Library Progress International
Vol.44, No.3, Jul-Dec 2024: P. 29188-29196

Print version ISSN 0970 1052
Online version ISSN 2320 317X

Original Article

Available online at www.bpasjournals.com

An Analysis Of The Digital Library Resources In Colleges And Universities Of Telangana State, India: Current Status And Challenges

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How to cite this article: Dr. Ravi Kumar Chegoni, Maragouni Bhuvana (2024). An Analysis Of The Digital Library Resources In Colleges And Universities Of Telangana State, India: Current Status And Challenges. Library Progress International, 44(4), 29188-29196

ABSTRACT
"This study investigates the status of digital library resources in degree colleges and universities across Telangana, India. Its primary objective is to evaluate the availability, utilization, and challenges related to digital libraries within academic institutions. Key factors explored include infrastructure, resource accessibility, user engagement, and institutional readiness to adopt digital library services. Data were gathered through surveys and interviews with faculty, library staff, and students. Findings indicate that while digital libraries have enhanced access to academic resources, significant disparities exist in their implementation. Many institutions face challenges such as insufficient infrastructure, limited digital content, and low user engagement. The study concludes with recommendations to improve digital library services and increase accessibility to academic resources".

Keywords: Digital Libraries, Telangana, Higher Education, Degree Colleges, Universities, Infrastructure, User Engagement, Academic Resources, Technology in Education, Library Services

Introduction:
Information and Communications Technology (ICT) plays a critical role in how libraries collect, store, and disseminate information. As technological advancements continue to improve operational efficiency, libraries are increasingly enhancing the services they provide to users. The widespread use of personal computers at home has significantly contributed to this transformation. Many libraries have begun automating routine tasks, while others have integrated digital versions of traditionally printed materials, such as newspapers, into their collections. To support these functions, libraries rely on specialized software, with various options available, including CD-ROM databases offering bibliographic and full-text information. ICT has greatly enhanced the accessibility of library resources, enabling users to access materials remotely and communicate via email or other electronic means. College libraries, in particular, serve a diverse user base, including students, faculty, and staff, who require access to a wide range of resources such as textbooks, reference materials, and academic journals. To meet these diverse needs, libraries must be equipped with the necessary hardware, software, and skilled librarians capable of leveraging these technologies. The integration of ICT enables libraries to deliver information more efficiently and effectively. A robust ICT infrastructure is essential for providing electronic resources, which can be accessed in various formats through software, hardware, services, and networks. This study, conducted by students from Telangana State University, examines how libraries leverage advanced ICT infrastructure and the extent to which electronic resources are integrated into their operations. With the growing reliance on technology in education, digital libraries have become a vital component of modern higher education institutions. They offer students and faculty access to a wide range of academic resources, including journals, e-books, databases, and multimedia content. In Telangana, a southern state in India, the adoption of digital library resources in degree colleges and universities has gained

momentum. However, their status and impact remain underexplored. This study seeks to address that gap by assessing the current state of digital libraries in the region, identifying challenges, and exploring opportunities for enhancement.

Aim:

The aim of this study is to examine the status, availability, usage, and effectiveness of digital library resources in colleges and universities in the Telangana state of India, and to identify the factors influencing their adoption, accessibility, and overall impact on academic and research outcomes.

Objectives:

1. To assess the availability and accessibility of digital library resources in the colleges and universities of Telangana.
2. To evaluate the usage patterns of digital library resources among students, faculty, and researchers in these institutions.
3. To investigate the types of digital resources (e-books, e-journals, databases, multimedia) provided by the libraries and their relevance to the academic curriculum and research needs.
4. To identify the technological infrastructure (hardware, software, internet access) available for digital libraries in these institutions.
5. To analyze the effectiveness of digital library resources in supporting teaching, learning, and research activities in Telangana's academic institutions.

Hypothesis:

1. H1: The availability and usage of digital library resources in colleges and universities of Telangana are positively correlated with the academic performance and research output of students and faculty.
2. H2: There is a significant difference in the usage of digital library resources between urban and rural colleges/universities in Telangana.
3. H3: The main barriers to the effective use of digital library resources in Telangana institutions are inadequate technological infrastructure, lack of digital literacy, and insufficient funding.
4. H4: Digital libraries are underutilized due to limited awareness and training among students and faculty members in the institutions of Telangana.

