering & Technology (JET)	0(0%)	1(1.19%)	1(0.77%)
Social & Management Sciences	0(0%)	1(1.19%)	1(0.77%)

Preferred publishers’ E-journals/databases accessed through CeRA

Table 9 depicts that 121(93.08%) of respondents access e-journals/databases of ‘Indian journals’, 74(56.92%) Springer, 73(56.15%) ISHS, 66(50.77%) Annual Reviews, 64(49.23%) American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS), 62(47.69%) Elsevier- Science Direct, 61(46.9%) CABI, 35(26.92%) Taylor and Francis, and only 1(0.77%) American Society of Microbiology, American Society of Agronomy, CSIRO and Oxford University Press.

Table 9 also revealed that 100% of research scholars are preferring and accessing use E-journal/databases published by ‘Indian journals’, ‘International Society for Horticultural Science’, and ‘Annual Reviews’. 89.29% of the PG students are preferring and access use of E-journal/databases published by ‘Indian journals’, followed by 42.86% Springer.

Table 9: Preferred publishers’ E-journals/databases accessed through CeRA

Publishers	Research Scholars (N=46)	PG Students (N=84)	Total (N=130)
American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS)	38(82.61%)	26(30.95%)	64(49.23%)
American Society of Microbiology	0(0%)	1(1.19%)	1(0.77%)

American Society of Agronomy	1(2.17%)	0(0%)	1(0.77%)
International Society for Horticultural Science (ISHS)	46(100%)	27(32.14%)	73(56.15%)
Annual Reviews	46(100%)	20(23.81%)	66(50.77%)
CABI	39(84.78%)	22(26.19%)	61(46.9%)
CSIRO	1(2.17%)	0(0%)	1(0.77%)
Elsevier- Science Direct	42(91.30%)	20(23.81%)	62(47.69%)
Indian journal	46(100%)	75(89.29%)	121(93.08%)
Oxford University Press	1(2.17%)	0(0%)	1(0.77%)
Springer	38(82.61%)	36(42.86%)	74(56.92%)
Taylor and Francis	24(52.17%)	11(13.10%)	35(26.92%)

Preferred downloading format of CeRA

Table 10 shows the preferred downloading format of CeRA consortium among respondents. Table 10 depicts that, all 130(100%) of respondents say 'PDF' as the preferred article downloading format.

Table 10: Preferred downloading format of CeRA consortium

Format	Research Scholars (N=46)	PG Students (N=84)	Total (N=130)
PDF	46(100%)	84(100%)	130(100%)
HTML	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)
Any other	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)

Strategy use for Improving research activity through CeRA

Table 11 indicates that the respondents reaction to 'CeRA consortium save the time by searching articles easier and faster' is strongly agreed by majority of 121(93.08%) respondents, and only 9(6.92%) to agree mode, followed by 'Easy to use e-journals and we can create our own mini library' is strongly agreed by 119(91.54%) respondents and 11(8.46%) to agree mode. These two aspects are a moral sign of support for the expansion of a CeRA consortium. However, in terms of 'Authentic information relating to specific research articles through CeRA' concept is attributed by strongly agree to 83(63.85%) respondents followed by 47(36.15%) respondents to agree. While 88(67.69%) respondents

gave option to agree to ‘CeRA provides good-quality articles’ followed by 42(32.31%) to strongly agree mode. Then, in term of ‘Multiple users can access it at a time’ by 127(97.69%) respondents to agree followed by 3(2.31%) to strongly agree mode.

Table 11: Strategy use for improving research activity through CeRA consortium

Choices/ Activities	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Disagree strong
Save the time by searching articles easier and faster	121(93.08%)	9(6.92%)	0(0%)	0(0%)
CeRA provides good-quality articles	42(32.31%)	88(67.69%)	0(0%)	0(0%)
Authentic information relating to specific research articles through CeRA	83(63.85%)	47(36.15%)	0(0%)	0(0%)
Multiple users can access it at a time	3(2.31%)	127(97.69%)	0(0%)	0(0%)
Easy to use e-journals and we can create our own mini library	119(91.54%)	11(8.46%)	0(0%)	0(0%)

Problems encountered while accessing/using CeRA

The problems encountered while accessing/using CeRA consortium has been shown in Table 12. Table 12 depicts that most 122(93.85%) of the respondents faced a problem is the difficulty in finding relevant information, followed by 65(50%) with restricted access, 63(48.465%) Full text not available, 61(46.92%) lack of awareness in access e-resources, 57(43.85%) lack of sufficient e-journals, 56(43.08%) thesis not available and slow response of requested articles, and 54(41.54%) respondents opine as problem with the connectivity.

