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Awareness and Use of Digital Resources and Services in the Selected State Agricultural Universities in Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand

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Abstract: The integration of digital resources and services in academia has revolutionized the landscape of agricultural education and research. This study investigates the awareness and use of digital resources and services among faculty members, researchers, and students in selected state agricultural universities in Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand. Data were collected through structured questionnaires and analysed using SPSS, with findings highlighting varying levels of awareness and adoption across demographic and institutional factors. Key recommendations are proposed to enhance the effective utilization of digital resources to improve academic and research outputs. The study concludes that targeted interventions and robust infrastructure development are essential for bridging gaps in digital resource usage.

Keywords: *Digital Resources, Agricultural Universities, Uttar Pradesh, Uttarakhand, SPSS, Academic Research, Awareness, Digital Services.*

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I. INTRODUCTION

The rapid evolution of information and communication technologies (ICT) has significantly impacted the agricultural education sector. Digital resources and services have become essential tools for disseminating knowledge, conducting research, and fostering innovation in agriculture. State agricultural universities in India, particularly in Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand, play a pivotal role in advancing agricultural practices and technologies. Despite their critical role, the extent to which these institutions leverage digital resources remains unclear. This study aims to assess the level of awareness and use of digital resources and services among stakeholders in these universities, identify barriers, and recommend strategies for improvement.

II. OBJECTIVES

- To assess the level of awareness of digital resources among faculty members, researchers, and students in the selected universities.
- To evaluate the frequency and purpose of using digital resources and services.
- To identify the barriers hindering the effective utilization of digital resources.
- To provide recommendations for improving the adoption and usage of digital resources in agricultural universities.

III. LITERATURE REVIEW

Digital resources, including e-journals, databases, and online repositories, have transformed academic ecosystems worldwide. Previous studies have underscored the importance of digital literacy and access to technology in enhancing academic productivity. Globally, universities are integrating digital tools to enhance research and teaching. However, in developing countries like India, disparities in digital resource usage persist due to factors such as infrastructure limitations, lack of training, and varying levels of digital literacy. Studies focusing on Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand are sparse, necessitating this focused inquiry. For instance, Yadav and Gupta (2021) emphasize the need for improved digital training among postgraduate students, while Singh and Sharma (2019) highlight the impact of institutional support on digital resource adoption.

IV. METHODOLOGY

This study employs a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative and qualitative data collection techniques.

➢ *Population and Sample:*

The target population includes faculty members, researchers, and postgraduate students from selected state

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agricultural universities in Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand. A stratified random sampling method was used to ensure representative data.

➢ *Data Collection:*

Structured questionnaires were distributed, and semi-structured interviews were conducted. The questionnaire included sections on demographic information, awareness of digital resources, frequency of use, and perceived barriers. Additionally, a focus group discussion was held to gain deeper insights into qualitative aspects.

➢ *Data Analysis:*

The collected data were analysed using SPSS. Descriptive statistics were used to summarize the data, while inferential statistics, such as chi-square tests, t-tests, and regression analysis, were applied to explore relationships between variables. Results are presented in tabular and graphical formats to enhance clarity and interpretation.

V. FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The findings reveal that:

Awareness Levels:

Respondent Group	Percentage Aware of Digital Resources
Faculty	80%
Researchers	70%
Students	50%

Usage Patterns:

Purpose of Usage	Frequency (%)
Literature Review	60%
Research	55%
Teaching Preparation	50%
General Browsing	40%

Barriers Identified:

Barrier	Percentage of Respondents Reporting		
Inadequate Training Programs	45%		
Limited Internet Access	40%		
Lack of Awareness	30%		
Limited Resource Availability	25%		

➢ *Demographic Factors:*

Analysis revealed significant correlations between age, designation, and digital resource usage ($p < 0.05$). Faculty members above the age of 40 showed relatively lower usage rates compared to their younger counterparts. Researchers with higher exposure to international collaborations reported more frequent use of specialized digital databases.

➢ *Graphical Representation:*

A bar graph illustrates the percentage of respondents aware of and using specific digital resources, emphasizing disparities between different demographic groups.

VI. RECOMMENDATIONS

- Capacity Building: Organize regular training programs to enhance digital literacy among students and faculty members. Tailored workshops addressing subject-specific resources should be prioritized.
- Infrastructure Development: Improve internet connectivity and access to digital devices on university campuses. Consider collaborating with technology providers for subsidized solutions.
- Resource Promotion: Increase awareness of institutional subscriptions to e-resources through workshops, digital campaigns, and user-friendly guides.
- Policy Formulation: Develop institutional policies to integrate digital resources into academic curricula and research activities. Ensure regular budget allocation for digital infrastructure.
- Monitoring and Evaluation: Implement a feedback mechanism to assess the effectiveness of digital resource utilization periodically. Use data analytics tools to monitor trends and identify areas requiring attention.
- Collaborative Initiatives: Encourage inter-university collaborations to share best practices and jointly develop digital tools and platforms.

VII. CONCLUSION

This study highlights the critical role of digital resources and services in fostering academic and research excellence in agricultural universities. While significant progress has been made, challenges such as digital literacy and infrastructure gaps persist. Addressing these barriers through targeted interventions and institutional support will ensure that stakeholders can fully leverage digital technologies for advancing agricultural education and research in Uttar Pradesh and Uttarakhand. Furthermore, fostering a culture of continuous learning and adaptation will enable these institutions to remain at the forefront of agricultural innovation.

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