USE OF ELECTRONIC JOURNALS BY ACADEMIC STAFF AT STRATHMORE UNIVERSITY

BY

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Abstract

Strathmore University subscribes to electronic journals with the aim of providing library users a variety of information resources to use in teaching, learning and research. Library users receive training in the use of e-journals through information literacy and library user training programs. In addition, users have access to computers fully connected to the internet. Despite this, the use of e-journals by lecturers at Strathmore University is below the librarians’ expectations. The researcher was motivated by this to carry out a study to establish why Strathmore University lecturers do not make maximum use of these electronic journals. The aim of the study was to investigate the use of electronic journals by lecturers at Strathmore University; and ascertain the extent to which their information needs were met by these journals. The objectives of the study were to; determine the use of e-journals by lecturers in teaching and research; find out whether lecturers at Strathmore University were aware of the availability of e-journals in their libraries; establish whether the available e-journals were meeting the information needs of lecturers at Strathmore University; find out whether lecturers at Strathmore University had adequate skills to use in accessing e-journals; establish the perception of lecturers at Strathmore University towards electronic journals; establish the level of ICT support infrastructure available at the university; establish the challenges lecturers at Strathmore University encountered in using e-journals; and establish the possible solutions to the challenges faced by lecturers in using e-journals. The study was based on the Horizontal Pyramid Model by Ndubisi and Jantan (2003). The population of the study comprised Strathmore University lecturers. Purposive sampling techniques were used in the study. Data was collected using face to face semi-structured interviews, observation and documentary analysis. It was analysed using descriptive statistics and content analysis. Tables and charts were used to give more detailed presentation and analyses. The study established that most lecturers are aware of the existence of e-journals in the university. The e-journals available meet the information needs of lecturers. Most lecturers at Strathmore University did not have adequate skills to use in accessing e-journals. It was found that lack of skills, low bandwidth, work overload, and publishers' embargos, among others, are some of the challenges lecturers faced in using e-journals. Among the recommendations included the establishment of information literacy programs to train lecturers to access and use e-journals. Libraries should also improve the e-journals' databases’ user interface to eliminate the complexity that exists in various databases.