

ICT FACILITIES AND ACADEMIC LIBRARIES IN BRIDGING THE DIGITAL DIVIDE AMONG FACULTY MEMBERS

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Abstract

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has become an essential part of higher education, supporting teaching, learning, and research. Academic libraries play an important role in bridging the digital divide by providing access to computers, the internet, digital resources, and technical support for faculty members. This study focuses on the role of ICT facilities and academic libraries in reducing digital inequalities among faculty members. It needs. The study aims to understand how academic libraries contribute to improving digital examines the availability and use of ICT facilities, digital library services, and library institutions.

1. Introduction

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has revolutionized the way higher education institutions support teaching, learning and research. Faculty members are increasingly using digital technologies to access scholarly information, communicates Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has revolutionized the way higher education with students and conduct research. However, the access to ICT facilities, digital resources and technical skills varies, creating a digital divide among faculty members.

Academic libraries are in a position to help in solving this problem providing computers, internet access, e-resources, digital library services and user training. These services help faculty members to improve their digital skills and access credible academic information. Therefore, it is important to upgrade the ICT facilities in academic libraries for promoting digital inclusion and providing equal opportunities for faculty to actively participate in academic and research activities

3. Review of Literature

Lythreathis, Singh, and El-Kassar (2022) conducted a systematic review of digital divide research and reported that inequalities in ICT access, digital skills, infrastructure, and training remain the major factors contributing to the digital divide. The study emphasized that educational institutions should strengthen digital infrastructure and digital literacy initiatives to promote digital inclusion.

Ogunmodede et al. (2023) reviewed the role of librarianship in the digital era and found that academic libraries play a significant role in reducing the digital divide through ICT-enabled services, user education, and continuous capacity building for librarians. The study recommended regular ICT training to improve digital service delivery.

Grimes and Porter (2023) highlighted that libraries are essential institutions for promoting digital equity. They observed that libraries provide internet access, digital technologies, and digital literacy programmes that help bridge the digital divide and improve equitable access to information.

Khumalo (2025) presented a scoping review on digital literacy in academic libraries and concluded that academic libraries are increasingly focusing on developing digital competence and digital fluency among library professionals and users to effectively support

teaching, learning, and research in higher education.

Aliyu et al. (2025) examined the relationship between open access, ICT, and the digital divide. The study found that academic libraries can reduce digital inequalities by providing open-access resources, digital literacy training, and technology-based services that support faculty members and researchers.

4. Statement of the Problem:

Despite the availability of ICT facilities, many faculty members still face challenges in accessing and effectively using digital resources. This study examines the role of academic libraries in bridging the digital divide among faculty members.

5. Objective of the Study:

- To examine the availability of ICT facilities in academic libraries for faculty members.
- To assess the role of academic libraries in bridging the digital divide among faculty members.
- To identify the use of digital library resources and services by faculty members.

6. Research Methodology:

This study adopts a **descriptive survey research design**. Primary data were collected from faculty members of arts and science colleges through a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire focused on ICT facilities, library services, and digital resource usage. The collected data were analyzed using simple

statistical tools such as frequency, percentage, and chi-square test. The findings were

Presented in tables and interpreted to understand the role of ICT facilities and academic libraries in bridging the digital divide among faculty members.

7. Results and Discussion

Table 1. Library Provides Adequate Support for Digital Needs (N=50)

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	50	100
No	0	0
Total	50	100

Interpretation

All 50 respondents (100%) stated that the library provides adequate support for their digital needs. This indicates a high level of satisfaction with the digital support services offered by the college libraries.

Table 2. The Library Provides Adequate Digital Resources for Teaching and Research

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	45	90
Agree	5	10
Neutral	0	0
Disagree	0	0
Strongly Disagree	0	0
Total	50	100

Interpretation

A majority of respondents (90%) strongly agreed that the library provides adequate digital resources for teaching and research, while 10% agreed. None expressed disagreement.

Table 3. Library Staff are Knowledgeable and Helpful in Using Digital Tools

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	10	20
Agree	37	74
Neutral	3	6
Disagree	0	0
Strongly Disagree	0	0
Total	50	100

Interpretation

Nearly three-fourths (74%) agreed that library staff are knowledgeable and supportive in using digital resources, while 20% strongly agreed. Only 6% remained neutral.

Table 4. Digital Resources are easily Accessible and User-Friendly

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	22	44
Agree	28	56
Neutral	3	6
Disagree	0	0
Strongly Disagree	0	0
Total	50	100

Interpretation

More than half of the respondents (56%) agreed that digital resources are easily accessible and user-friendly, while 44% strongly agreed.

Table 5. Library Plays a Crucial Role in Bridging the Digital Divide

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	39	78
Agree	11	22
Neutral	3	6
Disagree	0	0
Strongly Disagree	0	0
Total	50	100

Interpretation

Most respondents (78%) strongly agreed that the library plays a crucial role in bridging the digital divide among faculty members, while 22% agreed.

Table 6. Institutional Subscription Limitation

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	39	78
Agree	9	18
Neutral	2	4
Disagree	0	0
Strongly Disagree	0	0
Total	50	100

Interpretation

Most respondents (78%) strongly agreed that institutional subscription limitations affect access to digital resources.

Table 7. Publisher Restrictions

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	12	24
Agree	35	70
Neutral	3	6
Disagree	0	0
Strongly Disagree	0	0
Total	50	100

Interpretation

A majority (70%) agreed that publisher restrictions affect access to digital resources, while 24% strongly agreed.

Table 8. Digital Rights Management (DRM) Issues

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	27	54
Agree	21	52
Neutral	2	4
Disagree	0	0
Strongly Disagree	0	0
Total	50	100

Interpretation

More than half (54%) strongly agreed that Digital Rights Management issues affect access to digital resources, while 42% agreed.

Table 9. Issues with Remote Access

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	18	36
Agree	29	58
Neutral	3	6
Disagree	0	0
Strongly Disagree	0	0
Total	50	100

Interpretation

Most respondents (58%) agreed that remote access issues influence access to digital resources, while 36% strongly agreed

Table 10. Insufficient Time to Explore Digital Resources

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Strongly Agree	27	54
Agree	21	42

Neutral	2	4
Disagree	0	0
Strongly Disagree	0	0
Total	50	100

Interpretation

More than half (54%) strongly agreed that insufficient time affects the use of digital resources, while 42% agreed.

8. Findings

The analysis indicates that faculty members have a highly positive perception of their college libraries' digital services. All respondents confirmed that libraries adequately support their digital needs. Most respondents strongly agreed that libraries provide sufficient digital resources, effective training, accessible digital platforms, and play a significant role in bridging the digital divide. At the same time, institutional subscription limitations, publisher restrictions, Digital Rights Management issues, remote access problems, and lack of time were identified as important barriers affecting access to digital resources.

9. Conclusion:

ICT facilities and academic libraries play an important role in bridging the digital divide among faculty members. By providing access to digital resources, internet facilities, and user support, libraries help improve teaching, learning, and research activities. Strengthening ICT infrastructure and enhancing digital library services will further promote digital inclusion and ensure equal access to information for all faculty members.

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