



The Institutional Repository Of The Indian Law Institute: A Tool For Legal Research And Knowledge Management

Mr. Nandu Sahebrao More¹ & Dr. Manjusha K. Ahirrao²

¹Librarian, Gokhale Education Society's, N.B.Thakur Law College, Research Scholar,
Kaviyatri Bahinabai Chaudhari North Maharashtra University Jalgaon

²Librarian, SPDMS Arts, Commerce & Science College, Affiliated to Kaviyatri Bahinabai
Chaudhari North Maharashtra University Jalgaon, Shirpur

Corresponding Author – Mr. Nandu Sahebrao More

DOI - 10.5281/zenodo.17265433

Abstract:

Purpose: This paper looks at the Institutional Repository (IR) of the Indian Law Institute (ILI) and its role in supporting legal research and knowledge management. In the digital era, IRs are important for preserving academic work, improving open access, and building the reputation of institutions. The study reviews the ILI's methods of digital archiving, the kinds of materials it holds, and how it connects with wider trends in legal scholarship. It also stresses the value of the repository in research, knowledge sharing, and long-term preservation. In addition, the paper aims to make legal professionals, research scholars, and legal information professionals aware of such repositories and encourage greater use of the legal knowledge they provide.

Methodology: The study is based on a qualitative analysis of information that is publicly available. Sources include the Indian Law Institute's official website, its digital archives, and other related documents. Data were gathered by closely reviewing the library's webpage and carefully examining the contents of the institutional repository. This approach helped in understanding the range of resources available and the way they are organized and managed within the repository.

Findings: The ILI repository is a well-structured digital archive supporting legal research and knowledge management. It contains a wide variety of resources, including law reports, journals, government reports, rare documents, conference proceedings, and the Tagore Law Lecture series. The repository is based on an open-source platform, making it accessible and flexible. It increases the visibility of the institute's work, preserves important legal knowledge, and serves as a reliable resource for students, researchers, and legal professionals. Some areas, such as restricted access to rare materials and reliance on traditional deposit practices, highlight opportunities for improvement.

Originality: This study provides a detailed, focused analysis of the ILI repository, highlighting its unique contribution to legal research and scholarly knowledge management.

Keywords: Institutional Repository (IR), Legal Research, Indian Law Institute (ILI), Knowledge Management, Open Access Legal Resources.

Objectives of the Study:

The study aims to:

1. Examine the role of the ILI's IR as a tool for legal research.
2. Analyze the variety and types of legal and scholarly materials preserved in the repository.
3. Explore how the repository facilitates knowledge management through

organization, preservation, and dissemination.

4. Investigate how the IR supports access to legal resources for students, researchers, and legal professionals.

Introduction:

Institutional Repository (IR):

History and Evolution: Institutional repositories emerged with the rise of the internet and the open access movement. In the 1990s, the rising cost of academic journals made it difficult for libraries to provide access. Scholars like Stevan Harnad proposed that researchers could self-archive their work online. Early examples include arXiv (1991), which hosted physics research papers¹.

In the early 2000s, the term “institutional repository” became more widely used. Milestones include the Budapest Open Access Initiative (2002), which encouraged free access to research, and the development of open-source software such as EPrints (2000) and DSpace (2002)². These tools enabled institutions to set up repositories to store and share their academic output.

Over time, IRs evolved from simple storage spaces into advanced platforms for open access publishing, showcasing institutional achievements, supporting research evaluation, and preserving digital heritage³.

Defining of IRs: Clifford Lynch described IRs as services offered by universities to manage and share digital work, emphasizing that repositories are more than technology—they

represent a long-term commitment to preserving knowledge³. Raym Crow (2002) defined IRs as digital archives containing the intellectual output of faculty, researchers, and students, with open access for both internal and external users⁴. In essence, IRs are more than archives—they reflect an institution’s promise to manage, preserve, and share knowledge with the community and future generations.

Indian Law Institute (ILI):

The Indian Law Institute established in 1956, at New Delhi, It is a Deemed University dedicated to legal research and education. Its mission is to promote the study of law, address societal legal needs, and contribute to justice system reforms. ILI is autonomous, non-profit, and has over 3,000 members interested in legal studies. Its governance includes top legal figures, such as the Chief Justice of India (President) and the Union Law Minister (Vice-President).

ILI hosts one of India’s premier law libraries, with over 75,000 books and subscriptions to around 270 journals. The institute publishes significant works, including the *Journal of the Indian Law Institute* (JILI) and the *Annual Survey of Indian Law* (ASIL). It is recognized nationally and internationally as a hub for lawyers, judges, policymakers, and researchers.

Key Objectives of ILI:

- Promote legal study and research.
- Improve access to justice and understanding of law.
- Spread legal knowledge through teaching, training, and publications.
- Collect and organize key legal documents and maintain specialized law libraries.

