

Use and Impact of E-Resources in Academic Libraries: Special References in Government First Grade Colleges of Kolar District

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Abstract

The advent of information technology has had a significant and pervasive impact on almost all areas of library services. The library environment has changed rapidly, resulting in a new generation of libraries focused on electronic resources. As the popularity of electronic resources increases, librarians and staff are also concerned about electronic resources, their methods, access, evaluation, selection, organization, etc. In this study, the existing situation of electronic resources in some academic libraries in first class state colleges of Kolar district has been revealed. The study also shows the advantages of using electronic resources, the problems faced by users in accessing electronic resources, and the perceived impact of electronic resources on academic library users. Today, electronic resources have transformed the entire library systems and services. Whereas a decade ago most online information searches took place in libraries and information centers and were primarily related to scientific and technical bibliographic databases, today they are much more common in the workplace and at home, and literally anyone can sit down at a computer.

Keywords: Use of e-resources; Impact of electronic sources; Academic libraries; Kolar.

INTRODUCTION

The invention of computers and the Internet has radically changed the way information is collected, stored, organised, accessed, and

consumed. Today, the availability of electronic resources in a university library is widespread, but their appropriate and maximum use is a point of debate. Electronic resources have transformed traditional library systems by making them accessible by anyone, anytime, anywhere. Since electronic resources provide more up-to-date information and the user is not tied to a specific location, they have a great impact on students, faculty, and researchers who use the library for their studies or research. *Crawford, John C. and Daye, Andrew. (2000)* the advent of information technology has resulted in reducing the size of libraries. In fact, these smaller modern libraries are rich potential of information. It has been possible due to the digitization of information. The digital

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and electronic information is based on electronic data, which has gradually replaced paper-based records. As the visual information system in comparison to text based information system is getting more and more popular these days, the traditional libraries are becoming hybrid libraries as they are in the process of doing digitization of their documents and moving towards to become electronic libraries.¹

An electronic resource is defined as a resource which require computer access or any electronic product that delivers a collection of data, be it text referring to full text bases, electronic journals, image collections, other multimedia products and numerical, graphical or time based, as a commercially available title that has been published with an aim to being marketed. These may be delivered on CD ROM, on tape, via internet and so on. *Edwards, C.E.: Day J.M. and Walton, G. (1995).* a numbers of techniques and related standards have been developed which allow documents to be created and distributed in electronic form. Hence to cope with the present situation, librarians are shifting towards new media, namely electronic resources for their collection developments that the documents of users are better fulfilled. The e-resources on magnetic and optical media have a vast impact on the collections of University libraries. These are more useful due to inherent capabilities for manipulation and searching, providing information access is cheaper to acquiring information resources, savings in storage and maintenance etc. and sometimes the electronic form is the only alternative.³

E-resources (electronic resource) is that, "Information (usually a file) which can be stored in the form Electrical signal usually, but not necessary on a computer.

Types of e-resources: The e-resources are basically

divided in two major types are:

Online e-resources, which may include:

- E-journal (Full text & bibliographic)
- E-books
- Online databases
- Web sites

Other electronic resources may include:

- CD ROM
- Diskettes
- Other portable computer databases

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The main objective of the study is to evaluate the use and impact of electronic resources on academic libraries. The other objectives of the study are to:

- Study the impact of electronic resources on the academic works of users.
- Know the different types of electronic resources available in the selected libraries.
- Study the purpose and frequency of using the electronic resources available in the libraries.
- Identify the impediments faced by the users while accessing and using e-resources.
- Assess the benefits of e-resources over conventional sources of information.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This study has been conducted on nine selected Government First Grade College libraries around Kolar District. These are:

