

USE OF OPEN ACCESS RESOURCES IN LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE: A STUDY

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ABSTRACT

This Paper discusses the uses of Open Access Resources in Library and Information Science. Open Access in LIS refers to the availability of scholarly and professional resources related to libraries, information science, and allied fields that are freely accessible to anyone with an internet connection. These resources include e-journals, e-books, conference proceedings, research papers, theses, dissertations, and more. Open Access initiatives in LIS align with the broader objectives of open access in promoting knowledge dissemination, collaboration, and innovation.

Key Words: Significance, Open Access Resources in LIS, Benefits and Challenges.

1. Introduction

Open access resources have profoundly impacted the Library and Information Science (LIS) field, both as a subject area and as a professional practice. In this overview, we will explore open-access resources in LIS, highlighting their importance and transformative impact on the field.

Open Access (OA) resources are free of most copyright and licensing restrictions. Open Access research articles, therefore, unlike those in conventional subscription journals are free at the point of use to anyone with an internet connection without the need for any institutional login IDs and passwords. Open access resources are one that meets the conditions of "Open Access"- composed of free, online copies of peer-reviewed journal articles and conference papers as well as technical reports, theses, and working papers. In most cases, there are no licensing restrictions on their use by readers. They can, therefore, be used freely for research, teaching and other purposes. As open access, a paper is available with no payment for access, and scholars in economically disadvantaged areas can also access the newest research (S & S, 2018).

1.1. What is Open Access?

Open Access makes peer-reviewed scholarly research and literature freely available online to anyone interested in reading it. Open access has two different versions- gratis and libre. Gratis open access simply makes research available for others to read without paying for it. However, it does not grant the user the right to make copies, distribute, or modify the work in any way beyond fair use. Libre open access is a grant meaning the research is available free of charge, but it goes further by granting users additional rights usually via active commons licenses that people are free to reuse and remix the research; there are varying degrees of what may be considered libre open access (S & S, 2018). Peter Suber (2012) defines OA “Open Access literature is digital, online, free of charge, and free of most copyright and licensing restrictions” (UNESCO, 2015).

1.2 Open Access in Library and Information Science:

Open access in LIS refers to the availability of scholarly and professional resources related to libraries, information science, and allied fields that are freely accessible to anyone with an internet connection. These resources include e-journals, e-books, conference proceedings, research papers, theses, dissertations, and more. Open access initiatives in LIS align with the broader objectives of open access in promoting knowledge dissemination, collaboration, and innovation. E-resources are those resources that include documents in electronic or e-format that can be accessed via the Internet in a digital library environment. E-resources are electronic products that deliver data, text, image collection, or other multimedia products like numerical or graphical modes for commercially available libraries and information centers (Padval, 2022).

2. Significance of the Study

Open access resources in LIS ensure that professionals, researchers, and students have access to the latest research, developments, and best practices in the field. This availability of information fosters a culture of continuous learning, enabling practitioners to stay updated and make informed decisions. The Present study, “Use of Open Access Resources in Library & Information Science: A Study” aims to know the uses and awareness of open access resources in Library & Information Science and provide access to use of open access resources.

Increased Visibility: Open access resources provide a platform for researchers, scholars, and educators to disseminate their work to a global audience without the traditional barriers of subscription fees and limited access. This enhances the visibility and impact of their research.

Knowledge Democratization: Open access breaks down barriers to information, allowing anyone with an internet connection to access valuable research and

educational materials. This democratization of knowledge fosters collaboration, innovation, and progress.

Accelerated Research: By making research freely available, open access resources enable faster dissemination of findings, facilitating knowledge advancement and accelerating scientific discovery.

Public Engagement: Open access resources ensure that research funded by taxpayers' money is accessible to the general public, promoting transparency and engagement between researchers and society.

Preservation and Accessible Archives: Digital repositories and e-print archives preserve scholarly works, making them accessible for future generations and preventing the loss of valuable research (Baskar, 2017).

3. Literature Review

Amponsah1, Madukoma & Unegbu (2021) in this study observed that Research is one of the key pillars in the teaching and learning situation in any university in the world. However, the approach to research varies from one university to the other. This study aimed to determine how the level of awareness and satisfaction, the challenges and the extent of use of open-access resources impact the research productivity of faculty at Dartum University. A quantitative survey research method was adopted. A sample size of 62 full-time lecturers and 134 part-time lecturers was selected for the study using a stratified simple random sampling technique. The findings revealed low research productivity despite high awareness and satisfaction with open-access use.

Baskar (2017) this study highlighted the E-Resources focus on the various aspects. Digital technology has made applying the stored intellect easier, faster, and more comfortable. The advent of technology has made libraries add new things to its collection. Print sources are more digitalized. E-resources information sources are very important for the academic community. The paper presents an overview of these resources few advantages and some disadvantages and addresses of a few websites. This collected information through the ages has to be used for further research, betterment and overall development of society. Electronic resources are easily accessible in remote areas. Electronic resources solve storage problems and control the flood of information.

Christian et al. (2019) studied the Open Education gained more visibility as a result of the emergence of Open Educational Resources (OER) and Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs). This article discusses whether MOOCs should be considered OER. Open Education and OER can be treated as two strands with different historical roots even though, in theory, OER are an aspect of Open Education. Different OER definitions and typologies are analyzed in relation to their dimensions

and categorizations. Furthermore, the four conditions and two original categories of MOOCs are discussed, leading to a debate on their quality.

