

Rise of E-Resources: An Overview

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Abstract: Technology has evolved everything. From style statement to reading patterns everything is seeing a change. In present era trend of reading has undergone a major shift. There was a time when people would spend hours sitting in a library, moving from shelf to shelf to read a book of their choice. Today that habit of people has got replaced by online reading to a larger extent. On just a single click a person can get access to loads of information. With their smart phones or I pads people get information about whole world. People no more need to visit a library to read a book when the same material is available free of cost on the internet.

Research has brought to the fore that Gen X and its progeny take much fewer rounds of libraries. They get whole of information readymade and need to put in no much effort to get the material of their need. However, this changing news consuming patters has created a digital divide among the users and non-users of internet. A section of society who has not been touched by the technology believes that the real flavour of reading comes by sitting in a library and not by holding laptops or phones in hand. This paper will try to find out how new media's resources are being used by the university students and scholars in Kashmir.

Keywords: e-resources, digital divide, electronic revolution, new media.

1. INTRODUCTION

Since evolution man has been striving to identify, to know and to learn NEW. No doubt, this is a very fundamental approach of mankind, but it has also initiated the concept of preservation of knowledge or one can say the preservations of content which later on gave rise to the all-important concept of libraries.

Over many decades libraries have played a vigorous role in ensuring quality education and research. But with the advent of globalization new mass media resources such as the internet and the web, e-resources have become widely accepted resources.

Advance in technological resources have brought radical changes in the way each and every institute is functioning and libraries is also no exception. It has influenced the way libraries gather, store, organize, retrieve and disseminate information (Sharma, 2009).

Due to new storage media and new channels for transmitting information, electronic libraries have become crucial to the complete formation of any university (Tomescu, 2009). Technological advances have greatly affected scholarly communication (Egberongbe, 2011; Sharma, 2009) because of their potential to deliver goods and services to a large target market irrespective of their geographical location.

Printed materials have their own merits, they may not have been completely replaced by e-resources but in contemporary world new media resource has certainly transformed most traditional libraries into hybrid libraries with most of their resources in both print and electronic formats. Print medium is increasingly giving way to the electronic form of materials¹.

¹ Narayana Poornima and Goudar IRN, "E-Resources Management through Portal: A Case Study of Technical Information Center", In: International Conference on Knowledge Management (ICIM2005), 22-25 Feb 2005, P 1-19.

According to Dadzie (2005), electronic resources are invaluable resources that complement print based resources. They have also been shown to be very helpful, especially, to post graduate students and distance learners who may have limited access to library resources in traditional formats (Egberongbe, 2011; Sharma, 2009).

This research paper seeks to explore opinion of students and scholars towards digital resources. We would like to show user preferences in various situations. Moreover the paper also discusses need, use and impact of these resources. Possible solutions and measures are also proposed followed by summarizing key issues.

2. NEED OF E-RESOURCES

Today we are living in an era of technology and if we talk about need of electronic resources in present? Is a question, whose answer lays in literally thousands of resources, provided by them-ranging from papers, reports, journals, books to magazines among various others which are far more than the library could possibly contribute in paper format?

The concept of literacy has to be refined in order to respond to the needs and demands of today's information society. By e-resources any kind of desired information can be gained from as many as different publications at same time. Moreover the diversity of these resources is not confined to boundaries and can be used by more than one user and at different places. E-resources brought changes in trends of publishing as well and any change can be made quickly with the help of e-resources only. As per studies readers nowadays demand more and more information in different formats. They feel more convenient to access information at their fingertips.

With each increasing day more and more library resources become electronic and are helpful in changing trends in publishing as well. Gilster's (1997) conceptualization of digital literacy is one of the various forms of new literacies that have emerged under the impact of new communication tools. Bodomo and Lee (2002) also proposes a 'technology-sensitive' approach to literacy in their study of changing forms of language in the information age, which is an instantiation of context-sensitive approaches to literacy studies.

3. USES OF E-RESOURCES

Usage of e-resources mainly depends on the facilities available to use them whereas use of printed material is less dependent on technology. Therefore it can be said that e-resources has been increasing with the improved internet facilities. Communication pattern in local research environment significantly influenced e-resources use².

