

A feasibility study on the establishment of an Online Institutional Repository of Faculty publications: Faculty of Medicine, University of Kelaniya

W.M.T.D.Ranasinghe

Department of Library and Information, Science, University of Kelaniya

ABSTRACT

There is a growing interest among academic institutions in collecting, preserving, and providing access to digital content produced by the Faculty members during their teaching and research activities. In the past several years open source platforms such as Eprints, Dspace, and Fedora have been released to allow this content to be organized, described, shared, and preserved in an Online environment.

Faculty of Medicine, University of Kelaniya was established in 1991 and it is one of the leading medical schools in Sri Lanka. Currently the Faculty has approximately 110 academic staff members serving in 16 academic departments. They produce high quality research which is published in international as well as local journals, conference proceedings, monographs, etc. According to the University Calendar 2010, during the past 6 years, the highest number of research papers and books has been published by the Faculty of Medicine. It includes 1535 research papers, 571 published abstracts and 360 books.

Therefore, it has become a timely need to collect, organize, preserve and provide access to this literature in an efficient and effective manner. Present study aims to examine the feasibility of establishing an Online Institutional Repository (IR) of these publications based on DSpace software. The study does an environmental scan, proposes an implementation strategy, and discusses issues related to establishing an Institutional Repository.

Establishing an Online IR will ensure free and open access to the publications of academic staff members. It will minimize the impact of restrictions imposed by publishers on authors in sharing their research findings with peers. Providing a wider visibility to research work is another advantage of this repository. By facilitating author self-archiving, it will also save the administrative tasks of librarians such as maintaining publication lists and dissemination of information. Finally, this online IR will serve as an Online digital archive which preserves the scholarly work of the Faculty members for future generations.

Keywords: Institutional Repositories; Medical Literature; Open Access; Open Source Software