

# **Utilization of Online Journals by Undergraduates: A Case Study Based on the Faculty of Agriculture, Rajarata University of Sri Lanka.**

**W.P.T.Dilrukshi**

Assistant Librarian, Agriculture library, Rajarata University of Sri Lanka  
thanudilrukshi@yahoo.com

## **Abstract**

Journal publications serve a very important purpose for learning, teaching and research in any university. Before the inception and advancement of Information Communication Technology (ICT) use in library services, journals were mainly printed and manually distributed. However, current trend is to go online and access electronic journal databases.

Use of journals by undergraduates is expected to improve their academic standards and positively effect on their final year research (project) work as well (Bamidele, Omeluzor, and Amadi, 2013). Therefore, conducting a user survey was considered as a key activity to obtain information regarding the prevailing situation and enhance the current services of the library to meet the stakeholders' needs and requirements.

The objectives of this study were to find out the preferences of printed and online journals by undergraduates of the Faculty of Agriculture (FoA), and to identify obstacles faced by users in accessing and utilizing online journals.

Case study method was adopted in this study. Fourth year undergraduates of FoA, Rajarata University of Sri Lanka were selected as the population. Descriptive statistical analysis was performed.

Results of the survey has confirmed that most of the respondents (52%) preferred to use online journals to fulfill their academic needs. However, out of all the respondents, 48% of them still preferred printed journals.

Survey data also revealed obstacles faced by users of the faculty when using online journals to fulfill their academic needs. Results indicate that majority (40%) of

respondents have identified the absence of a proper training on using online resources. 26% of respondents have pointed out 'limited or inadequate time for searching information from the Internet' as another key barrier, with their busy lecture schedules. Another 18% indicated 'poor knowledge on online journals as a drawback for accessing online journals. Further, 16% of respondents have pointed out that the computer facilities available in the faculty is not sufficient.

Based on the results, it is recommended to launch a sound awareness programme for improving information literacy of users, and allocate time for library use in time tables. Also, conducting frequent training programmes and increasing computer facilities at the library would enhance the undergraduate's use of academic journals.

### **References**

Bamidele, Itunu A.; Omeluzor, Saturday U.; and Amadi, Hannah U., "Utilization of Journal Publications by Undergraduate Students of Babcock University, Nigeria" (2013). Library Philosophy and Practice (e-journal). Paper 1006. <http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/libphilprac/1006>