They are especially useful for finding information which is not yet available in books or obtaining up to date information on current events or issues. E- Resources brought changes in habits of writers as well as readers. They are helpful in changing the pattern of serving the library users as well, because nowadays libraries are using information and communication technologies such as bar codes, e-commerce, e-journals etc.

4. IMPACT

The impact of technology on user both in terms of behaviour and attitude has been huge. In present world readers are highly impatient and time conscious, with everyone in a race of getting information just now or never. Changes can be noticed in every sector of society within user's behaviour and attitude towards information search and use. So, libraries are forced to do changes from physical to virtual environment and make such tools available, so that information received by readers is more attractive, effective with multimedia benefits in limited time.

Publication of e-books is increasing but their acquisition represents only a small proportion of acquisition of the academic libraries³. If we take into account preferences of today's audiences, libraries are bound to do some radical changes from print resources to e-resources to full fill expectations of users.

Digital divide has overcome, information and communication technology are now easily accessible across different communities and cultures. With changing environment traditional reading habits are now changed. It reduces the burden

² Torma S and Vakkari P, Discipline, availability of electronic resources and use of Finnish National Electronic Library-FinElib, *Information Research*, 10 (1) (2004).

³ Newman M, Librarian eBook survey, Highwire. (Palo Alto CA: Stanford University) (2010).

for people to stay inside the library. People are now looking for an opportunity to read content in electronic mode via Internet, mail, or even while travelling.

5. PREVIOUS STUDIES

There have been a vast number of studies carried from time to time by the various teachers, students and research scholars among different universities and research organizations. Studies by Ray and Day (1998) reveals that 83% of students surveyed felt that using electronic resources saved them time and found it relatively easy to use

University of Texas at Austin conducted an informal survey in 1999. The survey question was: 'If you were to choose between the library's receiving an electronic subscription or a paper subscription to a given journal, which would you prefer? Of the 788 respondents, 627 (80%) preferred e-journal access, while only 162 (20%) preferred print. Most of those who chose electronic materials stated that e-journals can save resources and are more accessible. The capability of keyword search was also another reason for the preference for electronic materials.

Many of studies have focused on students, lecturers and scholars' usage of electronic resources and their feelings about its usage (Tenpori, 2003). Oduwole and Akpati (2003) investigated the accessibility and retrieval of electronic information at the University of Agriculture Library, Abeokuta, Nigeria. The 425 participants responded out of a survey population of 1,000, giving a response rate of 53.87 %. The study revealed that electronic information cuts across all members of the University community that it was to a greater extent easy to use and were satisfied with their search outputs. The constraints identified included insufficient number of terminals available for use despite high demand and inadequate electricity supply.

Okello-Obura and Magara (2008) investigated electronic information access and utilization at the East African School of Library and Information Science, Makerere University, Uganda. Out of the 250 targeted students, 190 responded, giving a response rate of 76%. The study revealed that users derived a lot of benefits from electronic resources gaining access to a wider range of information and improved academic performance as a result of access to quality information

Another study by Egberongbe (2011) showed that 77% of lecturers preferred to use electronic resources compared to print resources because they found it less time consuming, even though 66% of them believed that electronic resources can never diminish the significance and importance of the print resources.

A S Chandel & Mukesh Saikia (2012) in their research article entitled "Challenges and opportunities of e-resources" suggests E-resources have come with many advantages giving solutions to many professional problems like solution to space problem, providing remote access, convenience in use, increased readership with improved services, leading to more opportunities for productive research output and academic excellence within shortest possible time.

Elavazhagan and Udayakumar (2013) "examined the exposure and measure the extent use of e-resources by the faculty members and research scholars of BITS, Pilani - Hyderabad Campus" and confirmed that "the e-resources are time saving, easy to use and handle, more informative, preferred, flexible and effective".

6. RESEARCH OBJECTIVES

The main objectives of the paper is to analyse the dependency of students and research scholars on e-resources

- To Study the purpose and frequency of using electronic resources among users.
- To find out the benefits of e-resources over conventional sources of information.
- To determine the level of satisfaction.

7. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

A study that seeks to explore the usage of electronic resources requires a substantial sample to be adopted. Thus survey is an ideal research tool in this regard. The study was done a week before among students & research scholars of Kashmir University-Hazratbal, Srinagar. Information was collected from the respondents on the basis of questionnaires. Researchers personally administered questionnaires among individuals. A total of fifty samples were surveyed for this paper on the basis of equal sized stratified sampling. The respondents were divided among two groups on the basis of

their designation i.e. students and Scholars and then twenty five number of respondents were chosen from each group on the basis of purposive sampling.

8. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The information gathered through the questionnaire from Students and Research Scholars is compiled and interpreted in this chapter and provides a clear picture of the findings of the study.

Purpose of using e-resources:

S. No	Responses	Numbers			Percentage (%)		
		Students	Research Scholars	Total	S	RS	T
01	Academic	11	21	32	22	42	64
02	Personal	09	04	13	18	08	26
03	Entertainment	04	01	05	08	02	10
		Total	50		Total		100

S- Students, RS- Research Scholars, T- Total

Source: As per the survey conducted

When the respondents were inquired about the purpose of using e-resources, 64 % of the respondents were of the opinion that they are using e-resources for academic work, among them 42 % were scholars and 22 % were students. While as 26 % of respondents were of the view that they only use e-resources for their personal works among it 8 % were scholars and rest 18 % were students. Rest 10 % were of the opinion that they see e-resources only for entertainment purposes, which included 8 % of students and 2 % of scholars.

Frequency of usage:

S. No	Responses	Numbers			Percentage (%)		
		Students	Research Scholars	Total	S	RS	T
01	Daily	08	16	24	16	32	48
02	Once in 15 days	08	09	17	16	18	34
03	Once in month	05	04	09	10	08	18
		Total	50		Total		100

S- Students, RS- Research Scholars, T- Total

Source: As per the survey conducted

Regarding the frequency of e-resources, 48% among the total were of the view that they use e-resources daily among them 32 % were scholars and 16 % were students. Whereas 34 % of respondents suggested that that they only use e-resources once in fifteen days which included 18 % of scholars and 16 % of students. Remaining 18 % were of the opinion that they use e-resources once in a month only, including 10 % of students and 8 % Scholars

Reasons of using e-resources”

S. No	Responses	Numbers			Percentage (%)		
		Students	Research Scholars	Total	S	RS	T
01	Time Saving	06	14	20	12	28	40
02	More Informative	04	06	10	08	12	20
03	Easily accessible	08	07	15	16	14	30
04	Less expensive	03	02	05	06	04	10
		Total	50		Total		100

S- Students, RS- Research Scholars, T- Total

Source: As per the survey conducted

Majority of respondents 40 % were of the opinion that they by using e-resources, a lot of precious time is saved which in turn comprising 28 % of scholars and 12 % of students. While as 20 % of respondents were of the view that e-resources are more informative than traditional means of learning with 12 % and 8 % of scholars and students respectively in favour. 30 % of respondents were of the belief that e-resources are easily accessible and that is why we are using them consisting of 14 % of scholars and 16 % of students and the remaining 10 % were of the opinion that e-resources are less expensive that is reason we prefer them with 4% of scholars and 6 % of students falling under the said %age.

Level of satisfaction:

S. No	Responses	Numbers			Percentage (%)		
		Students	Research Scholars	Total	S	RS	T
01	Highly satisfied	03	09	12	06	18	24
02	Satisfied	08	13	21	16	26	42
03	Neutral	06	05	11	12	10	22
04	Dissatisfied	03	03	06	06	06	12
		Total	50		Total	100	

S- Students, RS- Research Scholars, T- Total

Source: As per the survey conducted

When the respondents were asked about their level of satisfaction, majority of them 42% were satisfied with the use of e-resources with 26 % of scholars & 16 % of students. Whereas 24% of respondents among the total sample were highly satisfied with e-resources among them 18% were scholars and 6 % were students. 22% of respondents were neutral with 12 % of students and 10 % of scholars. While the remaining 12 % were dissatisfied with e-resources consisting of 6% of scholars and 6% of students each

