

DIGITAL LIBRARIES EXISTING IN INDIA

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Abstract: Information & communication Technology (ICT) has brought a significant change in all round development of the society through transmission of information. Due to World Wide Web, access to the internet has become part of our life. A large number of people search the internet every day. The ICT revolution and the advent of the Internet has had drastic & far reaching impacts on the knowledge & information and added a new dimension to information retrieval. Now libraries have been able to provide fast & seamless access of information to its users. Besides conservation & preservation of the traditional knowledge, application of ICT has provided wider opportunities in archiving & accessing knowledge in the digitized form.

In the 21st century libraries are moving from print to e- resources either subscribing individually or through consortia. Demands of digital information are increasing which caused the existence of digital library in India. Digital libraries attempt to provide instant access to digitized information and consist of a variety of information including multimedia. They will provide enhanced access to the electronic information sources and users can access the digital content irrespective of time & space boundaries. The present study focuses on the digital libraries which are existing in India. It also discusses the features, need and objectives of the digital library.

Keywords: Information & Communication Technology, Information Technology, Digital Library.

1.0 Introduction:

Information & Communication Technology (ICT) has brought a significant change in all round development of the society through transmission of information. Due to World Wide Web, access to the internet has become part of our daily life. A large number of people search the internet every day. More & more people need to search indexed collections. A new revolution in information retrieval technology has been spurred by the public awareness of the net as a critical infrastructure in 1990s. Many people believe that a net Millennium is coming where the net forms the basic infrastructure of everyday life (Schatz & chen, 1990). The information & communication technology revolution and the advent of the internet has had drastic and far reaching impacts on the knowledge and information and added a new dimension to information retrieval. The Information & communication Technology has brought changes and transformation to libraries & information services. Now libraries have been able to provide fast & seamless access of information to its users. Besides conservation and preservation of the traditional knowledge, application of ICT has provided wider opportunities in archiving & accessing knowledge in the digitized form. In 21st century most of the library resources are being made available in electronic formats such as e-books, e- journals, databases etc. Libraries are moving from print to e- resources either subscribing individually or through consortia. Demands for digital information are increasing which caused the existence of digital library in India. Digital libraries attempt to provide instant access to digitized information and consist of a variety of information, including multimedia. They will provide enhanced access to the electronic information sources and the users can access the digital content irrespective of time & space boundaries.

2.0 Concept of Digital Library

A Digital Library is much more than just the collection of material in its depositories. It provides a variety of service to all its users. The goal of the digital library is to satisfy user needs for management, access, storage & manipulation of the variety of information stored in the collection. Digital library are the digital face of traditional

libraries that include both digital & traditional collections. There are so many scholars who defined the term Digital Library in different way. Some important definitions are given as:

Lesk (2005) defined digital Library as a collection of information that is both digitized and organized and which offers capabilities beyond those of the traditional library.

Vanitha et al (2006) defined Digital Library as a library consisting of digital materials and services. Digital materials and items are stored, processed & transferred via digital (binary) devices & networks.

Larson (1985) said that Digital library is no single, standalone repositories of digital data. Instead, they are a heterogeneous collection of network based repositories using a variety of products for user's interaction, data encoding and transmission.

The Association of Research Library (IRL) (1955) has identified five basic elements common to all the definitions of digital library as –

- a) The digital library is not a single entity.
- b) The digital library requires technology to link resources of many libraries.
- c) These links are transparent to all the end users.
- d) Universal access to the digital libraries and information services is the goal.
- e) Digital library collections are not limited to document surrogates but they also include digital artifacts that cannot be represented or distributed in printed formats.

3.0 Scope of the Study

The present study focuses on the features & need of digital libraries. In an electronic era, digital library is necessarily needed to meet the changing information needs of users. Digital libraries are playing a key role in disseminating information by providing different types of relevant and recent information to the users with a short span of time. This study also highlights the digital libraries existing in India.

4.0 Objectives of the Study

- To emphasize on the need of digital library.
- To discuss the features of digital library.
- To highlight the digital libraries existing in India.