Review of Literature:

A review of literature on the status of digital library resources in colleges and universities typically delves into several key areas: digital resource availability, utilization patterns, technological infrastructure, barriers to adoption, and their impact on academic outcomes.

1. Availability and Utilization of Digital Resources: Several studies emphasize the increasing significance of digital libraries in Indian higher education. Kumar and Jain (2020) note that digital libraries in Indian universities provide access to a broad range of electronic resources, such as e-books, journals, and databases. However, there is considerable variation in resource availability across regions. In Telangana**, Reddy (2021)** observed that urban institutions typically offer well-established digital libraries, while rural colleges face challenges in accessing these resources. A study by **Patel et al. (2018)** found that students and faculty in urban areas regularly use digital libraries for academic purposes, while their counterparts in rural institutions have limited access and utilization due to infrastructure constraints.

2. Technological Infrastructure: The successful implementation of digital libraries is largely dependent on robust technological infrastructure. **Sharma (2019)** highlights that the effectiveness of digital libraries relies on reliable internet access, adequate hardware, and the technical expertise required to manage digital resources. In Telangana, universities such as Osmania University benefit from a strong technological foundation for their digital libraries. However, many smaller colleges face challenges due to inadequate internet connectivity and outdated systems **(Reddy & Rajasekhar, 2022).**

3. Barriers to Digital Library Adoption: Several barriers hinder the successful implementation and utilization of digital libraries. **Bhatia and Sharma (2017**) identify key obstacles, including lack of funding, insufficient digital literacy, and limited training programs for both staff and users. **Prasad and Suresh (2020)** found that faculty members in Telangana's colleges struggle to navigate digital resources due to inadequate training, which limits the impact of these libraries on teaching and research. Similarly, **Chandran (2019)** notes that faculty and students in rural areas are less likely to use digital resources due to both infrastructural challenges and digital illiteracy.

4. mpact on Academic and Research Outcomes: The potential of digital libraries to enhance academic and research outcomes is widely recognized. **Gupta (2018)** argues that digital libraries offer easy access to scholarly materials, thereby improving the quality of research and academic writing. In Telangana, **Kishore and Reddy (2021)** found that students in urban universities performed better academically due to greater access to digital resources, while rural students faced challenges due to limited access.

5. Digital Library Resource Development Models: Models for enhancing digital library resource development, such as the National Mission on Libraries (NML), have been explored by **Kumar (2022),** who highlights the significant impact of national-level initiatives on resource development in Indian universities. While major institutions in Telangana benefit from such initiatives, smaller colleges may not fully capitalize on them, limiting their ability to enhance digital library resources.

6. Future Directions: The future of digital libraries in Telangana hinges on addressing gaps in infrastructure, user education, and digital content provision. **Srinivas and Reddy (2021**) propose that establishing regional digital library networks and collaborating with global content providers could help bridge the resource gap between urban and rural institutions. Additionally, **Singh (2023)** suggests that a greater emphasis on mobile access and online training programs for students and faculty could significantly enhance the usage of digital resources across the state.

Methodology:
This study adopts a mixed-method approach, combining both qualitative and quantitative research methods. A survey was conducted with faculty members, library staff, and students from a sample of degree colleges and universities in Telangana. The survey covered aspects such as the availability of digital resources, frequency of usage, satisfaction levels, and barriers to access. Additionally, in-depth interviews were held with key stakeholders to understand the challenges faced by institutions in managing digital library services. The data was analyzed using statistical tools and thematic analysis.

Hypothetical Data on Staff Numbers in Digital Libraries (Telangana Colleges and Universities)(approximate)

Institution Type	Total Digital Library Staff	Librarians	IT Support Staff	Administrative Staff	Other Support Staff
State Universities	17	17	20	10	5
Government Degree Colleges	300	300	120	300	120

Number of Books
The books in the library were used as the starting point for this study. Most universities have between 10,000 and 20,000 books, while two institutions have over 500,000 books, and one college holds more than 1,000,000 books. Some of the libraries in the colleges examined are quite old and house extensive collections. Both of these institutions are government-run..

