

**AN OVERVIEW OF E-RESOURCES SELECTION CRITERIA IN UNIVERSITY
LIBRARIES**

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Abstract

Online resources have increased quickly due to information overload. Libraries are having trouble accessing all of the necessary informational resources from the parent organization's budget. The increased costs of sustaining print and online subscriptions, as well as concerns about 'perpetual' electronic access to back files, exacerbate libraries' troubles. According to data, the global print sector is in decline. Because electronic versions of reading materials are more portable, accessible, and affordable, users prefer them. Certain challenges of e-resources subscription and procurement, such as their selection, purchase, and preservation, necessitate the collaboration of library professionals and associations.

Keywords: e-resources, selection and acquisition of e-resources, procurement of e-resources, collection development of e-resources.

Introduction

The purpose of university libraries is to provide print and electronic resources while also integrating their use in support of teaching, learning, and research at their institutions. Electronic resources address difficulties such as access, interface, technical assistance, and licencing that traditional library materials. To solved these problems, libraries must establish a separate policy for the growth of electronic resource collections. This policy's objective is to offer consistency and priorities in managing an important element of the library's collection by making suggestions for selecting appropriate electronic resources. The selection and acquisition of electronic resources, the affiliation and collaboration of libraries, various publishers, vendors, and dealing with licence agreements are all topics covered in the study paper.

Objectives of the Study

- Challenges and selection criteria of e-resources.
- Collection development of e-resources.
- Tools used for selection of e-resources.

Review of Literature

E-resources

According to Wikipedia (2023), according to that the term e-resource refers to all the products which a library provides through a computer network. The e-resources are also known as online information resources covering bibliographic database, e-books, e-journals, search engines etc. (<https://en.wikipedia.org>)

Padval (2022), it is noticed that an electronic resource is information that may be kept in the form of an electrical signal. E-resources are available in electronic form as e-books, e-journals, e-newspapers, databases, e-images, and library website pages. The word e-resources refers to all of the information items that a library offers via a computer network, including e-resources.

International Federation of Library Association (IFLA, 2012), according to IFLA e-resources are materials that require computer access, whether through microcomputer, mainframe, or other types of computers, and they may either be accessed via the internet or locally.

Types of e-resources

The e-resources are divided in two types -

E-resource selection tools

Present study discovered different tools should be used while choosing e-resources. The tools used to select e-resources are critical, because there are so many tools available. The librarian must select the best one. This makes it easy for librarians to select appropriate e-resources. The following are some helpful tools for selecting e-resources.

Recommendation from the faculty, librarians selected e-resources by surfing the website, used publishers - vendors catalogue, students recommendation, demonstration from the vendors, consulting with other libraries, publishers review of the e-resources, free online access, vendor exhibit at conference and seminars.

Selection criteria of e-resources

In the domain of library, the e-resource selection is a new problem. Researchers have written extensively on the use of electronic resources, rather than the selection and purchase of electronic resources, and the challenges face by libraries when selecting and procuring electronic resources.

Velmurugan, Senthur (2013), the present study revealed that, the criteria utilised to select electronic resources, including resource must contribute to the Library's goal of supporting education. E-resources procurement is more precise to the Library's budget. Also, considered the selection criteria such as value, significance, utility, and charge.

International Federation of Library Association (IFLA, 2012), It has been observed that electronic publications provide considerable challenges in terms of licencing, access, networking, cost, ownership, and rapidly changing technology and standards. Before acquiring e-resources, the librarians must collaborate with other departments in the library to assess the suitability of a resource. The library may investigate ways for collecting user feedback on electronic resources in order to involve users in collection development. This could include feedback on both prospective new and existing resources. In addition, the library should alert users of new content and services.

University librarians must intention on the following important points when selection of e-resources.

Cost - When libraries select e-resources, cost is an important factor to consider. The cost must be reasonable. The e-edition should be the same or less expensive than the print version. If the price of these resources grows, so will their use and accessibility.

Content - The library authority must analyse and assess the items. These resources' must be unique, current and up to date, trustworthy, and fulfil the demands of the intended audience. E-resource-specific additional content standards must be encountered.

Features and consistency – The important feature of e-resource interfaces is user-friendly, easy to usage, and intuitive. The search engine should be versatile. The system should provide keyword and Boolean searches, as well as full-text searching and truncation. Document export choices include e-mail, printing, and downloading facility.

