AN IMPACT OF USING E-JOURNALS IN THE ACADEMICS IN THE UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES OF BANGLADESH

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ABSTRACT

This study focused the impact of using e-journals by the academics (faculty members and research students) in the university libraries of Bangladesh. The results also explored the purpose of using e-journals, challenges faced by academics and recommendations for improving e-journals services in the university libraries of Bangladesh. The surveyed data have been analyzed using SPSS (16.0). A structured questionnaire was distributed to collect data and information. The table presentations have been made using Microsoft Excel and MS Word 2013. A total of 100 questionnaires were distributed to ten (10) reputed public and private university library users. The researcher received all the questionnaires with properly filled up and the response rate was 100%. The analysis of results has been explained within the framework of the research. The researcher had made all possible investigations to collect data related to this study in order to show a complete picture. It was understandable from the findings of this study that most of the users used e-journals for writing and publishing research articles, academic and professional development and search for necessary resources. They achieved more skilled in the field of research after using e-journals and mentioned some problems regarding e-journal services. The researcher believed that the recommendations would help the users in getting successful e-journal services. It was also useful to the library professional and e-journal service providers for developing e-journal services in the university libraries of Bangladesh.

KEYWORDS: E-journals, Academics, Research scholars, Public University, Private University, University Libraries & Bangladesh

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INTRODUCTION

E-journals are considered as a major part of the digital collections and vital information resources all over the world. University libraries provide e-journal services to the user and most of the users were used e-journals for research purpose. E-journals may be defined as any serial publication (such as journals, magazine, and newsletter) in digital format and available on CD-ROM, DVD, online systems and the internet. E-journals are often referred to interchangeably as “electronic publishing”, “electronic serials”, “online journals” and “electronic periodicals” (Chan, 1999). Now-a-days academics and research students are interested to use internet based journals instead of printed journals. Most of the publication processes of e-journals are now done digitally i.e. research paper submission, peer review, editing etc. on the publisher’s network. The medium of e-journals are suitable to access and easily usable for the researcher and have the quality to include huge information together. The Internet plays an essential role in meeting knowledge and information needs of the academic organizations since it creates potential to access a large number of resources, such as recent results of investigation, from anywhere in the globe. It also facilitates researchers, scholars and university libraries in delivering resources to a wider audience in any place of

the world over the internet and a way to access the literature and maintain the result (Luambano & Nawe, 2004)

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The prime objectives of this study are:

- To determine the purpose of using e- journals available in the university libraries of Bangladesh;
- To know the impact of using e-journals by the academics in the university libraries;
- To identify the challenges faced by the users in the university libraries;
- To offer some suitable suggestions for improving e-journal services in the University libraries of Bangladesh.

REVIEW OF RELEVAT RESEARCH

The use of e-journals and e-books has created a new source of information to the professional development of the research scholars and students. E-journals very important source for the professional development and research. E-resources are becoming a vital to carry any meaningful research. Information resources are the heart of technological progress and scientific information. Scholarly communication system is being carried out worldwide, particularly with respect to e-journals. E-journals and e-books are electronic equivalents of their print counterparts possessing many added features. E-resources offer a range of potential advantages to libraries and research scholars; multiple simultaneous access to the same issue, remote access, in-built searching facilities, multimedia capabilities and reduced storage concerns. Libraries today buy licenses for an ever-increasing number of e-journals from a range of different publishers and providers. Consortia based library subscription to E-journals and electronic full-text databases are picking up good momentum in worldwide. It was implemented a web-based electronic refereeing system for an electronic journal whose many value-added features are described in detail in this paper(Padma, 2016).The results showed the students are not satisfied with the present level of online resources which subscribed by the university library authority. The users mentioned the major problems for using online resources are limited access to computers and low downloaded speed. The result also explored that these problems do affect for the use of online resources by the students in these universities. Though, the problems are basically attached with bad ICT infrastructure which may also conduct to other obstacles such as unwillingness and thus low satisfaction with online resources(Ahmed, 2013).

