



Digital Libraries Initiatives in Western India: A New Era

Mr. Abhijit Mohanrao Patil¹ & Dr. Ravikumar Jani²

Department of English,

¹Ph.D. Scholar, Parul University, Vadodara, Gujarat, India.

²Ph.D. Supervisor, Parul University, Vadodara, Gujarat, India

Corresponding Author - Mr. Abhijit Mohanrao Patil

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Abstract:

This is an overview of the work of Digital Libraries of Western India. The Government of India's current initiative towards digitization is reflected in numerous digitization initiatives. Twenty digital library projects spread across four Western states of India are mapped using information obtained from secondary sources. According to the study, there may not be enough digital libraries in real sense. Many digital libraries are not regularly maintained and are not open to the public. A national strategic initiative with various stakeholders including academics and library professionals is urgently needed in this regard. The study also makes several important observations and policy recommendations that can be useful to academics, librarians, government policy makers and decision makers.

Keywords: Digital Library, E-Library, Western India.

Introduction

A digital library is a collection of digital resources that are accessible and organized through digital systems. Unlike traditional libraries, which house physical books, documents, and other materials, digital libraries provide access to a wide range of digital content, including books, articles, multimedia files, and more. The goal of digital libraries is to facilitate easy and efficient access to information, promoting knowledge dissemination and scholarly collaboration in the digital age.

The term “digital library” is the most recent in a long series of names for a concept that has been written about nearly

as long as the development of the first computer: a computerized “library” that would supplement, adds functionality, and even replaces traditional libraries.

Digital libraries play a vital role in democratizing access to information, supporting research and education, and preserving cultural heritage in the digital era. They contribute to the global sharing of knowledge and facilitate collaborative endeavors across disciplines and geographical boundaries. India has made significant strides in the development of digital libraries to enhance access to information and promote learning. Several digital library initiatives and projects have

been undertaken by government bodies, educational institutions, and organizations across the country.

Literature Review :

*Gurram, S. (2008)*¹ The development of society has been greatly impacted by information and communication technologies; in India, digital libraries have been launched. The Digital Library of India is an initiative of the Ministry of Communications and Information Technology. Technology transfer, research, and distance education are coordinated by the Distance Education Council. Technology is used by Open Distance Learning (ODL) to expand learning opportunities, lessen inequality, and foster excellence. A digital library system for Indian open universities is suggested in this paper.

Sinha M. (2011) In the network environment, electronic publishing has drawn readers' attention and changed knowledge formats. Full text access to academic publications in print and electronic formats is a challenge for libraries. To provide network-based access to peer-reviewed journals, this paper identifies issues with access, bibliographic control, access management, policy, and the development of e-journals consortium approaches.

Barui S. (2016) Given the introduction of Digital Libraries (DLs), Knowledge Management (KM), and the ability to archive indigenous culture, the Internet has completely transformed information technology. These libraries facilitate communication and resource

sharing, which is essential for the global information infrastructure. The Ministry of Communications and Information Technology of India launched the Digital Library of India, one of several government-funded projects and digitization programs currently in progress.

Wani G., (2021) Information storage, retrieval, and dissemination have been completely transformed by digital technology and computer networking. With programs like Carnegie Mellon University's Million Book Project and Google Books Projects encouraging the development of digital libraries in developing nations like India, digital libraries have advanced significantly.

Mukherjee S., (2022) This study looks at 16 projects in eight states related to digital libraries in North East India. According to the study, many digital libraries are not regularly maintained and are not open to the public. It offers policy recommendations for academics, librarians, and government decision-makers, as well as a national policy initiative.

Research Objectives:

The Digital Library Initiative was launched by the Government of India to encourage the creativity of citizens and provide free access to all human knowledge. In view of this, the aim of the study is to compile a list of digital library projects of western states of India from their individual websites. The present study aims to survey digital library

initiatives by examining several aspects such as volume of collections, access methods, software used for digitization, statistics on users, copyright issues, restrictions on collection development and use, and third-party access. The metrics mentioned above will clarify the current developments in digital library endeavors in India.

Methodology:

The secondary sources used in this study were mostly the websites of the corresponding digital library initiatives. The websites were seen from January to February of 2024. This study examines twenty different digital libraries in total. The following Western states' libraries are considered for this study: Maharashtra (10) Gujarat (8), Goa (1), Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu (1). Table 1 displays the sample size details. The results of a thorough literature search and a visit to the websites of the relevant libraries are presented in the sections that follow.

Sample Size Description :

For this study, twenty digital libraries from various Indian departments have been considered. Academic, government, public and autonomous libraries are divided into the following four categories. The study considers fifteen academic, two autonomous, three government libraries.

