Chapter 8

Identification and Evaluation of Quality of Open Access Journals Cited by Researchers of MIT, CIT and STANFORD

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ABSTRACT

The study focuses on the top 3 institutions of the USA as ranked by the Times Higher Education University rankings and was keen to identify the quality of fully Open Access (OA) journals cited by the researchers of these institutes in the field of physics. Quality evaluation of identified OA journals was done by applying performance indicators viz: 5-year IF, SNIP and Eigen factor. It was found that these fully identified OA journals have decent 5-year IF, SNIP factor and Eigen factor, which indicates that OA journals are evolving as qualitative channels of scholarly communications. The study implicates that researchers, R&D institutions, libraries and information dissemination centres or anyone should make use of OA resources, and a good chunk of OA journals are at par with journals which are Toll-Access journals. Besides, it also reveals that OA publishing should be strengthened by whatever means necessary.

INTRODUCTION

The scholars from every field require access to quality journal literature for completing their research assignments. But, mostly high-quality journals are subscription based which can be accessed by researchers with sound financial capacities. Those researchers who belong to underdeveloped countries are financially weak, could not afford to get access to these high-quality journals and lead them to yield limited research output. Similarly, those researchers who can get access to high-quality scientific findings can yield best results in their researches. In order to offer a universal platform for every researcher from across the globe, to get access to quality primary journal literature Open Access can serve the purpose. Open Access is the free and unrestricted online access to outputs of scholarly research without any financial, technical & legal barrier, thus enables a person to download, distribute and use required scientific literature freely (Suber, 2002, 2007). As such Open Access can be considered as a cost-efficient way to disseminate and use scientific knowledge, it is a best alternative to traditional subscription-based scholarly communication model, made possible by new digital technologies and development of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) and networked communication (Association of Research Libraries, 2004 cited by Ghosh & Kumar Das, 2007). Quality of scientific literature matters a lot for its user; it can't be compromised over quantity. Similarly, the quality of Open Access resources particularly the journal resources is also a matter of concern for users who are doubtful about whether Open Access journals are qualitative or not? And how much they are used /cited by researchers, especially from the developed world? These are the questions which need to be answered.

In this ambient, our study focuses on how open access resources are utilized by the scholarly community by assessing the momentous and quality of Open Access journal resources cited by doctoral students of CIT, STANFORD & MIT. The premise is that these universities are the top-ranked institution in the USA as per The Times Higher Education World University Rankings, which uses 13 indicators in order to rank universities around the world. This ranking aims to provide an overview of an institution by analyzing thirteen indicators, which are designed to represent all university activities as widely as possible. Therefore, the indicators are focused on areas such as research, teaching, knowledge transfer and internationalization. Two of the indicators that have considerable weight is based on surveys of the reputation of teaching and research, completed by a significant sample of experts in the academic field (The Times Higher Education World University Rankings, 2017). As all the selected universities are located in a developed country, researchers from these institutions can easily afford access to Toll-Access journal literature. It would be riveting to investigate how much open access resources particularly research journals are used by researchers of these institutions. The study also makes an endeavor to

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