



Impact of Open Access Resources on Scholarly Communication: An Empirical Study of University of Jammu Research Scholars

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ABSTRACT

This study examines awareness, use, impact, and attitudes towards open-access scholarly resources among research scholars at the University of Jammu. It further explores the challenges respondents face while using these resources. Data were collected through a structured questionnaire in November 2025 and analyzed using Microsoft Excel. Shodhganga (86.44%) and Google Scholar (76.27%) are the most popular platforms for accessing scholarly information. The findings demonstrate that a substantial majority of respondents (90.60%) perceive open access resources as having a positive impact on their research productivity. However, the results also indicate a need to strengthen users' skills to enhance the effective utilization of these resources. These findings underscore the increasing significance of open access in supporting academic research and boosting research output

Introduction

Research plays an important role in a nation's development. However, communicating the research findings is equally important for ensuring the applicability of research work and for the growth and development of a nation. The introduction of Information and Communication Technology has



completely changed the research landscape by providing access to scholarly information online (Sellan & Sornam, 2017). Now, it is no longer a tiresome job to find and share research findings with others. A large amount of scholarly information is made available in electronic form, but accessing this information is an expensive deal where high costs of the subscription journals are making it nearly impossible for the libraries to subscribe to all the necessary documents creating a "scholarly crisis" (Umar et al., 2017) and an information divide in the society (Tripura and others, 2018; Das, 2018). It created a need for the free availability of scholarly publications for the upliftment of society, which ultimately led to the emergence of the Open Access movement. This Open Access movement aims to make publications available online, free of charge and free of most copyright and licensing restrictions, as soon as they are published. The movement is widely supported and put into practice in countries that are signatories to the Budapest Open Access Initiative (BOAI) and the Berlin Declaration on Open Access to Knowledge (UNESCO, n.d.). The history of the Open Access movement can be traced back to the launch of the "Project Gutenberg" by Michel Hart, the emergence of the concept of self-archiving given by Stevan Harnad and several other international initiatives such as the Budapest Open Access Initiative in 2002, the Bethesda Statement on Open Access Publishing in 2003 and the Berlin Declaration on Open Access to Knowledge in the Sciences and Humanities in 2003 (UNESCO, n.d.). Self-archiving is an important initiative in the field of Open Access, involving the process of making a free copy of research papers available online, thereby greatly increasing their accessibility to the community and enhancing research productivity and impact (Harnad, 2001). However, other initiatives on open access provided a wide range of definitions. UNESCO (2003) has stated that the Berlin Declaration on Open Access, defines open access as: "when an author and a copyright holder provide free, irrevocable, permanent right to access and also provides a license to copy, use, distribute, transmit and display the work worldwide and to make and distribute the derivatives works of it in any digital form for any responsible purpose, subject to proper attribution of authorship and also provides the right to make a small number of copies for their personal use". Open access makes publications available free of cost and with limited restrictions on reuse (Springer, n.d.). Content is said to be Open Access if it is available in digital form, free, and free of most copyright and licensing restrictions (Creative Commons, n.d.). Open access is a scholarly communication model that aims to provide access to scholarly content to a wider community without financial or copyright restrictions (Dulle et al., 2010). Open access enables users of scholarly content to read, download, and distribute it for non-commercial purposes without cost or licensing restrictions (Velmurugan, 2010; Osahon & Ozoemelem, 2013). Open access ensures greater accessibility, usability, productivity, and sustainability of scholarly work within the scientific community (Kaba & Said, 2015).



Literature review

Various studies highlight respondents' awareness of open access. In a study on awareness and use of open access journals in Nigeria, it was found that the majority of students were unaware of open access journals available in their field; however, they were willing to adopt open access (Ivwithreghweta & Onoriode, 2012). On the contrary, a study by Obhu and Bozimo (2012) found a high level of awareness and use of open-access publications among respondents, which accounted for their tendency to use them. A similar study by Singson, Joy, Thiyagarajan, and Dkhar (2015) at Pondicherry University identified that the majority (98%) of the respondents were aware of open access journals but lacked clarity over the term; however, the majority preferred both open access and commercial journals. In addition, Das (2018) found that although respondents claimed they were familiar with and interested in publishing on open-access platforms, in reality, they had confusion about the meaning of open access. A study by Narayan and others (2018) revealed that many respondents had limited knowledge of open-access journals and were more aware of their own institution's open-access policies than of those mandated by other publishers and funding bodies.

Nazim and Zia (2019), in their study on open access publishing in India, identified an increasing trend of the availability of open access scientific research in India, where researchers are frequently publishing their work in open access journals and self-archiving their articles. Palla, Sheikh, and Baquee (2022) found that awareness of open access among Indian students is low, with only 29.7% familiar with it, while the majority lacked knowledge of open-access platforms. It was revealed that although many students used open access, their conceptual understanding remained limited. The awareness of Open Access (OA) concepts was found to be moderate, with mean scores ranging from 1.80 to 2.27 on a three-point scale (Rangaswamy & Babu, 2024). A high level of awareness was observed for various open access resources, with more than 50% of scholars being aware of platforms such as Google Scholar (96.95%), SpringerOpen (90.30%), Sci-Hub (90.02%), Open Science Elsevier (86.7%), Wiley Open Access (82.82%), Shodhganga (71.46%), and PubMed Central (68.97%) (Gurikar, 2026). Ali, Nazim, and Ahmad (2024) investigated open-access publishing trends in the social sciences at high-ranked central universities in India and found moderate, steadily growing adoption. The study revealed that 30.40% of total research publications were published through open access, indicating increasing acceptance of OA models among researchers.

