

Perceived Barriers to Research Publishing in Saudi Arabia

Jumaan Abdulqader Alzahrani

Jumaan5@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

Academic research represents the backbone of human activity in the way that it improves our quality of life through expanding frontiers of academic knowledge and making further research possible throughout the world. Academic research aims to provide solutions for many current problems. The importance of academic research has grown at universities and research centres in Saudi Arabia, fuelled by dramatic increases in governmental and private funding for research. This study focuses on the academic publication processes in Saudi Arabia, the barriers that affect researchers' ability to carry out and publish research and the potential advantages and disadvantages offered by the Internet in the area of academic publishing. The data collection and analysis presented in this study addresses the extent to which such benefit could be realised in practice. This research reviews the limitations of research publishing in Saudi Arabia by focusing on the nature of academic journals, in terms of their numbers and purpose, the barriers that academic staff faced when they wished to publish their research work in local or international academic journals, and the attitudes of academics towards electronic publishing and publishing in general. This research uses questionnaire tool. The data are tabulated and analysed in a systematic method to show findings in accordance with required objectives. The most prominent findings from this study are the lack of academic staff encouragement to conduct and publish research, lack of financial support to the research publishing sector, lack of a research publishing infrastructure and a lack of private sector support for funding research and publishing. An interesting finding is that unlike many other countries, there is no culture of volunteering for work that does not provide direct financial benefit. This could be an important factor affecting the adoption of an online open publishing approach in which reviewers and editors are not paid directly for the work. This research ultimately aims at proposing and implementing suitable processes and policies to solve these problems and to identifying means of overcoming the research publishing barriers in Saudi Arabia.