MANAGEMENT OF ELECTRONIC RESOURCES IN SPECIAL LIBRARIES OF DELHI, NCR

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Abstract: With the advent of Internet and World Wide Web, the collection of libraries has changed rapidly. Currently electronic resources have become an inseparable part of library collection. While electronic resources are very easy to use, they are troublesome for the library administration point of view. As libraries increases their collection of electronic resources, finding ways to manage them efficiently becomes a major challenge.

The objective of the present research paper is to know the various strategies employed by the special libraries of Delhi NCR in managing the electronic resources. The study also identifies the challenges faced by the librarians of special libraries in managing their e-resources and an attempt has also been made to find out the satisfaction level of the library professionals with the present methods of managing electronic resources. A Well-structured questionnaire for librarians of special libraries was designed to collect data. The study shows that 96.8% professional staffs assist the users in using OPAC and 87.5% assist in accessing to information collection. 90.32% libraries provide access of their e-resources through links from their home page, 48.39% through links from their online catalogue. Study also shows that 77.42% libraries provide hands on training to their users to help them to use these resources. Majority of libraries (i.e.74.19%) face the problem of budgeting to cover the high cost of electronic resources followed by dealing with frequent changes in models of e-resources (38.71%). 38.71% librarians are fully satisfied whereas 61.29% librarians are partially satisfied with the present methods of managing electronic resources.

Keyword: Electronic Resources; Digital Resources; Electronic resource management; Special Libraries.

1.0 Introduction

In the last two decades, the academic and research libraries have shown visible signs of adaptation to the latest Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) in content creation, collection development, preservation and delivery of information to their members. Further, there has been an increased availability of information in electronic format. From the library's point of view, the transition from print to electronic is an action propelled by the ubiquitous Internet. Currently electronic resources have become an inseparable part of libraries and its users.

Libraries of all sizes and types are embracing digital collections, although most libraries continue to offer both print and digital collections. New purchases and purchases of journals, magazines, and abstracting and indexing services are heavily weighted toward digital, such a dramatic switch from print to digital collection has an impact on library users and users' perceptions of the library.

While electronic resources are very easy to use and having significant role in research, they are troublesome for the library administration point of view. They are difficult to catalogue, manage and administer. Finding course of action to manage these electronic resources efficiently and effectively becomes a problematic for libraries. Managing e-resources becomes further complicated due to endless variation in the packages offered by the various e-resource providers.

Management of these electronic resources helps the users to search and access of e-resources conveniently without wasting of much time of users and same time to provide library staff the tools and techniques to keep track of them.

According to Breeding (2004), there are two fundamental aspects to managing electronic resources: 1) the Front-end details of delivering the content to library users and 2) managing the business details of Back-end staff functions related to acquisition, payment, and licensing. As libraries increases their collection of electronic resources, finding ways to manage them efficiently becomes a major challenge.

2.0 Objectives of The Study

1. To find out the strategies employed by the special libraries in the management of e-resources.

2. To identify the challenges faced by librarians in the management of e- resources.

3. To find out the satisfaction level of the library professionals in managing e-resources.

3.0 Review of Literature

Singley and Natches (2017) conducted a research survey on "Finding the gaps: A survey of electronic resource management in Alma, Sierra, and WMS." The objective of the survey was to explore whether libraries which have implemented next generation library systems are able to complete the electronic resource management workflows entirely within that system or if additional tools are still required. **Pradhan (2013)** in his article "Developing standards for electronic resource management" discussed about the various challenges faced due to emergence and excessive use of e-resources and incapability of existing library management systems in managing these e-resources effectively. **Ugwu and Onyegiri (2013)** in their research paper "Management problems of electronic information resources: A case study of UNN Library" discussed the various problems faced in managing e-resources in the University of Nigeria, Nsukka Library System. Strategies for enhancing effective management of e-resources were studied and recommended that a certain percentage of the library budget should be allocated to the development of e-resources in the university library. ICT Infrastructural development is needed. Library professionals should be trained/ retrained to function effectively in an IT-driven information environment.

4.0 Methodology

The present study confined to the government libraries of Delh NCR working in specialized disciplines. Only those government libraries have been taken in to considerations which were having sufficient e-collection.

Well-structured questionnaire was designed to collect data from the librarians. The investigator personally visited the special libraries to get filled the questionnaires. Total 40 questionnaires were distributed and 31 were received back (77.5%).

5.0 Data Analysis

Table 1: Responsibilities of the Library Professionals to Manage E-Resources

Responsibilities	Responses	Percentage
They assist in accessing to information collection	27	87.5
They assist in using OPAC	30	96.8
They provide recently available web resources subject wise	21	68.75
They help in searching through Federated Search/ Discovery Service	19	62.5
They carry out licensing of e-resources	19	62.5
They are involved in devising methods of organizing e-resources	19	62.5

Table 1 depicts the responsibilities being performed by the library professionals to manage the available electronic resources. It shows that 96.8% professional staff assist the users in using OPAC, 87.5% assist in accessing to information collection.