Constraints while accessing to e-resources:

S. No	Responses	Numbers			Percentage (%)		
		Students	Research Scholars	Total	S	RS	T
01	Charges to access e-Resources	04	05	09	08	10	18
02	Lack of proper guidance	05	08	13	10	16	26
03	Slow nature of the internet	05	03	08	10	06	16
04	Lack of knowledge about tools /techniques for searching proper information	08	12	20	16	24	40
		Total	50		Total	100	

S- Students, RS- Research Scholars, T- Total

Source: As per the survey conducted

Regarding the constraints, majority of them 40 % were of the opinion that at times they feel lack of knowledge in searching proper information is a major hurdle while accessing information, among them 24 % were scholars and 16% were students. While as 26 % were of the view that there must be a proper guidance related to the use of e-resources consisting of 16 % of scholars and 10 % of students. 18% of respondents were of the view that charging of various e-resources is a biggest limit in accessing information among them 10% were scholars and 8% were students. Remaining 16% (10 % students and 6 % scholars) puts forward that, slow nature of internet is a constraint in collecting information.

Do e-resources diminish importance of traditional resources?

S. No	Responses	Numbers			Percentage (%)		
		Students	Research Scholars	Total	S	RS	T
01	Yes	05	07	12	10	14	24
02	No	04	06	10	08	12	20
03	To some extent	08	15	23	16	30	46
04	Cannot comment	03	02	05	06	04	10
		Total	50		Total	100	

S- Students, RS- Research Scholars, T- Total

Source: As per the survey conducted

46 % (30 % scholars & 16 % students) of respondents were of the opinion that, e-resources have reduced the importance of traditional resources to some extent. Whereas 24% were of the view that, e-resources do have diminished the importance of traditional resources among them 14 % were scholars and 10% were students. 20% (12 % scholar, 8 % students) of respondents were of the belief that, e-resources does not have vanished the importance of the traditional resources. Remaining 10% of respondents were of the view that they cannot comment with 6 % of students and 4% of scholars falling under the said category.

9. CONCLUSION

Availability and access of online resources have definitely affected the way the library user's access information. Electronic revolution has transformed the society into information knowledge. The rapid growth of e-resources and the complexity in managing these resources has posed new challenges. Now we are living in digital environment and obviously it is changing the nature of library reading as well.

Audiences today are least reliance on physical structure of libraries and are more dependence on online world because of its convenience, accessibility, instant availability. They like to have libraries on their desktop computers or laptops even on mobiles and iPods⁴. Users like to get satisfied with whatever is easily available. Research studies have proved that in researchers' opinion, improved access to e-journals has positively influenced their research activities by helping them to keep up-to-date and by saving time⁵.

Electronic resources seem likely to replace most of print materials, but uncertainty still remains. Some students still find print books as preferred means of information even in this 21st century. Findings suggested that electronic resources find more popularity among the research scholars than students but both target groups were active users of them. There were 64% of respondents using e-resources for academic purpose. When tried to find out the frequency of use 48% of respondents use various types of e-resources daily and in terms of gratification level 42% of them were satisfied with the usage. Furthermore the study revealed that 40 % of respondents see time saving quality of e-resources as main reason of use. Whereas in context of limitations 40 % of respondents suggested lack of knowledge about tools & techniques used for searching and retrieving of desired information at times is a hurdle in gaining information. There were at least 46 % of respondents who were of the opinion that yes electronic resources do have diminished the importance of traditional print resources to some extent in one way or the other.

10. RECOMMENDATIONS

- There should be availability of training programs in universities regarding the need and use of e-Resources.
- Workshops regarding tools and techniques for searching proper information should be arranged for users.

⁴ Chandel A S, Challenges of electronic resources management, Transformation of agricultural libraries in collaborative era, edited by M S Pathania et al. (AALD: Hyderabad (2011) 10-21.

⁵ Brown B, Found C and McConnell M, Federal science eLibrary pilot, *Electronic Library*, 25 (1) (2007) 8-17.

- Due to globalization technological awareness should be start in educational institutions at basic level.

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