



Faculty perception of scholarly communication trends: usage and challenges of e-journals

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Abstract: This study is an attempt to analyze the level of understanding and the perception of scholarly communication trends using e-journals by the faculty members and their possible challenges in the universities of the Balochistan. Being quantitative in nature this study used survey method as well as close ended questionnaires for collecting data from public sector universities of Balochistan. The findings of the study revealed that with the availability of limited resources the respondents have highly response on scholarly communication trends for e-journals. While this study confirms the role of scholarly communication trends, usage, perception and challenges towards e-journals of the public sector universities of the Balochistan, Pakistan. The results of this study make it obvious that the faculty members in these universities are aware about the importance of scholarly communication, their usage and upcoming challenges but still there is lack of orientation programs, electricity failure and the lack of budget for subscription to scholarly communication.

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Introduction

We live in a world of communication networks. With the embrace of fast technological advancements the world has become a global village. The exchange of any sort of information among all levels has become very fast and rapid. The click of a minor key on computer makes ones capable of accessing its own needed information. That is why the Communication is the most important activity of human being since ancient times (Nickerson, 1995).

There exist various forms of communication but as one talk about the communication in academic institutions so the scholarly communication takes great momentum to be discussed.

Scholarly communication is one of the important sources of academic world. In recent past, its development has mostly focused on peer-reviewed journal articles. In traditional scholarly communication occurs in formal literature - in journal articles, meeting reports, book chapters, and books. However, now the situation is totally change (Jaya, 2019).

Scholarly communication can be viewed as the association among researchers, which expands the familiarity with one researcher to the work and thoughts of another; scholarly communication has dependably been viewed as a basic part of scholarly and logical research (Neal, 2005).

The system of scholarly communication has evolved over that time since it came into existence. The current system of scholarly communication is said to have originated as an exchange of letters and lectures among scattered peers until 1665 when the first print journal known as Philosophical Transactions was launched by the Royal Society of London (Mukherjee, 2009).

Khan (2006) mentions, that the e-journals are modest electronic demonstration of a magazine. Mostly these reproduce the published sort of the magazine, sometimes including additional information such as interactive graphics or external links, however in around cases, as the magazine is "digital in nature" there is no parallel Printing source. Any newspaper vacant on Internet can call an e-journal. It may or may not have a printed equivalent.

Today, the faculty members use e-journals directly and the usage of e-journals is rapidly increasing with the passing of every day. In many scientific fields the usage of e-journals is crossing the usage level of printed materials. If this pattern proceeds, many creators accept that printed forms of alternative distributions will attractive much in many years. The World Wide Web has extraordinarily advanced and the rise of these electronic properties (Guruprasad et al., 2013).

The first scientific journal, the *Journal des Scavans*, was printed as a new average of communication in 1665 and was quickly followed by the *Philosophical Transactions of the Royal Society* (Osburn, 1984).

For more than three hundred years, the journal, as the main medium of scholarly exchanges, has played a central role in the creation and dissemination of knowledge, and its form and function have remained almost unchanged throughout its life cycle. Without scientific journals, the science we know is unbelievable (Maria, Correia, & Teixeira, 2005)

Maxymuk (2004) highlights, the advantages of scholarly e-Journals that these do not need actual space and can be grown to form almost any work station that can be clearly associated with the foundation's organization. Therefore the electronic journals are accessible to everyone beyond the geographic boundaries. It can be says that scholarly e-journals are definitely a dream come true of faculty members for their work.

The objectives behind conducting this study is to analyze the level of faculty members for their perceptions of scholarly communication trends, their usage, and what are the challenges that facing regarding e-journals in universities of Balochistan.

The Balochistan is the largest province of Pakistan as per land area but it is the least populated province of Pakistan. The review of literature is evidence of various studies carried out in this area in order to enhance the education level of researcher regarding scholarly communication, its current trends, usages as well as the challenges. The present study is the first one to examine the level of faculty perception of scholarly communication trends, usage, and challenges of e-journals in universities of Balochistan.

