PERSPECTIVE OF ACADEMIC RESEARCHERS ON OPEN ACCESS PUBLISHING IN KENYAN UNIVERSITIES

Wanyenda C, Ajwang’ N.W.O and Maina M.

Abstract
Despite the potentials for Open Access (OA) in improving the visibility of research through e-publishing in either OA journals or achieving in Institutional Repositories (IRs), this mode of scholarly communication is not yet fully exploited and is little known by Kenyan scholars. The review of literature shows very few studies that have been done in Kenya to address the issue of OA to scholarly literature. In addition the few studies available mainly present the viewpoints of OA advocacy groups such as the Kenya Library and Information Services Consortium (KLISC), publishers, and librarians. What is largely missing is the views of the researchers and authors, arguably the most important stakeholder group. This research project seeks to investigate whether academic researchers in Kenya perceive OA to be a viable outlet for scholarly publishing. In addition, the research will assess awareness, concerns and depth of support for OA amongst Kenyan academic researchers. This study is important especially at this time where most Kenyan Universities are in the process of adopting OA policies and strategies for their institutions. The study will capture academic researchers’ perceptions and concerns regarding OA on issues of quality of OA publishing outlets, article or author charges and the academic reward system. This information will provide important feedback to the OA policies making process in Universities.