¹ Harnad, S. (1995). Implementing peer review on the Net: Scientific quality control in scholarly electronic journals. In *Scholarly Communication and Technology Conference*. JSTOR.

² Budapest Open Access Initiative. (2002). BOAI declaration. Retrieved from <https://www.budapestopenaccessinitiative.org/>

³ Lynch, C. A. (2003). Institutional repositories: Essential infrastructure for scholarship in the digital age. *ARL: A Bimonthly Report*, 226, 1–7.

⁴ Crow, R. (2002). The case for institutional repositories: *A SPARC position paper*. Washington, DC: Scholarly Publishing & Academic Resources Coalition (SPARC).

- Collaborate with national and international organizations to extend legal research and education across India.

Literature Review on Institutional Repositories:

In terms of content diversity, Kim (2007) expands the traditional view of IRs by showing that they can include not only journal articles and theses but also datasets, lecture notes, book chapters, software, and multimedia. However, real-world practices often differ. Tripathi and Jeevan (2011) found that most authors deposit only research-related materials such as post-prints, pre-prints, theses, and reports. This finding is echoed by Owen (2011) and Nicholas et al. (2012), who all observed a clear preference for journal articles, technical reports, conference papers, and theses, with less attention given to other content types. In the Nigerian context, Omagbemi Clement (2022) provides a detailed analysis of IRs, highlighting both their potential and the obstacles they face in developing economies. Challenges such as poor infrastructure, funding shortages, low awareness, and lack of policy support hinder their growth, despite their usefulness in increasing research visibility. Ukachi (2018) adds that Nigerian libraries are taking strategic steps to support IRs, such as digitizing print content, encouraging self-archiving, and integrating IR contributions into staff evaluations. Content management is another recurring theme. Odili (2017) stresses the importance of collaboration between librarians and research administrators. The study found that inconsistent metadata and weak coordination often reduce the quality and effectiveness of IRs. Clear policies, better metadata practices, and involving skilled library professionals were recommended to improve outcomes. Hashim and Jan (2011)

also reported systematic content handling in the IRs they studied, noting a wide range of accepted materials like preprints, reports, and theses. The method of content deposit is also important. According to Xia and Sun (2007), self-archiving by authors is still quite low, with most content being uploaded by librarians or administrative staff. They also observed low levels of full-text availability in many IRs, particularly in Europe. This points to the need for stronger institutional policies and active support to improve participation and access. Finally, Demeter's, Delgado, and Wright (2020) conducted a systematic review to assess the impact of IRs. Their findings show that IRs can increase citation counts and improve the discoverability of research. They also noted some administrative advantages, such as easier updates to ORCID profiles. However, they cautioned that more rigorous and large-scale research is needed to fully evaluate the long-term benefits of IRs. The literature consistently shows that institutional repositories play a crucial role in supporting open access, improving research visibility, and preserving academic work. While IRs hold great promise—particularly in developing countries—their success depends on several factors: user participation, good content management practices, supportive policies, and adequate infrastructure. The gap between potential and practice, especially in terms of content diversity and author self-archiving, suggests that further awareness, training, and institutional support are essential for IRs to realize their full value.

Library of Indian Law Institute:

ILI houses one of India's most prominent law libraries, approved by the University Grants Commission for Ph.D. students in law and political science. The library holds over 75,000 books and subscribes

to around 270 journals. It is heavily used by researchers, judiciary members, government officials, and international scholars.

Key Publications:

- Journal of the Indian Law Institute (JILI): Quarterly, peer-reviewed, features articles, notes, comments, and book reviews.
- Annual Survey of Indian Law (ASIL): Annual journal covering major legal

developments, new laws, landmark judgments, and trends.

The ILI Institutional Repository: Content Analysis:

The ILI maintains a digital repository as a centralized archive for research publications and faculty work. Built on an open-source platform, it is flexible and cost-effective.

S.N	Resource Category	Year	Statistics (Number of Items/Volumes)
1	Annual Survey of Indian Law	1965-2023	Vol.1 to 59
2	Committee and Commission Reports	1917-66	28 items(20 Year)
3	Federal Courts Reports	1939-1950	Volumes 1-11
4	Index to Indian Legal Periodicals	1963-2018	Vol.1 to 56
5	Indian High Courts Reports	1864-1916	Bengal Law Reports, Bombay High Court Reports, Indian Decision, Indian High Court Calcutta Reports, Madras High Court Report, Weekly Reporter -Sutherland.
6	Indian Law Reports	1876-1940	Allahabad, Calcutta, Lucknow, Madras, Patna, Bombay, Lahore & Rangon
7	Journal of Indian Law Institute	1958-2024	Vol. 1 to 66
8	ILI Publication-Books & Conference Proceedings	1956-2006	63 e-books & 32 Proceeding
9	Rare Documents	1842-1990	22 Books
10	Tagore Law Series	1894-1999	9 Books
11	ILI PhD Theses	NA	Access Restricted

The Indian Law Institute (ILI) maintains a rich and diverse collection of legal resources in its institutional repository, which serves as a key tool for legal research. One of its most significant publications is the **Annual Survey of Indian Law** (ASIL), started in 1965. This yearly journal provides a detailed overview of major legal developments in India, including new laws, landmark court decisions, and emerging trends. Prepared by experienced legal Scholars, ASIL serves as a reliable reference for lawyers, students, and researchers to track the progress and evolution of Indian law.

