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Project Title:	A model for the provision of information services to support distance learning in Saudi Arabia
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Department:	Information Science

Project Description:

This PhD research aims to investigate the current role of academic libraries in supporting distance learning (DL) programmes in Saudi higher education; it also aims to improve the quality of DL programmes in the country. Moreover, it aims to raise awareness regarding the importance of academic libraries and information services support in the processes involved in delivering DL in Saudi higher education. For conducting the study, a case study methodology was used and two Saudi public universities were selected to participate in this study because of their past and present involvement in offering DL programmes in the country: King Abdul-Aziz University (KAU) in Jeddah and Imam Mohammad Bin Saud Islamic University (IMBSIU) in Riyadh. However, qualitative and quantitative research approaches were used, specifically semi-structured interviews, questionnaires and document analysis. 32 interviews with male and female participants were carried out and 498 valid questionnaires from DL stakeholders were analysed. In addition, several information service models were presented to DL stakeholders, to others in administrative positions in the universities included in this study, and to certain participants from the Ministry of Higher Education (MOHE). An analysis of the results showed that some information service models were preferred over others by the respondents and the outcomes of this study will present the most effective solutions to overcome the shortcomings of the current poor information service support provided by the universities included in this study to DL stakeholders. So, interviews results, along with findings obtained from the questionnaires will be combined and contrasted in order to arrive at the final conclusions, as well as to provide recommendations regarding the current and future role of academic libraries in supporting DL programme stakeholders in higher education in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia.