
**AWARENESS AND USE OF OPEN EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES
AMONG RESEARCH SCHOLARS: A STUDY**

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ABSTRACT

The present research study investigates the awareness and use of Open Educational Resources among the research scholars of Mangalore University. A sample of 185 research scholars was involved in the study. Random sampling technique was used during the selection process. The instrument used for the study to collect data from respondents is a structured questionnaire. The findings of the study showed that, all 185(100.0%) of respondents were aware about OERs, 173(93.5%) the respondents marked most often use journal papers for their research purpose, 156(84.3%) of respondents use it to write research papers/Articles/Books/Chapters.

KEYWORDS: Open Educational Resources, Higher Education, Scholarly Research, Research Scholars, Mangalore University

INTRODUCTION

The rising cost of traditional educational materials, particularly textbooks, has created significant barriers, especially to student success in higher education(Singh., Sulekha, & Ram, 2022). As institutions and educators seek innovative solutions to reduce these barriers, Open Educational Resources (OER) have become a promising alternative(Kumar., Singh, & Soni, 2025). Higher education institutions all over the world have been using the Internet and supplementary digital technologies to advance and allocate teaching and learning for decades(Oluwayimika & Idoghor,2023). Now a days, Open Educational Resources (OER)

have increased attention for their possible and potential to avoid demographic, economic, and geographic educational boundaries and to stimulate life-long learning and also personalised learning(Rolfe2012).

The concept of "Open Educational Resources (OER)" has become increasingly prevalent in education across the globe. In the current era of rapid technological advances, everything needsto be accessible at the touch of a button. There is also a demand for learners to experience self- paced, independent learning(Mausumi , Mohanty, & Dutta, 2025). The development of these channels has opened up new vistas ofdisseminating information. Furthermore, a healthier tomorrow requires a proficient sharing of resources, as new knowledge is created. Therefore, OERs can be considered as one of the most important and promising tools for learning and sharing knowledge(Ndaago., Kankam, & Bentil,2025).

Open Educational Resources are essential for research scholars because they offer free and unrestricted access to educational materials that support academic study and teaching. OER gives researchers access to and usage of assets including research papers, audio and video instructional materials, and textbooks(Patel, 2023). OER promotes international collaboration among academics across boundaries and disciplines by facilitating the interchange of ideas, research findings, and instructional strategies. It encourages sharing and teamwork (Kumar et.al.,2021). OER diminishes cost efficiency for researchers and students from diverse economic backgrounds by lowering the cost of accessing educational content. OER encourages creativity in research by making fresh learning resources, open data, and a range of viewpoints accessible. OER is easily incorporated and converted into a variety of learning forms, giving academics access to flexible and personalized learning resources(Pandian & Sujatha, 2025).

Literature Review

Khunte & Sahu(2025) jointly conducted a study to explore the use and awareness of Open Educational Resources by researchers of Pandit Ravi Shankar Shukla University, Raipur. The findings of the study revealed that, vast majority (92.54%) of the respondents stated that they are aware of Open Educational Resources (OER), followed by (82.09%) of them actively use them. It is found that, most widely recognized platform is YouTube, with 95.52% awareness and 77.61% usage for educational video lectures, followed by Shodhganga, with 83.58% awareness and 70.15% usage. Majority 80.60% research scholars said that it is beneficial in writing research papers/articles/book chapters.

Sahu & Khunte (2025) carried out a study to examine the perception of and use of Open Educational Resources among researchers at Mahatma Gandhi Anterrashtriy Vishvavidhyalaya, Wardha (Maharashtra). The findings reveal that a significant majority (92.54%) of researchers are aware of OER, with 82.09% using it daily. YouTube emerges as the most generally used platform, with 98.31% of scholars utilizing it for educational purposes. The study highlights the key advantages of OER, including time efficiency, ease of access, support for online education, and enhanced subject understanding. However, scholars face notable challenges, such as lack of time, insufficient technical skills, poor internet connectivity, and limited availability of OER in native languages. Resolving these issues is essential to improving OER's efficacy in scholarly contexts, guaranteeing wider accessibility, and enabling academics to fully utilize these priceless teaching resources.

Singh., Sulekha, & Ram (2022) carried out a study to investigate how Kurukshetra University research scholars use of Open Educational Resources for research purpose. It was found that, vast majority 145 (96.66%) of respondents stated that they are aware of online resources, whereas 135 (93.103%) of respondents utilize Online Education Resources to obtain up to date knowledge regarding subject specific, 96 (66.20%) of them utilize for writing research papers and 95 (65.51%) of them utilize to access to desired literature. The results of the study also showed that, 139 (97.20%) of researchers are aware of Shodhganga, while 125 (87.41%) of them are aware about ShodhGangotri, and 91 (63.63%) of them are aware with SWAYAM and 89 (62.23%) are aware of NPTEL.

