

# Awareness and Use of Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ) Sites Among Faculty Members in Non-Technical Colleges in Ahilyanagar District: A Survey

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## Abstract

The Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ) is an important ecosystem that allows free access to scholarly research of high quality. The aim of the authors was to find out the level of knowledge of the Directory of Open Access Journals and its further utilization among college faculties in non-technical departments in Ahilyanagar District. The quantitative methodology was used, which involved issuing a self-designed questionnaire to 60 faculty members, and the obtained data has been quantitatively analyzed. Moderate awareness of the Directory of Open Access Journals and low utilization, with great interest in training and institutional support are the findings. The authors end up the paper with the proposal of possible directions in developing the engagement of the Directory of Open Access Journals in academic research and teaching as well as in the local community.

**Keywords:** DOAJ, Open Access Journals, Faculty Awareness, Scholarly Communication, Research Platforms.

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The digital change of the world of scholarly communication has greatly changed the way in which academic information is collected and spread. Open Access (OA) publishing, which gets rid of price and permission barriers, is the key to this revolution. The Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ) is one of the main players in the OA field, and it is going to the forefront by the fact that it indexes those open access and peer-reviewed journals that are of high quality and represent various disciplines. In India, although the consciousness of open access is becoming more and more developed, its actual practice among the faculty members of non-technical institutions is still irregular. This paper detection for the employment of DOAJ by faculty members in non-technical schools of Ahilyanagar District, intended to investigate their knowledge, accessibility, perceived benefits, challenges, and attitudes toward the platform.

## 2. Objectives

1. To assess the level of awareness of DOAJ among faculty members.
2. To examine the frequency and purpose of DOAJ usage.
3. To identify challenges faced while using DOAJ.

4. To suggest strategies for improving the use of DOAJ in academic practice

### **3. Literature Review**

#### **3.1 Open Access Movement**

Suber (2012) defined open access as literature that is free to read and use with minimal restrictions. OA enhances visibility and citation of research work, especially in developing countries.

#### **3.2 Role of DOAJ**

Laakso & Björk (2012) highlighted that DOAJ serves as a quality-assured index of peer-reviewed open access journals and supports academic freedom and transparency. DOAJ currently indexes over 20,000 journals from 130 countries.

#### **3.3 Faculty and OA Awareness**

Kaur and Singh (2015) found that while faculty members appreciate the value of OA, many lack awareness about specific OA platforms. A study by Khan & Zaidi (2018) emphasized the importance of training to increase OA platform usage.

#### **3.4 Indian Context**

Ramesh & Padma (2020) conducted a study in Tamil Nadu and found that over 60% of arts and science college faculty were unaware of DOAJ, despite having regular internet access. They recommended institution-level workshops and library initiatives to boost awareness.

### **4. Methodology**

#### **4.1 Research Design**

A descriptive survey research design was employed to gather quantitative data Awareness and Use of Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ) Sites among Faculty Members in Non-Technical Colleges in Ahilyanagar District: A Survey

#### **4.2 Population and Sample**

The study targeted non-technical college's faculty members in Ahilyanagar District, encompassing disciplines such as Arts, Commerce, and Social Sciences. A stratified random sampling technique was used to ensure representation across various colleges and departments. A total 60 faculty members as a populations

#### **4.3 Data Collection Instrument**

A structured questionnaire was developed, comprising both closed and open-ended questions. The questionnaire covered areas such as demographic information, of Awareness and Use of Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ) Sites among Faculty Members in Non-Technical Colleges in Ahilyanagar District: A Survey

#### **4.4 Data Analysis**

Quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive statistics, percentages,

### **5. Data Analysis**

The study was carried out 60 faculty members that responded to the questionnaire for Awareness and Use of Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ) Sites among Faculty Members in Non-Technical Colleges in Ahilyanagar District: A Survey As per below.

**Table No- 1**

Sr. No.	Are you aware of the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ)?	No. of Respondent	Percentage
1.	Yes	39	65%
2.	No	21	35 %

Table No. 1 shows that 39 (65%) of faculty members are aware of the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ) and 21 (35 %) were not aware of DOAJ. This suggests that most of the faculties are aware of DOAJ.

**Table 2**

Sr. No.	If yes, how did you first learn about DOAJ?	No. of Respondent	Percentage
1.	Online Search	9	23.10 %
2.	Workshops/Seminars	10	25.60%
3.	Colleagues	12	30.80%
4.	Library Orientation	5	12.80%
5.	Others	3	7.70 %

Table No. 2 shows that 9 (23.10%), 10 (25.60%), 12(30.80%), 5 (12.80%), 3(7.70%)stated Yes for Online Search,Workshops/Seminars, Colleagues, Library Orientation and Others, respectively. This suggests most of the faculty members were learn first from colleagues.

**Table 3**

Sr. No.	What do you understand by Open Access Journals?	No. of Respondent	Percentage
1.	Free to access without subscription	45	75 %
2.	Peer-reviewed scholarly content	32	53.30 %
3.	Author-pays model	18	30 %
4.	Not Sure	8	13.30 %

Table No. 3 shows that 45(75 %), 32 (53.30%), 18(30%), 8(13.30%), respondents, were stated 'Yes' forFree to access without subscription,Peer-reviewed scholarly content,Author-pays model and Not Sure, respectively. It is observed thatmost of the faculty members understood about Open Access Journals.