Another study reported high use of open-access publications and a positive attitude towards open-access; however, respondents rarely self-archive their work (Osahon & Ozoemelem, 2013). The findings also



showed that researchers use multiple open-access publishing routes, with green open-access being the most preferred, followed by gold, bronze, and hybrid models (Ali, Nazim, and Ahmad, 2024). A recent study by Roy, Shukla, and Tripathi (2025) analyzed open-access academic outputs from Indian state agricultural universities and revealed high usage and adoption of open-access publishing. Gold open access was the most widely used (57.27%), followed by Bronze, Hybrid, Green, and Diamond routes. Furthermore, the study observed a continuous increase in open-access publications over time, demonstrating growing reliance on open-access resources for research dissemination and use. In a study on open access scholarly publishing, it was observed that open access provides an easy way to communicate the research findings to the community, provides global visibility to the publications and maximizes the impact of the research findings (Musa et al., 2015). Umar and others (2017) conducted a study on open access in which a positive effect of using open access resources on research productivity was observed and it was identified that the major factors which led to the use of open access resources were free access to information resources, staying updated in the relevant field, satisfying their curiosity to contribute to knowledge, increased citations, greater visibility and quick communication of research work. A study by Muthuvennila and Thanuskodi (2018) revealed that the majority of respondents used open access resources to update knowledge (46.15%), followed by gaining current information (28.20%) and for study purposes (25.64%). Open access ensures centralized, equitable access to scholarly resources for the research community and enriches library holdings by integrating them worldwide (George, 2024). The study concludes that open access publishing enhances research visibility, accessibility, and citation impact, and its growth is supported by institutional policies, funding opportunities, and technological advancements (Ali, Nazim, and Ahmad, 2024). Open-access facilitates collaboration, innovation, and professional development and also promotes inclusivity (Gurav & Nagarkar, 2025). It provides greater visibility for both the author and the information, and democratizes access to research (Edet & Horsfall, 2025).

In another study, respondents perceived that open access journals lack quality, reliability, and standards, and that a lack of awareness about open access is a challenge in using them (Singson and others, 2015). In a study conducted by Sellan and Sornam (2017), some challenges in adopting open access were identified, including the non-availability of full-text articles, the non-availability of relevant articles, scattered information, and too many results. In a study on open access resources in India, major problems encountered by the respondents while using open access were internet facilities (35.89%) followed by information overload (28.20%), speed of accessing the internet (17.94%), difficulty in finding relevant information (12.82%) and lack of computer skills (5.12%) (Muthuvennila & Thanuskodi, 2018). Some



challenges identified in a study on open access in India include a lack of awareness of national-level open access policies and mandates (Nazim & Zia, 2019). The reviewed literature shows that Open Access plays an important role in improving access to scholarly information, increasing research visibility, and enhancing productivity. Although many studies have examined awareness, usage, benefits, and challenges of Open Access, most focus on broader populations or institutions outside Jammu and Kashmir. Limited research has specifically explored these aspects among research scholars at the University of Jammu. It creates a significant research gap in understanding their level of awareness, usage patterns, impact on research productivity, and the challenges they face. Therefore, the present study is important because it addresses this gap and provides valuable insights that can help libraries and institutions develop effective awareness programs, training initiatives, and policies to promote the better use of Open-access resources.

Objectives

- To find out the awareness of open access among the respondents.
- To explore the usage of open access for accessing and publishing scholarly information.
- To identify the impact of using open-access resources on research productivity.
- To trace out the challenges faced by respondents in using open access.

Methodology

The present study used a quantitative research method to achieve its objectives. The present study is based on a structured questionnaire survey of research scholars at the University of Jammu. Data was collected using simple random sampling. The questionnaire was designed and distributed to research scholars to assess their awareness, use, impact, and challenges with open access resources. A total of 350 questionnaires were distributed to the study population, of which only 236 respondents responded to it. Data was classified and analyzed using Microsoft Excel.