E-journals are available in university libraries of Andhra Pradesh are UGC-INFONET journals, open access journals and the journals subscribed by the library authority. It is intended to assess the type of used e-journals, purpose, spending time, problems in accessing e-journals, search methods, satisfaction level with printed and online version, adequacy of e-journals and training obtained in accessing them(Kumar & Reddy 2016). The researcher provides useful information regarding the impact of e-journals on subscription to e-journals, infrastructure, staff, space, technical services, photocopying, inter-library loan, and library use and reference services. The study will have important implications for information creators, publishers, libraries, scholars and researchers. It evaluates the impact of e-journals on libraries and points out the directions that e-journals will take in the future(Kaur, 2011). In this study researcher observe very low usage of e-resources in the academic libraries. The main reason that supported to low implementation of electronic resources was inadequate of searching proficiency regarding the services Oyedapo & Ojo, (2013). Digital scholarly journal databases were underutilized. Researcher and scholars mentioned lack of knowledge about the existing services and slowness of the server are the major barriers that decrease the effective use and utilization of the digital information resources(Baro, et. al.,

2011).

E-journals are getting popular for the purpose research and teaching in the area of higher studies. Consortia also played a significant role for gaining popularity of e-journals amongst the researchers and scholars. The study indicated that users training should be done on regular basis and it would increase their skills and enable them to optimally use subscribed as well as open access databases (Tasnim, 2016). Major percentage of teaching and research scholars are aware of the collection of online journals and that there is an increasing preference for the online version to the impairment of the printed version. The number of online journals is extremely admired and most of the scholars presume to grow the use of online journals during the nearest future. This survey results also explain the significance of discipline and age as evaluative things of the use of online journals (Borrego, et. al. 2007).

METHODOLOGY

In order to obtain the purposes of this study, the survey method was utilized to gather knowledge and experiences of the academics. Five public universities and five private universities were selected on the basis of their reputation in Bangladesh. From each sampled universities five faculty members were selected from different discipline and five research students were selected in case of their convenience. The selected university libraries are-Dhaka university Library (DUL), Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology Library (BUETL), Rajshahi University Library (RUL), Chittagong University of Engineering and Technology Library (CUETL), Jagannath University Library (JNUL), Ayesha Abed Library (AABL), East-West University Library (EWUL), Islamic University of Technology Library (IUTL), Asian University for women Library (AUWL) and North South University Library (NSUL). Both qualitative and quantitative data were collected in the survey. Quantitative data were analyzed in particular on 7-point Likert scales using the descriptive analysis techniques of SPSS 16.0 and responses to other qualitative data were analyzed using Microsoft Word and MS Excel. To ensure the anonymity of the respondents, qualitative data were analyzed using the short form of respondents as Respondents 1 (R1), Respondents 2 (R2), etc. In this study 100 questionnaires were distributed to 10 selected area for obtaining feedback and determine their purpose, impact, problems and recommendations. The researcher received 100 questionnaires with properly filled up and the response rate was 100%. To contact with respondents, the researcher took the help of library professionals of sampled university libraries of Bangladesh.

DATA ANALYSIS

In this study, quantitative data were analyzed in particular on 7-point Likert scale using the descriptive analysis techniques of SPSS 16.0 and MS excel. Responses to other qualitative data were analyzed using Microsoft word. To ensure the anonymity of the respondents, qualitative data were analyzed using the short form of respondents as Respondents 1 (R1), Respondents 2 (R2), etc. This study revealed most of the respondents used e-journals for writing and publishing research articles, academic and professional development and search for necessary resources. Academics and research students achieved more skilled in the field of research after using e-journals. The impact was measure on the basis of their published articles after using e-journals. The respondents also mentioned remarkable problems and barriers regarding e-journal services. Some recommendations were explored at the end of the study that can increase usage and users of e-journal services in the university libraries of Bangladesh.