Statement of the problem

Modern skills, and entirely the Internet have changed the trends, ideas, and usage of faculty members; the possibility of the quick arrival to scholarly e-journals kept anywhere in the world, and the higher possibility of finding the answers you need, directly affect the way faculty learn and complete tasks. The fast development of ICT, especially e-journals and their trends and usage emphasizes the need for continuous research (Cothran, 2011; Ozoemelem, 2009; Simões & Soares, 2010).

As the provision of higher education is concerned the Balochistan has six public sector universities and the faculty members in these institutes having higher degrees such as MPhil and Ph.D. from national and international institutions. They are producing sufficient numbers of research publications in national and international journals.

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This study is an attempt to find the purpose of using scholarly communication, e-journals and university databases as well as their success level in Balochistan. It will also explore the trends, usage and perceptions, to find out the basic factors that affecting their services. This study will also try to find the challenges that come in front of the faculty members and how to solve these challenges. This study will play a vital role to solve the barriers that comes to share their works by the faculty members.

Review of the literature

In the last decade, the key changes brought out by technology in different areas specifically from print to electronic resources. This switching from print to electronic also has affected the scholarly journals. This review focuses on two aspects of this perception: the replacement from printed journals to e-journals and its control on the sign behavior of scholarly researchers (Ollé & Borrego, 2010).

“Scholarly communication is all about creation, dissemination, and preservation of scientific knowledge” (Halliday, 2001).

In the early seventeenth century, new research ideas, observations, experiments etc. often made available through formal communication channels such as scientific letters, (a sentence announcing a discovery that was encrypted), e-journals, even newspapers etc. Broadly, these methods used to communicate research, scientific news, establish facts, a priority of discovery (Y. S. Rao, 2020).

Jaya (2019) indicates about the trends of scholarly communication that the Internet is not just about finding information; it also includes publishing, broadcasting, establishing networks, and interactive services. With the introduction of navigation and hypertext viewer software in 1993, it has become a "useful tool for scholarly work". It has gradually improved the information management skills of researchers and provided them with Internet products of incredible growth, from hypertext and multimedia to digital libraries and many more. The quality and reliability of Internet resources have been a concern in scholarly communication.

Sawant (2012) describes about scholarly communication life cycle that, “The system includes both formal means of communication, such as publication in peer-reviewed journals, and informal channels, such as electronic source. Scholarly communication is frequently defined or depicted as a lifecycle documenting the steps involved in the creation, publication, dissemination and discovery”.

Qutab (2012) conducts the first survey on the development of scholarly e-journals in Pakistan, which focused on domestic attempts to promote open access. The results of the review showed that the idea of e-journals in Pakistan is often relevant to different countries. In this way, the patterns of e-journals in Pakistan close

to home and institutional premise need national dimension support and Governmental activities as in many created nations of the world. Be that as it may, if Government pays attention to some intrigue and in Pakistan, it can help in connecting advanced partition generally.

Sheik (2017) remarks in his investigations, namely the current status of Pakistani e-journals, text surveys on the Internet, and surfing the web, and found that development was not uniform. In expressions of gold open access, e-journals in Pakistan are growing very fast. The Open Access Journal Directory (DOAJ) recognizes 50 electronic journals distributed in Pakistan. Moreover, two hundred and one HEC perceived national gold e-journals are as of now distributed by various Pakistani universities. Be that as it may, as far as Green open access, the pace has been moderate, as just three universities and subject stores have been ordered and recognized in the Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ). Accordingly, there is a need to focus on the advancement of e-journals at a national aspect.

In the Pakistani scenario, particularly in, Balochistan there is a need to investigate the trends, usage patterns of e-journals by scholars (Arshad and Ameen, 2016).

It is evident from the above writing that sufficient writing can be found about the perception and usage of e-journals on the Pakistan level but there don not exist a single research article on Balochistan in this perspective. It will be the first research regarding faculty perception usage and challenges by the faculty members for scholarly e-journals through universities in Balochistan.