Analysis and discussion

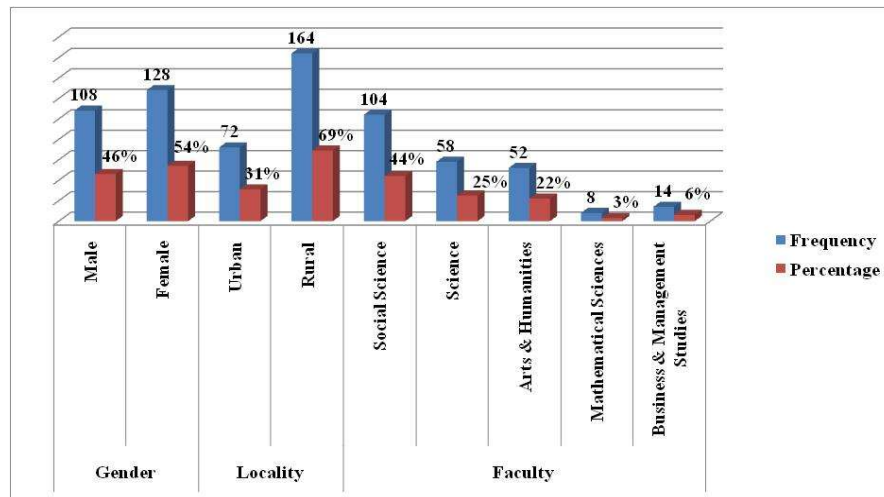


Figure 1: Demographic data of respondents

Figure 1 illustrates the demographic data of respondents. Analysis of the data revealed that the majority of the respondents were females (54.23%), while the rest were males (45.76%). The majority of respondents were from rural areas. It was found that the majority of the respondents belonged to the Social Science (44.06%) stream, followed by the Sciences stream (24.57%) and the Arts and Humanities stream (22.03%). Whereas a small number of respondents belonged to Business and Management (5.93%) and Mathematical Science (3.38%).

Objective1: Awareness of Open Access among respondents

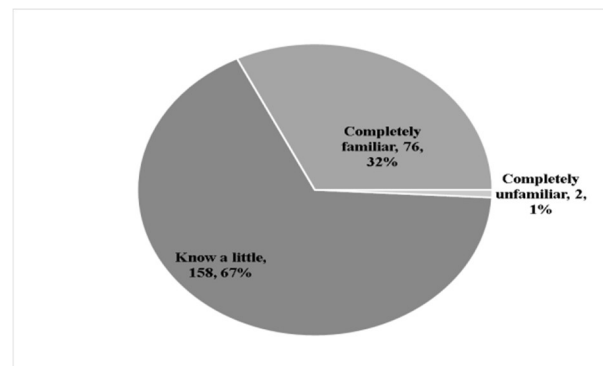


Figure 2: Respondent's Familiarity with Open Access

Respondents' familiarity with open access was assessed, and it was found that the majority of them know a little about it (67%). This indicates that most respondents consider themselves less familiar with the concept of Open Access (Figure 4). This low level of awareness suggests that, despite the global

emphasis on Open Access initiatives, the concept is less popular among the respondents. The results highlight an urgent need for targeted awareness programs to increase familiarity among respondents.

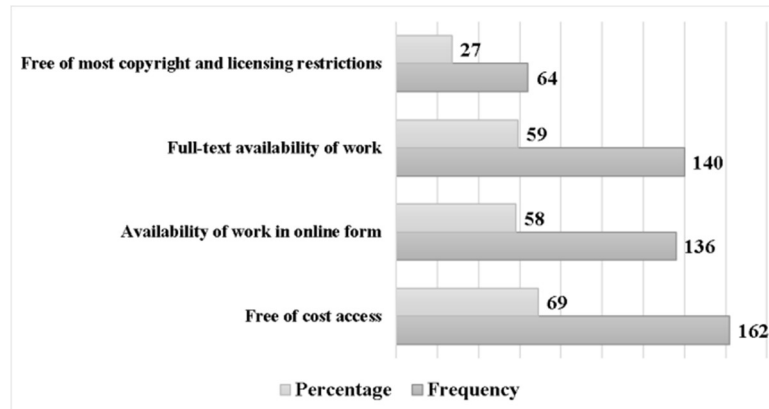


Figure 3: Respondents understanding about the meaning of open access

The assessment of respondents' understanding of the meaning of Open Access revealed varied interpretations. Although a majority of them were aware of three of the four key aspects, a substantial proportion remained unaware of the various aspects of Open Access. Notably, only a small number of respondents recognized that Open Access entails freedom from most copyright and licensing restrictions, an essential component of the concept. This dispersed understanding of the concept indicates that respondents may not be fully knowledgeable about engaging with or advocating for Open-access practices. The findings indicated the need for awareness regarding Open Access to bridge the knowledge gap among the study participants for its adoption. Overall, the findings indicate that respondents have limited knowledge of Open Access, with the majority unaware of many aspects related to it, especially its copyright and licensing implications.

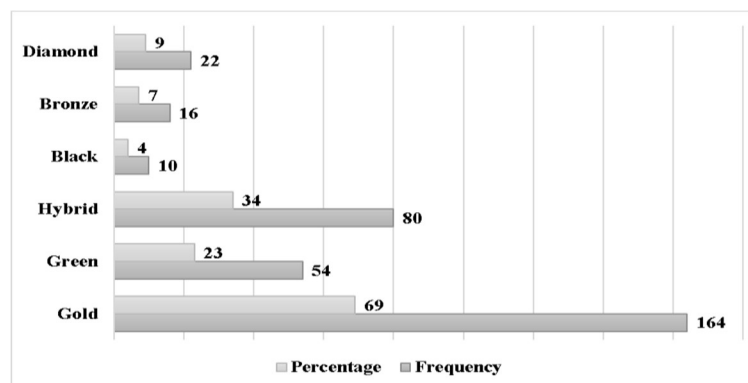


Figure 4: Awareness of different types of Open Access

Data analysis revealed that the majority of the respondents are aware of Gold Open Access (69%), however, most of the respondents are not aware of Hybrid Open Access (34%), Green Open Access (23%), Diamond Open Access (9%), Bronze Open Access (7%), and Black Open Access (4%). The findings indicated that respondents' understanding of Open Access is largely limited to the Gold model, while awareness regarding other models was found to be notably low. This limited familiarity suggests a significant awareness gap that may hinder effective adoption of different Open Access practices. Consequently, there is a clear need for targeted interventions to raise awareness of all Open Access models and their adoption among the research community.