5.0 Review of Related Literature

1. Chowdhury, Govinda (2009) discussed the commonalities of research in digital libraries and digital preservation with regard to the issues of users and context of information. He also discussed some current research in digital preservation that aims to handle the users and context information for building future digital preservation systems.
2. Mahesh, G. & Mittal, R. (2008) discussed the importance & need of digital libraries. By reviewing many articles related with the topic, this study revealed that most articles focus on developing digital libraries.
3. Edward, A. Fox (2005) discussed some case studies related to digital libraries and their importance in education with the help of their study entitled "Digital Library for Education".
4. Sreenivasulu (2000) in his study stressed that the multimedia nature of the next generation of digital libraries requires the digital librarians who have to manage & organize the digital library, digital reference services, electronic reference services, search co- ordination and manage the archive and its access.

6.0 Methodology

The conceptual and textual information related to the present study was collected from primary and secondary sources of information Such as books, National & International journals, research paper & articles. Websites were also used for collecting information to prepare this research paper.

7.0 Discussion

7.1 Features of Digital Library

Digital library is the one which really helps the users to get access to the digital resources directly on the screen of their computer itself. Digital library is reforming the dissemination of the information with respect to the availability of speed & access. The main features of the digital library are :-

- All resources are in digital form.
- Advanced search & retrieval of information.
- User- friendly interface to access the information.
- Network accessibility.
- Accessibility from anywhere & anytime.
- Providing access to very large collections including access to primary & secondary sources of information.
- Dynamic and ephemeral.
- Supporting multimedia content and fractal objects.
- Availability for long time.
- Free as well as fee based.
- Provide Client server architecture.
- Greater opportunity for publishing.

7.2 Need of Digital Library

A digital library provides a variety of service to all of its users. The users can access the digital content irrespective of time and space boundaries. Digital library is needed for the reasons given as-

- Easy to understand.
- Information explosion
- Information retrieval
- Multiple access to same information
- Huge storage capacity
- Distance learning
- Access to online Publication
- Low cost of Technology

7.3 Purpose of Digital Library

The goal of digital library is to satisfy user needs for management, access, storage & manipulation of the variety of information stored in the collection. The main purpose of the digital library includes:

- Promote efficient delivery of information economically to all users.
- Strengthen communication and collaboration between and among organizations.
- Expedite the systematic development of procedures to collect, store and organize information in digital form.
- Encourage co- operative efforts in research resource , computing and communication networks.
- Take leadership role in the generation and dissemination of knowledge.

7.4 Digital Libraries Existing in India

The concept of digital library in India began in the mid of 1990 with the advent of information technology, the internet and the support of the central government. In 1996, this concept was recognized during the conference on digital libraries organized by the society of information science at Bangalore. Although the concept of digital library is very new concept in India and few libraries have made attempts in this direction earlier, the digital library in India is still at binding stage. Majority of the digital library were largely confined to limited uses such as subscribing to e-journals, scanning documents and installing them on the internet. Some of the important digital libraries across the country are-

7.5 Archives of Indian Labour

The Archives of Indian Labour was set up in July 1998 as a collaborative project of V.V. Giri National Labour Institute and the Association of Indian Labour Historians. The core activities of the archive are digital archiving, research, collection, public interface and dissemination. It is comprised of more than 40,000 printed pages and more than 100 hours of taped interviews. Besides this several reports & articles related to labour history of India is also available. Only registered user can access the library.

7.6 Digital Library of India

Digital Library of India is the biggest digital library in India at National level. It is run by the collaboration of different Universities and institutes under universal digital Library project. DLI is coordinated by Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore and is supported by Ministry of communications and Information Technology, Government of India. Different books of Indian language are available free to all. Very soon, this portal will provide gateway to other Indian digital libraries of Science, Arts, Culture, Movies, Music and traditional medicines.

7.7 Kalasampada

Indira Gandhi National Center for arts (IGNCA) established a Digital Library Known as Kalasampada (Digital Library Resource for Indian Culture Heritage). The IGNCA has taken up multimedia projects for the digitization of traditional artwork and artifacts that will be made available on the web. It includes non-print as well as printed materials. This digital library contains digital images, audio-video, recordings, animations e-books related to Indian Art and culture. The users can access to the highly researched publications of the IGNCA from the single window. The integration of multimedia computer Technology and software provides a new dimension in the study of the Indian Art and Culture.

7.8 Khuda Baksh Oriental Public Library

The Khuda Baksh Oriental Public Library has initiated digitization of Arabic and Persian manuscript medieval India. It is one of the oriental libraries having rich collection of Persia, Arabic, Urdu and other languages manuscripts.