Muthuvennila & Thanuskodi (2018) conducted to investigate the accessibility and use of open access resources used in the library and Information Science PG students at Alagappa University DDE. In this paper, an attempt has been made to study the awareness of open-access resources. The methodology adopted for the study was survey in which questionnaires, interviews, and observations were used to collect the data. A total of 39 respondents participated in the study. It was concluded that most of the open access resources were unaware of most of the available resources; hence, they could not access and use them effectively.

Padval (2022) observed that the traditional functions of libraries have undergone various changes in the present century and e-resources have great importance in libraries and amongst library users because, in today's rapidly changing world, the information needs of learners and knowledge searchers are met through many sources. Developments in Information and Communication Technology (ICT) have greatly changed information handling methods. New technologies have always been of interest to libraries both for the potential of increasing the quality of service and for improving the efficiency of operations. This paper discusses the definition and types of E-resources.

Satish kumar et al. (2021) discussed that the new education system emphasizes online teaching-learning approaches. In particular, all learners want to secure, open, affordable, and normal educational services. Open educational tools fulfill all the educational-related problems to the learners. The study's key objective is to figure out the level of use of accessible educational services and find out the level of excellence in education among the state universities of Tamilnadu research scholars.

4. Objectives of the Study

The present study has taken up the following objectives:

- To Study the use and awareness of open-access resources in Library and information science.
- To know the overview of open access resources in Library and information science.
- To Increase the Accessibility of open-access resources in Library and information science.

5. Open Access Resources in LIS

Open access is a scholarly publication model that provides unrestricted, free, immediate, and online access to peer-reviewed scholarly research and the right to use

it. Users are free to read, download, copy, distribute, print, search, or link to the full texts of scholarly literature available through open access platform.

5.1 E-Journal

The journals are available in electronic format “A remote access electronic serial is a continuing resource accessed via computer networks; it provides easy access, keyword search ability, and accessibility just at publication time, independent of space and time access, interactivity and customization etc.(Padval, 2022).

5.2 E-books

An electronic book is a text and image-based publication in digital form produced on published by and readable on computers and other digital devices. E-books are usually read on dedicated hardware devices known as e-readers or e-book devices. Personal computers and some cell phones can also be used to read e-books. Users prefer E-books for their features like portability, upgradeability, note making, citation, changeable font size, links to other relevant sites, searching etc. E-books can be transferred from the library catalogue to the user’s e-book readers for a fixed loan period and after which it is automatically taken back. An e-book can be offered indefinitely without ever going “out of print” (Padval, 2022).

5.3 Electronic Theses & Dissertations

An E-Thesis and dissertation is an electronic document that explains the intellectual work of the researcher. E-Thesis and Dissertations provide a technologically advanced medium for expressing ideas with less expensive, easy handling, and high longevity (Padval, 2022).

5.4 Open Education Resources

According to UNESCO, “Open Educational Resources (OER) are teaching, learning and research materials in any medium – digital or otherwise – that reside in the public domain or have been released under an open license that permits no-cost access, use, adaptation and redistribution by others with no limited restrictions (Dill & Cullen, 2020).

5.5 Search Engines

A search engine is a software program that helps people find the information they are looking for online using keywords or phrases. Search engines are able to return results quickly—even with millions of websites online—by scanning the Internet continuously and indexing every page they find (Google, 2023).

5.6 Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ)

A comprehensive directory of high-quality, peer-reviewed open-access journals across various disciplines. The Directory of Open-Access Journals aims to increase

the visibility and ease of use of open-access scientific and scholarly journals, thereby promoting their increased usage and impact. The Directory aims to be comprehensive and cover all open-access scientific and scholarly journals that use a quality control system to guarantee the content (Ellen, Madukoma, & Unegbu, 2021).

6 Benefits and Challenges of Open Access Resources

6.1 Benefits of Open Access Resources

- **Increased Accessibility:** Open access removes financial barriers, ensuring that individuals from all backgrounds can access scholarly information, leading to a more inclusive and equitable dissemination of knowledge.
- **Enhanced Collaboration:** Open access encourages collaboration among researchers, allowing them to easily access each other's work and build upon existing knowledge.
- **Higher Citation Rates:** Studies have shown that open access articles tend to receive higher citation rates, indicating increased visibility and impact for researchers.
- **Faster Innovation:** Open access enables faster dissemination of research findings, accelerating the pace of innovation and discovery (UNESCO, 2015).

6.2 Challenges of Open Access Resources

- **Sustainable Funding Models:** Transitioning to open access requires alternative funding models to replace traditional subscription fees, which can challenge publishers, institutions, and researchers.
- **Quality Control:** The proliferation of open-access resources raises concerns about maintaining rigorous peer review processes and ensuring the quality and credibility of published work.
- **Copyright and Licensing:** Open access often relies on Creative Commons licenses, which must balance allowing access and protecting authors' rights.
- **Digital Divide:** While open access aims to bridge the knowledge gap, the digital divide, including limited internet access or technological resources, can still hinder access for some individuals and regions (Velmurugan, 2010).

7 Conclusion

Open access resources have significantly benefited the Library and Information Science field. They have revolutionized scholarly communication, facilitated collaboration and innovation, supported professional development, and promoted inclusivity and global perspectives. Embracing open access in LIS is essential to advancing the field, improving access to information, and fostering a vibrant and engaged community of professionals and researchers.

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