Table 12: Problems encountered while using CeRA

Frequency	Research Scholars (N=46)	PG Students (N=84)	Total (N=130)
Lack of awareness in access e-resources	6(13.04%)	55(65.48%)	61(46.92%)
Restricted access	32(69.57%)	33(39.29%)	65(50%)
Full text not available	35(76.09%)	28(33.33%)	63(48.465%)
Difficulty in finding relevant information	44(95.65%)	78(92.86%)	122(93.85%)

Problem with the connectivity	14(30.43%)	40(47.62%)	54(41.54%)
Lack of sufficient e-journals	13(28.26%)	44(52.38%)	57(43.85%)
Thesis not available	17(36.96%)	39(46.43%)	56(43.08%)
Slow response of requested articles	23(50%)	33(39.29%)	56(43.08%)

Attitude towards Usefulness of e-Journal through CeRA

Table 13 revealed that most of the respondents 72(55.38%) opined to say very useful, 58(44.62%) as useful. It is revealed that none has given to ‘somewhat useful and not useful’ category.

Table 13: Attitude towards Usefulness of e-Journal through CeRA

Attitude	Research Scholars (N=46)	PG Students (N=84)	Total (N=130)
Very Useful	32(69.57%)	40(47.62%)	72(55.38%)
Useful	14(30.43%)	44(52.38%)	58(44.62%)
Somewhat useful	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)
Not useful	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)

Satisfaction level of accessing e-resources in CeRA

Table 14 shows the satisfaction level of accessing e-resources in CeRA consortium. Table 14 shows that about 72(55.38%) of respondents are ‘satisfied’ with e-Journals in CeRA consortium, followed by 57(43.85%) of respondents are ‘highly satisfied’, and only 1(0.77%) of respondents are ‘dissatisfied’ with e-Journals available through CeRA consortium.

Table 14: Satisfaction level of accessing e-resources in CeRA

Level of satisfaction	Research Scholars (N=46)	PG Students (N=84)	Total (N=130)
Highly satisfied	26(56.52%)	31(36.90%)	57(43.85%)
satisfied	20(43.48%)	52(61.90%)	72(55.38%)
Dissatisfied	0(0%)	1(1.19%)	1(0.77%)

Need for the Awareness Program

Table 15 indicates that 130(100%) respondents have said positive opinions about having user

awareness programs i.e., workshops, seminars, orientation programmes, and special training for the effective use of CeRA consortium. It can be suggested that all of the respondents are in need of orientation programs.

Table 15: Need for the User Awareness program

Opinion	Research Scholars (N=46)	PG Students (N=84)	Total (N=130)
Yes	46(100%)	84(100%)	130(100%)
No	0(0%)	0(0%)	0(0%)

9. MAJOR FINDINGS

1. It is found that 115(58.7%) respondents are female and 81 (41.3%) are male respondents.
2. 100% of respondents are aware of CeRA consortium.
3. Most of the respondents 124(95.38%) access CeRA consortium from 'Library'. It is indicated that the library is the main accessible gateway to CeRA consortium by the respondents.
4. 124(95.38%) respondents expressed 'Library Website/ Notice Board', and 58(44.62%) respondents mentioned 'Library Professional as the main source to get information about CeRA consortium.
5. Highest, 123(94.62%) respondents prefer keyword wise search to retrieve articles/information in the CeRA consortium, followed by 85(65.38%) respondents prefer author wise search.
6. 100% of respondents use CeRA consortium with the prime purpose of improving their research work.
7. It is identified from the study that the all 130(100%) of respondents expressed that PDF format is a chosen format for taking/downloading articles in CeRA consortium.
8. The majority of 126(96.92%) respondents expressed that using the CeRA consortium is very important i.e., 'Easy to use, available up-to-date information, Easy accessibility, provides graphical capabilities and hyperlinks facilities.
9. The study showed that the Highest 122 (93.8%) respondents are facing the problem of 'difficulty in finding relevant information', 65(50%) respondents faced the 'restricted access' and followed by 63(48.5%) with 'Full text not available.

10. Large number of 125 (96.2%) respondents expressed that CeRA consortium helps to 'Save time in literature search, followed by 60 (46.2%) of respondents saying 'Improve the thesis/articles standard'.

10. SUGGESTIONS AND CONCLUSION

Based on the findings of this study, some suggestions are made for enhance the utilisation of CeRA consortium for worthwhile research.

- The Universities/institutes should conduct orientation programmes/workshops/seminars on awareness and importance of CeRA regularly.
- The research scholars and Postgraduate students should be trained in access and usage skills of CeRA. Then, CeRA utilisation can be enhanced.

Conclusion

Forming a consortium of libraries is an emerging opportunity of libraries since libraries face a resource crunch, they need to optimize the infrastructure and access to information through the consortium and to meet the user requirements. Libraries need to take an active part in major efforts at the national and international levels. Electronic publishing is the route for the consortia approach. library consortia can be organized according to a variety of models. The CeRA is to reduce the unit cost of e-Information and improve oral resource sharing among members. But respondents expressed that a lack of awareness in access e-resources and struggle in searching relevant information. In this connection, the study suggests the concerned authorities to conduct workshops/seminars/conferences on topics related to importance and utilisation of CeRA consortium from timely which are very helpful to respondents.

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