

GOING DIGITAL! INFORMATION SERVICES IN THE PERSPECTIVE OF CURRENT PRACTICES

Geetika Bhatia*
Dr. Shiva Kanaujia Sukula**

ABSTRACT

The paper discusses about the digital information services in the current scenario. It highlights the various activities going on in the few Indian libraries and Asian counterparts. The libraries in India are going through transition and on the way to embrace the emergent technologies to develop into sunshine libraries for other centres of storage of wisdom. The paper suggests improving the library manpower and the environment to cater information services with a digital touch.

Keywords: Digital libraries, Indian libraries, information technologies.

INTRODUCTION

This paper will discuss basics of developing a digital library and the new concepts underlying the digital library development procedures based upon appropriating innovative technologies and managerial skills. With increased computerization, there is a heightened risk of computer viruses. Measures are needed to overcome the problems of computer viruses and also unauthorized use. Initial investment in digital libraries is high, as is maintenance; it is therefore essential to also explore the new sources of fund.¹

FEW EXAMPLES

The example of the policies and practices of development and management of e-resources in the select R & D libraries of Kolkata City can be cited here. They depict the current state of e-collection, policy statements, and management practices in vogue. They also examine various criteria for selection and evaluation of e-resources. Feasible recommendations have been put forth for the development of a balanced collection of electronic resources and its effective management.²

Another example is the status of current development of In-house digital repository initiated by the engineering college libraries of Odisha. The engineering college libraries have initiated a significant effort in the field of digitization so that a digital repository helps to manage and capture their intellectual assets of the institutions. Libraries have been preserving the intellectual assets i.e. study material, question paper, NPTEL web/ video courses, Back volume, thesis & dissertation, and books. For digitization, the libraries are using some open source software and commercial software. This helps the libraries disseminate the information on a finger tip. In addition to this, present study explore the area of the in-house digital repository initiation, the types and contents of the archive for in-house digital repository, recognition of the source of preservation and finally finding out the skills of the manpower engaged in the digital repository activity.³

* Ms. Geetika Bhatia is a Research Scholar at Singhania University, Rajasthan.

**Dr. Shiva Kanaujia Sukula is working as the Dy. Librarian, Central Library, Dr. B.R.Ambedkar University, Agra, U.P.

Munshi and Ahmed (2000) investigated the current status of automation in different types of libraries in Bangladesh and highlight the gradual development of using computers and telecommunication technologies in Bangladeshi libraries and information centres. Sixty five libraries and information centres have been selected as sample to collect information for the purpose of the study. They also attempt to identify the library operations by the use of computers and to determine the major problems with some effective solutions.⁴

DIGITAL LIBRARIES AND INFORMATION RETRIEVAL

Information technology has provided the means for compact storage, quick retrieval and speedy access to information. Developed countries have the resources and the technology to quickly adopt and absorb new methods of information handling in their work cultures. On the other hand, developing countries face several problems. There are some common problems of adoption and absorption of technology in developing countries with special reference to India. While focusing on the issues and concerns regarding implementation of information technology on a relatively moderate scale, they focus on the strengths of India's knowledge base. They bring out the areas of concern on which India has to focus in order to exploit its strengths and overcome its weaknesses.⁵

Information retrieval (IR) has traditionally been the domain of librarians and information professionals. IR systems have been used almost exclusively by such research experts for several reasons, such as the number of search systems available, cost, and the complexity of use requiring command language searching. However, with the rapid growth of the Internet, together with tools like World Wide Web (also known as WWW), there have been significant changes and improvements in online information retrieval environments. These include a broad and diverse existence of both IR systems and various user interface and functions. The developmental history of Web-based IR systems is available for library reference services.⁶

NETWORKING AND INFORMATION MANAGEMENT

Libraries are the important institutions for human development and progress. The advancement in knowledge and technology is a vital issue for increasing the patron demands and resources in the libraries. To safeguard these resources for posterity, libraries are adopting various security measures. Unfortunately even after introducing technology driven security solutions, the problem of library security is unresolved. The various dimensions of existing security measures and those which may be adopted in libraries must be analyzed. There should be few guidelines to handle this most sensitive but still important issue of library management.⁷

Nawarathne and Singh (2012)⁸ explored the current practices of information literacy in Sabaragamuwa University of Sri Lanka. The study succinctly sketches a picture of all component of the availability and it gives explicit directions about information literacy activities. They explicated the attitudes of the students who attended the information literacy through reinforce feedback. It revealed that they admired value of the programme highly. This will help to motivate other university authorities to observe the current situation and its significance.