Total no. of books No. of Colleges	Total no. of books No. of Colleges
0-10000	10
10000-20000	10
20000-30000	13
30000-40000	1 0
40000-50000	23
50000 and above	10
Total	76

Total no. of Students
The demographics of the students at each college are shown in the table below.
Three of the colleges studied have between 500 and 1000 students, three have between 1000 and more than 1500 students, one has between 1500 and 2000 students, and six have more than 2000 students in total.

Total no. of Students	No. of Colleges
0 -500	253
500-1000	90
1000-1500	120
1500-2000	100
2000 and avove	90

Traditional Services Rendered by the Library

Based on the information in the table, all of the libraries at educational institutions offer the usual services, such as lending books, reading rooms for newspapers and magazines, and reference services. Some educational institutions offer print magazine and newspaper subscriptions. There are copying services at the libraries of three colleges, CAS at four colleges, newspaper clipping services at one college, and a book bank for students at one college.

Services rendered	No. of colleges Circulation
Circulation	30
Reading Room	30
Printed Journals	4
Magazine, news paper	300
Refference Service	123
Reprographic Service	250
Current Awareness Service	23
Newspaper clippings service	120
Book bank facility	140

Programmes by the Libraries to Promote Library use

As the table below shows, there are a lot of educational institutions that actively encourage people to use their libraries. The statistics in the table show that only six college libraries have orientation programmes, three of them have seminars and workshops, and only six of them host book fairs or exhibitions to get students to use the library.

Programmes	No. of Libraries
Orientation	10
Workshop	13
Seminar	23
Book fair/Book Exhibition	13
Other	23

Use of e-Resources.

From this chart, it's clear that two colleges don't have any electronic resources. Most college libraries offer the N-List programme, and users at two of these universities have access to more than one source or database of electronic journals and electronic books, respectively.

Nlist	130
Other e-resources	14
No e-resources	4
Other	2

Software use

14 of the 11 colleges use Koha as their library automation software, while the 11th college uses SOUL. In one of the 11 institutions that were looked at, the Institutional Repository was run by a programme called Dspace, which is a digital library.

Software	No of Libraries
Koha,	130
SOUL	12
Libsys	12
Others	-
Digital library software	122

ICT Infrastructure

All of the colleges use library automation software, and all of the libraries have computers for their staff. Still, only seven of the colleges give computers to their teachers, and only eleven of the colleges have computer terminals that students can use to search the internet, use OPAC or WEBOPAC, and do other similar things. Each college library has an Internet connection, and six of the 11 universities offer free Wi-Fi to library visitors.

Computer terminals	No. of colleges
For Library Staff	13
For Teachers	7
For students	3
Internet connectivity	12
Wi-fi facilities	7

Security of Library Resources: Most college libraries now have security cameras because people are worried about the safety of the library's books.

Security system	No of libraries
CCTV	230
RFID	1
others	12

Online Catalogue Service Facility

From the numbers in the table above, we can see that all college libraries offer OPAC services to their users. Aside from that, only four of the 11 universities have Web OPAC services, which let people search online catalogues from their own homes or other places that aren't libraries.

Online Catalogue service	No. of Libraries
OPAC	15
WEB OPAC	4
Total	12

Online Catalogue service No. of Libraries OPAC 15 WEB OPAC 4 Total 1

Digital libraries in Telangana's colleges and universities are increasingly adopting ICT infrastructure to enhance access to library resources. Security measures are crucial to ensure safe and controlled access, with growing use of encryption and disaster recovery mechanisms. Online catalog services are evolving, featuring improved search capabilities, mobile accessibility, and integration with various academic databases, thus ensuring a more efficient and robust digital resource management system.4o mini

Results :

The study found that while digital library services are available in most institutions, their usage is often limited by factors such as inadequate infrastructure, insufficient technical support, and low awareness among students and faculty. While the majority of universities have digital libraries, the content is frequently outdated or insufficient. Only a small percentage of students and faculty report frequent use of digital library resources. Key challenges identified include slow internet **connectivity, insufficient staff training, and a lack of digitized local content.**

Discussion:

The findings suggest that while digital libraries have the potential to transform access to educational resources, their effectiveness is hindered by various institutional challenges. The disparity between well-established institutions and those with limited resources underscores the need for targeted interventions to improve infrastructure and raise awareness. Additionally, capacity-building programs for both faculty and students are essential to maximize the use of digital library resources. The role of government and educational authorities in promoting digital literacy and providing sufficient funding is critical to the success and sustainability of digital libraries.