Table 2: Strategies Applied to Provide Access to E-Resources

Strategies	Responses	Percentage
Provide links from home page	28	90.32
Through links from online catalogue	15	48.39
Through Discovery services	08	25.81
Through federated search	05	16.13

Table 2 shows the various strategies applied by the libraries to provide access of e-resources to the users. It shows that 90.32% libraries provide access of their e-resources through links from their home page, 48.39% through links from their online catalogue and 25.81% provide access through discovery services..

Table 3: Criteria for Selecting E-Resources

Criteria	Responses (N=31)	Percentage
Meet user need	23	74.19
Cost effectiveness	23	74.19
Subject	23	74.19
Authenticity/ Vendor reliability	15	48.39
Currency of Information	14	45.16
Back file availability	20	64.52
Product review by expert	17	54.84
Scope/ Coverage	21	67.74
Other criteria	5	16.13

Table 3 shows various criteria adopted by the libraries to subscribe electronic resources. It shows that 74.19% have the criteria as meet user needs, cost effectiveness and subject coverage. 67.74% select on the basis of scope/ coverage of the e-resource, and 54.84% on basis of product review by the expert.

Table 4: Process of Selection of E-Resources

Selection methods	Responses (N=31)	Percentage
Getting recommendations from faculty members, research scholars etc.	28	90.32
Scanning catalogues	12	38.71
Surfing e-information website	14	45.16

Consulting other libraries	16	51.61
Newsgroup	04	12.90
Free online trial access	22	70.97
Calling vendors and discussing about their products	18	58.06

The process adopted by the libraries for selection of electronic resources has been shown in Table 4. It shows that 90.32% libraries subscribe the e-resources on the basis of recommendations received from the users whereas 70.97% libraries get the e-resources on trial before subscribing it. 51.61% libraries consult with other libraries before getting these subscribed.

Table 5: Measures to Promote the Use of E-Resources

Measures	Responses	Percentage
Provide links from home page	23	71.87
Provide links through OPAC	10	31.25
Conduct orientation program for users	21	65.62
E-mail/Internet mailing link	21	65.62
Other	2	6.25

Table 5 shows the different measures applied by the libraries to promote the use of e-resources. Majority of the libraries i.e. 71.87% provide links from their home page. 65.62% libraries conduct training programmes and equally promote the use of e-resources by sending E-mails/ Internet mailing links to the users.

Table 6: Availability of Separate Section for Accessing E-Resources

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Yes	27	87.1
No	4	12.9
Total	**31**	**100.0**

Table 6 shows that majority of the libraries i.e. 87.1% have separate section of accessing e-resources.

Table 7: Membership of Consortia

Responses	Frequency	Percent
Yes	19	61.29
No	12	38.71
Total	**31**	**100.0**

Table 7 shows that 61.29% libraries are member of e-resource consortium to get access of e-resources whereas 38.71% libraries are not member of any consortium.

Table 8: Users' Feedback to Evaluate the Subscribed E-Resources

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	28	90.32
No	3	9.68
Total	**31**	**100.00**

Table 8 shows the process of getting feedback to evaluate existing subscribed electronic resources to continue the subscription of these e-resources for next year. The table shows that more than 90% libraries take feedback from its users before renewal of these e-resources.

Table 9: Remote Access to Electronic Resources

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	16	51.61
No	15	48.39
Total	**31**	**100.00**

Table 9 shows that 51.61% libraries provide remote access facility (off campus facility) to their users to access the electronic resources from remote place.

Table 10: Hands on Training Regarding the Use of E-Resources

Responses	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	24	77.42
No	7	22.58
Total	**31**	**100.00**

Table 10 shows that 77.42% libraries provide hands on training to their users whereas 22.58% libraries don't provide any training to their users to help them to use these resources.

Table 11: Frequency of Providing Training to the Users

Responses	Frequency (N=24)	Percentage
Monthly	2	8.33
Quarterly	5	20.83
Half yearly	7	29.17
Once in a year	10	41.67
Total	**24**	**100.00**

Table 11 shows that majority (41.67%) of the libraries provide training to their users once in a year, 29.17% provide half yearly, 20.83% provide quarterly.

Table 12: Challenges Being Faced in Managing E-Resources

Challenges	Responses	Percentage
Acquisition of skills to handle current e-tools	9	29.03
Budgeting to cover high cost of e-resources	23	74.19
Expertise in licensing e-journals	10	32.26
Dealing with frequent changes in models of e-resources	12	38.71
Problems in communicating with users	2	6.45
Integrating processing of electronic resources into existing organizational structure	7	22.58

Table 12 shows various challenges being faced by the librarians in managing electronic resources. It shows that majority of libraries (i.e.74.19%) face the problem of budgeting to cover the high cost of electronic resources followed by dealing with frequent changes in models of e-resources (38.71%) and 32.26% libraries also face the challenge of expertise in licensing e-journals.