RESULTS AND FINDINGS

EDUCATIONAL QUALIFICATIONS AND TYPE OF THE RESPONDENTS

Table 1: Highest Educational Qualifications and type of the Respondents

Educational Qualifications	Graduate	Postgraduate	MPhil	PhD
	27.0%	23.0%	20.0%	30.0%
Type of Respondents	Research Students		Faculty	
	50.0%		50.0%	
Total	100%			

Table 1 revealed that the distribution of educational qualification and types of academics. We can see that 27.0% of the respondents were Graduate, followed by 23.0% Postgraduate, 20.0% MPhil and 30.0% PhD. The table 1 also showed that 50% of the respondents were faculty (n=50) while the rest 50% were research students (n=50).

THE PURPOSE OF USING E-JOURNALS

(Rating on the Degree to which Respondents Agree/Disagree for the Purpose of using e-Journals)

The respondents were asked to indicate the degree to which they agree or disagree about the purpose of using e-journals. The responses received from them were measured in seven point Likert scales, and responses were calculated according to the following scores: strongly disagree=1.00; disagree=2.00; somewhat=3.00; neutral=4.00; agree=5.00; agree somewhat=6.00; strongly agree=7.00.

Table 2: The Purpose of using e-Journals by the Respondents

Statements	N	Min	Max	Mean	S.D
Academic & professional development	100	1	7	5.36	1.851
Preparation of lectures	100	1	7	4.84	1.710
Course work Assignment	100	1	7	4.81	1.680
Writing & publishing research article(s)	100	1	7	5.48	1.946
Completion of Thesis/Dissertation	100	1	7	5.35	1.882
Recommend reading for students	100	1	7	4.87	1.704
Further reading(s) on topic interest(s)	100	1	7	5.02	1.711
Pursuing e-abstract of journals	100	1	7	4.74	1.942
Professional competency	100	1	7	4.97	1.017
Regular updating of content	100	1	7	5.11	1.922
Search for necessary resources	100	1	7	5.36	1.573

Table 2 showed that the majority of the respondents preferred e-journals for “Writing & publishing research article(s)” (with the mean score of 5.48) while the second highest of the respondents preferred e-journals for “Search for necessary resources” and “academic & professional development” (with the mean score of 5.36). “completion of thesis/dissertation” as a purpose of using e-journals ranked third (with the mean score of 5.35), followed by “regular updating of content” (with the mean score of 5.11). The other purposes for using e-journals are: “further reading(s) on topic interest(s)” (with the mean score of 5.02), “professional competency” (with the mean score of 4.97) “recommend reading for students” (with the mean score of 4.87), “preparation of lectures” (with the mean score of 4.84), “course work Assignment” (with the mean score of 4.81) and “pursuing e-abstract of journals” (with the mean score of 4.74).

THE IMPACT OF USING E-JOURNALS ON ACADEMICS

(Rating on the degree to which respondents agree/disagree for the impact of using e-journals)

The respondents were asked to indicate the degree to which they agree or disagree about the impact of using e-journals. The responses received from them were measured in seven point Likert scales, and responses were calculated according to the following scores: strongly disagree=1.00; disagree=2.00; somewhat=3.00; neutral=4.00; agree=5.00; agree somewhat=6.00; strongly agree=7.00.

Table 3: The Impact of e-Journals in the Academics

Statements	N	Min	Max	Mean	S.D
Facilitate to improve quality of research work	100	1	7	5.46	1.566
Enable to improve quantity of research work	100	1	7	5.48	1.738
Provide access to a wide range of information	100	1	7	5.47	1.696
Give access to up-to-date information	100	1	7	5.46	1.755
Accelerate the research process	100	1	7	5.32	1.728
Extend the range of work	100	1	7	5.32	1.582
Reduce working time	100	1	7	5.38	1.710
Improve professional competency	100	1	7	5.32	1.746
Interest to use of EJ for research in future	100	1	7	5.41	1.821

Table 3 showed that the majority of the respondents agreed with the statement that e-journals “Enable to improve quantity of research work” (with the mean score of 5.48) while the second highest of the respondents agreed with the statement e-journals “Provide access to a wide range of information” (with the mean score of 5.47). The statement “Facilitate to improve quality of research work” and “Give access to up-to-date information” ranked third (with the mean score of 5.46), followed by “Interest to use of EJ for research in future” (with the mean score of (5.41). The respondents agreed with the other statements are: “Reduce working time” (with the mean score of 5.38), “Accelerate the research process”, “Improve professional competency” and “Extend the range of work” (with the mean score of 5.32).