LIBRARY NETWORKING AND DIGITAL INFORMATION SERVICES

Khode and Dhar (2003) describe how information technology tools such as Internet, networking and electronic publishing are helpful in successful implementation of the Five Laws of Library Science. During the last 50 years, society in every developed country has become a society of institution. Every major task, whether economic performance or health care education or the protection of the environment, the pursuit of new knowledge or defence, is today being entrusted to big organization, design for perpetuity and managed by their own management. On the performance of these institution, performance of modern society if not, the survival of each individual increasingly depends.⁹ The realization has dawned for the need for national information system in education in India.¹⁰ The existing information centres in India should be at par with the international information services. There have been suggestions about the cost effective networks at international level.¹¹ The library

consortium has been a better solution. The Government of India initiatives such as INDEST, UGC-Infonet, CSIR Consortia, FORSA, IIM Library Consortia, IUC-DAEF Consortia-Based Subscription to Electronic Resources are briefly discussed and suggestions are made. These cause pruning of scholarly publications for subscription, which becomes a barrier to the flow of exploded information from generation to the end users.¹²

CONCLUSION

Indian Higher Education System is one of the largest systems in the world, facing challenges due to globalization, increased academic population, knowledge explosion in different forms and a lot of research and development projects on one side and on the other side reduced budget, diversity of users' needs, reduction in staff, inflation, escalation in cost of scholarly publications. Libraries require upgradation according to changing information scenario and the library staff is required to constantly adopt the new technology, skill and practices to meet the demand of the end-users. A quantum jump is required to bridge the concepts like Web 2.0 and the Web 3.0.

REFERENCES

1. Pradhan, Mohan Raj(2004). Developing Digital Libraries Technologies and Challenges. Library Herald, Vol. 42 (2):100-108, June,2004 .
2. Maharana, Bulu; Choudhary, B.K. and Dutta Syam Ashree (2004). Collection Development of Electronic Information Resources in the R & D Libraries of Kolkata City- A survey. Library Herald, Vol. 42 (3): 235-246, September, 2004
3. Sahu ,Mahendra K. and Mahapata, R.K.(2012). Digital Repository. A Study of Revolutionary Endowment of Engineering Institution Libraries of Odisha. International Journals of Information Dissemination and Technology, Vol. 2(4):237-248.
4. Munshi, Usha Mujoo and Malhan, Inder (1998). Information Technology. Concerns and issues in Developing countries with special reference to India. Library Herald, Vol. 36(2):39-79.
5. Munshi, M Nasiruddin and Ahmed ,SM Zabed(2000). Status of Library Automation in Bangladesh, Existing Problems and Solutions. Library Herald, Vol. 38 (2)"79-88.
6. Begum, Suraiya and Ahmed ,S.M.(2003). Development of web-based IR Systems: A review. Library Herald, Vol. 41 (2):119-127, June 2003.
7. Kulkarni, Shobha and Powowal , Sushama(2008). Library Security Systems Metamorphosis. Library Herald, Vol. 46(2): 81-90.
8. Nawarathne, I.M. and Singh ,Ajay Pratap(2012). Information Literacy Programme conducted by the Sabragamuwa University of Sri Lanka: General Overview. Information Journals of Information Dissemination and Technology, Vol. 2 (4): 219-229.
9. Khode, Subash and Dhar , Upinder(2003). Information Technology and the Five Laws of Library Science. Library Herald, Vol. 41 (1): 56-61
10. Gupta, Sangita (2006). Future of Libraries and Role of Librarians. A Perspective. Journals of Library Information Technology, Vol. 2 (1): 49-57.
11. Mahur, Sudha and Kapoor , Sarita (2002). Educational Information Centres & Services in India. Library Herald, Vol. 40 (3) :195-207.
12. Mounissamy, P., Kalli Ammal, A. and Thirunavukka, Rasu (2004). Access of E-Journals in the institutions of Indian higher education through consortium. J Lib Inf Sci , vol. 29 (1-2): 26-36.