

Strengthening Research Access through One Nation One Subscription (ONOS): Policy, Practice and Institutional Perspectives

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Abstract

The purpose of this study is to investigate the impact of ONOS resources on faculty members and research scholars at Cooch Behar Panchanan Barma University (CBPBU). For primary data, a survey method along with well-structured questionnaire was used. The study revealed a high level of awareness (over 80%) and substantial adoption (75.2%) of ONOS resources among the academic community. E-journals emerged as the most frequently accessed resources, primarily used for research, thesis writing, and academic reference. While overall satisfaction regarding accessibility and user-friendliness was high, challenges such as limited remote access, lack of structured training, and moderate departmental promotion were identified. The study established that ONOS has significantly enhanced research productivity and scholarly access at CBPBU, particularly benefiting research scholars. However, strengthening awareness programs, technical support, and remote accessibility could further maximize its impact. The results contribute to understanding the institutional-level effectiveness of ONOS and offer recommendations for improving its implementation in higher education institutions.

Keywords: One Nation One Subscription (ONOS), Academic Libraries, Research Access, Research Productivity, Higher Education.

1. Introduction

One Nation One Subscription (ONOS) is an innovative project conceptualized by the Government of India, Ministry of Education, with the objective of changing the face of scholarly literature and academic resources in the country (Chari and Nagaiah 2023). Conventionally, academic bodies like universities, research institutions, and colleges have separately subscribed to expensive international journals, databases, and electronic resources. This has resulted in a duplication of costs, disparities in access between well-funded and resource-poor institutions, and financial constraints that limited researchers and students from accessing critical knowledge. To address these problems, the One Nation One Subscription service provides a novel subscription model where the government, through national-level negotiations with the publishers, procures a collective subscription package. After the subscription process is done, the e-resources can be accessed by all recognized institutions in the country, thus creating a knowledge-sharing ecosystem (Chegoni et al., 2024; Kumar et al., 2025).

The Prime Minister of India in his address to the Nation from the ramparts of the Red Fort on 15th August, 2022, had emphasized the need for Research and Development in our country in the Amrit Kaal. He gave the clarion call of “*Jai Anusandhan*” on the occasion (Press Information Bureau, 2024). The National Education Policy, 2020 (NEP 2020) has also pointed out research as a corequisite for excellent education and development in our nation (Press Information Bureau, 2024). In light of the vision to make India Atmanirbhar and Viksitbharat@2047, the Government of India has approved the One Nation One Subscription initiative to offer nationwide access to global high-impact research articles and publication of research journals for students, faculty members, and researchers of all Higher Education Institutions under the management of the central government and state governments, and Research & Development Institutions of the central government (Bagga et al., 2025; Chegoni et al., 2024). This will unlock a goldmine of knowledge that is available in top quality scholarly journals to nearly 1.8 crore students, faculty members, researchers, and scientists of all disciplines, including those in tier 2 and tier 3 cities, and will thus encourage core as well as interdisciplinary research in the country (Press Information Bureau, 2024). The ONOS is operational since 1st January 2025. It’s phase-I has been approved for the calendar years 2025, 2026, and 2027. The journals are being provided access through national subscription coordinated by the Information and Library Network (INFLIBNET) Centre, which is an autonomous inter-university centre of the University Grants Commission (UGC), Gandhinagar, Gujarat.

2. Review of Related Literature

Rathinasabapathy and Veeranjanyulu (2022) conducted a study From Library Consortia to "One Nation, One Subscription" Model: Prospects and Challenges where the study shown as information needs and digital publishing increased, the long-standing tradition of library cooperation changed. When traditional interlibrary lending proved inadequate, online access and subscriptions based on consortiums gained popularity. Through cooperative agreements, library consortia enable several libraries to effectively share digital resources, providing e-materials to a wider audience around-the-clock. Koley and Lala (2022) conducted a study where they described although India adopted open-access policies in 2014, much research remains hard to access. With open access rising worldwide, the government now proposes a blanket One Nation One Subscription scheme. This study will assess open-access patterns in India and globally to judge whether ONOS or more subject-specific, open-access approaches would better improve access to scholarly knowledge.