NUMBER OF PUBLICATIONS AFTER USING E-JOURNALS (UNIVERSITY WISE, 4-13)

Table 4: Number of Publications after using e-Journals (DUL)

Type of Respondents	Number of Articles before and after using e-Journals		
	No of Respondents (n=10)	No of Research Articles before using EJ	No of Research Articles after using EJ
Faculty Members	R1	25	40
	R2	22	37
	R3	5	25
	R4	17	22
	R5	4	22
Research Students	R6	5	7
	R7	3	5
	R8	2	3
	R9	2	3
	R10	0	2

The respondents were asked to mention their number of research articles before and after using e-journals. Table 4 showed that the respondents of Dhaka university library (R1 to R10) reported the number of research articles had amazingly increased after using e-journals.

Table 5: Number of Publications after using e-Journals (BUET)

Type of Respondents	Number of Articles before and after using e-Journals		
	No of Respondents (n=10)	No of Research Articles before using EJ	No of Research Articles after using EJ
Faculty	R1	15	25
	R2	10	27
	R3	5	25
	R4	10	15
	R5	4	16
Research Students	R6	5	7
	R7	3	6
	R8	3	5
	R9	2	3
	R10	1	3

Table 5 reflected the impact of using e-journals of the Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology library. Respondents (R1 to R10) indicated that the quantity of research articles had increased after using e-journals.

Table 6: Number of Publications after using e-Journals (CUET)

Type of Respondents	Number of Articles before and after using e-Journals		
	No of Respondents (n=10)	No of Research Articles before using EJ	No of Research Articles after using EJ
Faculty	R1	5	25
	R2	10	22
	R3	4	24
	R4	5	15
	R5	3	23
Research Students	R6	2	4
	R7	2	5
	R8	1	3
	R9	0	3
	R10	1	2

Table 6 showed the impact of using e-journals of Chittagong University of Engineering and Technology library. Respondents (R1 to R10) explored that the number of research articles had tremendously increased after using e-journals.

Table 7: Number of Publications after using e-Journals (RU)

Type of Respondents	Number of Articles before and after using e-Journals		
	No of Respondents (n=10)	No of Research Articles before using EJ	No of Research Articles after using EJ
Faculty	R1	4	12
	R2	2	6
	R3	1	8
	R4	0	5
	R5	2	6
Research Students	R6	0	1
	R7	0	2
	R8	1	2
	R9	0	3
	R10	0	2

Table 7 showed that the impact of using e-journals in the Rajshahi University library. Respondents (R1 to R10) explored that the number of research articles had amazingly increased after using e-journals.

Table 8: Number of Publications after using e-Journals (JU)

Type of Respondents	Number of Articles before and after using e-Journals		
	No of Respondents (n=10)	No of Research articles before using EJ	No of Research Articles after using EJ
Faculty	R1	3	10
	R2	2	6
	R3	6	25
	R4	4	18
	R5	3	11
Research Students	R6	2	4
	R7	1	2
	R8	1	3
	R9	0	2
	R10	0	1

Table 8 showed the impact of using e-journals in the Jagannath University Library. Respondents (R1 to R10) stated that the number of research articles had amazingly increased after using e-journals.

Table 9: Number of Publications after using e-Journals (BRAC)

Type of Respondents	Number of Articles before and after using e-Journals		
	No of Respondents (n=10)	No of Research Articles before using EJ	No of Research Articles after using EJ
Faculty	R1	4	10
	R2	3	9
	R3	2	6
	R4	4	12
	R5	3	14
Research Students	R6	1	2
	R7	0	2
	R8	1	3
	R9	1	2
	R10	0	1

Table 9 showed the impact of using e-journals in the Aisha Abed (BRAC University) Library. Respondents (R1 to R10) stated that the number of research articles had amazingly increased after using e-journals.