Manju and Bhatt (2021) found that, 70 (36.8%) of the respondents are from JNU and maximum number of female students 43 (22.6%) from Delhi University, while 56 (29.5%) of students from JNU and 35 (18.4%) students from DU are using regularly the OERs, majority 140 (73.7%) of students are downloaded by research articles, 139 (73.2%) text documents, 114 (60%) open books and 113 (59.5%) of dissertations and thesis. The study concluded that, majority of respondents are very much aware of OERs and using them for learning and research, OERs are very much useful for everyone as it is freely available anytime anywhere and most of the respondents had positive experiences using an OER as their primary course material.

Objectives of the study

- To investigate the types of OERs used by the students.
- To determine the awareness and understanding of Open Educational Resources (OER) among research Scholar

- To identify the purpose of use of open educational resources by research scholar.
- To find out the benefits and problems associated with the use of open educational resources by university research Scholars.

METHODOLOGY

The current research study employed a questionnaire-based survey method to accomplish the above objectives. For this purpose Random sampling method was used to collect data from the research scholars of Mangalore University. A well-structured questionnaire was designed to gather the primary data. A total 200 questionnaires were distributed, out of which 185 filled questionnaires were received back. The collected data were classified, analysed and tabulated by using statistical methods.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Table: 1 Gender -Wise Distribution.

Sl. No	Gender	Responses	Percentage
1	Male	76	41.0%
2	Female	109	59.0%
Total		185	100.0%

The table 1 shows gender-wise distribution of respondents of Mangalore University. Out of 185 respondents, 109 (59.0%) are male and 76 (41.0%) are female respondents. The findings of the study revealed that, both males and females were pursuing the full time Ph. D research and the number of male respondents were more compared to female respondents.

Table 2: Age group -Wise Distribution.

Sl. No.	Age group	Responses	Percentage
1	Below 30 Years	67	36.2%
2	31-35 Years	76	41.0%
3	36-40 Years	33	17.9%
4	Above 41 Years	09	4.9%
Total		185	100.0%

The age wise distribution of respondents is shown in the above table 2. The table indicates that, 76 (41.0%) of the respondents fall into the age group of 31-35 years, whereas 67 (36.2%) respondents belong to the age group of below 30 years, 33 (17.9%) respondents belong to the age group of 36-40 years and remaining 09 (4.9%) respondents belong to the age group of above 41 years.

Table 3: Discipline-Wise Distribution.

Sl. No.	Discipline	Responses	Percentage
1	Social Sciences	94	50.9%
2	Science and Technology	72	39.0%
3	Commerce and Management	19	10.1%
Total		185	100.0%

The discipline-wise distribution of respondents as shown in the above table 3 reveals that, 94(50.9%) of the respondents are from the discipline of Social Sciences, whereas 72(39.0%) are from the discipline of Science and Technology and 19(10.1%) are from the discipline of Commerce and Management.

Table 4: Familiarity with Open Educational Resources.

Sl. No.	Familiarity	Responses	Percentage
1	Through teachers	32	17.3%
2	Through family members/friends	26	14.1%
3	From my research supervisor	89	48.1%
4	Through Academic/ research/ professional Platforms like LinkedIn, Research Gate, Academia.edu etc.	38	20.5%
Total		185	100.0%

The above table 4 shows methods of learning to use Open Educational Resources. It is observed that, among 89 (48.1%) respondents learnt from their research supervisor, while 38(20.5%) are learnt through Academic/ research/ professional Platforms like LinkedIn, Research Gate, Academia.edu etc. and 26(14.1) from their friends/family members.

Table 5: Awareness about various platform of OER by research scholars.

Sl. No.	Platform of OER	Responses	Percentage
1	National Digital Library of India	113	61.0%
2	Shodhganga-E-thesis Repository	185	100.0%
3	e-PG Pathshala	89	48.1%
4	eGyanKosh	65	35.1%
5	video lectures available on YouTube	154	83.3%
6	SWAYAM – NPTEL	78	42.2%
7	National Repository of Open Educational Resources (NROER)	72	38.9%
8	NCERT	88	47.6%
9	MOOCs (<i>Massive Open Online Courses</i>)	75	40.5%
10	DOAJ/DOAB	98	53.0%

It is observed from the table 5, all 185(100.0%) of respondents were aware about Shodhganga-E-thesis Repository, followed by 154 (83.3%) were aware about video lectures available on YouTube, 113 (61.0%) were aware about National Digital Library of India, 98(53.0%) were aware about DOAJ/DOAB and 89(48.1%)were aware about e-PG Pathshala.

