

Use of Information Communication Technologies (ICTs) in Academic Libraries

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ABSTRACT

Rapid developments of Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) have changed the traditional concept of libraries. Modern academic libraries are more powerful, dynamic and can reach their users without the restrictions of geographical boundaries. In this Internet era libraries fast moving to digital mode and can be accessed universally. With the advent of new communication technologies libraries redesigned their services to borderless world and become lifeblood of the community. Use of ICTs in libraries has become great advantage for its users as they open up opportunities for interoperability and information exchange. Users can access wide variety of information resources such as text, sound, images etc according to their needs under one umbrella. Therefore, application of ICTs provides considerable impact on the way in which libraries relate to their user communities and become an essential part of evolving informationsociety.

Keywords: ICT application; ICT services; value of applying ICTs; academic library resources; e-learning; grey literature; scholarly community; librarians' role

INTRODUCTION

Modern Internet is rapidly progressing beyond the creation, delivery, management and preservation of its resources to provide quality services for the humanities. The explosion of information through the WWW and human interaction through wireless devices and mobile telephony is increasing day by day. ICT tools have become backbone of the human community. They conduct their surveys online and trying to reach their goals using online resources. At this point, academic libraries provide greater service to accomplish their goals. If not they will become frustrated like keeping inefficient inattentive sales persons on big shopping mall. Therefore, academic libraries facilitate universal access of scholarly brains and allow scholarly community to accomplish their goals as efficiently, reliably and predictably as possible. Once they are satisfied with the libraries, they will repeatedly search for the resources and recommend those academic libraries to the others. Eventually these libraries become Aladdin's Cave for its communities.

E- Learning in Academic Libraries

With the application of ICTs in libraries, access to information has become more dynamic for the scholars who need to gain specialized knowledge. Modern ICT tools has changed traditional teaching methods and made distance learning education more effective and efficient by providing multimedia data repositories which can serve as continuously changing up-to-date information. ICTs facilitate closer cooperation among libraries and distant learning communities. Therefore, it improves quality of people's life providing easy access to range of information which need for their day to day lives. ICTs in academic libraries have become more effective tool into the dissemination of information to the scholarly communities in the developing countries. E-learning can be described as online learning, virtual learning, distributed learning, network and web-based learning. They all use ICTs for teaching and learning activities. It can be referred as intentional use of ICTs in teaching and learning. E-learning can be done online or offline or via networked or standalone computers and other electronic devices (Naidu,2006).

Technology is a must for e-learning. There is no e-learning without technology infrastructure. Lack of IT knowledge is also a barrier to e-learning. Therefore scholars should be familiar with new technologies. Scholars can do e-learning at anytime, anywhere that suited their convenience. And also, e-learning is different from class room learning. ICTs have dramatically

changed the world of learning and teaching in this digital era.

Information and communications technology also enables the capture and storage of information of various types including print, audio, and video. Networked information and communications technologies enable access to this content in a manner that is not possible within the spatial and temporal constraints of conventional educational settings such as the classroom or the print mode (Dede, 2000).

CONCLUSION

Academic libraries are facilitating more timely exchange of information among scholars and improve distance learning without any geographical barrier. It supports teaching, learning and research while reaching unreachable without walls. Greater revolution has occurred in the libraries recent past converting paper-based libraries to electronic based ones. With the emergence of ICTs and availability of national and global networks, libraries have turned their attention to digital collections rather than building printed-based collection. In this way, librarian's role dramatically changed and is responsible for what e-repositories available for their users and how users can access to the available information within the physical walls of the library or elsewhere.

Many libraries, particularly academic, have provided access to good-quality information sources only to find that many of their customers display conservative tendencies and tend to shun new channels and to cling to the familiar, preferring to use hard copies of sources they know, even when the online version offers far more powerful searching capacity: it is clear that, for these customers, the ready availability of a technology does not guarantee its immediate take-up and exploitation (Morrow, 1999) and that the usefulness of a piece of technology is strongly tempered by the user's *perceptions* of its usefulness (Barry and Squires, 1995).

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