Table 1: Scope of the Study

Sl. No	Name of the College Library	Type	Year of Establishment	Location
1	Government First Grade College	Public	1948	Kolar
2	Government Women's College	Public	1984	Kolar
3	Government Law College	Public	1996	Kolar
4	Government First Grade College	Public	1985	Srinivasapur
5	Government First Grade College	Public	1988	Malur
6	Government First Grade College	Public	1970	Mulabagilu
7	Government First Grade College	Public	1985	Bangarapet
8	Government First Grade College	Public	2007	KGF
9	Government First Grade College	Public	2007	Bangaru Tirupathi

METHODOLOGY

Methodology used for this study was based on qualitative methods, which include questionnaire surveys on the users (i.e., students and teachers) of the selected Academic College libraries. The questionnaire was close ended. Data for this research came from both primary and secondary sources. The primary data was collected from the users of the selected libraries through the questionnaire. The secondary sources of data included previous works such as thesis, reports, books, journals and other electronic sources. The goal was to receive qualifying surveys from the users in order to provide a clear concept on use and impact of electronic resources on academic libraries.

For collecting data, a number of total 200 questionnaire was distributed among the users of the selected College libraries (i.e., 50 in each). In which 100 questionnaire was collected successfully from the users and a number 50 questionnaire was randomly selected for the analysis of data.

Table 2: Category of User

Sl. No	Category of User	Frequency	age
1	Students	41	82%
2	Faculty	09	18%
	Total	50	100%

ELECTRONIC RESOURCES AND ACADEMIC LIBRARY

In modern library the electronic resources are becoming more and more important. The printed resources are now being digitized, which has given rise in increases of the availability of books and journals in the electronic format. Ibrahim, *Ahmed Elhafiz*. (2004) The electronic books are helpful because of their easy portability and its feature of incorporating more than one book in a single hand held device. The published materials are also available on open access platform. This helps the poorer to get the information required free of cost and bridge the digital divide.⁴

Electronic Resources: Electronic resources are those resources which include documents in electronic or e-format that can be accessed via Internet in digital library environment. E-resources are that electronic product that delivers a collection of data, be it text, image collection, other multimedia products like numerical, graphical mode for commercially available for library and information centre's. These may be delivered in

on CD-ROM/DVD, over the internet and so on. (*Sinha, 2010*). According to Wikipedia, Electronic Resources means "Information (usually a file) which can be stored in the form of electrical signals, usually on a computer; Information available on the Internet". According to Library and Information Technology Glossary "Term used to describe all of the information products that a library provides through a computer network."⁷

According to *Dadzie, Perpetua S. (2005)*, an electronic resource is: "Material (data and/or program (s) encoded for manipulation by a computerized device. This material may require the use of a peripheral directly connected to a computerized device (e.g., CD-ROM drive) or a connection to a computer network."²

According to *Ray, Kathryn and others (1998)* "A publication in digital format which must be stored and read on a computer device. There are two types: Direct access: these are physical objects such as CD-ROMs, diskettes, computer tapes, and computer cards, containing text, images, software, etc."⁵

Need of E-Resources: E-Resources enable the librarian to provide better service to the user community. The few considerable points are mentioned bellow:

- To get access to an information source by the more than one users.
- E-Resources can be searched quickly.
- These can be found easily by the user.
- These resources can be stored in huge amount.
- Amount of time spent on the E-Resources use.
- Analyses the purpose of using e-resources by respondent
- Know different types of e-resources commonly used by respondents
- To collect, store, organize information in digital form.

Characteristics of Electronic Resources: Electronic resources are an integral part of the educational system whose primary function is to serve users. Electronic sources are advantageous to the users, as the information can be delivered directly to the users; users can specify his/her information needs and information is obtained speedily. Electronic information also provides a number of advantages compared to print sources including fast and easy access, especially when users are searching

retrospectively. *Smith, Erin T. (2003)*. The main advantage is for distance users with limited time to access the library since they are now able to access information outside of the library.⁸

The characteristics of electronic resources can be pointed as:

- Electronic resources can be used from anywhere at any time. There is no time or geographical boundary.
- Same database or electronic records can be used by several users at a time.
- Electronic resources do not require physical space.
- They can be easily accessed, organized, revised, rearranged, archived and retrieved.
- Hyperlinks lead the user to the related information.

