

Evaluation of digital libraries of Iranian research institutions based on the DigiQUAL protocol

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Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this study is to identify the situation of evaluating Iranian digital libraries using DigiQUAL protocol.

Design/methodology/approach – Evaluative survey research method is used in this study to assess digital libraries. In this way, digital libraries of Iranian research institutes constitute the study population. DigiQUAL protocol actually was used to evaluate eight Iranian digital libraries. Systematic observation and interview based on researcher-made checklist was used for data collection. In fact, checklist was constructed based on DigiQual protocol.

Findings – The results showed that Digital Library of Isfahan Science and Technology Town has the best performance and Noor digital library has the lowest operation in studied digital libraries. The overall score of all studied digital libraries was under 60 (out of 100) which shows the average performance of the digital libraries.

Originality/value – This study emphasizes on evaluating active digital libraries in Iran by DigiQUAL protocol. Because digital libraries are new in Iran and their progress need to evaluate their activity, this research was done to demonstrate their situation.

Keywords Evaluation, Information systems, Libraries, Digital libraries

Paper type Research paper

Introduction

Obtaining access to information is the mission of libraries. Regardless of content or technology, libraries exist to provide a community with access to information (Buckland, 1992). In recent years, technological advances have played a prominent role in the field of libraries and, consequently, digital libraries (DLs) have emerged to improve our access to information. In fact, DLs have a significant position in research institutes and their services are critical for research activities. Services provided require assessment to be upgraded and the evaluation of DLs is specifically important due to the role they play in research activities.

DLs can be considered from several perspectives. They may be introduced as new forms of information institutions, as multimedia information retrieval systems or as systems that support knowledge production, organization and the search and retrieval

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