Committee and Commission Reports: These preserve important government documents from colonial and post-Independence periods.

Early reports (1917–1920) focus on constitutional and administrative reforms under British rule, such as the Disorders Inquiry Committee on the Jallianwala Bagh tragedy. Later reports, including the Central Pay Commission (1947), Draft Constitution of India (1948), and Indian States Finances Enquiry Committee (1949), contributed to financial unification in independent India.

Federal Courts Reports: These document the decisions of India's Federal Court (1939–1950), which handled inter-provincial disputes, appeals from High Courts, and advisory opinions before the Supreme Court was established. They provide insights into constitutional and federal law under British rule and early independence.

Indian High Courts Reports: Cover judgments from various High Courts, helping researchers understand civil, criminal, and constitutional law development at the state level.

Indian Law Reports (ILR): Produced under the Indian Law Reports Act of 1875, ILR covers judgments from late 19th century to mid-20th century. Series from Allahabad, Calcutta, Madras, and Bombay (1876–1940), and later from Lucknow, Patna, Lahore, and Rangoon, offer authoritative records of case law under the British legal system.

Journal of the Indian Law Institute (JILI): A peer-reviewed academic journal published quarterly since 1958, containing research articles, notes, comments, and book reviews. The ILI repository provides free digital access to past issues, enhancing accessibility for legal scholars.

Books and Conference Proceedings: These include ILI publications and selected works by other authors. Conference proceedings cover topics such as constitutional law, human rights, comparative law, and international trade. Many are digitally available for easy access by subject or author.

Rare Documents: The collection preserves old and unique materials crucial for historical and legal research, including Bengal Law Reports (1868–1875), Bombay and Madras High Court Reports (1862–1875), Weekly Reporter – Sutherland, and Indian Decisions (1911–1916). Special storage conditions protect these items, and many are digitized, although some can only be consulted in the library.

Tagore Law Lectures: Initiated in 1868 by the University of Calcutta with an endowment from Prasanna Kumar Tagore, the series features detailed lectures by leading Indian and foreign jurists on topics including Hindu and Muslim law, property law, trusts, and

legal history. These lectures are preserved in the ILI repository and provide historical insight into legal scholarship.

Many Ph.D. theses by research scholars are not accessible through the Indian Law Institute's (ILI) Institutional Repository, despite being valuable academic contributions. Institutional Repositories are designed to store and share an institution's intellectual output, including theses and dissertations, but ILI has not fully achieved this objective for doctoral research. Possible reasons include the absence of clear policies for uploading theses, lack of awareness among scholars about the importance of depositing their work, or technical limitations within the repository system. As a result, important legal research remains hidden and underutilized. Improving access to these works would enhance legal scholarship, support academic collaboration, and contribute to the broader open access movement in India.

Together, these collections make the ILI repository a comprehensive resource, providing access to historical documents, scholarly research, and contemporary legal analysis. They allow researchers to trace legal trends, study landmark cases, understand policy reforms, and build strong references for academic or professional work.

Role of Institutional Repository as a Research Tool:

The Institutional Repository of the Indian Law Institute serves as an important tool for legal research and knowledge sharing. It collects, organizes, and preserves the institute's academic and intellectual output, making it accessible to students, researchers, and legal professionals. The repository includes a wide range of resources such as law reports, journals, government documents, rare legal materials, and lecture series.

By providing open access to these resources, the repository increases the visibility of the institute's work and helps researchers find reliable legal information in one place. It also ensures that valuable materials are preserved for future use. As a digital archive, the repository not only supports ongoing legal studies but also contributes to the wider dissemination of knowledge, making it a key resource for academic and professional research in law.

Role of Institutional Repository in Knowledge Management:

The ILI's IR plays a critical role in managing legal knowledge. It collects, organizes, and preserves a wide range of scholarly materials, including research papers, law reports, journals, theses, and conference proceedings. By making these resources easily accessible, the IR enables students, researchers, and legal professionals to locate and utilize information efficiently. It supports knowledge sharing, improves research visibility, and ensures that valuable legal resources are preserved for future generations. In this way, ILI's IR strengthens the institution's efforts to manage, protect, and disseminate legal knowledge.