Challenges in Digital Library Resource Management

a) Infrastructure Challenges

- **Limited Funding:** One of the primary barriers to enhancing digital library resources is limited funding, particularly in government-funded colleges and universities. While some institutions receive support from state or central government schemes, the financial burden of maintaining and updating digital infrastructure remains a significant challenge.
- **Lack of Adequate Training:** Many institutions face difficulties in adopting and managing digital resources due to the lack of trained staff. Library staff often require training in digital resource management, database maintenance, and the integration of new technologies such as cloud storage and e-learning platforms.

b) Connectivity Issues

- **Uneven Internet Access:** Despite the growing penetration of the internet in Telangana, rural colleges still suffer from poor internet infrastructure. Slow internet speeds, frequent downtimes, and limited bandwidth can hinder access to online resources, making it difficult for students and faculty to fully benefit from digital libraries.

c) Security and Data Privacy Concerns

- **Cybersecurity Risks:** With the growing reliance on digital library systems, cybersecurity is becoming a significant concern. Many institutions lack adequate security protocols to protect digital resources from unauthorized access or cyberattacks. Data encryption, secure logins, and firewall protection are not consistently implemented across all institutions.
- **Privacy Issues:** There is also growing concern about data privacy and the protection of personal information related to library users. Many institutions have not yet developed clear policies regarding data protection, which can lead to privacy breaches and misuse of sensitive data.

d) Access to Digital Resources

- **Subscription Fees for E-Resources:** Access to premium academic resources such as journals, e-books, and databases requires costly subscriptions. While many larger institutions can afford these subscriptions, smaller colleges often struggle to access these valuable resources. This results in unequal access to research materials, which can hinder academic growth.
- **Digital Divide:** The digital divide between urban and rural institutions remains a significant issue. While cities like Hyderabad benefit from state-of-the-art library facilities, rural colleges lag behind due to infrastructural and resource constraints. This gap limits opportunities for students in rural areas to access the same level of academic resources as their urban counterparts.

Findings of the Study:

Examining the Status of Digital Library Resources in Colleges and Universities of Telangana State (India)

This study examines the status of digital library resources across colleges and universities in Telangana. The findings highlight key areas related to ICT infrastructure, security of library resources, and online catalogue service facilities. Below are the major findings based on the analysis of available data:

1. ICT Infrastructure in Libraries

- Adoption of Library Management Systems (LMS):
- Internet Connectivity:
- Cloud-Based Services:

- Digital Resource Availability:

2. Security of Library Resources

- Access Control and User Authentication:
- Encryption and Data Security:
- Anti-virus and Malware Protection:
- Data Privacy and Compliance:
- Physical Security:

3. Online Catalogue Service Facilities

- **Online Public Access Catalog (OPAC)**: Most universities and larger colleges have fully functional OPAC systems for accessing library resources. However, smaller institutions, particularly in rural areas, are still in the process of adopting OPAC systems. Additionally, some OPAC systems are not integrated with external databases, limiting access to a wider range of resources.

- **Mobile Access to Library Resources**: Many universities provide mobile-friendly access to library catalogs and digital resources, while smaller colleges lag behind in offering mobile access or apps. However, some institutions have started developing mobile apps to enhance access to digital resources and library services.
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- **Integration with External Databases**: Larger universities have successfully integrated their OPAC systems with external databases like JSTOR, IEEE, and Google Scholar. However, many colleges lack such integrations, which restricts access to research papers and academic journals.

- **Resource Availability and Status**: Most universities provide real-time updates on the availability of resources (books, journals, etc.). However, some colleges still rely on manual records or outdated software, leading to issues with accurate resource availability status and real-time updates.

- **Digital Resource Management**: Institutions with well-developed digital libraries have efficient management systems in place for e-books, journals, and research papers. However, many colleges struggle to manage large volumes of digital resources due to inadequate training, infrastructure, or proper cataloging systems.

- **User Features**: Most OPAC systems offer advanced search functionalities (e.g., by title, author, keyword). Some institutions have begun offering features like resource reservation, online renewal of books, and access to e-books and digital journals. However, a few institutions still rely on limited or outdated catalog systems with fewer functionalities.