Objective 2: Use of Open Access resources

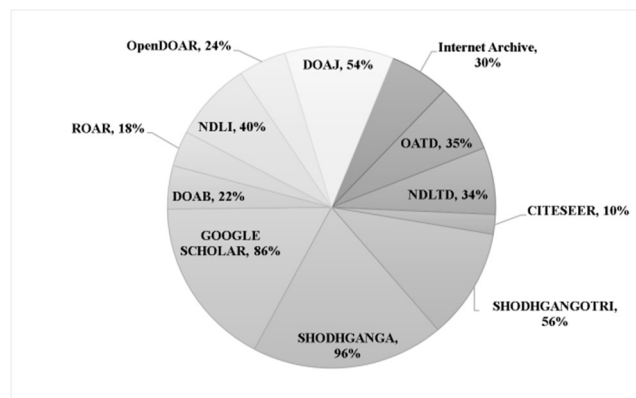


Figure 4: Use of Open Access Resources

The analysis of data revealed that Shodhganga (96%) is the highly used open access resource for accessing scholarly information by the respondents, followed by Google Scholar (86%), Shodhgangotri (56%), DOAJ (54%). However, Internet Archive (30%), DOAR (24%), OATD (Open Access Thesis and Dissertations) (35%), NDLI (National Digital Library of India) (40%), NDLTD (Networked Digital Library of Thesis and Dissertations) (34%), OpenDOAR (24%), DOAB (22%), and CiteSeer (10%) are among the least used Open Access resources. The findings demonstrate the respondents' preference for a limited range of Open Access resources, with Shodhganga and Google Scholar dominant among the research community. In contrast, the less use of international repositories such as DOAJ, DOAR, NDLTD, DOAB, and CiteSeer indicates their less popularity among the respondents. This uneven utilization suggests that respondents may rely heavily on familiar or institutionally promoted platforms while lacking awareness of the emerging global Open Access tools. The findings underscore the need for awareness to enhance familiarity with and adoption of diverse Open Access resources.

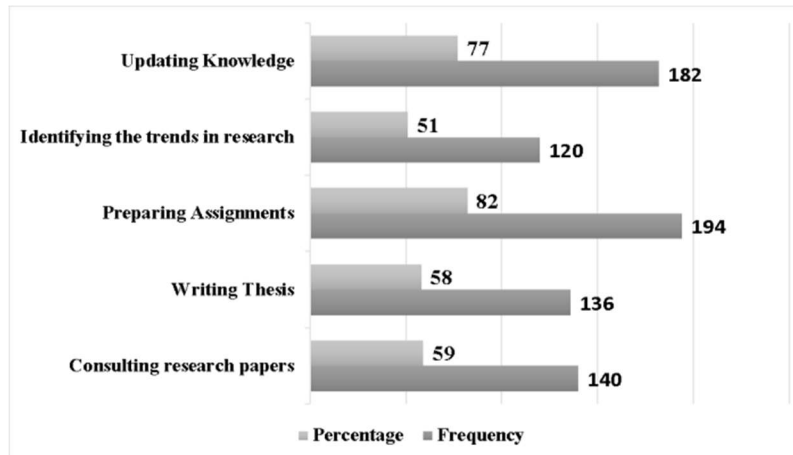


Figure 8: Purpose of using Open Access Resources

Figure 8 illustrates the purpose of using Open Access Resources by respondents. Respondents are using open access resources for preparing assignments (82%) updating knowledge (77%), writing thesis (58%), consulting research papers (59%) and identifying trends in research (51%).

The data indicate that respondents primarily use Open Access resources for performing academic tasks such as preparing assignments and updating their knowledge. However, the use of open access tools for research purpose such as thesis writing, consulting research papers, and identifying research trends are comparatively less frequent among the study participants. This pattern suggests that although respondents recognize the significance of Open Access resources for basic academic needs, their engagement with these tools for scholarly activities remains limited. The findings highlight the need for enhanced research literacy and training to encourage more effective and advanced use of Open Access resources.

