Chapter 6
A Digital Library for Researchers, Scientists, and Scholars:
Mendeley Desktop Application

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ABSTRACT

This chapter discusses the application of Mendeley desktop in academic and research libraries. The features of Mendeley were used to justify it as a digital library for researchers, scientists, and scholars. The importance of Mendeley desktop application as a digital library was also compared with a traditional library. This chapter should thus enable anyone without prior knowledge of Mendeley to effectively utilise it as a digital library as it provides an extensive guide on how to work with the Mendeley Application to perform various tasks.

INTRODUCTION

Library remains an avenue for sourcing information and performing other activities such as reading, studying, writing, and researching. Its extensive use by individuals of all categories and fields makes it one of the most critical places knowledge seekers should not overlook. The library can be used across different levels of education. A library is a collection of resources, books, or media readily available. It stores up-to-date information that suits the demands of different users daily. A physical or virtual library gives physical or digital access to available resources in hard copies or electronic form. The collection in a library may comprise printed and non-printed resources stored in a bibliographic database.

Over the years, development in Information and Communication Technology, especially the Internet, has brought various electronic tools and databases that changed how information is collected, processed, stored, and retrieved. Consequently, attention is gradually shifting from traditional to electronic libraries for speedy and accurate access to information. One of such innovations shaping the way scholarly materials are organised, classified and retrieved is the Mendeley Desktop Application (hereafter MDA). This chapter discusses the Mendeley application as a digital and portable library for researchers, scientists and scholars. The chapter describes the application's features and aims to guide readers to use the application effectively. The authors ensured that this chapter was presented to promote understanding among young and experienced readers.

Therefore, at the end of reading this chapter, readers should be able to: describe the MDA; identify/ mention the various features of the MDA; electronically catalogue books and research articles using the MDA; use it for citing and referencing articles in Microsoft word; highlight the importance of MDA to scholars, researchers and scientists.

OVERVIEW OF A DIGITAL LIBRARY

As days pass, innovations keep emerging in all fields of man's endeavours. Thus, Library and Information Science as a discipline is not left out due to the high demand for quick and easy access to books, journal articles and other information sources. In time past, researchers, scholars and scientists relied on the physical/traditional library to source relevant knowledge and information. Along the line, many scholars faced the challenge of travelling distance locations in search of scholarly literature. Fortunately, this challenge was bridged through the advent of the Internet and electronic/digital databases. The Internet is a platform that allows individuals to communicate/disseminate research ideas and findings electronically without having to meet themselves or travel across a long distance. Although the Internet made the storing and retrieval of information accessible, not many people have benefited from the wealth of the Internet. This is because many people lack Internet access, especially in Africa and developing nations (Abdulqadir & Asongu, 2022; Mojapelo, 2020; Owan et al., 2021, 2022; Oyedemi, 2015; Sambuli, 2016). Without internet access, there will be difficulty gathering scholarly materials, especially at the convenience of one's location.

Over two decades ago, accessing digital information was only possible by saving the materials/books on a computer disk or removable disks such as CD-ROM, floppy disks, etc. However, there is poor maximisation of cataloguing skills/tools when accessing files from such storage devices. Thus, these media do not constitute a digital library. A digital library should contain appropriately arranged materials (catalogue) to optimise easy access to information. Cataloguing is a demanding task performed by librarians to ensure that materials are not mixed up. Cataloguing aims to make sure that materials are timely and quickly sourced. The arrangement of materials (including books, journal articles, magazines, etc.) uses several classification indicators. For instance, books can be classified based on, but not limited to, the field, author(s), publisher(s) and year of publication. This means that anywhere materials are saved without appropriate arrangement and classification, such media cannot be referred to as a library. For a platform to be considered a library, it must possess many features (such as proper management of materials, easy accessibility, location of indexed materials, etc.), just like traditional libraries.

Digital libraries, therefore, are electronic databases devoted to producing and maintaining e-collections without requiring end-users to buy the contents they wish to retrieve (Cordón-García et al., 2013). The

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