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## Review of E-Resource Utilisation among Research Scholars in Ayurveda Colleges of Maharashtra: Adoption Patterns and Challenges

**Devendra M. Ruparel**

Research Scholar, R. T. Ayurved Mahavidyalaya, Akola

**Dr. Ashish S. Raut**

Librarian, Shri Shivaji College of Arts, Commerce & Science, Akola

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### ARTICLE DETAILS

**Research Paper**

**Keywords:**

*Ayurveda Colleges, Awareness, E-Resources, Digital Literacy, Medical Education, Utilisation, Research Scholars*

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### ABSTRACT

The integration of electronic resources (e-resources) has become pivotal in contemporary research, yet its adoption within traditional fields like Ayurveda faces unique challenges. This review paper examines the utilisation of e-resources among research scholars in Ayurveda colleges across Maharashtra, focusing on adoption patterns and the obstacles encountered. By synthesizing existing literature and empirical studies, this paper aims to provide a comprehensive overview of the current state of e-resource usage, identify key challenges, and suggest potential strategies for enhancing digital resource integration in Ayurveda research.

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### Introduction:

Ayurveda, a traditional system of medicine, is experiencing resurgence in contemporary healthcare and research. The availability and utilisation of e-resources have become increasingly crucial for research scholars in this field, offering access to a vast repository of scientific literature, databases, and digital tools. E-resources, including online journals, e-books, databases, and digital archives, have the potential to significantly enhance the quality and efficiency of research in Ayurveda (Kumar & Singh, 2020). However, the adoption of these resources within Ayurveda colleges in Maharashtra is influenced by various factors, including digital literacy, infrastructure, and cultural perceptions.

This review paper aims to explore the utilisation of e-resources among research scholars in Ayurveda colleges in Maharashtra, focusing on adoption patterns and the challenges encountered. Understanding these patterns and challenges is essential for developing strategies to improve e-resource integration and enhance research productivity in Ayurveda.

### **Review of Literature:**

The integration of electronic resources (e-resources) into academic research has been a subject of extensive scholarly inquiry. Studies across various disciplines have highlighted the transformative potential of e-resources in enhancing research productivity and knowledge dissemination.

- **General E-Resource Adoption:**

- Research by Tenopir and King (2004) has consistently demonstrated the positive correlation between access to electronic journals and research output. Their work emphasizes the efficiency gains and broader accessibility afforded by digital resources.
- Nicholas et al. (2008) explored the information-seeking behavior of researchers in the digital environment, identifying common usage patterns and challenges. Their findings highlight the importance of digital literacy and user-friendly interfaces.

- **E-Resources in Medical and Traditional Medicine:**

- In the medical field, studies have examined the impact of e-resources on evidence-based practice and clinical decision-making. Greenhalgh and Peacock (2005) discussed the challenges of integrating digital information into clinical practice, emphasizing the need for critical appraisal skills.
- Specifically, regarding traditional medicine, there is emerging research. Studies have begun to look into the digitization of traditional texts and the use of online databases for ethnobotanical and pharmacological research. Works by Smith (2015) have begun to explore the challenges of digitizing, and protecting traditional knowledge.

- **Digital Literacy and Infrastructure:**

- The importance of digital literacy in e-resource utilisation has been emphasized by several studies. Bawden (2001) defined digital literacy as the ability to understand and use information in multiple formats from a wide range of sources.<sup>1</sup>



- Infrastructure challenges, particularly in developing countries, have been a recurring theme. Studies by Unwin (2009) have looked into the digital divide, and how it impacts access to information.
- **Ayurveda-Specific Literature:**
  - While comprehensive reviews on e-resource utilisation in Ayurveda colleges are limited, some studies have focused on specific aspects. Kumar and Singh (2020) demonstrated the positive impact of e-resources on Ayurveda research productivity, highlighting the importance of access to relevant databases.
  - Patel and Sharma (2019) have shown the direct correlation of availability of e-resources, and research output in Ayurveda colleges.
  - Chavan and Gupta (2020) have begun to highlight the language barriers that are present in the field of Ayurveda.

This review of literature provides a context for the current study, highlighting the broader trends and challenges in e-resource utilisation. It underscores the need for a focused examination of the adoption patterns and challenges faced by research scholars in Ayurveda colleges in Maharashtra.

### **Adoption Patterns of E-Resources:**

The adoption of e-resources among research scholars in Ayurveda colleges is influenced by several factors, including the availability of resources, digital literacy, and institutional support.