Chari and Nagaiah (2023) conducted a study upon The One Nation One Subscription strategy of the Government of India seeks to give all Indian citizens, irrespective of where they live or their financial situation, access to scholarly publications. In order to obtain resources at reasonable costs, the government will bargain with publishers. Library consortia, which now combine resources to obtain academic information, may be impacted even if this could increase access to research. Koley and Lala (2023) investigate a study on limitations of Indian ONOS policy proposal and a way forward which aims to improve access to research for all HEIs. This study analyses OA trends and argues that focusing only on subscriptions limits long-term impact. Sustainable access requires strengthening national publishing infrastructure and promoting open access content. In a critical policy analysis, Editage Insights (Nair, 2024) highlighted “ONOS’s potential to democratize research access but cautioned over-reliance on centralized selection of journals, which may lead to misalignment with niche institutional needs and reduced autonomy for academic libraries”. The study argued that institutions in tier-2 and tier-3 cities may struggle with inadequate digital infrastructure and awareness, potentially limiting effective use of ONOS resources.

Qamar and Ashraf (2025) in their study on “ONOS and Expanding Access to Research Journals” critically explore the Government of India’s One Nation One Subscription (ONOS) initiative, aimed at providing centralized and equitable access to scholarly journals across academic and research institutions. The authors argue that ONOS, though well-intentioned, lacks long-term vision in supporting open knowledge infrastructure, such as institutional repositories and community-led publishing. Bhagat (2025) examined the awareness and readiness of library professionals in Gujarat’s government colleges regarding the One Nation, One Subscription (ONOS) initiative. The study revealed that awareness and participation were highest in the Central zone, while East and North zones lagged behind. It highlighted that ONOS could enhance access to scholarly resources and reduce acquisition costs but faces significant challenges including inadequate infrastructure, insufficient staff training, minimal awareness, and lack of institutional preparedness. Negi and Goel (2025) conducted a study on the "One Nation One Subscription" (ONOS) in Promoting Higher Education in India: Library Perspective. The authors highlight key features of the program, including centralized access to resources, affordable education, and the integration of digital platforms. The paper concludes that the scheme is vital for students and librarians, as it encourages lifelong learning, promotes digital literacy, and boosts innovation in education.

3. Statement of the Research Problem

The One Nation One Subscription (ONOS) scheme, launched by the Government of India, is a major step towards ensuring that there is fair access to academic resources by offering e-journals, e-books, and databases through a collective subscription scheme. Although the scheme aims to address the issue of high subscription costs and inequitable access, its practicality and success at the institutional level depend on the level of awareness and usage of the scheme by the end-users. The faculty members and research scholars are the key stakeholders in the success of such a scheme. In the context of Cooch Behar Panchanan Barma University (CBPBU), the extent to which the ONOS resources are known, used, and appreciated by the faculty members and researchers has yet to be explored. The issues pertaining to the extent of awareness, usage, ease of access, user satisfaction, and overall effectiveness of the ONOS resources in the teaching and research processes of the faculty members and research scholars of CBPBU are yet to be investigated. In this background, the current study aims to evaluate the awareness, usage, and effectiveness of the ONOS resources among the faculty members and research scholars of CBPBU, and to identify the existing problems and generate feedback for improvement.

4. Objectives of the Study

1. To assess the level of awareness among faculty members and research scholars regarding the ONOS subscription at CBPBU.
2. To examine the usage patterns of ONOS resources.
3. To identify challenges encountered by faculty and research scholars in accessing and utilizing ONOS.

