

“Entire study on Availability, Access, and Awareness of E-Resources among Faculty Members”

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Abstract

The radical evolution of ICTs is slowly superseding the physical book as the main method through which students, teachers, and researchers access and analyze and process academic literature, owing to the electronic resources, or books on demand. This research is to explore the extent to which the e-resources are popular, convenient and readily available to faculty members of universities. The paper will explore the issue of whether university libraries possess electronic resources, the ease at which the materials can be accessed through library systems and digital technologies, and whether the faculty members are informed of the value of using electronic resources.

Data was gathered using structured questionnaires and observations in order to examine faculty members' knowledge, usage habits, and access to the different electronic resources (e-books, journals, databases, and institutional repositories). The findings reveal that the libraries in universities are diverse in the subject coverage, technical infrastructure, usability and the range of electronic resources as well as access options they offer. The article also adds that having knowledge and skills to conduct personal research is one of the most significant aspects in the effective utilization of e-resources.

It is important to find the sweet spot between availability, access and awareness in order to maximize the electronic resource as the authors of the study note. By so doing, it brings to focus how academic libraries and the library professionals can go a long way in ensuring enhancement of digital collections, access processes and procedures as well as the delivery of continual user training and education. Findings of this study could be used by librarians, administrators, and legislators to better the academic standards and access to electronic resources.

Keywords:

Academic Libraries; Faculty Members; Information Literacy; Access to Electronic Resources; Faculty Members' Awareness of Electronic Resources.

Introduction

The information and communication technology in the contemporary academic world have changed knowledge creation, storage, and access, as well as knowledge sharing in a drastic way. The research, instruction and evaluations processes of higher education now use online resources such as open access resources, databases, e-books, e-journals, and institutional repositories. These online materials are potentially very useful, as they overcome the limitations of time, space, and physical storage that accompany traditional print resources, allowing the user to access huge amounts of academic literature on demand.

Faculty members have always been significant to educational institutions in their capacity as teachers, researchers, and creators of new information. This leads to improved quality of education, the number and quality of original research, and academic greatness through their effective application of electronic resources. However, the availability of technological resources does not guarantee that they will be used to their fullest potential. The extent to which the faculty members can utilize these tools will depend on several variables, such as the availability of the tools, the quality of the infrastructure, the digital literacy of the faculty members, the level of institutional support, and user awareness.

When the number of appropriate electronic resources is enough, we assert that an institution possesses sufficient resources available. We argue that, teachers should utilize them once they are made available to them. All these fall under one umbrella, which is the internet, authentication systems, and library support services. The awareness of the faculty members on the other side includes their knowledge on the presence, scope and utility of the various e-resources. Lack of knowledge or inadequate training would be a thwart on efficient use of resources even in locations where the resources can be readily available.

The study's primary objective is to find out how often and to what extent faculty members use electronic resources. The analysis of these fundamental characteristics will allow the study to fill a gap, reveal a problem, and discover opportunities concerning the proper utilization of electronic resources in learning institutions. Librarians, administrators, and lawmakers may utilize this study's findings to better manage electronic resources, develop user training interventions, and boost academic output generally.

1. The Electronic Resources (E-Resources)

Commonly abbreviated as "e-resources," electronic resources are any and all forms of information that may be stored, retrieved, or sent electronically via electronic devices. Some examples of web-based academic resources include electronic journals, books, databases, digital libraries, and institutional repositories.

2. Availability of E-Resources

The extent to which a school makes use of and maintains its electronic information resources is known as the availability of e-resources. It includes having enough of a digital collection to meet the academic and research needs of the organizations' faculty members, as well as having access to up-to-date and relevant e-resources, both paid and free.

3. Access to E-Resources

The phrase "access to e-resources" refers to the ease with which faculty members may use different types of electronic material. A number of factors, including widespread internet connectivity, authentication mechanisms, library resources, individual devices, desktops, laptops, and remote access services, make it possible for individuals to readily access and make use of electronic resources.

4. Understanding Internet Resources

Professors' level of familiarity with electronic resources is a good indicator of their knowledge of these tools, including their format, purpose, qualities, and possible benefits. To aid in the effective use of electronic resources, it is also cognizant of access methods, search engines, and institutional services.

5. Faculty Members

Members of the academic staff entrusted with the responsibilities of teaching, researching, and providing academic service are known as faculty members. According to this research, faculty members are the primary users of electronic resources for the purposes of lesson planning, academic research, and professional development.

Discussion

Availability of E-Resources

The findings show that faculty members' research and teaching are significantly aided by academic library users' access to electronic resources. The majority of university libraries have subscribed to a wide variety of electronic resources, including journals, books, databases, and consortia services. The library's role as a hybrid information hub has been enhanced by the addition of several online assets, which augment print collections. The sufficiency of the accessible electronic resources, however, tends to be conditioned by the library funding, subscription policy, and involvement in library consortia. The curriculum/research-driven approach to the collection development strategies is required, since the faculty members have occasionally complained of the absence of a subject-related source.

Access to E-Resources

The provision of access to electronic materials is one of the primary functions of modern academic libraries that are also the significant elements of the ICT infrastructure. According to the research, library websites, online public access catalogs (OPCs), discovery tools, and institutional repositories are frequently used by faculty to access electronic resources. Off-campus access has been bolstered by a significant use of a proxy server and IP-based authentication. Although these developments exist, an ineffective usage can be hindered by a few factors, including a slow internet connection, a lack of awareness of the existing tools, and technical difficulties. The library support services, reference services and technical help services are vital when it comes to ensuring that electronic information resources are readily available.

Awareness of E-Resources

Academic libraries rely on information literacy and user education initiatives to raise faculty members' awareness of electronic resources. Faculty members who have regular interactions with library staff are more likely to be knowledgeable of available databases, open-access resources, and specialist digital collections, according to the research. Unfortunately, great e-resources go unused since libraries don't promote their services and there aren't any systematic orientation programs. Faculty members need to be well informed about using and effective retrieving of electronic resources and that is done through implementation of library awareness activities such as as newsletters, seminars, training, and orientation.

Academic Libraries' Function

The academic library is highlighted as a key player in the movement to increase the effective use, accessibility, and understanding of digital resources. Among librarians' many responsibilities is the administration of digital resources, the evaluation of subscriptions, user training, and research assistance services. Library websites and learning management systems that include electronic resources further promote teacher engagement with digital content. To get the most of the electronic resources, academic departments and librarians have to work together, assess the user needs on a regular basis and get the faculty members to provide their opinion.

Overall Implications

As already mentioned, user awareness and accessibility of the resource are equally important as resource availability in terms of putting the right use of electronic resources. In an effort to serve their customers better, academic libraries ought to employ user-based concepts to enhance their digital infrastructure, collect more electronic materials and strengthen their information literacy programs. As a result, libraries will be able to make the most of their digital holdings, which will boost research quality and academic output.

Conclusion

Due to their significant importance in faculty members' research, teaching, and learning, electronic resources have become an intrinsic part of every academic library, according to the current study. As e-journals, e-books, online databases, and open-access materials become more widely available, libraries are becoming into digital information centers. Still, the research shows that these resources' usefulness and appropriateness vary by field; as a result, academic libraries need to build collections using systematic collecting methods and regularly update electronic collections.

The availability of electronic resources has significantly grown due to the development of digital tools for automating library access and the evolution of information and communication technology. Some of the programs that have enabled faculty members to access intellectual content in a better and more consistent manner are library portals, discovery services, institutional repositories, and remote access methods. Regardless of these developments, some challenges remain, including sluggish internet, technological complications and general ignorance with regard to access platforms. Also, university libraries need to endeavor to enhance information and communication technology infrastructure and offer regular technical and reference support.

Another significant conclusion of the research is that awareness is a crucial element of making a decision about the best utilization of e-resources. The use of electronic information resources like databases in classroom and beyond are of great benefit to teachers as well as the researchers. The study has proven that librarians are critical in creating awareness to the public through programs such as information literacy, user orientations, seminars, and regular outreach on materials newly subscribed. They have inaccessibility to resources but the resources are not utilized out of ignorance.

Overall, the research confirms the premise that the successful utilization of e-resources necessitates a balance between their access, availability, and knowledge. To ensure that academic libraries are more accessible and user-friendly, they should increase the number of their digital collections and ensure that faculty members do not ignore changes in order to adapt to them. This would allow the libraries to increase academic achievement, research production, and library growth, were the libraries to do this with their investments in electronic resources.

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