Research methodology

This study is quantitative in nature while using the survey (questionnaire) method to reach its goals. The study was online survey method of research and questionnaires distributed through e-mail and social media tools were administered to the faculty members of the universities of the Balochistan.

The present study is associated with the faculty members, specifically, six scholarly universities of Balochistan, Pakistan: UOB, BUITEMS, BUETK, LUAWMS, SBKWU, and UoT which recognized by the HEC of Pakistan.

The collected data were analyzed by using SPSS tool for interpreting values, relating tests, and creating results in specific area showing to meet the objectives of the study.

Results and Discussion

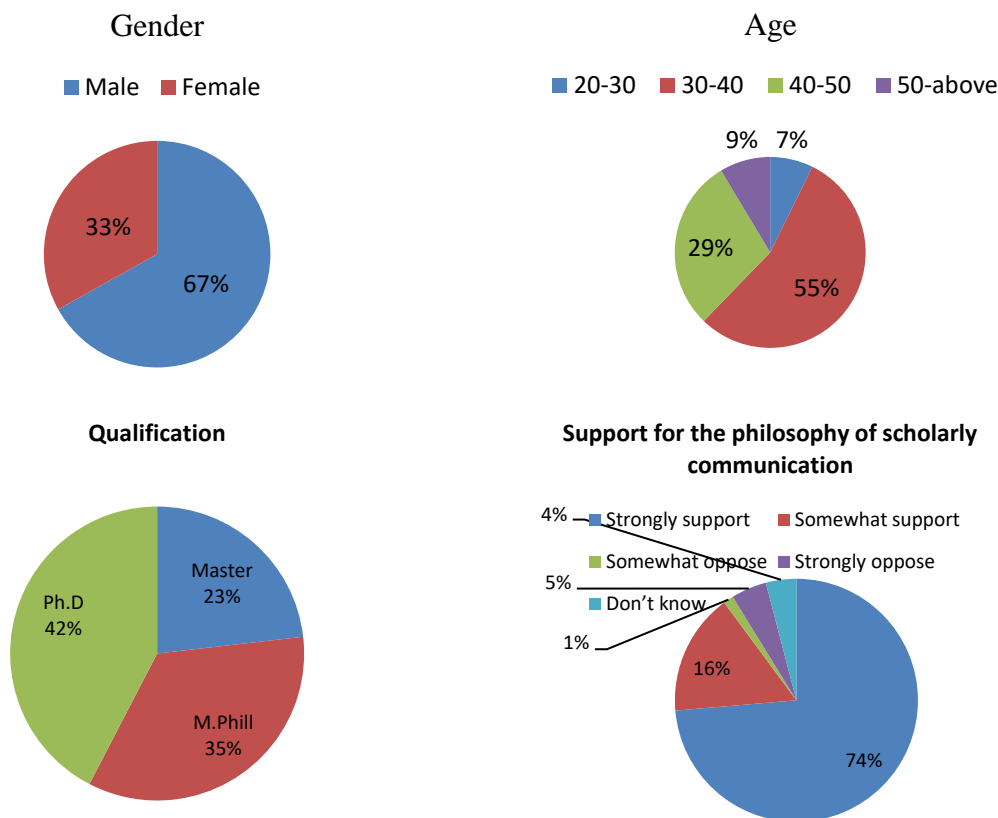
The faculty members of the Universities of the Balochistan who participated in this study have a mixed perception regarding scholarly communication trends, usage of e-journals. Most of the respondents felt that e-journals expanded their insight prospects for getting more data and the possibility of investigation. This study revealed an incredible difference with the response to communication