- **Availability of Resources:** The availability of relevant e-resources is a primary determinant of their utilisation. Studies have shown that access to comprehensive databases like PubMed, Scopus, and specialized Ayurveda databases significantly impacts research productivity (Patel & Sharma, 2019). Institutions that provide access to a wide range of e-resources through subscriptions and consortia tend to have higher utilisation rates.
- **Digital Literacy:** Digital literacy, encompassing the ability to effectively search, evaluate, and utilize digital information, plays a crucial role in e-resource adoption. Research scholars with higher digital literacy levels are more likely to utilize e-resources effectively (Deshmukh & Rao, 2021). Training programs and workshops on digital literacy can enhance scholars' ability to utilize these resources.



- **Institutional Support:** Institutional support, including infrastructure, funding, and policies, is essential for promoting e-resource utilisation. Institutions that provide adequate internet connectivity, computer labs, and technical support tend to have higher adoption rates. Furthermore, policies that encourage the use of e-resources in research and teaching can create a supportive environment.
- **Usage Patterns:** Studies indicate that research scholars primarily use e-resources for literature reviews, accessing research articles, and conducting data analysis. The use of specific e-resources varies depending on the research area and the scholars' familiarity with the tools (Joshi & Mehta, 2020). For example, scholars focusing on pharmacological studies may rely heavily on databases like PubMed, while those studying traditional texts may utilize digital archives.

### Challenges in E-Resource Utilisation:

Despite the potential benefits of e-resources, research scholars in Ayurveda colleges face several challenges in their utilisation.

- **Infrastructure Limitations:** Inadequate internet connectivity and limited access to computers are significant barriers to e-resource utilisation. Many Ayurveda colleges, particularly in rural areas, face challenges in providing reliable internet access and sufficient computer resources (Kulkarni & Iyer, 2018).
- **Language Barriers:** A significant portion of Ayurveda literature is in Sanskrit and other regional languages, while many e-resources are primarily in English. This language barrier can hinder the effective utilisation of e-resources by scholars who are not proficient in English (Chavan & Gupta, 2020).
- **Lack of Training and Awareness:** Many research scholars lack adequate training in utilising e-resources and digital tools. This lack of awareness and training can lead to underutilisation of available resources. Furthermore, there is often a lack of awareness about the availability of specialized Ayurveda databases and digital archives.
- **Cultural Perceptions:** Some scholars may have cultural perceptions that favor traditional methods of knowledge acquisition over digital resources. This can lead to resistance towards adopting e-resources and a preference for traditional texts and oral traditions (Singh & Verma, 2021).
- **Information Overload and Quality:** The vast amount of information available online can lead to information overload, making it challenging for scholars to identify relevant and reliable



sources. Furthermore, the quality of information available online can vary significantly, requiring scholars to develop critical evaluation skills.

- **Copyright and Access Issues:** Accessing copyrighted materials and subscription-based databases can be challenging for scholars in Ayurveda colleges. Limited funding and institutional subscriptions can restrict access to essential e-resources.

### Strategies for Enhancing E-Resource Utilisation:

To address the challenges and enhance e-resource utilisation, the following strategies are recommended:

- **Infrastructure Development:** Invest in improving internet connectivity and providing adequate computer resources in Ayurveda colleges. This includes upgrading internet bandwidth, establishing computer labs, and providing technical support.
- **Digital Literacy Training:** Conduct regular training programs and workshops on digital literacy, focusing on effective search strategies, database utilisation, and critical evaluation of online information.
- **Language Support:** Develop multilingual interfaces and translation tools for e-resources, making them accessible to scholars who are not proficient in English. Furthermore, digitize and translate traditional Ayurveda texts into multiple languages.
- **Institutional Policies:** Develop and implement institutional policies that encourage the use of e-resources in research and teaching. This includes providing funding for subscriptions, establishing digital repositories, and recognizing the use of e-resources in research evaluations.
- **Collaboration and Networking:** Foster collaboration and networking among Ayurveda colleges, research institutions, and digital resource providers. This can facilitate the sharing of best practices, resources, and expertise.
- **Development of Specialized Resources:** Encourage the development of specialized Ayurveda databases, digital archives, and online platforms that cater to the specific needs of research scholars in this field.
- **Promoting Awareness:** Conduct awareness campaigns to highlight the benefits of e-resources and address cultural perceptions that hinder their adoption. This includes organizing seminars, workshops, and conferences on digital resources in Ayurveda research.
- **Ethical Considerations and Copyright:** Implement clear ethical guidelines and policies regarding copyright and intellectual property rights to ensure responsible and legal use of e-resources.

**Conclusion:**

The utilisation of e-resources is crucial for advancing research in Ayurveda. This review has highlighted the adoption patterns and challenges faced by research scholars in Ayurveda colleges in Maharashtra. By addressing infrastructure limitations, enhancing digital literacy, and fostering institutional support, it is possible to improve e-resource utilisation and enhance research productivity. Future research should focus on developing specialized Ayurveda databases, evaluating the impact of e-resources on research outcomes, and exploring the integration of digital tools with traditional knowledge systems.

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