



Use and Management of Electronic Resources in Central University Libraries in North India

Mohammad Nafees Khan

Research scholar, Major S.D. Singh, University, Fatehgarh, Farrukhabad, U.P. nafeeskhan87311@gmail.com

Dr. Meenakashi Bhardwaj

Assistant Professor & HOD

Department of Library and information Science meenu0001sharma@gmail.com Major S.D. Singh, University, Fatehgarh, Farrukhabad, U.P.

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ABSTRACT

Almost every aspect of library services has been significantly impacted by the introduction of IT. As a result, the library environment has changed quickly, giving rise to a new generation of libraries that prioritise e-resources. Additionally, as e-resources grow in popularity, librarians and staff are also worried about how to access, evaluate, choose, and organise them. The goal of this study is to understand the issues associated with e-resources and how to handle them in a modern LIS for improved digital information services.

Keywords: E-resources, Electronic libraries, Consortia, Information Technology



INTRODUCTION

Libraries and information centres have seen significant changes recently. The pace of change continues to accelerate in today's world. New products include personalised information products, computers, reprographic equipment, databases, online information systems, cooperative library information networks, and electronic information processing systems such as electronic books. Communication has been shortened by IT. Electronic resources are used for collection development to better meet the needs of various consumers. However, to accomplish the objectives of an ideal information system, it is necessary to choose, assess, and arrange the e-resources in a way that maximises ease of access and retrieval for both users and staff at all times.

MANAGEMENT OF E-RESOURCES

The process of choosing, obtaining, organising, granting access to, maintaining, and assessing digital or online resources, such as databases, e-books, e-journals, and other electronic items in a library or information center, is known as management of electronic resources.

E-RESOURCES

E-resources are those electronic products that deliver a collection of data, be it text referring to full text basis, e-journals, image collections, other multimedia products and numerical, graphical or time-based commercially available tool that has been published with the aim of being marketed. These may be delivered on CD-ROM, on tap via the Internet and so on. According to Barker, there are three types of documents used in digital resources. A new era of communication and information exchange has been ushered in by electronic publication. It opens doors for publishers, writers, and users. Many electronic publications and the websites of electronic publishers allow and encourage people to comment on their works, frequently going straight to the author instead of the publisher. Users can, however, create their own accounts, charge services to credit cards or make planned payments, and have requested materials sent directly to them via email, fax, etc. These days, libraries of all kinds have been allocating an increasing portion of their budgets to the adoption or acquisition of electronic resources from vendors and publishers. This is because e-resources have made it possible for libraries to enhance services in a number of ways. First, users may conduct literature searches more successfully and efficiently thanks to the robust search-and-retrieval facilities included in the majority of e-resources. Additionally, since the majority of essential e-resources are now accessible online, consumers may access them on a desktop computer around-the-clock. Additionally, readers may go straight from indexing databases to an article's complete text and even click on additional links from there. However, the widespread use of electronic mail, list servers, and discussion groups to swiftly distribute content to broad audiences before the development of e-books and e-journals.

COLLECTION OF OF E-RESOURCES

For librarians and staff, the phrase "collection" is not new; libraries have been collecting printed materials for a very long time. However, as technology advances, libraries are now concentrating on adopting e-resources rather than printed materials. As a new medium for delivering information, web-based full-text online resources have really proliferated as a result of the development of the Internet, especially the www (World Wide Web). Librarians are attempting to fulfil user requirements and find new resources, such as online databases, web-based resources, collections in digital libraries, ebooks, e-journals, etc., as the web has increased in popularity and usage as well as content. Collection should be relevant to user requests, committees, focus groups, and recommendations. Aside from this, it should consider the following steps:

1. Identify library needs
2. Determine e-resource content and scope
3. Evaluate resource quality and search capabilities
4. Estimate cost
5. Determine subscription or web-based acquisition options
6. Evaluate systems and technical support
7. Review licensing agreements
8. Evaluate application software and installation (sporadically or on a regular schedule)
9. Evaluate educational facilities

ORGANIZATION OF E-RESOURCES

Organising resources is essential for the proper operation of any library information system, whether conventional or new. The system manager needs strong professional abilities to efficiently organise available resources. To operate in a contemporary digital library information system, professionals need expertise in computers, database administration,



networking, and other IT-related abilities. To effectively organise e-resources, the system management should consider the following:

1. To organise e-resources, consider including them in an OPAC or creating a separate list for browsing.
2. Access can be organised alphabetically or under specific subject headings.
3. E-resources should be organised in context with other resources and websites.
4. Check the method of access, whether abstracting or full.
5. To facilitate user searches, materials should be organised based on subject headings, allowing for easy retrieval of relevant information.

EVALUATION OF E-RESOURCES

Due to the abundance of electronic resources on the internet, including databases, e-text, e-journals, and more, resource evaluation has become increasingly important. Some acceptable criteria for evaluating e-resources include authority, currency, target audience, simplicity of use, correctness, etc. Additionally, the content's breadth, Other important considerations are cost, accessibility, technical support quality, and license agreement terms.

The following should be taken into account while evaluating e-resources:

1. To determine whether an e-resource's content is relevant to users and the collection as a whole.
2. to determine whether the information is frequently updated.
3. to determine whether the e-resources have an affordable price, even though the publishers offer a variety of pricing systems.
4. to identify the method of accessing the e-resources available.
5. to identify the e-resources required to maintain and redesign the library website identified.
6. to determine whether the e-resources have retrospective data since most electronic resources do not include data prior to some year.

OBJECTIVES OF THE INVESTIGATION

The following are the main objectives of the current investigation.

1. The study's objective is to evaluate library resources.
2. Find out how people utilise e-resources in North Indian central university libraries.
3. Determine consortium-based e-resource awareness and access points.
4. Recognise user awareness of electronic resources.
5. Evaluating patron satisfaction with library services is the aim.
6. Foresee possible problems while utilising electronic resources.

THE STUDY'S SCOPE

The development of an integrated library network/library consortium among the central university libraries of North Indian states has become imminent due to their strategic locations. This is because a sound collection of e-resources and their equitable distribution among the central university libraries in these states greatly enhances research input for the scholars pursuing their work in universities.

A realistic model of library networks and consortia in the North Indian area is available for each of the six libraries under review. However, no other North Indian central organization libraries or agricultural universities are included in the current study.

The scope of this investigation also covers

1. Networking within libraries,
2. The Internet
3. Technologies and Networking
4. Gathering and handling electronic resources,
5. Creating guidelines for creating digital collections,
6. Electronic infrastructure requirements for digitalisation, etc.

DIFFICULTIES IN MANAGING E-RESOURCES

The use of e-resources has greatly benefited library services. Since they can quickly and easily obtain the information they need, the majority of consumers are really happy with these features. Libraries must overcome several obstacles in order to maintain the high calibre of services that patrons have grown used to. Below is a discussion of some of the difficulties associated with e-resource management.



Preservation Although e-resources are making it easier to generate, alter, distribute, and retrieve information, maintaining access to this information is a significant barrier. If digital information is not actively preserved, it will become unavailable owing to shifting technological platforms and unstable media. Lack of professional skills: Librarians are unable to manage e-resources because they lack technical and management abilities. To operate in today's quickly evolving digital world, professional staff members must continuously upgrade their own knowledge and skill set. Inadequate library funding: The majority of libraries lack the funds necessary to purchase electronic resources, which prevents patrons from receiving the information they require when they need it. In this setting, libraries are at a disadvantage when operating alone, hence joint purchasing through library consortia is necessary. Technical infrastructure: To provide simpler, quicker, and more thorough access to information, a digital information service system needs hardware, software, internet facilities, and other physical equipment. In order to support e-resources, libraries in the digital era must improve and modernise their present technical design. Staff members' lack of cooperation: In a digital world, the assistance and collaboration of employees, programmers, and technical staff are crucial for delivering quality service. Because of this, library employees should be both technically proficient and approachable.

USE OF E-RESOURCES

For educational, instructional, non-commercial, and research uses, the license should allow fair use (fair dealing, etc.) of all information. Any license agreement that a library, its governing body, or its consortium signs should address the following issues of fair use, user statistics, and responsibility for unauthorised usage. Interlibrary loan (ILL): Interlibrary lending ought to be allowed at all times. Photocopies of printed electronic items should, at the very least, be permitted to be sent by mail or fax. It should be permissible to lend documents to other libraries using secure ILL and document transfer technologies like Ariel or other comparable protocols.

FINDINGS: In India today, electronic documents are the most popular way for libraries to acquire materials, while print is finding it difficult to maintain its audience. The study highlighted the opportunities and challenges libraries have when it comes to managing e-resource access. It was shown that the two biggest issues libraries have when trying to acquire electronic resources are insufficient funding and negotiating with publishers.

CONCLUSION

Libraries and information centers have been endowed with electronic materials due to the quick development of computer and information technology. As a result, libraries are gradually transitioning to electronic libraries with electronic resources. Libraries are consequently becoming more and more active in the production and acquisition of e-resources. Libraries are under increasing strain due to the availability of IT-based electronic resources, and e-resources are growing at an exponential rate. However, libraries must devise strategies to control access to electronic materials and efficiently distribute them, just as they have shared print resources for more than a century through interlibrary lending, in order to satisfy the user community's ever-growing demand in a digital environment.

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