Use of Open Access as a platform of scholarly communication

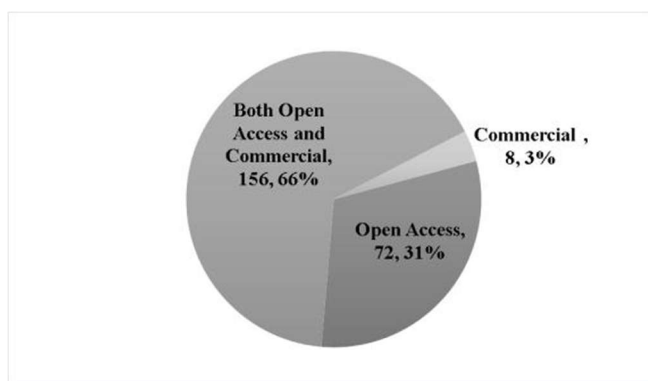


Figure 9: Type of Journals preferred by respondents for scholarly communication

Data analysis also identified the type of journals preferred by the respondents for publishing the research work. It was identified that majority of the respondents (66%) prefer both open access and commercial journals, while a very small number of respondents prefer only open access journals (31%) and commercial journals (3%) for publishing their research work. This indicates that a low percentage of respondents are publishing their research work in Open Access Journals.

The proportion of respondents choosing exclusively open access platforms for publishing their research is notably low, this may be due to limited awareness regarding various open access models and tools. This indicates persistent uncertainties or misconceptions regarding the value, credibility, or visibility of open access models, underscoring the need for greater awareness and institutional support to encourage more confident engagement with open access publishing.

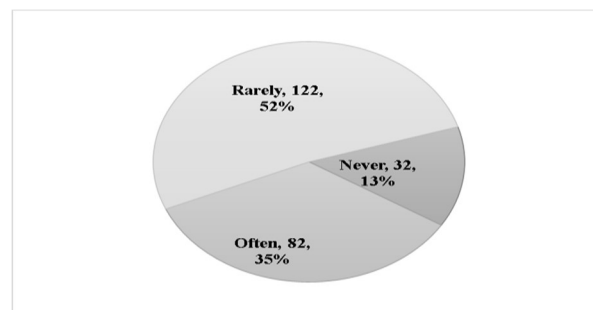


Figure 10: Respondent's frequency of publishing in Open Access Journals

Frequency of using Open Access Journals and Repositories

The findings reveal that more than half of the respondents i.e., 52% rarely publish in Open Access journals, while only a small number of respondents i.e. 35% publish in open access form oftenly. Although very few have never published in Open Access journals. Findings revealed that the overall frequency of using open access platforms is low among the respondents. This limited use to choose Open Access platforms for disseminating their research, underscores the need for increased awareness, and institutional support to promote Open Access publishing practices.

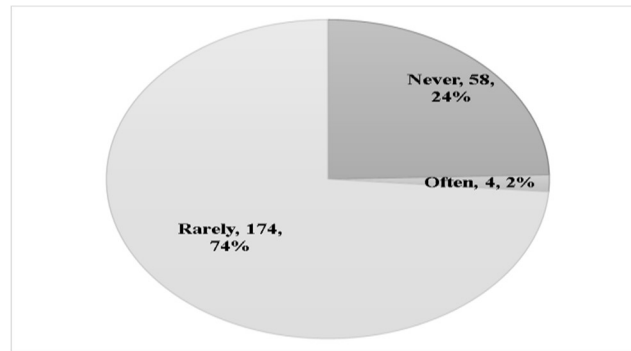


Figure 11: Respondent's frequency of publishing in Open Access Repositories

The analysis shows that self-archiving practices are least, with a large majority of respondents (74%) rarely self-archiving their work in open access repositories. This underutilisation indicates a significant knowledge gap related to the benefits of self-archiving, such as increased visibility, accessibility, and citation impact. The findings underscore the need for targeted advocacy and institutional policies that promote self-archiving as a standard scholarly practice among the research scholars.

Enhancing research literacy and providing awareness, access and support regarding the self-archiving platforms is crucial for improving engagement of researchers in Open Access platforms.

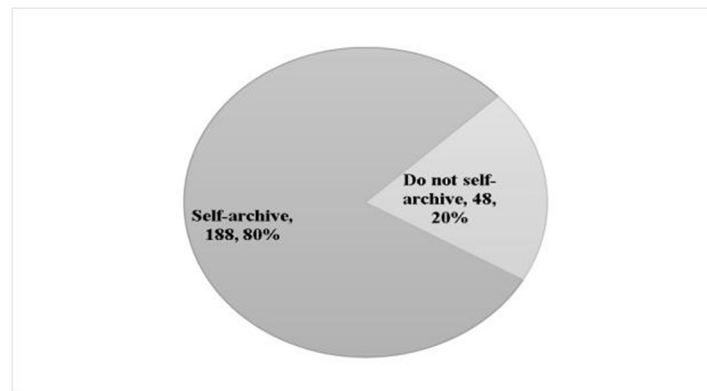


Figure 12: Respondent's willingness of publishing under Open Access

The analysis of data also reveals that majority of the respondents i.e., 79.66% are willing to publish their research papers under open access. The high proportion of respondents willing to publish under Open Access reflects a positive attitude towards the adoption of Open Access model. However, the gap between willingness and actual publishing behaviour underscores the need for stronger institutional guidance, clearer publishing pathways, and awareness of credible Open Access venues to translate this positive intent into practice.

