



# Use of digital resources by the scientists of Central Drug Research Institute (CDRI), India: A survey



Abdul Mannan Khan\*, Atika Khursheed

Integral University, Lucknow 202002, India

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## KEYWORDS

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**Abstract** The purpose of this study is to find out the level of use of digital resources by the scientists of CDRI, Lucknow (India). As a matter of fact, CDRI is among the thirty eight laboratories that are functioning under the aegis of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) of India headed by the Prime Minister of the nation as its president. CDRI is a pioneer research organization in the field of biomedical research in India. A well structured questionnaire was administered to the scientists of CDRI, Lucknow (India) to collect data regarding the use of digital resources. The survey reveals that most of the scientists are aware of the availability of digital resources and frequently use them for their research work and paper writing. They fully agree that with the usefulness of digital resources the quality of research work improves with enrichment of appurtenant contents and materials leading to high quality manuscript. It is also observed that majority of scientists of the CDRI keep themselves abreast of developments in digital resources and their proper utilization for their research projects. It is, however, found that slow downloading is the obstacle in proper and full utilization of digital resources.

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## Introduction

The rapid growth of information and communication technology since the early 1990s has greatly influenced the accessibility of information on a global level and also has played a critical role in restructuring the mechanisms by which specialized academic knowledge is validated, distributed, and made available to consumers. Most of the

libraries have changed their contemporary outlooks towards the functions and services. The environment is rapidly changing to an electronic one and the use of e-resources is the most popular source of undertaking research. Electronic resources are invaluable research tools, which complement print-based resources in any traditional library. The meaning of library changes from day by day. They offer totally new environment, new resources and new services to the users. The library collection will depend on users' needs. In the modern digital era most of the library collection will be e-resources. So, all collection of electronic resources is to provide specific, pin-pointed,

\* Corresponding author.

E-mail address: [abdulk78612@gmail.com](mailto:abdulk78612@gmail.com) (A.M. Khan).

exhaustive, expeditious dissemination of information service to their users Lal (2008).

E-resources in India became important with the advent of various library networks. The Council for Scientific and Industrial Research Consortium (CSIR E-Journals Consortium) for scientific and technical information for CSIR's Labs is one of these networks. One objective of this consortium is to promote the free flow of scholarly literature in the field of science and technology.

The main questions that arise here are related to the usability, awareness and knowledge of e-resources. The present study examines these questions.

## Historical almanac of Central Drug Research Institute (CDRI)

The Central Drug Research Institute is one of the first and one of the few laboratories that was established in India right after its independence. Now, the CDRI is among thirty eight laboratories that are functioning under the aegis of the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) of India. The Prime Minister of India serves as the Council's president. The CDRI is a pioneering organization in the field of biomedical research. It has the necessary infrastructure and expertise to develop a drug from the concept stage to the market. The Institute utilizes the latest techniques and services for developing drugs, diagnostics and vaccines to combat diseases prevalent among mankind in general and Indian population in particular. Since its establishment, on 17th Feb. 1951, the Institute has provided leadership on all fronts of pharmaceutical R&D, namely, development of new molecules, novel products, cost-effective indigenous process know-how for the institute's candidate and generic drugs/drug intermediates, quality research manpower, and training in the use of sophisticated tools and techniques in drug research. Several of the Institute's products and processes have been successfully commercialized, leading to treatment of diseases, products for both indigenous and international markets and generation of foreign exchange. The Institute has played a critical role in putting India on the international scene in drug research.

R&D activities at the CDRI are supported by a modern Knowledge Resource Centre which is comprised of a fully computerized library with a rich collection of relevant books and periodicals and on-line subscriptions to a large number of databases and periodicals. The Information Centre provides many services, including on-line responses to queries. The Centre publishes value-added current awareness periodicals. It provides services to the in-house science and technical staff, as well as to academia and industry from within the country and even to overseas users.

The inception of this modern Centre dates back to 1951 when a small library was started with a modest collection of about two thousand publications. The Library was set up primarily to meet the information needs of the scientific and technical staff of the Institute. Over time, the library grew at a fast pace and, in order to cater to the ever increasing information needs of the professionals, it systematically and gradually grew to a collection of specialized reading materials such as books, periodicals, reference works, serials and various macro & micro-documents in the

areas of biomedical research, drugs and pharmaceuticals. This highly specialized library began to draw the attention of the academic and R&D workers from other institutions in the city such as Lucknow University, King George's Medical College, the Sanjay Gandhi Post-Graduate Institute of Medical Sciences as well as several drug industry and research organizations from outside the city.

Because of the strength of the CDRI as a center of excellence and the library's rich collection of biomedical literature, the National Information System for Science & Technology (NISSAT), decided to house its National Information Center for Drugs & Pharmaceuticals (NICDAP), a Sectoral Information Centre on Drugs & Pharmaceuticals, at the CDRI library. NICDAP became part of the library in 1977. Then, the library metamorphosed into a National Information Centre in the early eighties when a wide array of information technologies was introduced in the library. The establishment of NICDAP also added a new dimension to the information services generated from its collection which were now provided to the users from all over the country and even abroad.

## Review of literature

Several studies on the use of e-resources have been carried out by students, research scholars, and teachers of various institutions all over the world. Swain and Panda (2009) in their study, 'Use of e-services by faculty members of business schools in a state of India: A study', have discussed the quantitative and qualitative use of e-resources by the faculty members of business schools of Orissa. Mounissamy and Swaroop Rani (2005) in their study, 'Evaluation of usage and usability of electronic journals,' have identified the usage and usability of e-journals by the users of the NIT, Tiruchirapalli. Appellton (2006) in his study, "Perceptions on electronic library resources in further education," described his personal experiences in the use of e-resources and their impact on teaching and learning activity. Nikam and Pramodini (2007) in their study, 'Use of e-journals and databases (subscribed by UGC-Infonet Consortium) by the University of Mysore: a survey' have analyzed the utilization of e-resources and the satisfaction levels of users of Mysore University. Haridassan and Khan (2009) in their study, 'Impact and use of e-resources by social scientists in NASSDOC, India', have identified the acceptance of e-resources in the National Social Science Documentation Centre (NASSDOC) library in New Delhi, and determined their usage, performance, degree of user satisfaction, and barriers faced in the access of e-resources.

Ozoemelem (2009) found that there is a low level of skillfulness in the use of ICT among postgraduate students. The internet, via Cybercafé, is the primary method used by students to access e-resources. Issues like the availability of large masses of irrelevant information, the need to filter the results from a search, download delay, failure to find information, inadequate or lack of search skills, high cost of access, power outages, inaccessibility of some electronic resources, difficulties in navigating through electronic resources, and so on are common problems encountered when using electronic resources. Chetan Sharma (2009) found that the use of e-resources is very common with teachers and

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