5. Methodology

After reviewing relevant literature, the researchers employed the survey method along with well-structured questionnaire as a tool for data collection. The questionnaire was drafted based on the previous studies conducted by many researchers. It was divided into five major sections. The first section collects demographic information to classify respondents, the second section assesses awareness of ONOS through both closed and Likert-scale questions,

the third section explores the usage patterns with multiple-choice, frequency, and scaled questions, the fourth section evaluates the impact and satisfaction levels using rating scales and problem-identification items and the final section provides open-ended questions to gather suggestions and feedback. A mix of closed-ended, scaled, and open-ended questions has been used to ensure both quantitative and qualitative data, and the logical sequence moves from general to specific aspects, ending with respondent opinions.

The target population of this study consists of the faculty members and research scholars of Cooch Behar Panchanan Barma University (CBPBU). This group has been selected because they are the primary stakeholders who directly engage with academic and research resources provided by the university library. Due to time constraints and limited financial resources, the researchers developed a Google questionnaire to facilitate data collection efficiently. To collect data, the researchers employed the random sampling technique, a non-probability method ideal for reaching populations that are difficult to access or identify. The link to the questionnaire was disseminated among the faculty members and research scholars by providing them with hard copies of the questionnaire and also a link to the Google Form, and requests were made to encourage their support in reaching potential respondents. To broaden participation, the link was also shared across various WhatsApp and Facebook groups, fostering community engagement and prompting students to take part in the survey. This online approach aimed to maximize response rates while minimizing logistical challenges associated with traditional data collection methods. However, Table 1 highlights the number of respondents from various departments.

Table - 1: Number of respondents from various departments of CBPBU

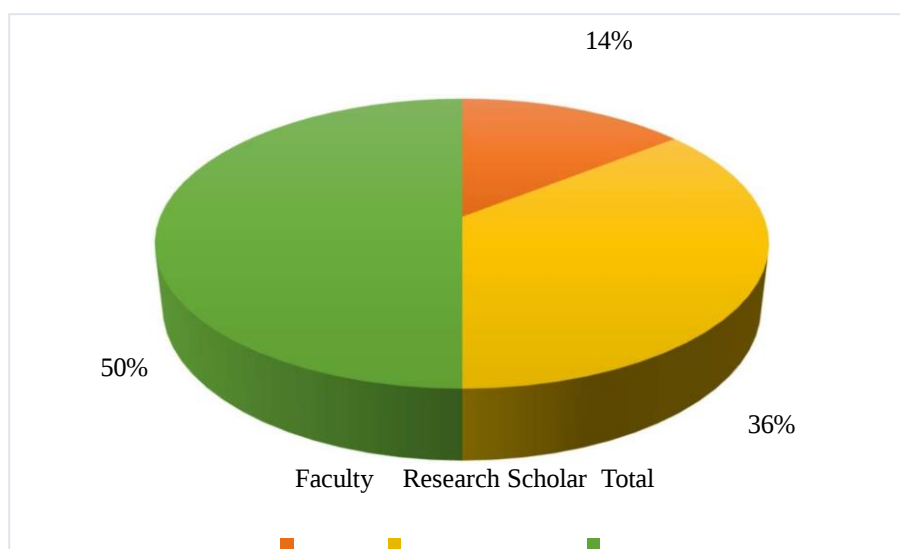
Department	Frequency	Percentage
Department of Bengali	7	6.9
Department of Sanskrit	3	3
Department of Hindi	4	4
Department of English	15	14.9
Department of History	2	2
Department of Philosophy	6	5.9
Department of Political Science	16	15.8
Department of Education	9	8.9
Department of Law	6	5.9
Department of Commerce	2	2
Department of Physics	4	4
Department of Chemistry	2	2
Department of Mathematics	4	4
Department of Geography	7	6.9
Department of Zoology	6	5.9
Department of Botany	2	2
Department of Economics	3	3
Department of Library & Information Sci.	3	3
Total	101	100

6. Results

6.1 Demographic Information

Figure 1 shows the designation-wise distribution of the respondents. Out of the total 101 participants, the majority (71.3%) are Research Scholars, while Faculty members constitute 28.7% of the sample. As per the data, the majority of respondents 69 (68.3%) are male, while 32 (31.7%) are female.