Objective 3: Impact of using Open Access resources on the research productivity

Research productivity of respondents

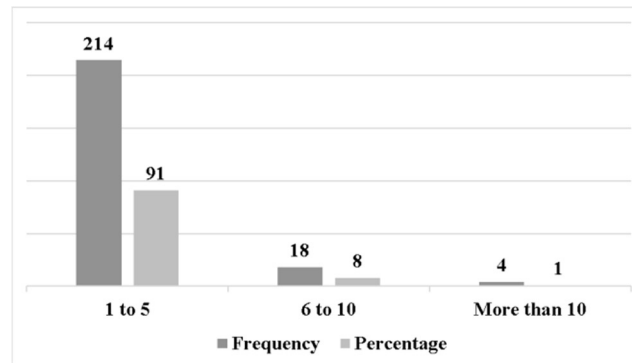


Figure 13: Total number of research papers published by respondents

Analysis of the data revealed that 91% respondents have published 1 to 5 research papers, 8% respondents have published 6 to 10 research papers, while the rest 1% respondents have published more than 10 research papers.

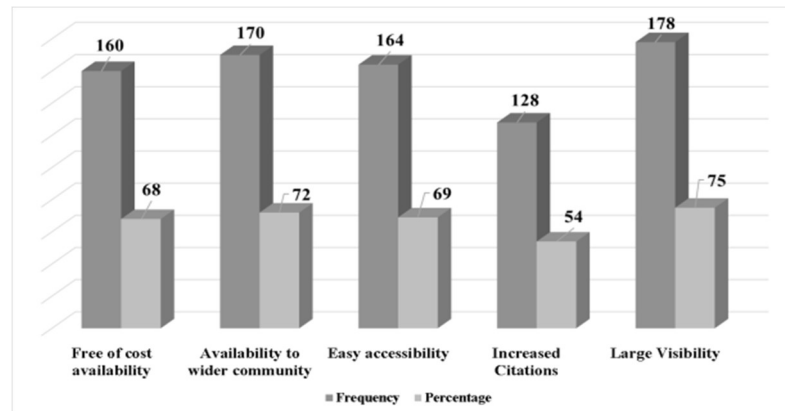
The analysis shows that the research productivity of respondents is relatively low, with 91% having published only 1–5 papers and very few exceeding this range. Only 8% have published 6–10 papers, and just 1% have produced more than 10 publications. This indicates that the overall scholarly output among the respondents remains modest, reflecting limited research engagement or opportunities within the group. This distribution suggests that respondents are in the early stages of building their research profiles, which may influence their publishing choices and familiarity with Open Access venues.

Open Access Publications of the respondents

Moreover, the data analysis also found that the maximum number of open access publications possessed by a respondent are 15 which were published by one 1 respondent, whereas there were 20 respondents who have not published under Open Access. However, majority of the respondents i.e., 28 have published only 1 publication under Open Access. This shows that the trend of publishing under Open Access is very low among the respondents.

The distribution of Open Access publications demonstrates very low engagement, with only one respondent publishing as many as fifteen papers and several respondents having no Open Access publications at all. Since the majority have published only one Open Access paper, the overall trend

reflects limited adoption of Open Access publishing, indicating the need for enhanced awareness and support mechanisms to encourage broader participation.



Purpose of publishing in Open Access Journals/ Repositories

Figure 14: Purpose of publishing under Open Access

Majority of the respondents are publishing under open access for increasing the visibility of research work (75.42%), making it available at free of cost (68%), easily accessible (69.49%) to wider community (72.03%) and for receiving more citations.

The findings indicate that respondents prefer to publish under Open Access due to its potential to enhance the visibility, broaden reach, and improve accessibility of the research publications. While factors such as free availability and increased citations also motivate respondents to publish in open access journals. Overall, the motivations reflect a positive recognition of the benefits of Open Access, suggesting that respondents value wider dissemination and impact of their research; however, this awareness has yet to fully translate into higher Open Access publishing practices.

Self-observed impact of publishing in Open Access Journals/ Repositories

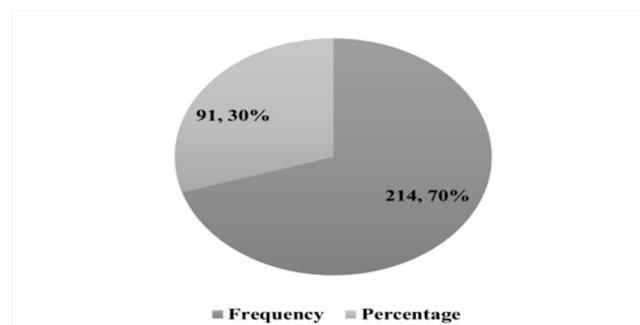


Figure 15: Observed positive effect on the research productivity

Most respondents (91%) feel that Open Access has a positive impact on their research productivity, showing how important these resources have become in academic work. This strong response suggests that easy and free access to scholarly information helps researchers work more efficiently, stay updated, and produce better quality outputs. Overall, it highlights the growing importance of Open Access in supporting research and its continued relevance in advancing academic development.