7.9 Indian National Digital Library in Engineering Science & Technology (INDEST)

The Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) has set-up the INDEST consortium on the recommendation made by the Expert Group. INDEST welcomes other institutions to join and offers highly discounted rates of subscription and better term of agreement with the Publishers. INDEST Consortium presently include ACM Digital Library, ASCE journals, ASME journals, Capitoline, Euro monitor(GMID), IEL Online, Indian Standards, Proquest Science, Science direct, Bibliographic databases of compendex and math Sci Net.

7.10 Vidyanidhi

Vidyanidhi started as a pilot project to demonstrate the feasibility of electronic Thesis & dissertation. Vidyanidhi project was started in 2000 at the Departments of Library and Information science, University of Mysore with the sponsorship of National Information System for Science and Technology, Government of India. The project's vision is to build and strengthen the research capacities and enhance the quality of doctoral research in India. It is supported by Government of India, Ford Foundation and Microsoft India.

7.11 Digital Library IIM

Digital library IIM Kozhikode has sufficient matter of management, Sociology & economics and IIM staff publications. But it is on the stage of development.

7.12 Librarians Digital Library(LDL)

The LDL developed by DRTC Contains full text of paper, articles & proceedings of Indian Librarianship.

7.13 National Mission for Manuscripts:

The Department of Culture, Government of India has launched the National Mission for Manuscripts in 2003 with the main objectives of conservation and preservation of manuscripts for posterity. India being the largest repository

of manuscripts, rare books, classics etc. needs digitization to preserve as well as give access. The national Informatics Centre (NIC) has prepared detailed guidelines for digitization of manuscripts.

7.14 National Institute of Advanced Studies (NIAS)

The NIAS (Bangalore) started digitization of painting and the Microfilming of Indian Publication Project (MIPP). The NIAs has also started work on rare manuscript preservation project for both microfilming & microfiche.

7.15 Mukhtabodha Digital Library & Archiving Project

The Mukhtabodha project is an attempt to create a digital library in Indian languages specially the ancient text on palm leaves, birch tree barks etc.

7.16 ETD

ETD at Indian Institute of Science contains digital repositories of thesis & dissertation of Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore. It is free for all.

7.17 Nalanda Digital Library (NDL)

NDL is run by National Institute of Technology, Calicut, In this digital library, some resources are open for all, otherwise they are restricted to NITC campus and their recognized users.

7.18 Down the Memory Lane

The National Library of India has started in 1990s a digitization programme, known as down the memory lane to digitize rare books, manuscripts and other resources from its collection. The English and Indian books published before 1920 were taken into consideration.

7.19 Parliament Library

In order to cater to the needs of Members of parliaments & officers and staff of parliament secretariat a digital library has been set up in the parliament library. A large number of index-based databases of information was developed by the computer center. The data stored and available now in PARLIS databases for online retrieval related to question, debates, reports, bio-data of present and past numbers of parliament including photograph and addresses etc.

8.0 Limitations of Digital Library

Digital Libraries in India are facing many problems which should be taken into consideration. Some of them are-

- Lack of Technical Infrastructure.
- Lack of clear cut policy at National level.
- Non-availability of well-trained skilled man power.
- Outdated software and hardware & difficulty in upgrading the same.
- Lack of proper preservation policy.

9.0 Suggestions

The given problems affect the success of digital libraries. In order to overcome these problems, few steps may be taken into consideration. Such as-

- A clear cut policy at National level should be made.
- Well-trained skilled manpower is needed.
- Regular up gradation of software and hardware should be done.
- User-focused policy & strategies should be made.
- International co-operation & collaboration should be made.

10.0 Conclusion

This study revealed that digital library is necessary in India. It became an imperative component in the present electronic environment. There is continuing expansion of digital library activities. More and more libraries will have departments and programmes in the digital library arena. Digital libraries provide an effective means to distribute

learning resources to user (Adams, Jansen & Smith, 1999). Digital Libraries present opportunities and challenges for the library and information communities. It is suggestible that library should collaborate with each other so that more and more information could be accessed to users. The digital library has to triumph over the hang-up and look to the lead for the betterment of information services to the user society by adopting the digital technology.

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