Impact of Electronic resources on library user:

- Electronic resources bring the library to the user, at work, at home and at anywhere.
- Support full text searching and browsing facility, where finding information is very easy.
- User can get current information as it can be updated continuously.
- Electronic resources are always available and never checked out, miss shelved, or stolen, because of electronic format.
- Electronic resources may save time and money of the use.

Limitations of Electronic Resources:

- ***Licensing:*** E-Resources need the license from the publisher to the library for making use of it.
- ***IPR:*** E-Resources can be easily copied and forwarded to the another person so librarian should be alert about IPR (Intellectual Property Rights).
- ***Standards of metadata:*** There are standards for metadata description like MARC21 but the available e-resources in the market are not standardizing by MARC21.
- ***Technological obsolescence:*** The hardware and software obsolescence is one of the major risk of using electronic resources.
- ***Low budget:*** Libraries are non-profit organization so they cannot purchase and

afford the costly electronic resources.

- ***Skill manpower:*** To handle the electronic collection the proper skills are required among the staff but libraries are lacking of skill manpower.
- ***Lack of infrastructure:*** Electronic collection is supported by Information and communication Technology components.

Academic Library: An academic library is a library that is attached to a higher education institution which serves two complementary purposes to support the school's curriculum, and to support the research of the university faculty and students. Academic libraries must determine a focus for collection development since comprehensive collections are not feasible. Librarians do this by identifying the needs of the faculty and student body, as well as the mission and academic programs of the college or university. (From Wikipedia, the free encyclopedia)

An academic library is the library associated with a degree granting institution of higher education. Academic libraries are identified by the post-secondary institution of which they are a part and provide all of the following:

1. An organized collection of printed or other materials or a combination thereof.
2. A staff trained to provide and interpret such materials as required to meet the informational, cultural, recreational, or educational needs of clientele.
3. An established schedule in which services of the staff are available to clientele.
4. The physical facilities necessary to support such a collection, staff, and schedule.

Major Finding

On the basis of the above analysis and observations, it seems that the entire selected library provides electronic resources for their user and all the respondents [Student, Researcher, Teacher and Academician] are familiar with it. The major findings of this study are given below:

- Maximum users of all the university libraries are preferred to use e-journal than any other electronic resources.
- Majority of the users use e-resources in most days which is a good sign.
- Most of the users use electronic resources for learning and research purpose.
- The users are highly benefited by using

e-resources because they get current information and the data can be retrieved quickly.

- Most of the users get it difficult to find relevant information, which is a major problem of using e-resources.
- Though some libraries provide orientation program, maximum users required to get presentation of different resources and IT training.
- Majority of the users consider that e-resources save their time and money and they get up-to-date information which is a great impact of using e-resources.
- A large number of users indicate that they have a high level of success in research/academic work for using e-resources.
- Most of the users feel comfortable to use e-resources.

CONCLUSION

The importance of electronic resources in academic library is increasing day by day. Now a days the electronic resources has changed the traditional library system and they have a great advantages over print collections. As the academic libraries are mainly used by the students, teachers and researcher, electronic resources have a great impact to their academic and research work. However, electronic resources have both merits and demerits. Although it will be difficult to overcome every barrier in a short time, some recommendation has been made to provide much better services particularly in the usage of electronic resources to the user by the selected libraries.

Recommendations

- The infrastructure facilities for accessing e-resources by the user should be developed.
- The libraries should subscribe more e-resources to provide better service to their users.
- The budget of the libraries should be

increased for subscribing more e-resources.

- Before subscription, a survey on users should be done at regular interval to receive information and suggestions from the faculty member and students, which need to subscribe or not.
- All the libraries should organize some training program for their users.
- Skilled library staff should be appointed for better service.
- Bandwidth of internet connection should be increased to minimize download time.
- Library websites should be monitored continuously.

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