Self-observed effect of under open access on the research productivity

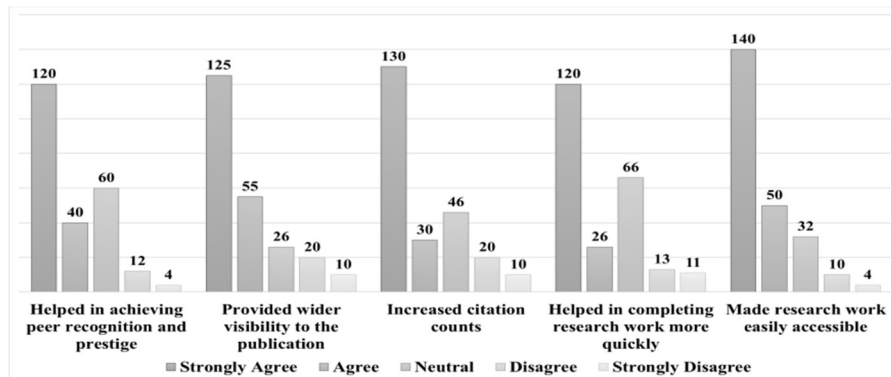


Figure 16: Effect of publishing under Open Access

Most respondents (140) strongly feel that Open Access has made their research much easier to access. They also believe that publishing in Open Access has helped increase their citation counts, given their work wider visibility, improved their chances of gaining recognition among peers, and even allowed them to complete their research more quickly.

Overall, these responses show that researchers clearly see the many benefits of Open Access, especially when it comes to accessibility, visibility, and academic reputation. At the same time, the findings suggest that simply having access is not enough—researchers also need proper guidance and training to make the most of Open Access platforms and fully benefit from what they offer.

Objective 4: Challenges faced by respondents in using open access

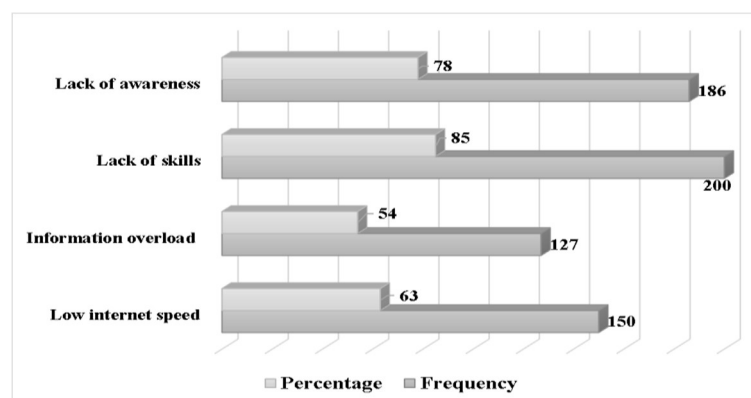


Figure 17: Challenges experienced in accessing Open Access

Figure 17 highlights the key challenges respondents face while accessing Open Access resources. A large number of respondents pointed to lack of skills (85%) and lack of awareness (78%) as major issues. In addition, low internet speed (63%) and information overload (54%) were also commonly reported challenges.

These findings show that even though Open Access resources are widely available, many users still struggle to use them effectively. The main issues are not just technical but also related to awareness and skills. This suggests a clear need for better training, improved internet infrastructure, and simpler ways to manage and filter information so that users can access and use these resources more easily.

Level of satisfaction

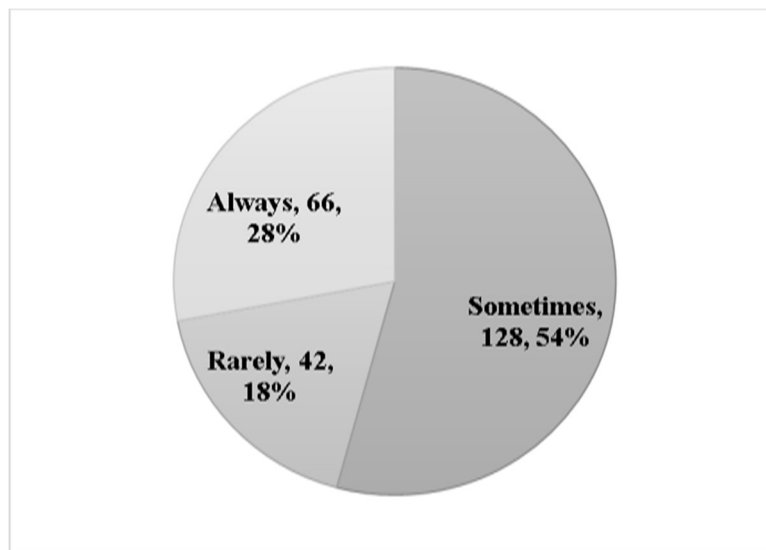


Figure 18: Frequency of finding relevant information

The analysis also looked at how often respondents are able to find relevant information using Open Access resources. It shows that more than half of them (54%) are only able to find what they need sometimes. Meanwhile, 28% say they are always successful in finding relevant information, while 18% report that they rarely find what they are looking for.

These findings suggest that although some researchers are able to consistently use Open Access resources effectively, most face occasional difficulties. This could be due to challenges in search strategies or navigating available resources. It highlights the need for better training and guidance so that researchers can use Open Access platforms more efficiently and get the most out of them.

