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Measuring Library Subscriptions to the availability of scholarly articles published by the academic and research community of the institution

Ishappa C. Bandi

BITS Pilani, ishappa.bandi@pilani.bits-pilani.ac.in

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BY

Dr. Ishappa Bandi

Deputy Librarian

BITS Pilani, Vidya Vihar, Dist. Jhunjunu

Rajasthan-333031, India

ishappa.bandipilani.bits-pilani.ac.in

Abstract:

Any research institution needs to analyze their research output in terms of journal articles in SCI or SCImago Journal Ranking (SJR) Indicator. It is also essential at the same time to understand the library subscription quality. In this article, an attempt has been made to map the faculty and research scholarly journal publications and the library E-journals subscription. The current year articles publications by the academic staff and research scholars indexed in the SCOPUS database have been analyzed based on the full-text availability. The sources from where the academic staff refer and cite would like to publish their research articles. It is vital from the library point of view to study bibliometric analysis on their users' needs from time to time by understanding the reading and referencing habits. It is effortless to subscribe to more resources, but it is challenging to use them for users' academic purposes. To know the usage pattern and develop a library subscription strategy where > 90% of the library budget was invested in subscribing to E-Journals, and online databases, the usage of these resources matters the most. Gone are the days when traditional methods like subscribe and wait for your user to use these resources. It is imperative to understand what they want instead of bombarding with what we have for them. The methodology used here is straightforward, the SCOPUS Indexed articles published by faculty members and research scholars of the institution were analyzed using full-text availability from the library subscriptions and from open access resources. The majority, 77% of the articles have full-text availability, of which 43% are from library resources and 24% are from Open Access journals. There are 23% of published articles indexed in SCOPUS do not available in full-text for and these sources are not part of the library subscriptions. Out of all types of documents, the majority, 69.70% published in the form of articles. Science Direct is the major source for academic staff to publish their articles, followed by Springer Nature, and the third-highest source of publication is Open Access resources.

Keywords: Scholarly Publications, E-Journals, Scopus, Indexing, Library Subscriptions, Databases, open access, SCI, COVID-19, INFLIBNET-INFED, remote access

1.0 Introduction:

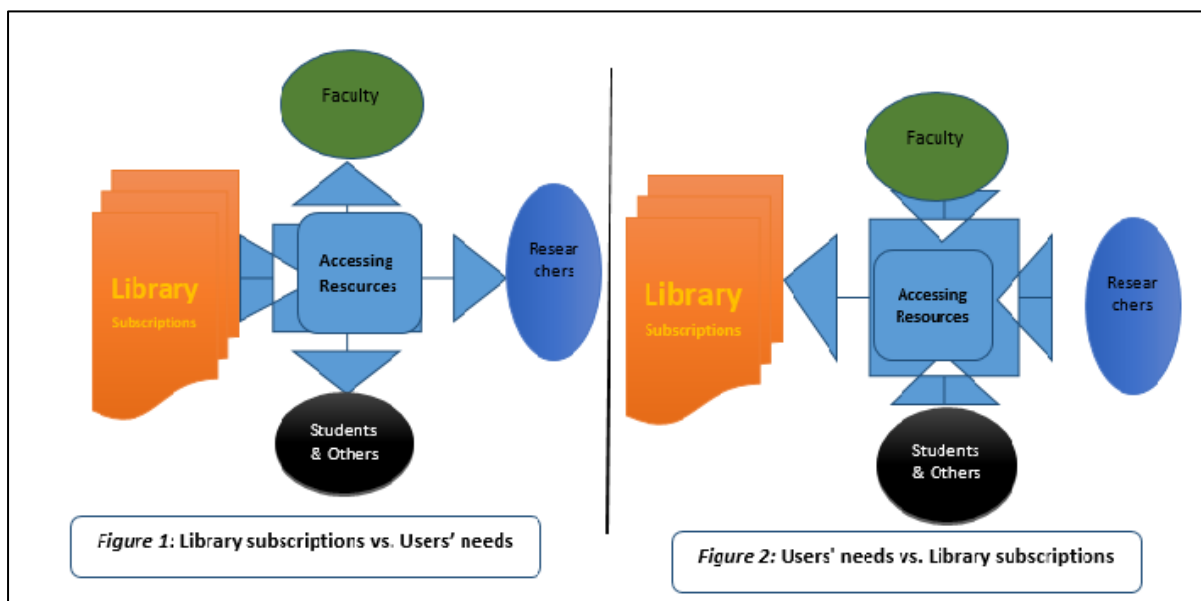
LIS professionals are thinking on many occasions that their roles had curtailed in the modern techno-savvy environment. However, it is also true that the most creative LIS professionals have become the backbone in many institutions in advocating quality research, significant visibility, and scientific publications.

