Globalisation of Information Sources & Services
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Abstract
The present paper deals with the Information sources and services in the era of globalisation. Globalisation has enormous impacts on all the aspects of human life. In the present day world with the help of ICT (Information and communication technology), information sources and services have really reached everybody’s doorstep. With the help of ICT digital libraries and institutional repositories are available at the click of the mouse. The paper also deals with the open source software for the development of institutional repositories such as Greenstone, Dspace, Fedora and Eprints Archive Software which are easily and freely available for the help of library professionals and end users.

Keywords: Information Sources, ICT, Digital, Open Source Software

Globalisation

Anthony Giddens defined globalisation as a decoupling of space and time, emphasizing that the instantaneous communications, knowledge and culture can be shared around the world simultaneously. According to Guillen globalisation is the "accelerated compression of the contemporary world and the intensification of consciousness of the world as a singular entity." Wikipedia defines it as "simply a means of international integration that is a process by which the people of the world are unified into a single society and functioning together." The process of globalisation is a combination of economic, technological, socio-cultural and political forces. The global society has emerged as an integrated entity which requires enhanced use of technology, and the exchange of information has become imperative throughout the globe. In the actualization of true globalisation, information and communication technology has really become a powerful tool to make the world independent of time and space. Shrinking of time and space symbolize the globalisation of information and this has removed all the barriers and constraints of geography, language and culture.

Globalisation of library services means providing borderless and boundless information services. In the context of Library and Information Science and Services, globalisation signifies the application of information and communication technologies in reaching the general masses even in the remotest areas of the world. Globalisation of library resources will enable the people of all ages to prosper in the present society. The new information technology helps people to acquire new skills and hence, improve the quality of their lives. With the use of information and communication technology, people have ready access to the local, state and central governmental information and services. Therefore, new technology empowers the masses to participate in the decision making process of the government which affect their lives.

The former Prime Minister of Great Britain, Tony Blair almost a decade ago remarked "The biggest changes in public libraries over the coming years will arise from the development of information technology (IT). These revolutionary changes will bring about previously undreamed of increases in the quality and quantity of detailed information and knowledge readily and speedily available to the public." Library and information science is a discipline concerned with the organization and dissemination of knowledge and information and has got not only relevance as a partner in globalisation but its globalisation has been viewed in the context of its quality, relevance and transnational transitional utility and competence. The phenomenal growth of information and the need for its organization, access and delivery have necessitated Internet supported by ICT to come to the rescue of the information industry in easy and faster transfer of information and information products globally.

To improve the quality of library services, to have greater access to the sources of knowledge and information, to reduce knowledge gap in the developing countries
Globalisation of library services is need of the hour. To provide library services to the rural community at root level, the Universalisation of library services is a must. Globalisation has tremendous influence on all walks of life including library and information services. It makes possible attractive opportunities and rapid growth of knowledge and innovations. Human knowledge is now growing at a pace which was indeed unthinkable two decades ago.

**Information Technology in Globalisation of Information Services**

Information technologies are now emerging as important tools for overcoming the barriers in the access and dissemination of information. The Internet and Web technology provides information with great speed and economy. Information technology is persistent and also dynamic in nature. Most of the information sources are being published in the digital form all over the world. The advantages of digital resources have made an impact on the role of library and information professionals as well as end users. To cope with the technological developments and utilisation of information the formation of digital libraries is necessary. A digital library can revolutionise information dissemination with respect to access, speed and availability.

Information technology has transformed the whole world into a 'Global Village'. Over the past decades the world has been experiencing significant changes in which the need to acquire, utilize and share knowledge has become increasingly essential. The World bank has used metaphor "knowledge is development". Lack of knowledge is largely responsible for underdevelopment.

Information services deal with the aspects of acquisition, storage, analysis, retrieval and dissemination of information to the society. The technologies which improve the efficiency and effectiveness are taken as inputs into the information system. Information technologies are now emerging as important tools for overcoming the barriers in the access and dissemination of information.

**Role of Internet in the Globalisation of Information Services**

Internet is a set of computers connected together to share the information. It is an ocean of information. It is one of the facilities through which the information can be stored, arranged and can be transmitted back to the users quickly, timely and accurately. There are millions of web pages, bibliographic and full text databases available on Internet.

Internet is a global resource centre containing information about any topic in the world. The resources available on the Internet includes electronic journals, electronic books, library catalogues, institutional repositories, databases, directories, companies/organizations and others. These resources help in making library and information services more effective and efficient. Internet has made all the information resources available through connectivity tools like Electronic Mail, File Transfer Protocol (FTP), Telnet, Usenet, World Wide Web, Internet Relay Chat etc.

Internet has revolutionized and has brought a sea change in the entire information handling process. The use of Internet has increased the efficiency of the library and information professionals, altered the nature of library and information related work and has provided users with an opportunity to access information sources. Internet is playing a vital role in the house keeping operations of the library like collection development, acquisition, classification, cataloguing, circulation, resource sharing, information service and user education.

**Globalisation and Digital Library**

The electronic version of a conventional library is a digital library. According to Mr. Yedrkey "Digital libraries are electronic libraries in which large number of geographically distributed users can access the contents of large and diverse repositories of electronic objects. Electronic objects include networked text, images, maps, sounds, videos, government datasets etc. They also include hypertext, hypermedia, multimedia compositions."