Table 13: Suggestions for Enhancing Management and Use of E-resources

Suggestions	Responses	Percentage
Library schools should provide pragmatic training for student librarians	22	70.97
Regular training should be provided as per need	21	67.74
The ICT skills of staff should be enhanced	23	74.19
A certain percentage of the lib budget should be set aside for the development/procurement of e-resources	14	45.16
E-resources should be evaluated to ascertain their acceptability	13	41.94
ICT infrastructure should be developed	16	51.61

Table 13 shows the various suggestions made by the librarians to enhance the use and management of electronic resources. 74.19% librarians suggested that the ICT skills of staff should be enhanced, 70.97% librarians were of view that the library schools should provide pragmatic training for student librarians to enable them handle electronic resources and 67.74% librarians think that regular training should be provided to the users as per need.

Table 14: Satisfaction with the Present Method of Managing E-Resources

Response	Frequency	Percentage
Fully satisfied	12	38.71
Partially satisfied	19	61.29
Not satisfied	0	0
Can't say	0	0

Total	31	100.00

Table 14 shows that 38.71% librarians are fully satisfied whereas 61.29% librarians are partially satisfied with the present methods of managing electronic resources.

6.0 Findings

a) 87.1% libraries are having separate section for accessing e-resources by the users.

b) 61.29% libraries are member of e-resource consortia available in their subject field.

c) 96.8% libraries help users to use Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC). 62.5% respondents help in searching through federated search/ discovery service.

d) Majority of the libraries (i.e. 74.19%) select e-resources on the basis of subject coverage, meet the user need (74.19%) and the cost effectiveness (74.19%) followed by back file availability (64.52%) and review by experts (54.84%).

e) 90.32% libraries subscribe e-resources on the basis of recommendations received from the users. 70.97% libraries take free trial access before going for subscription.

f) More than 90% libraries take feedback from their users about the e-product regarding continuing the subscription before going for renewal.

g) 90.32% libraries provide links to the e-resources from their Home Page followed by links from Online Catalogue (48.39%), search through Discovery service (25.81%).

h) Remote access facility to access e-resources from home or anywhere is being provided to the users by 51.61% libraries.

i) 77.42% libraries provide training to the users to use e-resources effectively.

j) 41.67% libraries organize training for their users once in a year followed by half yearly (29.17%), quarterly (20.83%).

k) Budgeting to cover high cost of e-resources is the most common challenge being faced by the 74.19% libraries followed by dealing with frequent changes in models of e-resources (38.71%), expertise in licensing e-journals (32.26%).

l) 74.19% librarians suggested that ICT skills of library staff should be enhanced, 70.97% librarians suggested that Library Schools should provide pragmatic training to the student librarians to enable them handle e-resources whereas 67.74% suggested to provide regular training to the staff as per need and 51.61% suggested that ICT infrastructure of the libraries should be developed to provide efficient library services.

   45.16% librarians suggested that a certain percentage of the library budget should be set aside for the development and procurement of e-resources whereas 41.94% suggested that e-resources should be evaluated to ascertain their acceptability.

m) 38.71% librarians are fully satisfied whereas 61.29% librarians are partially satisfied with the present method of managing e-resources.

n) It was found in the study that no library is using any standard Electronic Resource Management System (ERMS) to manage their e-resources. The possible reason may be that no ERMS is completely suitable for doing all tasks/ workflow management.

7.0 Conclusion

Library professionals are continuously facing the challenge of managing the e-resources effectively and find out the ways and means to provide access of these e-resources for its maximum utilization by the users without any difficulty. Most of the libraries are not having dedicated professional to manage e-resources. The library professionals are not trained in licensing of the e-resources. No separate budget has been allocated in most of the libraries to develop and promote the use of e-resources.

Many libraries are not having federated search or discovery search mechanism to retrieve all relevant information in a single click. No Electronic Resource Management System could (ERMS) developed which can take care of all the activities related to e-resource management and can manage work flow from the acquisition, licensing and providing access of e-resources to the patrons.

8.0 Suggestions

- Wi-Fi and Remote Access facility should be made available for the users so that they can use e-resources 24*7 e-resource from anywhere.
- The information regarding search strategies should be provided as FAQ to enable users to search the e-resources by themselves.

- For getting all the relevant information through single click, some good discovery tools may be deployed.
- Usage statistics and feedback should be the basis of continue subscription of e-resources.
- Library should arrange frequent user awareness and training programmes.
- The professional staff of the library should also be trained in various techniques of retrieving information on time to time.
- One e-resource librarian dedicated to help users in accessing information should be made available.
- Separate fund should be allocated to the libraries to subscribe e-resources.

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