**Table 4.**

Sr. No.	Do you think DOAJ is a reliable source for academic research?	No. of Respondent	Percentage
	Yes	33	55 %
	No	7	11.70 %
	Not Sure	20	33.30 %

Table No. 4shows that 33 (55 %), 7 (11.70%), and 20(33. 30%),of respondents stated YES, No, and Not Sure, respectively, for DOAJ is a reliable source for academic research.

**Table 5**

Sr. No.	Have you ever used DOAJ to access research articles?	No. of Respondent	Percentage
1.	Never	14	23.30 %
2.	Rarely	21	35 %
3.	Occasionally	15	25%
4.	Frequently	10	16.70 %

Table No. 5 shows that 14 (23.30 %), 21 (35 %), 15(25 %) and 10 (16.70 %) respondents were stated 'Yes' for Never ,Rarely, Occasionally ,Frequently used DOAJ to access research articles This shows that mostly faculty's used DOAJ Rarely.

**Table 6**

Sr. No.	For what purpose do you use DOAJ?	No. of Respondent	Percentage
1.	Literature review	28	71.80%
2.	Teaching material	20	51.30%
3.	Writing research papers	26	66.70%
4.	General knowledge	14	35.90 %

Table No. 6 shows that 28 (71.80 %), 20 (51.30 %), 26 (66.70 %) and 14 (35.90 %) respondents stated 'Yes' for Literature review, Teaching material, Writing research papers, and General knowledge, respectively. It is observed that most faculty's use DOAJ for literature reviews and writing research papers.

**Table 7.**

Sr. No.	On average, how often do you visit DOAJ?	No. of Respondent	Percentage
	Daily	3	5 %
	Weekly	10	16.70 %
	Monthly	15	25 %
	Less frequently	32	53.30 %

Table No. 7 shows that 3 (5%), 10 (16.70 %), 15 (25 %) and 32 (53.30 %) respondents stated 'Yes' for Daily, Weekly, Monthly, Less frequently respectively. It is observed that most faculty members visited less frequently for DOAJ.

**Table 8**

Sr. No.	What benefits have you experienced while using DOAJ?	No. of Respondent	Percentage
1.	Free access to quality journals	36	60 %
2.	Easy search and navigation	28	46.70 %
3.	Availability of peer-reviewed content	30	50 %
4.	Enhances research visibility	22	36.70 %

Table No. 8 shows that 36 (60 %), 28 (46.70 %), 30 (50%), 22 (36.70 %) respondents were stated 'Yes' for Free access to quality journals, Easy search and navigation, Availability of peer-reviewed content and Enhances research visibility respectively. It is observed that mostly Faculty members benefit while using DOAJ.

**Table 9**

Sr. No.	What challenges do you face while using DOAJ?	No. of Respondent	Percentage
1.	Lack of awareness	26	43.30 %
2.	Difficulty in navigation/search	18	30 %
3.	Lack of training	21	35 %
4.	Unsure about authenticity	14	35 %
5.	Language or subject coverage limitations	10	23.30 %

Table No. 9 shows that 26 (43.30 %), 18 (30%), 21 (35 %), 14 (35%), 10 (23.30 %) respondents were stated 'Yes' for Lack of awareness, Difficulty in navigation/search, Lack of training, Unsure about authenticity, Language or subject coverage limitations respectively. It is observed that for lack of awareness and lack of training is main challenges facing while using DOAJ by faculty members.

**Table 10**

Sr. No.	Do you feel the need for training/workshops on how to use DOAJ?	No. of Respondent	Percentage
1.	Yes	42	70 %
2.	No	8	13.30 %
3.	Not Sure	10	16.70 %

Table No. 10 shows that 42 (70 %), 8 (13.30%), 10 (16.70) respondents were stated 'Yes' 'No' and Not Sure for training/workshops on how to use DOAJ. It is observed that 70 % faculty members need training/workshops on how to use DOAJ.

**Table 11**

Sr. No.	In your opinion, how can awareness about DOAJ be improved among faculty?	No. of Respondent	Percentage
1.	Institutional workshops	38	63.30 %
2.	Library support	30	50 %
3.	Online tutorials	22	36.70 %
4.	Peer learning	18	30 %

Table No. 11 shows that 38 (63.30 %), 30 (50 %), 22 (36.70%), 18 (30 %) respondents were stated 'Yes' for Institutional workshops, Library support, Online tutorials, Peer learning. It is observed that most of the faculty members suggested opinion for improvement by Institutional workshops, Library support.

## Suggestions

1. Conduct regular training sessions on DOAJ and Open Access platforms.

2. Library professionals should actively promote DOAJ through orientation programs.
3. Inclusion of OA resources in research methodology and UGC-HRDC programs.
4. Create awareness campaigns at the institutional level.
5. Encourage publication in DOAJ-indexed journals through incentives and recognition.

### **Conclusion**

The research shows that non-technical college faculty members are becoming more aware of DOAJ, however, current usage is still very limited because of the lack of knowledge, training, and institutional promotion. If given a correct introduction, DOAJ can be an important academic resource to improve the quality of teaching and research in these institutions. Enhancing awareness and removing obstacles will allow for narrowing the divide between access and utilization.

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