Figure 1: Designation of respondents



6.2 Awareness level agreement regarding ONOS resources

The study reveals that the majority of respondents are aware of the ONOS. More than 80% (63.36% strongly agree and 16.83% agree) acknowledged their awareness, which indicates that the initiative has successfully reached most faculty members and research scholars. Only a negligible proportion (0.99%) reported disagreement, showing that ONOS has achieved broad recognition among the academic community.

Regarding the effectiveness of library communication, 43.56% of respondents strongly agreed and 19.8% agreed that the library has informed them about ONOS (Table 2). However, a significant section remained neutral (15.84%) or disagreed (20.79%), suggesting that the communication strategy has not equally engaged all users. This highlights the need for more consistent and wider promotional efforts through official channels such as emails, websites, and notices. When asked about orientation and training, the responses reflected a noticeable gap. While 54.45% of respondents (Strongly Agree + Agree) indicated that they had received some form of guidance, 22.77% strongly disagreed, showing the absence of structured training for a large portion of users. This lack of orientation remains a barrier to effective utilization of ONOS resources.

On the other hand, 20.79% strongly disagreed, which indicates that a substantial portion of respondents came to know about ONOS through informal means such as peers or self-exploration rather than structured communication. Encouragement from departments also plays an important role in ONOS usage. A majority (75.23%) agreed that their departments encourage the use of ONOS resources for academic purposes, reflecting a supportive

academic environment that fosters digital resource use. However, when it comes to confidence in their knowledge about ONOS functionality, only 60.39% agreed, while 21.78% strongly disagreed. This highlights a need for hands-on training sessions and user awareness programs to build confidence in navigating ONOS effectively.

Table - 2: Awareness level agreement of Respondents

S. No.	Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	Are you aware of the availability of ONOS in CBPBU Library?	64 (63.36)	17 (16.83)	14 (13.86)	1 (0.99)	5 (4.95)
2	Has the library effectively communicated the availability of ONOS to faculty and researchers?	44 (43.56)	20 (19.8)	16 (15.84)	5 (4.95)	16 (15.84)
3	Have you received orientation or guidance on using ONOS resources?	40 (39.6)	15 (14.85)	20 (19.8)	3 (2.97)	23 (22.77)
4	Do you know about the types of digital contents (e-journals, databases, etc.) offered through ONOS?	50 (49.5)	25 (24.75)	17 (16.83)	3 (2.97)	5 (4.95)
5	Did you become aware of ONOS through official library communication channels (email, website, etc.)?	40 (39.6)	17 (16.83)	19 (18.81)	4 (3.96)	21 (20.79)
6	Does your department encourage the use of ONOS resources for academic work?	58 (57.42)	18 (17.81)	11 (10.89)	4 (3.96)	10 (9.9)
7	Do you feel confident in your knowledge of how ONOS functions?	44 (43.56)	17 (16.83)	14 (13.86)	3 (2.97)	22 (21.78)
8	Do you believe that ONOS is a valuable subscription service offered by the university library?	78 (77.22)	14 (13.86)	5 (4.95)	0 (0.0)	4 (3.96)

Note: Number in brackets represent percentage.

6.3 Usage of ONOS Resources

Out of the total 101 participants, a majority of 76 respondents (75.2%) reported that they are using ONOS resources, whereas 25 respondents (24.8%) stated that they are not using them. The findings indicate that ONOS has achieved a substantial adoption rate, with nearly three-fourths of the academic community actively making use of its e-journals, e-books, and databases. This reflects the growing importance of digital resources in academic and research activities and suggests that ONOS is serving its intended purpose of enhancing access to scholarly information.

6.4 Frequency of use of ONOS resources

Table 3 illustrates the frequency with which respondents use ONOS resources. The result shows a varied usage pattern, ranging from regular to occasional use. A significant portion of respondents make consistent use of ONOS, with 22.8% using it daily and 34.7% using it weekly. Together, this accounts for more than half of the respondents (57.5%), reflecting that ONOS has become an integral part of the academic routine for many faculty members and research scholars.

