ABSTRACT

Agriculture has been the ancient occupation of mankind and it is the mainstay of India’s economy and development of farming community. It has been and will continue to be the nucleus of Indian economy supporting 55% of the population contributes nearly 19 % of the GDP and has a share of about 13% in the national exports. The Indian farmers have demonstrated that given the right technology and guidance, they can deliver the goods. However the rapid pace of information and technology generation certainly calls for augmentation of agriculture extension to build indigenous capacity to develop human resources. In this endeavor, course curricula will call for revision to enhance relevance and practical utility of education through diversified subjects to serve the cause of employment and country’s economic development.

Today, it is practically impossible for any agricultural scientist or researcher to carry out his work without using the internet technologies. He / she greatly depend upon these electronic innovation tools for accessing electronic information resources in the form of e-journals relating to agricultural research. It is very evident that the use of electronic media to support scientific communication has been one of the paradigm shifts in the practice of science today. The way the scholarly information is disseminated throughout the world, has changed, thanks to the transformation of print journals to e-journals. In fact, e-journals have effectively changed the way the information is accessed and used.

Today libraries are undergoing transformation: on one side they are facing three major challenges – shrinking budgets, shortage of space and increasing cost of publications; on the other hand there are the challenges posed by advances in the field of information and communication technology. The remarkable growth of electronic information in the last few decades has changed the scenario and has solved the problem of space. In this digital era digitized information is available on CDs, audio cassettes, video cassettes, as well as on the internet. This property, which Daniel Atkins calls digital coherence, allows all the objects in a digital library – sounds, images, texts, and everything else – to be treated in essentially the same way. Information technology has changed the complexion of the libraries in a big way.
Electronic resources play a vital role in the field of basic and agricultural science.

From the review of literature it is learnt that there are quite a number of studies have been conducted on information use pattern by the clients belonging to various disciplines and library professionals. But only a few studies have been done on the information use pattern by the teachers and students in agricultural science colleges in Karnataka. A study on the use and impact of e-resources at these institutions is the need of the hour, and the results will facilitate and encourage other institutions to follow the same. The results will help collection developers in designing suitable policy and assess the technical intricacies faced by the library staff in providing effective electronic information services. It will also help in designing the efficient infrastructure requirements for managing journals in both the formats.

Hence the present study proved to be important to assess the information use pattern by the users (teachers and students) working in agricultural science colleges across Karnataka.

Objectives of the Study

To find out the nature of information resources and services available in the agricultural science colleges in Karnataka. To examine the information needs of teachers and students of agricultural science colleges in Karnataka. To examine the information use pattern by the teachers and students of agricultural science colleges in Karnataka. To study the teachers and students approach to information in different types of information sources.

The thesis consists of five chapters; overview of each chapter is outlined as below.

The first chapter, as a convention provides an overview to the topic of research and establishes the need and importance of the study undertaken, clearly defined and discussed. It states the research problem, definition of concepts, its objectives and hypotheses, delineates the scope and limitation of the study, methodology used for data collection, data collection instrument, sample selection and data analysis techniques used. It also explains the framework of the thesis briefly.

The second chapter discusses about literature review conducted and that gives a glimpse of information resource usage and user studies and other related areas both
in India and other countries. Here the various publications published which are relevant to the present study are stated in brief. These studies are presented to highlight the changes in use pattern of e-journals from the early years of e-journals introduction to the present.

The Third chapter deals with an overview of Karnataka and a brief description of the agricultural colleges to study with an emphasis on their set-up. To gather the information on colleges and its location, brief topography of the city and university, date of establishment of the college, number of students, faculty members, research centers, Ph.D. programs, and library.

The fourth chapter devoted to the interpretation of primary data on use pattern of print and electronic information resources. By using relevant statistical techniques in presenting the data with regard to extent of e-journals accessibility at university libraries, awareness and familiarity, access and use, reading pattern, advantages and dis-advantages, importance and satisfaction, dependency and problems faced; necessity and format of journals used.

The fifth chapter provides the summary of findings drawn from the present study. Further, it gives suggestions to improve the use of electronic resources and recommendations for further research and conclusion with respect to the Agricultural Science College Libraries in Karnataka.

Bibliography of the references; questionnaire used in the present study; and the list of sixteen agricultural college libraries in Karnataka are provided at the end as appendices.

This survey has served as a benchmark to know the information use pattern of the teachers and students of Agriculture Science Colleges in Karnataka. It is hoped that a results of the study will enable the agricultural science libraries to evaluate, realign resources and services according to user’s requirements effectively.