

Access to Free e-journals via Library Portals: The Experience of the Shahid Chamran Ahwaz University in Iran as a Case Study

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Abstract

Journals as one of the most important information carriers are useful resources for libraries and information centers. As publishers more fully actualize the e-journal, it soon will be as insufficient to offer only print journals as it is to provide only print abstracts and indexes. Using journals especially scholarly journals, scientists can contact together in scientific communities. Impact of information technologies on journals has changed the format of these resources into electronic and has facilitated information storage and retrieval. Free e-journals are alternatives for non free e-journals and are useful for libraries that can not afford expensive costs to provide subscription-based e-journals. If libraries really support Free e-journals, then one would assume that we would be pretty aggressive about making free content readily available to our users through library systems and access points (e.g. ILS, knowledge base, web site). Finding free and non free e-journals in the web environment is more difficult than finding print journals, since they rarely are found in bibliographic resources, so their locating and retrieval is difficult. Librarians are responsible for information organization and retrieval and they must cooperate in designing search engines and web pages to offer electronic articles that are needed for users. Portals are one of the tools that can be used for accessibility of free and non free e-journals to users. Portals as website are windows to World Wide Web and often have a search engine, links to useful pages, news or other services. In this article various literature and experiences about access to electronic journals via web pages has been reviewed. We decided to create a special portal of free e-journals for postgraduate students, masters & researchers of Shahid Chamran Ahwaz University to use of these resources. So, we provided a list of Shahid Chamran Ahwaz University courses and on the basis of this list, we selected free e-journals of each course via Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ)¹. DOAJ has become "the" Open Access journal site for libraries because it is of a manageable size, Many librarians may think it is comprehensive, It is well organized and easy to harvest. In this survey, Researcher could extract 198 journals from this website that all of them were peer reviewed. Since we wanted to design a portal for free e-journals, we added selected journals to webpage that was linked to Shahid Chamran Ahwaz University Central Library website. This webpage was called free e-journals portal. All students and Masters could access to their needed articles freely. In this article we will discuss about importance of open access or free e-journals and their role in scholarly communication. Finally we will offer free e-journals portal of Shahid Chamran Ahwaz University Central Library as a tool for access to open access articles.

Keywords: open access; library portals; DOAJ; central libraries

1 Introduction

Using journals especially scholarly journals, scientists can contact together in scientific communities. Impact of information technologies on journals has changed the format of these resources into electronic and has facilitated information storage and retrieval. Free electronic journals are one of the types of electronic journals. These journals are accessible freely via Internet for users. Now, free electronic journals are the main part of scientific resources.

2 Research Aim

The major aim of this research, is designing a special portal for free electronic journals for Shahid Chamran University Ahwaz University on the basis of the attitudes graduate students of this university about these journals.

¹ <http://www.doaj.org>

3 Methodology

Data collecting tools were literature review, Checklist, questionnaire and Yahoo search engine. For data statistical analysis, descriptive statistics, Chi-Square, Anova One Way and Scheffe test were used. Results of checklist analysis, that was distributed among Iranian experts in Library & Information Science field, indicated 36 criteria can be used for selecting free electronic journals via Internet. By these criteria 198 journals, were selected from Directory of Open Access Journals.

4 Findings

This research indicated that graduate students of Shahid Chamran university of Ahvaz have little familiarity with free electronic journals of their special course and their use of these journals is in low level. On the basis of the attitudes graduate students of Shahid Chamran university of Ahvaz, evaluating criteria of free electronic journals quality and needed features for designing a special portal for free electronic journals were gained. In secondary findings part of this research, Chi-Square Test cleared that there is no significant difference among using full time and part time graduate students of Shahid Chamran university of Ahvaz of free electronic journals. In this research, by Webometrics method, highly cited free electronic journals were assigned. By this method, 63 highly cited free electronic journals were determined. Finally, by Microsoft Frontpage, that is a special software for designing web pages, primary version of special portal of free electronic journals for Shahid Chamran university of Ahvaz was designed and created. Free electronic journals of each university course will be accessible from this portal. Figure 1 shows portal of free e-journals in Shahid Chamran Ahwaz University. Its address is: <http://www.cua.ac.ir/lib/central-library3/free-home.htm>



Figure 1: Portal of Free e-journals

Notes and References

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