Moderate usage is seen among those who access ONOS on a monthly basis (13.9%), while 12.9% reported using it rarely. These groups represent occasional users who may depend on

ONOS only for specific research tasks or project requirements, rather than as a regular resource. On the other hand, 15.8% of respondents stated that they never used ONOS. This indicates that despite the wide availability of ONOS, a segment of the academic community has yet to integrate it into their information-seeking practices.

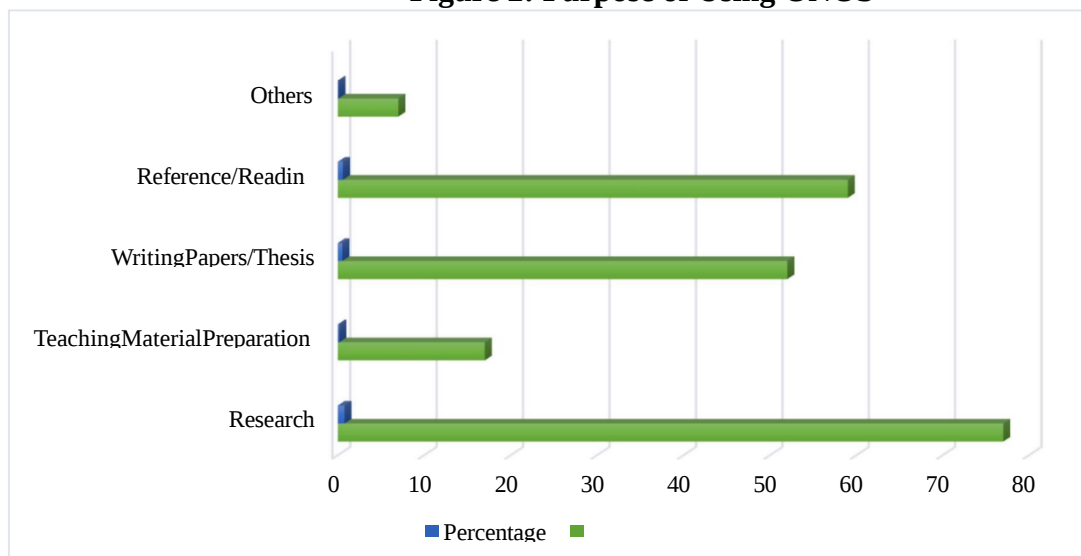
Table - 3: Frequency of use of ONOS resources

S. No.	Frequency Option	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Daily	23	22.8
2.	Weekly	35	34.7
3.	Monthly	14	13.9
4.	Rarely	13	12.9
5.	Never	16	15.8
Total		101	100.0

6.5 Purpose of using ONOS resources

Figure 2 highlights the different purposes for which respondents utilize ONOS resources. The primary purpose of ONOS usage is research, as indicated by 76.2% of respondents. This clearly shows that ONOS is regarded as a vital tool for accessing scholarly information and supporting ongoing academic investigations. Closely connected to this, a large proportion of respondents also use ONOS for writing papers and theses (51.5%), reflecting its importance in academic publishing and research output. Another major area of usage is reference and general reading (58.4%), which highlights that ONOS resources are not confined to project-based work alone but also serve as a valuable medium for academic enrichment and self-learning. In comparison, teaching material preparation (16.8%) shows relatively lower usage. This may be because faculty members rely on a combination of traditional and digital resources when preparing lectures or course content, and not exclusively on ONOS. A small fraction of respondents (6.9%) indicated “Others” as their purpose of usage, which might include activities such as preparing for competitive examinations, keeping updated with recent developments, or personal academic interest.