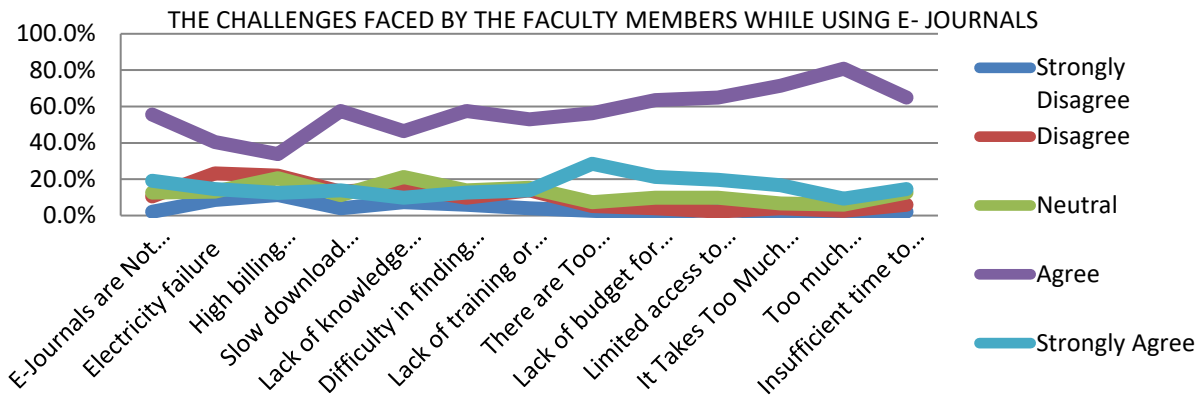
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patterns, use and difficulties for e-journals by the faculties from the universities of the Balochistan, The faculty members are well aware about the scholarly communication, they strongly support scholarly communication trends for using e-journals for their work.

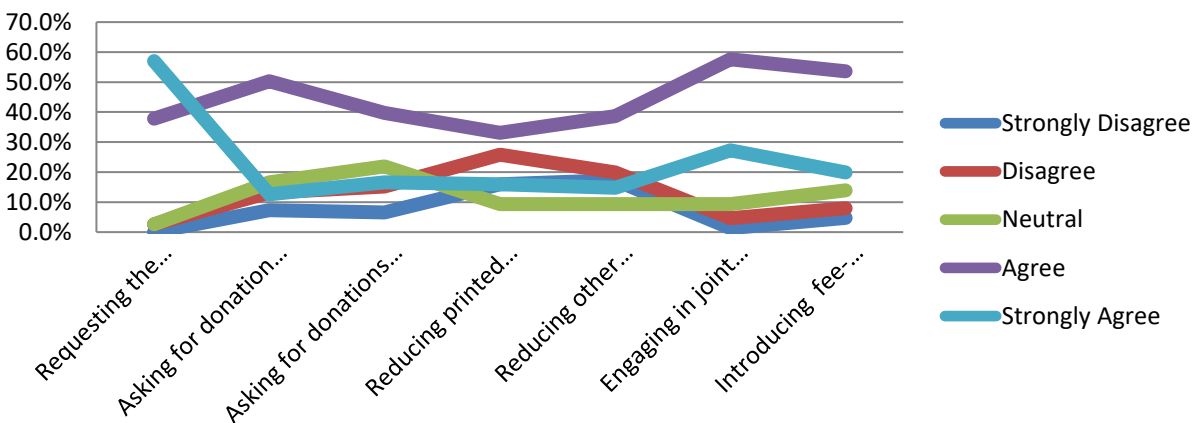
This became evident from the findings that the e-journals are not always accessible to them because of various factors as like electricity failure problem, high billing as well as internet with slow downloading speed. Many of faculty members having lack of knowledge about advanced searching techniques also faced difficulty to find relevant information.

The lack of proper training or orientations regarding access and usage of e-journals considered also a main hurdle in this regard. They countered other issue such as lack of budget for subscribing e-journals and time management issues owing to their other academic activities.