Table 10: Number of Publications after using e-Journals (EWU)

Type of Respondents	Number of Articles before and after using e-Journals		
	No of Respondents (n=10)	No of Research Articles before using EJ	No of Research Articles after using EJ
Faculty	R1	2	7
	R2	4	10
	R3	4	12
	R4	2	10
	R5	5	15
Research Students	R6	2	6

	R7	1	3
	R8	0	2
	R9	0	1
	R10	1	3

Table 10 reflected the impact ratio of before and after using e-journals in the East West University Library. Respondents (R1 to R10) explored that the number of research articles had amazingly increased after using e-journals.

Table 11: Number of Publications after using e-Journals (NSU)

Type of respondents	Number of Articles before and after using e-Journals		
	No of Respondents (n=10)	No of Research Articles before using EJ	No of Research Articles after using EJ
Faculty	R1	2	8
	R2	1	7
	R3	1	5
	R4	2	5
	R5	2	6
Research Students	R6	0	2
	R7	0	1
	R8	0	1
	R9	1	3
	R10	0	2

The respondents of North South University Library (R1 to R10) stated that the number of research articles had amazingly increased after using e-journals. Table 11 representing the impact ratio before and after using e-journals.

Table 12: Number of Publications after using e-Journals (IUT)

Type of Respondents	Number of Articles before and after using e-Journals		
	No of Respondents (n=10)	No of Research Articles before using EJ	No of Research Articles after using EJ
Faculty	R1	4	17
	R2	2	15
	R3	4	20
	R4	6	21
	R5	2	7
Research Students	R6	1	3
	R7	0	3
	R8	1	2
	R9	1	3
	R10	0	2

The respondents of International University of Technology library (R1 to R10) showed that the number of research articles had amazingly increased after using e-journals. Table 12 presented the impact ratio before and after using e-journals.

Table 13: Number of Publications after using e-Journals (AUW)

Type of respondents	Number of Articles before and after using e-Journals		
	No of Respondents (n=10)	No of Research Articles before using EJ	No of Research Articles after using EJ
Faculty	R1	10	20
	R2	4	18
	R3	3	10
	R4	4	15
	R5	2	18
Research students	R6	1	2
	R7	0	1
	R8	1	2
	R9	0	1
	R10	0	1

The respondents of Asian University for Women library (R1 to R10) showed that the number of research articles had amazingly increased after using e-journals. Table 13 showed the impact ratio before and after using e-journals.

PROBLEMS AND BARRIERS OF USING E-JOURNALS

(Rating on the degree to which respondents agree/disagree for the problems regarding using e-journals)

The respondents were requested to identify the major problems to use e-journals in their libraries. The respondents were asked to indicate the degree to which they agree or disagree about the purpose of using e-journals. The responses received from them were measured in seven point Likert scales, and responses were calculated according to the following scores: strongly disagree=1.00; disagree=2.00; somewhat=3.00; neutral=4.00; agree=5.00; agree somewhat=6.00; strongly agree=7.00.

Table 14: Problems and Barriers Regarding e-Journal Services

Statements	N	Min	Max	Mean	S.D
Unavailability of EJ services out of university	100	1	7	3.87	2.130
Subscription period	100	2	7	4.73	1.692
Unwillingness to explore new e-journals by professionals	100	1	7	4.32	1.896
Lack of infrastructure facilities	100	1	7	4.22	2.063
Difficulty in finding relevant information	100	1	7	4.33	1.770
Take too long to view/download pages	100	1	7	4.37	1.878
Difficulty in reading from screen	100	1	7	4.22	1.796
Content search is difficult	100	1	7	4.15	1.800
Deficit of field/theme coverage	100	1	7	4.15	1.904
lack of knowledge about advanced search techniques	100	1	7	4.09	2.085
Inadequate campaign for promoting EJ services	100	1	7	4.59	1.934
Lack of training and workshop for using e-journals	100	1	7	4.51	1.915