Most LIS professionals spend their quality time providing information literacy on how to use their resources and services rather than what the user community uses the most. There exist a wide gap between today's Libraries and other service industries in the world. The service industries always try to understand their customer needs rather than what they can offer to them. On the other hand, the libraries concentrated on what they can offer to their users for a long time instead of what users want.

It is complicated for libraries to understand their users' needs because they are bound to change in many circumstances. Just, for instance, the COVID-19 situation where nobody was prepared and started adopting the situation so also Libraries in the world. Many university libraries in India had difficulty supporting online teaching by providing digital access to their content. One hundred sixty-three institutions in India used UGC-INFLIBNET-INFED remote access platforms to provide remote access to their library digital content, including subscribed resources with publishers' help. This service has helped many institutions and libraries to deal with the current COVID-19 pandemic situation in India. Other than science and technology users, it was not easy to access these so-called remote access facilities in India before the UGC-INFLIBNET-INFED service. Most of them not prepared for sudden online teaching-learning. As we mentioned earlier, most universities and R&D institutions' libraries claimed that they had fulfilled most of their user needs. Any libraries need to do a litmus test on the new resources and services they have implemented to improvements and value additions.

Many reputed university libraries in India may never conducted user surveys, even on their essential services like collection development, library website, Web-OPAC, staff behaviour, physical facilities, etc. Hence such information centres cannot provide adequate services to their users because of the lack of the information in understanding the user community. The bibliometric analysis are alternative to the user surveys where behaviours can be studied and perceptions can be drawn using permutations and combinations.

The earlier libraries play an active role in their parent organization's teaching and research activities. However, if we carefully analyze the library role, it has weakened the importance of LIS professionals where anything and everything is available at our fingertips. The LIS professionals' role has risen over the invention of the information explosion, but it is not the case on real ground. Many reputed institutions library users do not know the library has subscribed to the online resources they are accessing seamlessly. Because of the over explosion of Google culture in modern researchers, it is tough for them to bifurcate what has been subscribing and freely available of open access (OA). One more problem the modern users face while accessing and publishing information on the Internet is understanding the difference between scholarly vs. predatory sources. Because of this problem, the open-access initiative in developing countries like India has taken the back seat. Most of the scholarly community still feels that open access journals lack in publishing peer reviewed quality content. We also need to blame the International publishers for making this belief by the scholarly community that if they want to publish in their OA journals, hefty article processing charges (APC) are charging to the authors. The Govt. of India is proposing a **“one nation one subscription”** policy to resolve these global resources subscription issues.



2.0 Methodology:

The current year (2020) data of the institutional publications were taken from the SCOPUS database. The articles' publications were considered from various document types published by faculty members and researchers in various journals—the articles published in E-journals, including open access journals considered for the analysis.

In the year 2019, there were 1436 publications in which 835 articles were published in various E-Journals amounting to 58%. In the year 2018, there were 1167 publications in which 624 articles were published in various E-Journals amounting to 55.4%.

These two years' article publication details were analyzed with the various databases subscribed by the library.

3.0 Objectives:

The following are the primary objectives for this study.

- a. To understand the library subscriptions with respect to sources of article publications by the academic and research community of the institution.
- b. Bibliometric analysis and the usefulness of E-Journals subscription for publication purpose.
- c. To study the quality of e-journals aggregators in the form of databases on the basis of availability of full-text content.
- d. To provide definite guidelines for Library database subscription and digital content development.

4.0 Literature Review:

(Becker & Chware, 2015) have analyzed the citation patterns in the thesis at Cape Peninsula University of Technology (CPUT). In this study, a bibliometric approach had been used to analyze the usefulness of library holdings. This unique study provided CPUT Library on how

well the users in their research work utilized the subscribed resources. It was concluded that the citation analysis method is one of the better tools to understand the usefulness of library resources by the users.

(Borrego, Anglada, Barrios, & Garcia, 2012) This paper presents the results of a survey of academics affiliated to the universities that are members of the Consortium of Academic Libraries of Catalonia (CBUC) and an analysis of the availability in these universities' libraries cited in a sample of articles published by these academics. The results reflect the primary importance that researchers assign to scholarly journals as the main scientific information source. Most of them stated that they used electronic journals either exclusively or, in any case, more than print journals, a preference that is higher among younger scholars. Concerning the reading frequency, four out of ten researchers state that they read journals virtually every day, while nine out of ten report that they do so at least once a week. Scholars claim that the obstacles they face when trying to download an article are related to the lack of subscriptions. However, the available study showed that most of the articles cited in their publications are available in at least one of the CBUC libraries. Though most researchers keep a copy of the articles they consult, just over a third of them use some reference management software.

