

Awareness and Use of Open Access Journals by Researchers of Punjabi University, Patiala: A Survey

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Abstract

The study identifies the users' awareness of open access journals and to know the use of open access journals among the researchers of Punjabi University, Patiala. A questionnaire survey was conducted amongst 60 researchers of Punjabi University, Patiala. The study reveals that awareness and use of open access journals is highest but they want attend a workshop or seminar which should organise by library so that they can get more knowledge about open access journals. The study concludes that comprehensive training on open access journals would be of great help to the users and library should take initiatives to promote open access journals.

Keywords: Open Access; Open Access Journals; DOAJ; Library; Researchers.

Introduction

Now days, due to technology advancement, Internet provide access to information very fast but there is limited information access. There are many types of information resources like e-journals, e-books and others can be accessed through subscription by libraries. The libraries are facing many problems due to restricted information because library budget cutting day by day. With the help of subscription, libraries can access the restricted information. But open access is a new concept of scholarly communication which can solve the problem of restricted information.

The term open access has been defined differently by different authors. According to Suber, open access content is "digital, online, free of charge and free of most copyright and licensing restrictions."¹ Open access journals are scholarly journals that are available online to the readers without financial, legal, or technical barriers other than those inseparable from gaining access to the internet itself².

There are two main routes of open access³.

Gold Open Access

'Gold' route to open access aims to make articles and information resources open for access by publishing in a journal that is open access journal or an open access publisher.

Green Open Access

"The author can self-archive at the time of submission of the publication (taking the 'green' route) whether the publication is grey literature (usually internal non-peer-reviewed), a peer-reviewed journal publication (with required permissions), a peer-reviewed conference proceedings (with required permissions) paper or a monograph".

In this paper, an attempt has been made to study the status of awareness and use of open access journals by researchers of Punjabi University, Patiala and to assess the role of library in promotion of open access journals.

Review of literature

The study was conducted to know knowledge and use of Open Access Journals (OAJs) by the academic staff of Bolgatangana Polytechnic. A descriptive survey was designed which revealed that all the respondents (100%) are aware of OAJs. and respondents had downloaded and used published materials from OAJs, and had also published their manuscripts in same. They believe that OAJs are able to speedily publish their manuscripts. A large number of the respondents are aware of the predatory activities of some OAJs⁴.



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This study investigated the awareness and use of open access journals by the Master of Education students in Salem Zone (Salem, Dharmapuri, Krishnagiri, Namakkal). A structured questionnaire was circulated among the Master of Education (M.Ed) students of various disciplines. The study found that the P.G students are aware of open access journals which are freely accessible through Internet. A majority of the respondents agreed that open access journals are very much useful and are of high quality⁵.

The study was conducted to explore the awareness of Open access scholarly publications among Science faculty members in Universities of Karnataka State. A questionnaire was used to collect the data from the faculty members. The study found that most of the faculty members are aware of OA scholarly publications (98.56%). Further, majority of the respondents are aware of OA journals (71.58%) and OA Books (59.71%). The respondents' awareness on OA patents and OA research/Technical reports is low (45.86%). However most of the faculty members are aware of open access outlets such as Google/Google Scholar and Open access journals gateways. The study recommends that the librarian should create awareness among the faculty members about OA scholarly publications⁶.

This study reveals the awareness and use of open access journals by LIS undergraduates in Ambrose Alli University, Ekpoma. A descriptive survey was conducted and questionnaire was used for data collection. Findings that there is a low level of awareness of open access journals. The findings equally revealed that majority of the respondents are only aware of African Journals Online (AJOL) among the list of open access journals and databases. It was discovered that majority of the respondents use open access journals to a high extent for carrying out search for relevant literature for project and seminars, downloading of articles, and searching of research topics/ideas. The major hindrances to use of open access journals were found to be lack of internet search skills; and limited access to computer terminals. Recommendations include that librarians, lecturers and others stakeholders in the faculty should intensify efforts in creating awareness on the importance of open access publications⁷.

Objectives of study

- The objectives of this study are:
1. To know the awareness of open access journals among researchers;
 2. To find out the use of open access journals;
 3. To reveal the role of library in promotion of open access journals;

Methodology

In the study, questionnaire was used for data collection. A total number of 60 questionnaires were distributed among the researchers and 43 questionnaires were returned. Data was collected from researchers who were present in the Library of Punjabi University, Patiala.

Research Design

The study was limited to researchers of Punjabi University, Patiala who were available in the

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Library. Data collected through questionnaire. The data was analysed using tables and results were represented through charts.

Limitation of study

The study was limited to only researchers of Punjabi University, Patiala. In this study, only researchers were taken as respondents from the library of Punjabi University, Patiala.

Analysis

Of the total 60 questionnaires circulated; 43 filled in questionnaire were returned which were useful for analysis.

