Chapter 3
OAI in University Libraries:
Its Dynamics in India's Northeast

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ABSTRACT

Open access initiatives (OAI) have gained momentum and have been accepted by the academic communities of the world. The role of libraries in promoting open access culture in universities is much more crucial in many ways. In the present study, the university library system in Northeast India has been assessed about the OAI taken up by them. The same has enabled the authors to ascertain many clues of the university systems, services, facilities, establishment of institutional repositories, supporting open access publications, conducting advocacy programs, and many others as a sign of engagement in this movement. The findings of the study have shown that almost 90% of the university libraries of the region have supported the open access movement and some of the universities have also started to establish digital institutional repositories using DSpace software.

BACKGROUND

Open Access (OA), as we consider today, is an approach to the online availability of research articles immediately and instantly free from most of the copyright and licensing terms without any charge in the digital environment. Two decades-old OA movement since the Budapest Open Access Initiatives (BOAI) declaration made in 2002 is considered as the origin of this very recent concept even though it was conceived in the 1990s with the emergence of the WWW. This movement has become a global issue that it is critical for all involved in scholarly publishing, including policymakers, research funders, learned societies, publishers, governments, librarians, and academic communities, to be well-informed

on the history, benefits, and pitfalls of Open Access (Tennant, et al., *2016)*. The concept of OA first captured the attention of the scientific and scholarly research community, bringing with it the promise and potential of a shining new digital landscape, in which knowledge is freely shared and freely used, and the pace of scientific discovery is accelerated for the benefit of all (Joseph, 2013). However, today the movement has been strengthened to include data, code, open educational resources and other research products. OA now comes in different flavours green, gold, diamond or platinum, and black. It has the potential to empower and stimulate ordinary people to be more intellectually inventive, providing many benefits in terms of their visibility, wider access and increased citation to the researchers and institutions; funders invested their funds to ensure returning better research results that have widely acceptable and usable by the industry or society. Libraries, particularly academic libraries, have a vested interest in supporting open access due to certain reasons. They have been facing, since the past few decades, serial crisis, shrinking budgets, publishers big deal policy, etc. Connecting the people with vast information being the fundamental objectives of libraries, the goals of OA make librarians a natural advocate for promoting greater access to scholarly works. Librarians have been involving in advocating OA related issues such as author rights, open access funding mechanisms, negotiation of open access agreements with major publishers, public access mandates, promoting the use of institutional repositories, and, most recently, using publication metrics and other indicators to analyse the impact of research. Hence, OA brings libraries closer to the scholarly communication process and their relationships with publishers and authors, and the dissemination of information. In this context, the role of the university library system is very great. The websites of the universities nowadays feature many provisions for OA towards enhancement of the digital marketing of the library products and services to a wider perspective. This chapter attempts to highlight the provisions made by the universities of different types having different ownership in India's North East about their initiatives taken up towards having Open Access through assessing their websites and by conducting a case study of the selected universities of the region.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Review of related literature has made us understood about the fast growing trends of research in OAI at global level and India as well.

Global Perspectives

Studies on open access initiatives have been conducted in different parts of the world. The SHERPA initiative (https://www.sherpa.ac.uk/) in the United Kingdom supports and encourages the creation of digital repositories in UK universities. Recent studies conducted by the Joint Information Systems Committee (JISC), have found that OA could improve the scholarly communication system. According to the JISC (2009) conclusions, switching to an OA publishing system will save British universities roughly £80 million per year. Richard,et al.,(2009) reflecting on the experiences of academic librarians involved in OA in Canada, noted that librarians are active participants in the OA movement. Librarians participate by adding OA titles to their collections, educating academic staff and promoting the values of OA. In addition, librarians support OA standards for publishing and digitizing their historical collections. Thus, the chief role of librarians is to advocate for OA. Van Orsdel & Born (2009) suggested that publishers, in general, are not attempting to satisfy the increased demand for OA. In Asia-Oceania region, the OA

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