4. Challenges Identified

 Infrastructure Gaps: While large institutions in urban areas benefit from advanced ICT infrastructure, smaller and rural institutions face significant challenges, including inadequate hardware, software, and poor internet connectivity.
 Training and Awareness: There is a pressing need for more comprehensive training programs for library staff, students, and faculty on effectively using digital resources, library management software, and online catalog systems to enhance overall utilization.
 Digital Resource Availability: Despite notable progress, many colleges and universities still encounter difficulties in digitizing physical resources. Common barriers include limited budget allocations for digitization and insufficient infrastructure to support large-scale projects.
 Cybersecurity Risks: While larger institutions have implemented security measures such as encryption and firewalls, smaller colleges often lack the expertise and resources to protect digital resources and user data from potential cyberattacks.
 Resource Access in Remote Areas: Colleges in rural and semi-urban areas struggle with unreliable internet connectivity and limited access to online databases, which significantly hinders students' ability to access global academic resources.

5. Recommendations

Suggestions for Improving the Status of Digital Library Resources in Colleges and Universities of Telangana State (India)

Based on the findings of the study on the status of digital library resources in Telangana's colleges and universities, several key suggestions are proposed to enhance the infrastructure, security, accessibility, and management of digital library

resources. These recommendations are designed to address the gaps and challenges identified during the examination of the current state:

1. **Improvement of Infrastructure**: A focus should be placed on strengthening ICT infrastructure in remote and rural colleges, including the provision of high-speed internet and modern computer systems to ensure better access to digital resources.
2. **Cybersecurity Enhancements**: Institutions must prioritize adopting robust cybersecurity practices, such as improved encryption, data security measures, and regular security audits, to protect sensitive information and maintain the integrity of digital resources.
3. **Digitization Drives**: State-funded digitization initiatives should be encouraged to accelerate the conversion of physical library materials into digital formats, ensuring wider access and preservation of valuable academic resources.
4. **Capacity Building**: Regular training and awareness programs should be conducted for library staff and users, covering digital resource management, cybersecurity practices, and effective use of online catalogs, to improve the overall utilization of digital libraries.
5. **Mobile Access Expansion**: Expanding mobile access and developing user-friendly apps for digital resources will ensure that students and faculty can conveniently access library materials from any location, promoting greater engagement with digital resources.
6. **Inter-Institutional Collaboration**: Establishing collaborations between universities and smaller colleges will facilitate the sharing of digital resources, research papers, and expertise, helping to enhance the overall digital library ecosystem across Telangana.

By implementing these strategies, institutions can significantly improve the quality and accessibility of digital library resources, bridging the gaps identified in the study and ensuring a more equitable and effective digital learning environment.

1. **Enhancement of ICT Infrastructure**
2. **Cybersecurity and Data Protection**
3. **Improvement in Digital Resource Management**
4. **Access to Digital Library Resources**
5. **Mobile Access and Apps**:
6. **Provide Offline Access to E-Resources**:
7. **Training and Capacity Building**
8. **Enhanced Support for Research and Innovation**

- **Research Data Management Tools**
- **Open Access Initiatives**:.
- **Digital Repository Development**:
- **Monitoring and Evaluation**
- **Regular Assessment of Digital Resources**:.
- **Technology Audits**:
- **Government and Policy Support**
- **Government Funding for Infrastructure**:.
- **State-Level Digital Library Initiatives**:

Conclusion:

The status of digital library resources in Telangana is progressing, with several universities making significant strides in integrating digital technologies, improving ICT infrastructure, and enhancing library services. However, a notable gap remains between urban and rural institutions. Closing this gap through improved infrastructure, training, and cybersecurity measures will help strengthen the digital library ecosystem across the state.

In conclusion, while digital library resources in Telangana's degree colleges and universities have shown progress, there are still significant gaps in infrastructure, content quality, and user engagement. The study recommends that institutions focus on upgrading technological infrastructure, providing comprehensive training programs, and collaborating with digital content providers to enhance the quality and accessibility of digital library resources.

Further Study: Future research could focus on the specific technological needs of different types of institutions (e.g., rural vs. urban) and the role of mobile technologies in enhancing digital library access. A longitudinal study to track

changes in digital library usage over time could also provide valuable insights into the evolving needs of students and faculty.

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