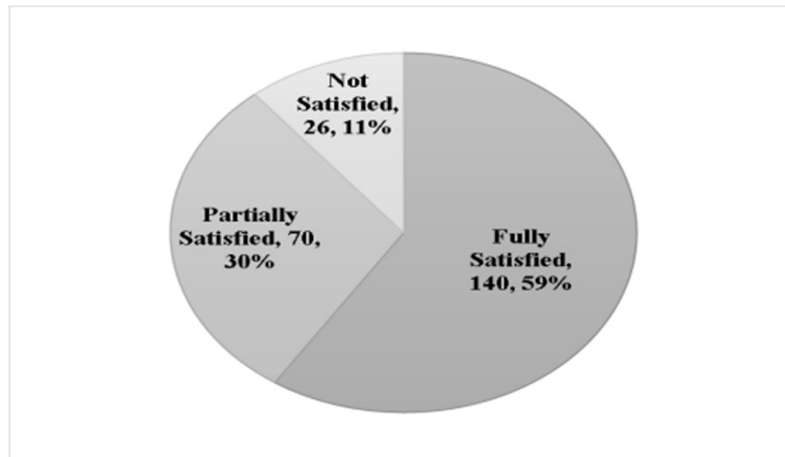


Figure 19: Respondent's level of satisfaction with Open Access Resources

Analysis of the data (Figure 10) revealed that majority of the respondents said that they are fully satisfied (59%) with the open access resources. Followed by the respondents who are partially satisfied (30%) with open access resources. The findings suggest that overall satisfaction with Open Access resources is high among respondents, with most reporting full or partial satisfaction. However, a small proportion remains dissatisfied, indicating room for improvement in the quality, accessibility, or usability of these resources.

Training expectations

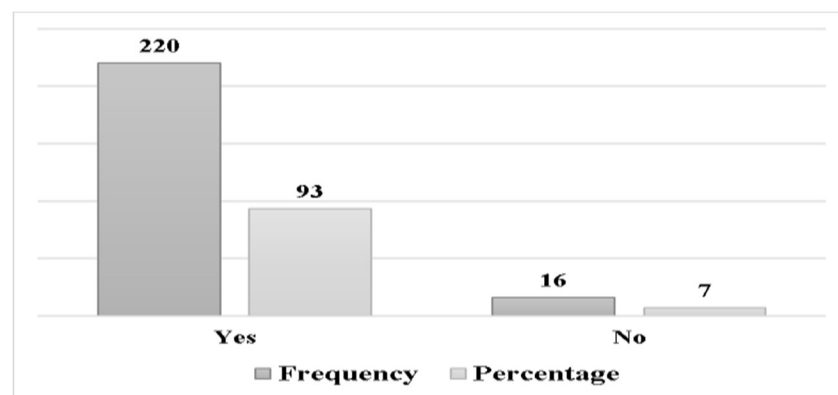


Figure 20: Expectation of training from the institute

The findings indicate a strong demand among respondents for institutional training on Open Access resources, highlighting the need for structured capacity-building initiatives to enhance effective use and understanding of these resources.



Discussion and Conclusion

Most respondents reported that they have only limited knowledge of Open Access. However, the analysis shows that they are somewhat familiar with certain aspects of it, except for one key point that Open Access often allows freedom from many copyright and licensing restrictions. Their understanding of different types of Open Access is also quite limited, mostly restricted to Gold Open Access. This suggests that their overall understanding is not complete, which is similar to the findings of Das (2018), where respondents were familiar with the term but unclear about its actual meaning.

In terms of usage, platforms like Shodhganga (86.44%) and Google Scholar (76.27%) are the most commonly used sources for accessing scholarly information, mainly for writing research papers (81.35%). When it comes to publishing, most respondents prefer a mix of Open Access and commercial journals (66.10%), while only a smaller group publishes exclusively in Open Access journals (30.50%). Many also rarely publish or self-archive their work in Open Access platforms, showing that these options are still underused. However, it is encouraging that most respondents are willing to publish in Open Access in the future and expect proper training from their institutions, reflecting findings similar to Dulle et al. (2010) and Ivwighrehweta and Onoriode (2012).

The study also highlights that Open Access has a clear positive impact on research productivity, with 90.60% of respondents agreeing. They believe it improves access to research, increases citations, enhances visibility, speeds up research work, and helps in gaining recognition among peers findings that align with Umar et al. (2017). Despite these benefits, actual research output through Open Access remains relatively low, suggesting that more awareness and encouragement are needed.

At the same time, respondents face several challenges while using Open Access resources. The most common issues include lack of awareness, information overload, limited skills, and slow internet speed. Many respondents are not always able to find relevant information, and less than half are fully satisfied with these resources. These challenges point towards gaps in knowledge and skills rather than problems with the resources themselves.

Overall, the study shows that while Open Access is widely recognized for its benefits, its full potential is not yet being realized. There is a clear need for structured training and information literacy programs. Libraries, in particular, can play an important role by organizing awareness sessions and skill-building workshops, helping users make more effective use of Open Access resources and ultimately improving their research output and impact.



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