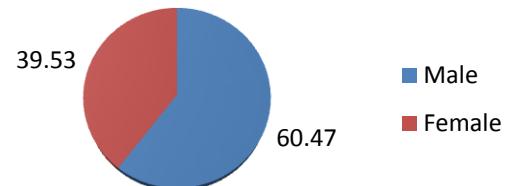
Gender Wise Distribution pf Questionnaires

Table-1

Sr. No.	Gender	No. of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents (%)
1.	Male	26	60.47
2.	Female	17	39.53
	Total	43	100

As indicated in Table 1, a total number of respondents were 43 in which 60.47 percent were males and 39.57 percent were females.

Percentage of Respondents (%)



Awareness of open access journals

Table-2

Sr. No.	Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents (%)
1.	Yes	40	93.02
2.	No	03	06.98
	Total	43	100

In the study, Table 2 shows that 93.02 percent respondents were aware of open access journals and only 06.98 percent were not aware of open access journals.

Awareness of Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ)

Table-3

Sr. No.	Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents (%)
1.	Yes	17	39.53
2.	No	26	60.47
	Total	43	100

Table 3 indicates that 39.53 percent respondents were aware of directory of open access journals (DOAJ) and 60.47 percent were not aware of it.

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Awareness of open access publishing routes

Table-4

Sr. No.	Routes	Number of Respondents		Percentage of Respondents (%)	
		Yes	No	Yes	No
1.	Gold	09	34	20.93	79.07
2.	Green	19	24	44.19	55.81

As shows Table 4, only 20.93 percent respondents were aware of gold route of open access and 79.07 percent were not aware of it.

Use of open access journals

Table-5

Sr. No.	Response	Number of Respondents		Percentage of Respondents (%)	
		Yes	No	Yes	No
1.	Yes	34		79.07	
2.	No	09		20.93	
	Total	43		100	

In the study, Table 5 reveals that 79.07 percent respondents use open access journals and only 20.93 percent respondents not use open access journals.

Frequency of use of open access journals

Table-6

Sr. No.	Frequency	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents (%)
1.	Daily	10	23.26
2.	Weekly	17	39.53
3.	Fortnightly	03	06.98
4.	Monthly	13	30.23
	Total	43	100

Table 6 presents that 23.26 percent respondents use open access journals daily, 39.53 percent respondents use open access journals weekly, 06.98 percent respondents use open access journals fortnightly and 30.23 percent respondents use open access journals monthly.

Use of open access journals databases

Table-7

Sr. No.	Frequency	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents (%)
1.	DOAJ	14	32.56
2.	OAJSE	04	09.30
3.	Open J Gate	19	44.19
4.	ERIC	06	13.95
	Total	43	100

As shows Table 7, 32.56 percent respondents use DOAJ, 09.30 percent respondents use OAJSE, 44.19 percent respondents use Open J Gate and 13.95 percent use ERIC.

Information about open access journals on library website

Table-8

Sr. No.	Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents (%)
1.	Yes	00	00
2.	No	29	67.44
3.	Don't know	14	32.56
	Total	43	100

In the study, Table 8 shows that not any respondents say that library website provides information regarding open access journals, 67.44 percent respondents know that library website does not provide any information regarding open access journals and 32.56 percent respondents don't know about it.

Workshop or seminar on open access journals organised by library

Table-9

Sr. No.	Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents (%)
1.	Yes	00	00
2.	No	19	44.19
3.	Don't know	24	55.81
	Total	43	100

Table 9 shows that not any respondents say yes about workshop or seminar organised by library, 44.19 percent respondents say no and 55.81 percent respondents say don't know about it.

Respondents want library organises workshop or seminar on open access journals

Table-10

Sr. No.	Response	Number of Respondents	Percentage of Respondents (%)
1.	Yes	38	88.37
2.	No	05	11.63
	Total	43	100

As shows Table 10, 88.37 percent respondents want that library should organise a workshop or seminar on open access journals and 11.63 percent respondents want that library should not organise a workshop or seminar on open access journals.

Findings

1. The study revealed that a majority of respondents were aware of open access journals.
2. Mostly respondents were not aware of DOAJ.
3. A half of the respondents were aware of Green route of open access but a large number of respondents were not aware of Gold route of open access.
4. A majority of respondents used open access journals but they used open access journals weekly.
5. Mostly respondents used Open J Gate but a less number of respondents used OAJSE.
6. Most of the respondents said that library website did not provide any information about open access journals.
7. A large number of respondents said that library did not organise any workshop or seminar on open access journals but they want that library should organise a workshop or seminar on open access journals.

Suggestions

The study shows that respondents were not aware of DOAJ and library not provides information about open access journals on their website. So researcher suggests that workshop/ seminar on open access should be organised and information also provided on library's website.

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Conclusion

Evolution of Internet has changed the modes of accessing and dissemination of information. E-resources, particularly e-journals, e-books and databases are important sources of information. Open access is one of the important initiatives that provide access to online journals and databases freely. The survey indicates that the awareness and use of open access journals is highest among researchers but they have lack of knowledge and training how to use open access journals databases. They want that library should organise a workshop or seminar on open access journals so that they can take benefits of open access journals for their research purpose. The library website does not provide any information regarding open access journals so information regarding open access journals should be provided by library website.

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