Results :

From the secondary literature it is noticed that the papers in this area focus only on the efforts of the organizations and the digitization process. However, during the digitization process, some of them touch on policy and copyright issues. However, there is no systematic research on "Digital Library initiative in Western India". Our analysis of India's digital library efforts yielded the following findings. Table 1 displays the state-by-state distribution of digital library initiatives.

Table 1 various digital Library initiatives of Western India.

State	Digital Libraries	Website of Corresponding Institutes
Maharashtra	1. Govt. of Maharashtra Higher and Technical Education Department Directorate of Libraries.	https://dol.maharashtra.gov.in/en/digilib https://eg4.nic.in/DOLMH/OPAC/DLibrary.aspx
	2. Knowledge Resource Center, Mumbai University	https://mu.ac.in/knowledge-resource-centre
	3. Yashwantrao Chavan Maharashtra Open University, Nashik	https://ycmou.ac.in/self_learning_material/ebook
	4. The Indian Institute of Science Education and Research (IISER), Pune	https://www.iiserpune.ac.in/library
	5. Barr. Khardekar Knowledge Resource Center	https://www.unishivaji.ac.in/library/About-Barr-Balasaheb-Khardekar-Knowledge-Resource-

	Shivaji University, Kolhapur	Center
	6. Jaykar Knowledge Resource Center, S P Pune, University	http://lib.unipune.ac.in:8002/
	7. Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Marathwada University, Sambhajinagar	https://bamua.digitaluniversity.ac/eBooks.aspx?ID=253
	8. Dr. B.R. Ambedkar Technical University, Lonare	https://dbatulibrary.knimbus.com/user#/home
	9. IIT, Mumbai	https://www.library.iitb.ac.in/e-resources/open-access-resource/
	10. SGB Amravati University Knowledge Resource Centre, Amravati	https://www.sgbaukrc.ac.in/
Gujarat	1. INFLIBNET Center, Gandhinagar	https://www.inflibnet.ac.in/
	2. Gujarat University, Ahmedabad	https://gulibrary.com/open_access.php
	3. Ahmedabad Smart City Digital Library	https://www.mjlibrary.in/
	4. Gujarat Technological University, Ahmedabad	https://www.gtuelibrary.edu.in/
	5. Munshi Saraswati Mandir Granthagar	https://bhavanslibrary.org/Gujarati-General
	6. Gujarat National Law University, Gandhinagar	https://gnlu.ac.in/Library/E-Database
	7. Smt. Hansa Mehta Library, Vadodara	https://www.hmlibrary.ac.in/
	8. Central University of Gujarat (CUG), Gandhinagar	https://www.cug.ac.in/eresources.php
Goa	1. Goa University, Taleigao	https://www.unigoa.ac.in/library/knowledge-portal/
	2. Government of Goa Krishnadas Shama Goa State Central Library	https://centrallibrary.goa.gov.in/open-access-e-books
	3. Central Library, IIT Goa	https://library.iitgoa.ac.in/
Dadra and Nagar Haveli and Daman and Diu	1. NIFT Daman	https://nift.ac.in/nrc/

Table 1 is a list of the most well-known digital libraries in Western India, although it is not an exhaustive list. Institutions in the academic, government and commercial

sectors that mention digital libraries on their websites have been examined for this study. This study examines digital libraries in Western India based on several factors.

These criteria include things like library collection size, access methods, software archives, user numbers, copyright issues, policies, and third-party access. Some libraries have closed access to digital library resources (IP-based authentication or remote access user IDs and passwords) while others have open access (public access). Repositories such as Koha, Libsys, Soul and DSpace are supported by a variety of closed and open-source library management systems. Institutions do not have any policies regarding retrieval, meta data extraction, or digital library collection difficulties. However, some libraries have created their own policies regarding privacy, copyright etc. However, some have searched and retrieved their digital library resources using outside organizations such as Google, Knimbus and others. Moreover, only a few libraries have posted user statistics on the website. Therefore, determining website usage data is challenging. A detailed summary of the libraries considered in this study is as follows:

Conclusion:

The initiative to create a Digital Library was initiated in India in the middle of the 1990s, but it really took off in the 2000s. Nevertheless, a suitable library management system is absent. Due to a lack of knowledge about library management, the management of the digital library may be the primary issue. Thus, it is evident that India lacks professionalism and expertise when it comes to creating digital libraries.

Additionally, some people have access to the digital library, but the website's real user statistics are unavailable. The digital libraries in Western India that were chosen for this study's foundation. Most digital libraries that are visible on academic institutions' websites are not operational.

Initiatives for the development of digital libraries in India have been taken by library networking through various agencies. Some websites have a separate section dedicated to their digital library, but that section lacks a link that would allow users to access the library. Perhaps a complete and more accurate picture of digital library initiatives in India can be obtained by comparing the initiatives of other regions of the country.

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