Table 6: Categories of Information Resources use by Respondents.

Sl. No.	Information Resources	Responses	Percentage
1	Journal Articles	173	93.5%
2	Review papers	97	50.2%
3	MPhil, PhD Thesis/ Dissertations	129	69.7%
4	Conference/ Seminar Paper	54	29.1%
5	Research reports	62	33.5%
6	Book/ book chapters	71	38.3%

The above table 6 illustrates that, vast majority 173(93.5%) the respondents use journal articles for their research purpose, followed by 29(69.7%) of them use MPhil, PhD Thesis/ Dissertations,97(50.2%) of them use Review papers and 62(33.5%) the respondents use Research reports.

Table 7: Purpose of usage of Open Educational Resources.

Sl. No.	Purpose	Responses	Percentage
1	To get novel ideas for research	133	71.9%
2	To write research papers/Articles/Books/Chapters	156	84.3%
3	To learn more thoroughly about a concept	124	67.0%
4	To enhance my professional skills	98	52.9%
5	To stay up-to-date in a subject area	116	62.7%

Table 7shows that, the majority 156(84.3%) of respondents use it to write research papers/Articles/Books/Chapters, followed by 133(71.9%) of them use it to get novel ideas for research, 124(67.0%) of them use it to learn more thoroughly about a concept, 116(62.7%) of them use it to stay up-to-date in a subject area and 98(52.9%) of them use it to enhance their professional skills.

Table 8: Challenges while using Open Access Resources.

Sl.No.	Problems	Responses	Percentage
1	Information overload on the internet	145	78.3%
2	Slow downloading speed	75	40.5%
3	Open Access Resources are not always authoritative	53	28.6%

4	Lack of ICT skills	125	67.5%
5	Lack of information Literacy	69	37.2%
6	No Proper guidance and training	81	43.7%

Table 8 illustrates that, 145(78.3%) respondents stated Information overload on the internet is the main problem while utilizing Open Access Resources, while 125(67.5%) of the stated lack of ICT skills, 81(43.7%) of them stated that there is no Proper guidance and training, and 53(28.6%) of them stated Open Access Resources are not always authoritative.

Findings of the study

- Out of 185 respondents, 109 (59.0%) are male and 76 (41.0%) are female respondents. The findings revealed that, both males and females were pursuing the full time Ph. D research .
- About 76 (41.0%) of the researchers fall into the age group of 31-35 years and only 09 (4.9%) respondents belong to the age of above 41 years.
- Most 94(50.9%) of the research scholars are from the discipline of Social Sciences, whereas 72(39.0%) of them from the discipline of Science and Technology, and 19(10.1%) are from the discipline of Commerce and Management.
- It was found that, all 185(100.0%) of respondents were aware about Shodhganga-E-thesis Repository, followed by 154 (83.3%) were aware about video lectures available on YouTube, 113 (61.0%) were aware about National Digital Library of India.
- Among 89 (48.1%) of the respondents stated that they learnt use of OER their research supervisor, while 38(20.5%) are learnt through Academic/ research/ professional Platforms like LinkedIn, Research Gate, Academia.edu etc. and 26(14.1) from their friends/family members.
- Vast majority 173(93.5%) the respondents marked most often use journal papers for, followed by 29(69.7%) of them use MPhil, PhD Thesis/ Dissertations.
- Majority 156(84.3%) of respondents use it to write research papers/Articles/Books/Chapters, followed by 133(71.9%) of them utilize it to get novel ideas for research, 124(67.0%) use it to learn more thoroughly about a concept.
- Majority 145(78.3%) of researchers opined that Information overload on the internet is the main problem while accessing Open Access Resources, while 125(67.5%) of them stated lack of ICT skills, 81(43.7%) of them stated no Appropriate guidance and training.

CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS

In this technological era, the usage of open educational resources in academic institutions is inevitable. Highest of the educational content is freely available on various websites under open educational repositories. The present study has revealed that all 185(100.0%) of respondents were aware about OERs, 173(93.5%) the respondents marked most often use journal papers for research purpose, 156(84.3%) of respondents use it to write research papers/Articles/Books/Chapters. No doubt, the usage of open access resources is boosting up due to the easy availability and convenience on the part of the users. OERs provide best support for researchers for their research with quality improve, cost effectiveness and flexibility. Therefore the study recommended that, it is a duty of library staff to spread knowledge of open access resources through different library activities. Also links to various OERs can be given on the library website.

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