Table 14 elaborates the problems and barriers of using the e-journals. The analysis shows that the majority of the respondents indicated the problem of “subscription period” (with the mean score of 4.73) while the second highest of the respondents claimed the cause of “inadequate campaign for promoting EJ services” (with the mean score of 4.51). Followed respondents (with the mean score of 4.37) stated the obstacle of “take too long to view/download pages”. Followed by “difficulty in finding relevant information” (with the mean score of 4.33), “unwillingness to explore new e-journals by professionals” (with the mean score of 4.32), “Difficulty in reading from screen” and “lack of infrastructure

facilities” (with the mean score of 4.22), “content search is difficult” and “deficit of field/theme coverage” (with the mean score of 4.15), “lack of knowledge about advanced search techniques” (with the mean score of 4.09), “unavailability of e-journal services out of the university which affect research” (with the mean score of 3.87).

RECOMMENDATIONS (MULTIPLE ANSWERS)

At the end of the survey, the respondents were asked to fill some qualitative questions about recommendations for improvement of e-journal services in the university libraries of Bangladesh. However, their recommendations are reported below in the table 14 under some specific and relevant headings.

Table 15: Recommendations for Improvement of e-Journal Services

Need More e-Journals	50% of the respondents mentioned that to cover all the subject's content university library should subscribe more e-journals and should arrange their online journal list according to user's needs.
Appoint Qualified Staff	65% of the respondents stated that the university library needs more skilled professionals for helping the users in accessing, downloading and printing of journal articles properly and easily
Supervise the Whole Process	40% of the respondents stated that libraries should introduce feedback systems for observing the proper use of e-journal facility for all kinds of users in the library.
Arrange Open Discussion or Symposium	85% of the respondents found to increase more awareness about e-journal services for user university library authority should arrange the seminar, symposium and workshop on e-journal services.
Highlight on User's Demand	80% of the respondents stated that users demand regarding e-journals should be done on a regular basis before and after the subscription of the resources. Library professionals can collect the requirements and suggestions from the academics, scholars as well as others which have to subscribe or not.
Develop Strong Consortia	85% of the respondents indicated that the university library should strongly establish consortia or buying clubs at the library, which will not only ensure e-journal subscription at minimized cost, but also give a suitable platform to share resources and conduct a joint survey and training programme for users and professionals as well.
Maintaining the System	65% of the respondents mentioned that maintaining the subscription of e-journals are a significant task for the professionals. Better policy and procedure should be established and the professionals should handle the activity that will make the whole process easy and smooth.
Remote Access	78% of the respondents stated that academicians, research scholars and students prefer to search e-journals from their residence and other place of the university. University library authority should allow remote access for use of e-journal services remotely via proxy server.
Advertisement	88% of the respondents explored that in order to promote the benefits and facilities of e-journal services the university libraries should arranged advertising activities on a regular basis. This is mandatory for creating awareness and increasing the number of the users of e-journal services.
Develop Infrastructural Facilities	85% of the respondents stated that enough computers and internet connection user friendly for the users of e-journals as they can download files easily from the library. Thus, there have a need for more computers and speedy networks for e-journal services in libraries.

CONCLUSIONS

The findings of this study showed an outlook of using e-journals in the academics in the university libraries of Bangladesh. To select the sample, researcher used leading and reputed universities in Bangladesh. The researcher calculated from the survey that one hundred (100) responses received from ten different disciplines to notice the purposes and impact of using e-journals by the users. Almost all respondents were interested about e-journals and it was observed that faculty members and research students has increased their writing skills after using e-journals. The main purposes of using e-journals as reported by the respondents as research, academic and professional achievement and search for necessary resources. This study is also explored that the quantity and quality of research work was improved after using e-journals. However faculty members and research students were reported some problems regarding e-journal services in the university libraries. In this study some problems were highlighted and some suitable recommendations offered for the betterment of the e-journals services in the university libraries of Bangladesh.

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