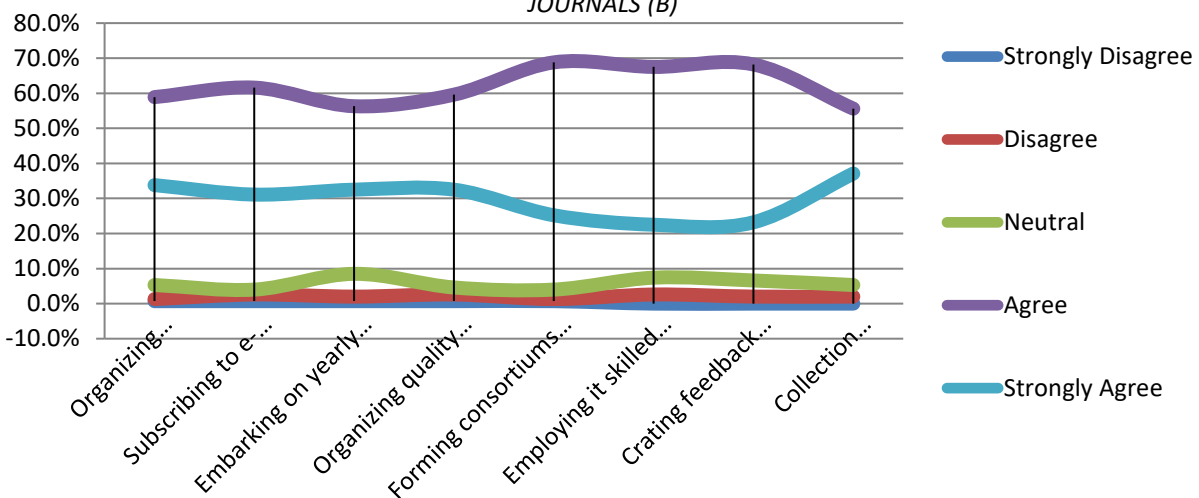




THE POLICIES / ASSESSMENT NEEDS THAT MAY ENABLE THE TRENDS USAGE OF E- JOURNALS (a)



THE POLICIES / ASSESSMENT NEEDS THAT MAY ENABLE THE TRENDS USAGE OF E- JOURNALS (B)



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Conclusion

For the purpose of understanding and accessing e-journals the faculty members use various sources and take part in different programs. Through this investigation it became clear that faculty members are aware of using electronic journals on their everyday work while knew their importance to some extent. The electronic journals are ideal when they prepare lecturers to utilize their learning materials in their own space at a specific time. The investigation also makes it clear that many of faculty members prefer electronic journals in light of its advantages.

The faculties members have an educational outlook towards scholarly e-journals which content are accessible on the Internet, as they advance self-coordinated learning. The e-journals also provide a timeless facility to search suitable data for their research and lectures.

The HEC digital library platform appears to be a proficient and easy to understand. It should continue to provide these services in accordance with university requirements. The study also found that many faculty members can access e-journal and use email for search engines. On the other hand the university faculties appear to devote more energy on the Internet to search appropriate contents for their research.

This study confirms that the faculty members have done a lot in promoting e-journals. This investigation is an expression of teacher's perspective on the utilization and difficulties of electronic journals in state funded universities in Balochistan. It also highlighted the challenges they face while working with electronic journals. They are frequently using e-journals for getting their required information, communication exchange, and interaction with each other as well as others with the help of social media. Even though the faculty members also used the institutional repositories to located find easily for e-journals for their required work. The faculty members have greater extent of agreement regarding the motivational factors with the help of quality e-journals.

The study found that the faculty members in the quest of using e-journals also confronting with various challenges such as the e-journals are not always accessible to them, the electricity failure, high billing internet connections, slow downloading speed, lack of knowledge about advance searching techniques, difficulty to find relevant information, lack of training and orientations program and the lack of budgeting for subscribing e-journals.

This study suggests that the government has to pay much heed in order minimize difficulties of the higher educational institutions of the Balochistan and the higher authorities in Pakistan is to expected to invest Pakistan to advance the utilizing e-journals development in the country.

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