Figure 2: Purpose of Using ONOS



6.6 Mode of accessing ONOS

A majority of respondents, 77.22%, reported accessing ONOS through the campus network, which highlights the centrality of institutional infrastructure in facilitating usage. Only a negligible proportion (0.99%) of respondents reported using remote (off-campus) access. Similarly, a small segment (3.96%) relied on library systems, such as dedicated terminals, to access ONOS, suggesting occasional use by those who may not have personal access to campus networks. A notable finding is that 17.82% of respondents have not accessed ONOS at all, despite its availability.

6.7 Usage level agreement of ONOS resources

Table 4 highlights respondents' views on different aspects of using ONOS resources. The responses reflect both positive adoption trends and challenges, particularly with teaching and remote access. A considerable number of respondents reported that they regularly use ONOS resources for academic activities, with 39.6% strongly agreeing and 15.84% agreeing. However, a substantial proportion (31.68%) strongly disagreed, indicating a divided pattern where some users are consistent while others hardly use ONOS in their academic routine. The responses on accessing research articles, e-books, and databases were more favorable, with a strong majority (50.49% strongly agree and 22.77% agree) confirming this use. Only 14.85% strongly disagreed, which shows that ONOS is widely accepted as a platform for core research resources.

When it comes to preparing course materials and lectures, usage was very low. More than two-thirds (66.33%) strongly disagreed, while only 11.88% strongly agreed. This suggests that ONOS is primarily perceived as a research tool rather than a teaching support system. Regarding writing research papers and theses, 38.61% strongly agreed and 22.77% agreed, indicating that over 60% of respondents rely on ONOS for academic writing. Yet, 23.76% strongly disagreed, again showing a divide between active and non-users.

On the issue of ease of navigation, 38.61% strongly agreed and 26.73% agreed that ONOS is easy to use, while 22.77% strongly disagreed. Although the majority find the system user-friendly, a significant minority struggle with search and navigation, pointing to a need for user training. The weakest aspect identified was remote access, where 70.29% strongly disagreed that they could access ONOS both on and off campus without difficulties. This finding highlights a major limitation in the accessibility beyond the campus network.

In terms of recommendations to colleagues and students, 50.49% strongly agreed and 18.81% agreed, showing that ONOS enjoys a strong reputation among users who frequently promote it to others. This peer-to-peer endorsement plays an important role in expanding awareness.

Table - 4: Usage statements of ONOS resources

S. No.	Statements	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
1	Do you regularly use ONOS resources for your academic activities?	40 (39.6)	16 (15.84)	11 (10.89)	3 (2.97)	32 (31.68)
2	Do you use ONOS to access research articles, e-books, and databases?	51 (50.49)	23 (22.77)	11 (10.89)	1 (0.99)	15 (14.85)
3	Do you use ONOS for preparing course materials and lectures?	12 (11.88)	10 (9.9)	7 (6.93)	5 (4.95)	67 (66.33)
4	Do you rely on ONOS for writing research papers and thesis?	39 (38.61)	23 (22.77)	14 (13.86)	2 (1.98)	24 (23.76)

5	Do you find it easy to navigate and search for resources in the ONOS platform?	39 (38.61)	27 (26.73)	13 (12.87)	0 (0.0)	23 (22.77)
6	Do you access ONOS resources both on campus and remotely without difficulties?	15 (14.85)	8 (7.92)	6 (5.94)	2 (1.98)	71 (70.29)
7	Do you frequently recommend ONOS resources to colleagues and students?	51 (50.49)	19 (18.81)	12 (11.88)	3 (2.97)	16 (15.84)
8	Has your usage of ONOS increased over time due to its usefulness?	46 (45.54)	26 (23.4)	6 (5.4)	2 (1.8)	21 (18.9)

6.8 Impact and Satisfaction of ONOS resources

Table 5 reflects the respondents' satisfaction levels regarding the impact of ONOS on their research and teaching activities. The results are highly positive, with no respondent reporting dissatisfaction. A substantial proportion of respondents, 41.6%, indicated that they are highly satisfied with the role of ONOS in supporting their academic work. Another 33.7% of respondents reported being satisfied, further emphasizing the usefulness of ONOS in enhancing both research productivity and teaching material preparation. Together, more than three-fourths of the respondents (75.3%) expressed satisfaction, reflecting the effectiveness of ONOS as a supportive academic tool. Meanwhile, 24.8% of respondents expressed neutrality, which may suggest either limited use of ONOS, lack of sufficient training, or a perception that ONOS has not yet significantly influenced their academic outcomes.

