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EDUCATION

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Ayesha Abed Library, BRAC University in collaboration with the Open Society Network (OSUN), celebrated Open Access Week 2023 from October 27 to November 4, to recognize and promote open access to scholarly research and educational resources.

The aim of this Open Access Week 2023 was to promote open access principles, encourage faculty, researchers, and students to make their work openly available, and raise awareness on the benefits of open access in advancing research at BRAC University.

This year, the theme of International Open Access Week was "Community over Commercialization." The Ayesha Abed Library organized a series of activities to celebrate Open Access Week 2023, which included a webinar titled 'Exploring the Impact of Open Access Publishing on Research Visibility and Scholarly Communication' conducted by Dr. Nitin Ghoshal from Elsevier.

One of the highlights of the celebration was "Open Access Publication Award" for faculty and students. The library awarded Dr. Kaosar Afsana, Professor, James P Grant School of Public Health, BRAC University (JPGSPH) for having the highest number of citations for her paper titled "Heterogeneous contributions of changes in the population distribution of body mass index to changes in obesity and underweight," published in the Scopus-Indexed Q1 category Gold Open Access Journal, eLife.

Another category of Open Access Publication awards was presented to the authors of the most-viewed undergraduate theses, postgraduate theses, and internship reports, as measured by DSpace Google Analytics Statistics. These works were archived in the BRAC University Institutional Repository (dspace.bracu.ac.bd) between January 2022 and December 2022.

Ms. Halima Hasin Tofa, from the Department of English and Humanities, received an award in recognition of her most-viewed undergraduate thesis titled "Despair in Asian Literature: Exploring Dazai Osamu's 'No Longer Human' in the Light of Existentialism, Absurdism, & Critical Disability Theory."

Mr. Liaquat Ali Khan, from BRAC Business School, received an award in recognition of his most-viewed postgraduate thesis titled "Effect of Microfinance on Poverty Reduction and Economic Growth in Developing Economies."

Ms. Nabiha Azad Noor, also from BRAC Business School, received an award in recognition of her most-viewed Internship Report titled "Revolutionizing Work from Home and the Contribution of Human Resources Management in Times of COVID-19."

Professor Syed Mahfuzul Aziz, PhD, Pro Vice-Chancellor & Acting Vice-Chancellor, BRAC University attended the award ceremony as the Chief Guest. Dr. Laura J. Reichenbach, Dean, JPGSPH joined as the special guest alongside Dr. Dave Dowland, Registrar. Hasina Afroz, University Librarian, Ayesha Abed Library, moderated the award ceremony.

Hasina Afroz, University Librarian at BRAC University, mentioned during her presentation on 'Open Initiatives at BRAC University Library: Unlocking the Door' that, 'There is a sustained move towards openness in every aspect of our library's operations.' These initiatives encompass various aspects of our work, including the expansion of open access services, the incorporation of open data, the promotion of open scholarship, the adoption of open technologies, and the utilization of open educational resources.

Professor Syed Mahfuzul Aziz, PhD, Pro Vice-Chancellor & Acting Vice-Chancellor, BRAC University, appreciated Ayesha Abed Library for taking this initiative. "Open source applications are opening many doors for universities around the world. They are free, customizable and powerful." He asked the researchers to publish in recognized open access journals and remain alert of the predatory journals.

Dr. Laura J. Reichenbach, Dean, JPGSPH, said that JPGSPH is proud to contribute to the advancement of research and publication in BRAC University. Research cannot be advanced without maximizing accessibility to the evidence it generates. Promotion of knowledge sharing through open access mechanisms is crucial to further collaboration between schools, institutes and universities around the world.

During the award ceremony, Dr. Dave Dowland delivered closing remarks, lauding the initiatives undertaken by Ayesha Abed Library.