(Herther, 2009) In this study, survey results were presented for the sample articles published by the academics in scholarly journals. The results show that more than print journals, a preference for e-journals was higher in young researchers. The lack of subscription was the major hurdle for the academicians faced while downloading online resources. The CBUC libraries were subscribing to the majority of the citations in the published articles by the academicians. This study also mentioned that 33% of academicians use one or the other reference management tools for their downloaded articles.

(Miholic & Juznic, 2018) Have linked with scientific research results and the information resources. This study has linked three international databases, Science Direct, Springer Link, and Wiley Online consortia, cited by the Primorska research scholars in their scholarly publications. A gradual increasing trend was reported by this study ranging from 13.5% in 2010 up to 24.8% in 2014. The scholars published in the highest impact factor journals from WoS from 18.03% in 2011 and 31.5% in 2014. This study also related access to quality information resources and increased use and resulted in higher quality research publications.

(Oleinik, 2012) The institutional environment of science differs across countries. The paper analyzes scholarly papers produced by faculty and graduate students affiliated with six universities. Two of them operate in the Russian institutional environment of science, and four others in the Western European and North American. The citation analysis of papers included in two major databases, eLibrary (Russian) and Web of Knowledge (international), shows that the lists of predictors for the number of references to a scholarly article significantly differ in the Western and Russian cases.

(Wiley, 2014) This study determined how well the library supported the needs of scientists and researchers. This analysis has been using to strengthen library collection. The study found that 77% of all cited references and that the library subscribed 74% of the cited journals. In

this study of 2516 journal articles, 85% of citations came from the top 20% of the journals with a high impact factor. As compared to the previous studies conducted on citation analysis studies of science and engineering researchers using academic library collection. This study also focused on a unique library collection.

(Wilson & Tenopir, 2008) The study was conducted to analyze the use and reading patterns for the academic library's research collection. The journal articles and their citations by the University of New South Wales (UNSW) were from the WoS database and journals' impact factors. The survey covered both the aspects of reader-related and reading-related of the academic staff of UNSW. Both methods showed that academics of Medicine and Engineering had published high impact factor journals. This survey also shows that over half of the titles in the study had been cited once only. The study reported that engineering academics had read mostly for research-related activities. This study's important outcome was that the library subscribed E-journals in which researchers have published and cited. The study also shows that non-journals cited by these academic staff were very low.

All these studies have attempted to understand the library users and their published resources bibliographic analysis for the subscribed resources. Hence, this study aims to understand the quality of university library e-journal subscriptions and full-text availability of published articles indexed in the Scopus database.

5.0 Scope of the study

The Scopus indexed article publications published in the year 2020 till 13th November 2020 by the BITS Pilani academic and research community. Data analyzed for the articles published in subscribed resources as well as open access resources. Availability of full text for all the published articles was checked with the help of the Kopernio Endnote tool from Clarivate.

6.0 Data analysis:

There is a total of 1518 documents of various types published by BITS Pilani Indian campuses' research community. The majority of 69% of publications are articles in which 86% of articles were published in subscribed resources and 14% in Open Access Resources.

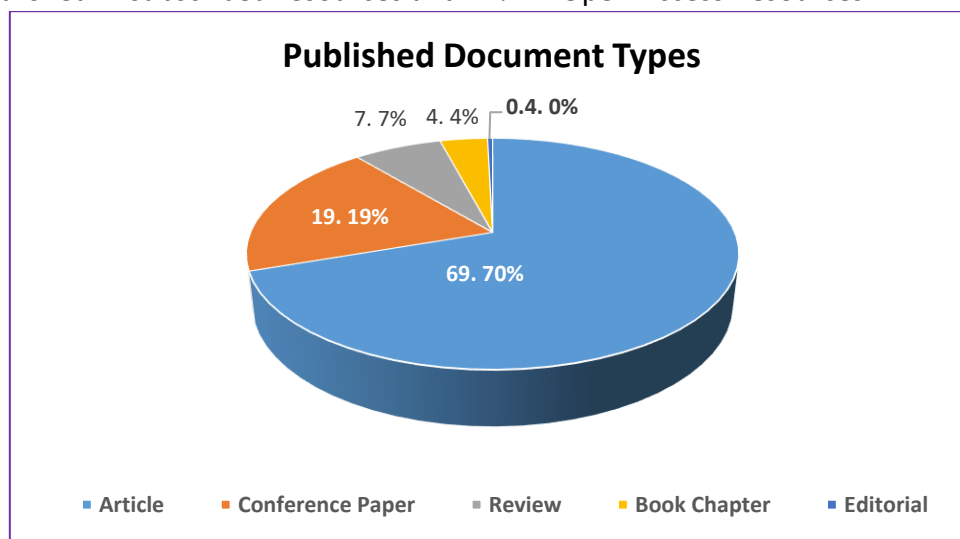


Figure 3: Documents types published and indexed in Scopus

There are five major sources of publications in total 72% of the total articles published in which Science Direct (24%) is the major source of publications followed by Springer Nature (18%), Open Access sources (14%). T&F (9%) and IEEE Explore (7%). These sources also contain inaccessible publications.

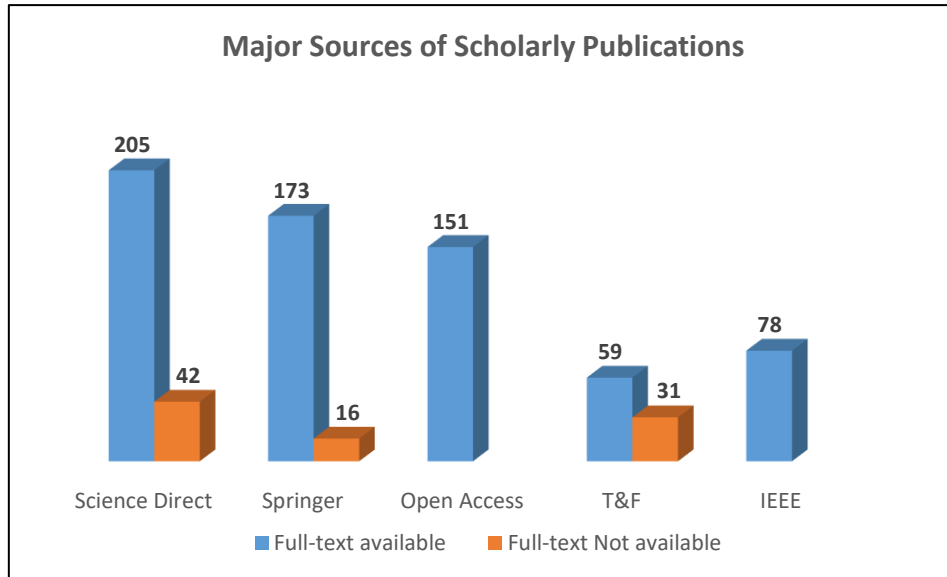


Figure 4: Major source of scholarly publications and their accessibility

This study's primary purpose was to understand the quality of resources subscribed by the library in terms of the number of articles published by its research community. 77% of the total publications full-texts were available, and 23% of the published articles were not available full-text for the other researchers to access and cite them in their research publications.

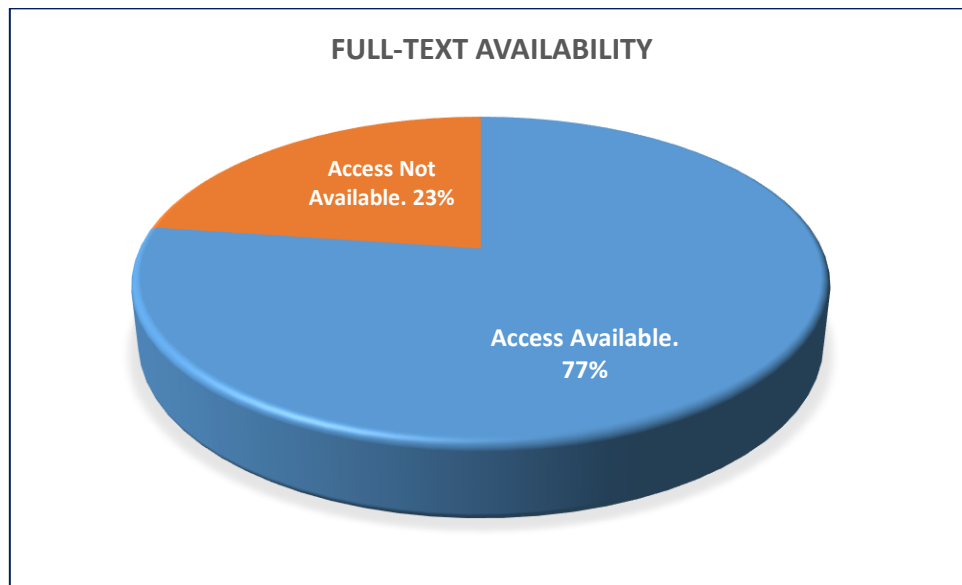


Figure5: Published Articles full-text accessible or not

Conclusion:

This attempt is to understand and evaluate library subscriptions' quality concerning the article publications by the research community and the availability of full-text access to them. We assumed that most of the resources referred by the academic community would be the sources for their scholarly communications. One more advantage of the availability of full-texts for the research publications will add citation counts in multi-folds. The 23% of the article published in various resources is not available for their research community to access and cite, which will adversely affect the institute's h-index, citation analysis, and research effectiveness. This study results and methodology will be useful in analysing the quality of library subscription for any academic and research libraries.

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