A digital library has the greatest advantage of usage of digital content in millions of pages of textual material or images locally available at affordable price. The conventional documents may deteriorate after some time due to hostile environmental conditions. The major advantages of a digital library are as follows:

1. Promote Universal accessibility.
2. Access to more information than is possible to physically acquire and maintain.
3. Protecting rare books that are rapidly deteriorating due to over use and storage conditions.
4. The user can peruse them instantly.
5. They will reduce the gap between the author and user of the work.
6. The E-Books and journals provide key words, author search, which reduced the work of indexing and abstracting.
7. They facilitate the downloading and printing of required papers.
8. Provide multiple access and access through the campus LAN.
In the era of Information and Communication Technology the generation of information and its dissemination has immensely changed with the advent of Computer, Internet, Electronic Publishing and Digital Libraries. Information and communication technology has made a momentous impact on the sources and services of the Information Centres. The impact of technological development on library and information centres completely changed the organization, collection, processes, services and products. Information technology has paved the new ways for promoting information and knowledge for the entire universe without physical and geographical constraints.

Role of Institutional Repositories in the Globalisation of Library Services

Institutional repositories are digital collections of an institution's resources i.e. rare books, newspapers, magazines, journals, reports, manuscripts, archival material etc. Institutional repositories are digital archives that capture, organise, preserve and disseminate the intellectual assets of institutions by forming a global system of distributed and interoperable digital library.

The main objectives of institutional repositories are to create global visibility for an institution's scholarly research material, to collect contents in a single location, to store, preserve and disseminate other institutional digital assets. An institutional repository may include full-text contents of journal articles, conference papers, books, monographs, research reports, project reports, theses, dissertations, patents, presentations, computer programs, tutorials, convocation addresses, audio materials, video materials, handbooks, data books, technical manuals, white papers, classroom teaching materials etc.

Open Source Software for the Institutional Repositories

Open Source Software is the vital tool for the creation and management of the Institutional Repositories. Over the last couple of years the Open Source Software has grown immensely in scope, popularity and use.

1. **Greenstone**: Greenstone is a comprehensive digital library software for building and distributing digital library collections. Greenstone has been developed by the New Zealand Digital Library Project at the University of Waikato New Zealand and distributed as open source, multilingual software in cooperation with UNESCO and Human Info NGO. This software is freely available and can be downloaded from www.greenstone.org. It provides a new way of organising and disseminate information worldwide through Internet.

2. **DSpace**: DSpace is an institutional repository system to capture, store, index, preserve and redistribute an organisation's resources. It was developed by MIT and Hewlett Packard Labs. Dspace is another open source software to manage digital assets such as books, journals, thesis, research reports, photographs, videos etc.

3. **Fedora**: This open source software is sponsored by the University of Virginia Library and Cornell University with support from the Andrew W. Mellon Foundation. This software allows to merge and deliver digital information in a flexible service oriented manner. Fedora could be used for library collection management, multimedia systems, archives and institutional repositories and digital library for education.

4. **Eprints Archive Software**: Eprints software provides a Web based institutional repository which has been developed by the University of Southampton. Primarily this software has been setup for the creation of archives for research papers, but could be easily used for other digital objects.

Impact of Globalisation on Society

People who live in a society should have an up to date information about nature, society and self. Libraries are supposed to collect, preserve and process the information and provide library services to the people. Hence, a library is considered as an important social institution without which no society can develop fully as a modern society.

Communication technology is sweeping across the world. It has not only brought distant communities into close proximity but is fast outdating all existing communication models. We can reach the remotest and the most inaccessible parts of the world and deliver information effectively. It has engulfed all spheres of human life, library system being no exception. We are witnessing the age of visually encoded information of the optical disc, digital compression, video networking and user friendly computers. The term library is being expanded from a 'book place' to a 'media centre' and the traditional 'Librarian' is being replaced by the 'Information Scientist'.

In the new global world libraries have become information centres which have to perform a pivotal role in disseminating and sharing the knowledge. In the age of globalisation libraries should be the repositories of all the information in digital as well as printed form. They will have to...
store information and disseminate it beyond the geographical boundaries. Information and communication technology is now enabling libraries to accomplish its immense task.

Exchange of information has always been the most important objective of libraries but now it is highly required to develop more hi-tech system to share and exchange the records at world level. Accessibility to knowledge has become universal. Universal Bibliographic Control (UBC) and Universal Availability of Publications (UAP) are two major programs of IFLA (International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions) to exchange knowledge at global level. OCLC is also the world level library network in USA for sharing intellectual knowledge all over the world.

**Conclusion**

Libraries in the knowledge oriented society play a dynamic role. They exchange knowledge and information with users inside and outside the country. This is only be possible if libraries agree to expand their role beyond the geographical boundaries using state of the art technology. The modern libraries in the era of globalisation cannot afford to be passive repository for books and other printed materials only. They are to upgrade their services by digitizing their resources for online use. All the services are to be accessible to anyone regardless of time or location by the use of information and communication technology throughout the world.

**References**