Table - 5: Impact on Research/Teaching

Level	Frequency	Percentage
Highly Satisfied	42	41.6%
Satisfied	34	33.7%
Neutral	25	24.8%
Dissatisfied	0	0%
Highly Dissatisfied	0	0%

6.9 Accessibility & User-friendliness of ONOS platform

Table 6 shows the respondents' perceptions regarding the accessibility and user-friendliness of the ONOS platform. A majority of respondents, 37.6%, reported being very satisfied, while another 36.6% stated that they are satisfied. Together, this makes up 74.2% of respondents, indicating that a strong majority find ONOS both accessible and easy to use for their academic and research needs. On the other hand, 24.8% expressed neutrality, which may point to either limited personal engagement with ONOS or mixed experiences in navigating its resources. Neutral responses suggest that while these users did not encounter significant problems, they may not have found the platform exceptionally user-friendly either. Only 1% of respondents reported dissatisfaction, and none indicated being very dissatisfied. This minimal negative response shows that issues of accessibility and user-friendliness are rare but still require attention to ensure inclusivity for all types of users.

Table - 6: Accessibility & User-friendliness

S. No.	Response	Frequency	Percentage
1.	Very Satisfied	38	37.6%
2.	Satisfied	37	36.6%
3.	Neutral	25	24.8%
4.	Dissatisfied	1	1%
5.	Very Dissatisfied	0	0%

6.10 Problems faced while using ONOS resources

The findings reveal that the majority of users, 85 respondents (84.2%), reported not facing any difficulties while accessing or utilizing the platform. This indicates that ONOS has generally been successful in providing a smooth and efficient user experience. However, a smaller proportion, 16 respondents (15.8%), stated that they did face problems while using ONOS. Though this group represents a minority, their responses are significant, as they suggest the presence of occasional technical, navigational, or accessibility-related issues that may hinder effective usage. These problems could range from login or access challenges to difficulties in searching, retrieving, or downloading resources.

7. Conclusion

Analysis of the response reveals that the effect of the ONOS initiative has been very significant on the academic community of CBPBU. A majority of faculty members and research scholars are aware of the availability of ONOS resources and are utilizing them extensively. Among the resources, e-journals have been identified as the most accessed ones, followed by e-books and reference materials, which reveal the increasing dependence on electronic resources for scholarly purposes. The resource is mostly utilized for research purposes, thesis writing, and reference, although its utilization for preparing teaching materials seems relatively less. This reveals that the role of ONOS is more significant in supporting research and higher learning activities rather than teaching.

The study also shows promising findings in terms of the quality and accessibility of ONOS contents. Most of the respondents were satisfied with the quality of the resources available, which were considered to be excellent or good by most of the respondents. Similarly, the majority of respondents rated their experience with the system to be excellent or very satisfactory, indicating that they valued the system's usefulness and accessibility. Notably, very few respondents found any major problems in using ONOS, which indicates that the system is quite seamless and efficient in serving the needs of the users. Nevertheless, some respondents pointed out some problems in terms of limited access, lack of training, and lack of promotion within the department.

The results have confirmed that ONOS is an invaluable national endeavour that has successfully improved academic access and helped in the academic development of faculty members and researchers at CBPBU. It not only enhances research productivity and publication facilities but also serves as an economic means of accessing global academic resources. The findings, however, have also stressed the need for awareness programs, workshops, and proper communication channels in order to ensure that all potential users are made aware of the benefits and trained properly to make the most out of the system. These

small changes can make ONOS even more user-friendly, efficient, and inclusive, thus ensuring the achievement of the goal of equal access to information and the goal of a technologically equipped academic environment by India.

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