The repository also ensures continuity in scholarship by integrating historical documents with contemporary research. This allows comparative legal studies, tracking of judicial trends, and analysis of policy evolution. Additionally, digital accessibility promotes open access, helping legal knowledge reach a broader audience.

Conclusion:

The Indian Law Institute's institutional repository is an important resource for legal research and knowledge sharing. It gives easy access to a wide range of

materials such as law reports, journals, historical documents, rare collections, and lecture series. By collecting, preserving, and making these resources available, the repository helps researchers work more efficiently, supports open access, and strengthens the institute's role in legal education and scholarship. It protects India's legal heritage while also supporting present-day studies. With better policies, more content, and improved technology, the ILI repository can further enhance its usefulness. Though access to Ph.D. theses is still limited, addressing this gap will increase its value. Overall, the repository plays a key role in preserving knowledge, promoting research, and linking historical and modern legal studies for future generations.

Bibliography:

1. Harnad, S. (1995). Implementing peer review on the Net: Scientific quality control in scholarly electronic journals. In *Scholarly Communication and Technology Conference*. JSTOR.
2. Budapest Open Access Initiative. (2002). *BOAI declaration*. Retrieved from <https://www.budapestopenaccessinitiative.org/>.
3. Lynch, C. A. (2003). Institutional repositories: Essential infrastructure for scholarship in the digital age. *ARL: A Bimonthly Report*, 226, 1–7.
4. Crow, R. (2002). *The case for institutional repositories: A SPARC position paper*. Washington, DC: Scholarly Publishing & Academic Resources Coalition (SPARC).
5. Kaladhar, A., Doraswamy Naick, B. R., & Somasekhara Rao, K. (2018). Institutional repository: An overview. *International Journal of Library and Information Studies*, 8(2), 60–65.

6. Omagbemi, C. O. (2022). Challenges and prospects of digital institutional repositories in developing economies. *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science (IOSR-JHSS)*, 27(7), 28–34. <https://doi.org/10.9790/0837-2707022834>.
7. Sharma, A. K., Saha, N. C., & Meichieo, K. (2008). Institutional repositories and skills requirements, a new horizon to preserve the intellectual output: An Indian perspective. In *Planner 2008* (pp. 336–354). INFLIBNET Centre.
8. Kim, J. (2007). The institutional repository: An overview of its services, content, and system. *The Serials Librarian*, 52(1–2), 111–127. https://doi.org/10.1300/J123v52n01_09.
9. Tripathi, M., & Jeevan, V. K. J. (2011). Institutional repositories in India: A study of their growth and development. *International Journal of Library and Information Science*, 3(2), 27–37.
10. Owen, J. M. (2011). The role of institutional repositories in scholarly communication. *Journal of Librarianship and Information Science*, 43(1), 59–70. <https://doi.org/10.1177/0961000610390993>.
11. Nicholas, D., Rowlands, I., Watkinson, A., Brown, J., & Jamali, H. R. (2012). Digital institutional repositories: What works and what doesn't. *Journal of Scholarly Publishing*, 43(2), 143–167. <https://doi.org/10.3138/jsp.43.2.143>.
12. Velmurugan, C. (2010). Institutional repositories: A powerful tool for accessing information for educationalists. In *National Conference on Next Generation Digital Libraries and Web Technologies* (pp. 6.92–6.97). Sri Krishna College of Engineering & Technology.
13. Cheruvil, S., & Majeed, A. (2018). Content growth of institutional repositories in South India: A status report. *Global Knowledge, Memory and Communication*, 67(3/4), 174–186. <https://doi.org/10.1108/GKMC-11-2017-0093>.
14. Odili, N. (2017). Institutional repositories, content management, and presentation: The librarians' and administrators' perspectives. *Journal of Applied Information Science and Technology*, 10(3), 84–91.
15. Xia, J., & Sun, L. (2007). Assessment of self-archiving in institutional repositories: Depositorship and full-text availability. *Serials Review*, 33(1), 14–21. <https://doi.org/10.1080/00987913.2007.10765097>.
16. Demetres, M. R., Delgado, D., & Wright, D. N. (2020). The impact of institutional repositories: A systematic review. *Journal of the Medical Library Association*, 108(2), 205–218. <https://doi.org/10.5195/jmla.2020.849>.
17. Hashim, T., & Jan, T. R. (2011). Institutional repositories: An evaluative study. *Trends in Information Management (TRIM)*, 7(2), 229–236.
18. Ukachi, N. B. (2018). Enhancing scholarly communication through institutional repositories: Salient issues and strategies by libraries in Nigeria. *Library Philosophy and Practice (e-journal)*, 1780. Retrieved from <https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/libphilprac/1780>.
19. Indian Law Institute. (2025). *ILI Library*. Retrieved September 1–15, 2025, from <https://ili.ac.in/library/library.htm>.