Technical support and requirements - When accessing e-resources a number of technical issues arise. The library should be able to provide and manage ongoing, cost-effective resource access. When libraries access e-resources over the web, the service provider should provide additional features such as updating, optimum access, and minimising the strain of storage, preservation, and maintenance. Apart from that, the library must be compatible with electronic resources. The service provider should offer full technical support.

Vendor support - The vendor should be well-known, established, and reliable. The e-resources provider should be willing to train library workers and patrons. Service levels for system availability and response time for technical issue resolution should be provided by the library. Furthermore, the vendor should be willing to design and trademark the product, back up the system data, provide user statistics, and provide bibliographic records or other metadata.

License Agreement – At the time of purchasing e-resources, a licence agreement is frequently essential. The licence must be evaluated and negotiated in order to guide and support the evaluation process. The most important features of licensing are as follows:

- Access to the database should be complete, including printing, downloading, and sharing and e-resources should be user-friendly.
- Authorized users and authorized sites should be defined as broadly as possible.
- Duplication of material - We're all aware of how expensive electronic resources. As a result, the selector must guarantee that resources are not duplicated while selecting materials.
- Supply - There is no common model for e-publication packaging and pricing when compared to print publications. The buyer should carefully analyse the pricing plan, which includes the purchase, subscription fee, pay per view, and leasing options. Access should be provided by the service provider for both single and many users. They should also maintain the same price. The selector may be cancelling many transactions before proceeding to the contents that have been selected.
- The licence should include terms for fair use, termination, reimbursements, the duration of the agreement, and some language considerations.
- The usage statics should be delivered directly to the library by the service provider.
- Licence agreement protect the confidentiality of the user's information.

Review and renewal process

The review and renewal process have become complicated because to the rapid advancement of technology. E-resources may not have a constant renewal date because subscriptions or leases may run for one or more years from any specific date. The vendor send reminder in advance notification or alerts for resource renewal and effective evaluation to library. Before re-evaluating resources, the library should examine available statistics to establish the relevance of e-resources for library users.

Cancellation process

Librarians evaluate e-resources before renewing them regularly. The renewal process is considering user feedback, suggestions and recommendations. Budget constraints necessitate resource reductions. The primary reasons for e-resource cancellation is given below :

- E-resources are no longer available or maintained
- If the online resources are out of date and no longer trustworthy.
- The service provider is not able to provide more extensive coverage of the subject.
- The product's price is not reasonable considering how much it is used.

Preservation of e-resources

E-resource preservation for future use is one of the library's main responsibilities. To keep up with the rapid advancements in technology, electronic information preservation requires more time and money than print document preservation. The two primary difficulties that librarians face when conserving digital content are physical deterioration and digital obsolescence.

Recommendations

The following recommendations for the seamless growth of e-resources in university libraries.

- A proper user education programme created at the library. The librarian advertises about the availability of e-resources and inform users how to use e-resources effectively.
- A well-defined set of selection criteria included in the library to assist the librarian in selecting the best e-resources.
- Before purchasing e-resources, a well-drafted licence agreement should be developed. This will make fair usage of e-resources easier.
- Librarians can choose cooperative acquisition and resource sharing to reduce prices and so manage the low funds.

- Library employees need to be educated on how to use e-resources effectively on a regular basis.
- The librarian's role is to inform library users on how to use e-resources effectively.
- The librarian tries to link the e-resource via the OPAC.
- To meet users' information needs and increase the library's e-resource collection, librarians should be more proactive in forming online consortiums.

Conclusion

E-resources collection growth is a continuing process for every organisation. Traditional print resources have become less useful in recent centuries. To make the information available electronically, various techniques were used. The library's e-resource selection criteria and procedure have been modified. A collection development policy includes a guide to library items as well as identifying and selecting good or bad resources. When building new collections, university librarians must evaluate material duplication, cost, and item utility. The e-resource collection development policy must be precise and fulfil user needs irrespective of the collection. There are certain issues, such as their selection, procurement, upkeep, and preservation, demand the cooperation of library professionals and associations. The library collaboration has developed a one-of-a-kind system to improve electronic access to scientific databases and publications. Faculty, researchers, students, and neighbouring higher education institutes would gain. With the help of consortiums, the financial condition, time, and labour will be improved.

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