Chapter - I

INTRODUCTION

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Knowledge can be regarded as the only unique resource that grows when shared, transferred and managed skillfully.

-Beerli, Alfred
1.1 Introduction

The world is experiencing a continuous change in the ways the society lives and communicates. With rapid growth and development in the use of modern Information and Communication Technology (ICT) and the Internet, a huge potential exists in the ways the information gets published and is made available to the individuals, institutions or libraries and information centres. The advances in ICT are heavily influencing the society throughout the globe, bringing many changes to everyday life, in a process commonly termed the ‘information revolution’. The most exciting aspect of this new technology is its potential as an educational tool for a new generation. Being on the cusp of this enormous cultural shift makes it a thrilling time to be a part of the education community (Gates, 2000). Libraries as an important component of any educational institution and hub of learning activities have provided an opportunity for students, researchers, and teachers to explore the vast amount of information resources.

Information being the vital commodity for human beings in today’s world becomes the basic need of the man just as food, water and shelter. Since beginning, our libraries have been trying to manage the available information from time to time. The memoir of kings, various courtiers and common individuals engraved on the clay tablets, coins, leaves, etc have been still managed by the libraries. These rare documents are the only sources to reveal most of the hidden parts of our cultural heritage. Gutenberg’s invention of mechanical moveable type (printing press) in the 15th Century led to a mass revolution of printing activities and it was a great leap towards information dissemination and had given momentum to keep records of day to day activities. In the beginning of 20th Century, informal libraries got converted into well managed and formal library system. The collection of libraries is not just limited to print collections that require the user to visit the library. It has gone through many changes from traditional print formats to the current digital formats. The introduction of personal computer in the early 1980s heralded a set of major changes and started putting its effect on various research and developmental activities. The library professionals started using computer as a tool to manage libraries as well as to fulfil the informational needs of its users.
Invention of World Wide Web (WWW) or Web is another great leap towards electronic scholarly communication and transformed the scattered world into a global village and brought the revolutionary changes. Harnad (1991) has rightly opined that the arrival of the electronic communication is the fourth revolution in the means of production of knowledge after spoken language, written language and the printing press. With the help of computers, libraries started changing its nature from traditional libraries to automated libraries, then electronic libraries. Now in the beginning of 21st Century we are dealing with online or digital libraries. Just like libraries, the traditional print publishing industry has also shifted to e-publishing in the form of microfilms in 1930s, audio-visual materials in 1940s and 50s, and CD-ROMs in 1980s. In the 1990s, online electronic resources such as electronic journals, electronic books, and full text databases have emerged as important sources of information. These online formats allow users who have access to Internet connections to search and retrieve information from anywhere and anytime (Nisonger, 2003). The new electronic formats have brought about many changes in library and information centres. The advent of electronic resources came to rescue to remove the difficulties faced by the library managers, its users as well as the publishers dealing with print documents and is being welcomed by the whole world. One can enumerate many significant changes in the way we conduct our business and deliver our services from the stacks-only library to the mobile-accessible library today (Choy, 2011). One of the major changes has been the drastic increase in choices, and information available to users, largely without cost through the Internet. What has changed is the ease of accessibility and availability of numerous ways of getting the required information.

1.2 Background of the Study

In recent years, the widespread availability and use of electronic resources have drastically revamped the status of all libraries and information centres across the world. There has been a rapid urge of the user community to get more and more information online. The development of ICT devices, rapid rise of databases and modern e-book technologies have altogether changed the entire scenario of informatics. The users' attitude to information has been gradually shifting from the printed documents to electronic resources and therefore, it has been their prerogative to know the details of the
availability and organization of electronic resources like online journals and databases, electronic thesis and dissertations, government publications, online newspapers, etc. in the information centres. Therefore, it is necessary for information professionals to study the different key dimensions of electronic resources and to successfully channel them into the inquisitive minds of users by identifying and addressing some of the issues relating to the use of electronic resources.

The term electronic resources can be taken to refer to online journals, databases and searching tools available to learners for retrieval of information. The change in traditional document delivery services, from print to electronic, has come about very quickly and libraries and information services have undergone significant transformation in order to effectively deliver electronic resources to the academic community (Appleton, 2006). The array of electronic resources available in libraries today is an outgrowth the changes in information delivery made possible through advances in both computer technologies and information storage and delivery mechanisms such as CD-ROMs and user friendly GUIs (Fecko, 1997). The electronic resources carry the potential power to increase the learning opportunities offered to students in particular and the interactive and multimedia elements provided by the electronic medium can offer a great variety of learning experience than those offered by text on paper (Swain and Panda, 2009). These developments have brought a revolutionary change in information and knowledge scenario giving rise to a number of options to the user communities to handle varied information resources at their ease.

In recent years, electronic journals as an important component of electronic resources have become widely popular among the library users as they are available electronically via computer network. One can access electronic journals round the clock beyond geographical barriers, which make electronic journals omnipresent. Besides their ability to reach all the subscribers simultaneously, they often get published or reach subscribers well before their print counterpart. Another advantage of electronic journals is that many users can have simultaneous access to a single electronic copy from many locations. Articles can be downloaded and printed simultaneously by more than one reader depending upon access right and permission. The publishers of electronic journals
are themselves providing services like contents, abstracts of articles, full text, before the actual printed edition. These services are available to anyone having access to e-mail and importantly are free of cost. Some of the journals are only available on commercial basis for which library has to pay the required amount. This is a boon for huge campuses particularly where there are hundreds of readers with many departments (Halijwale et al., 2004).

Academic libraries have been building up the collections in print and electronic resources and make it available to their user communities which are primarily the staff and student populations: The central role of academic libraries has been to promote and facilitate effective use of recorded information in all formats by all of the library’s users (Hoskins 2002). A university library differs from other libraries by virtue of its size, range, depth and quality of its collection, necessary general background stock to support its special areas and large-scale holdings, amassed over a long period of time to form a concentration of materials important to support scholars worldwide (Prytherch, 2000). The library is the heart of the university. The teaching methodologies could not suffice and sustain the progress and objectives of education without educational support systems such as libraries. According to Rice-Lively and Racine (1997) academic libraries are at the centre of a revolution. Phrases like “information economy,” “knowledge industry,” “virtual library,” “information superhighway,” and “electronic journal” only hint at the magnitude of the changes in information and knowledge production, preservation, and dissemination. The report of the American Library Association (ALA) presidential committee on information literacy (ACRL, 2010) emphasized the impact of the information age on all people and the need for everybody to become information literate. The mission of academic libraries has been to create a learning environment in which faculty and students are provided with a variety of library resources and ultimately, become competent users. In today’s electronic information environment, an understanding of the use of electronic resources by user community is important to the success of information professionals. Such an understanding could theoretically assist them to be more effective in designing and providing electronic information services.
1.3 Statement of the Problem

The development of technology especially the wide use of electronic resources towards globalization has been moving at a fast rate. However, there are some problems occur in maintaining and making it available systematically. In order to employ sophisticated and faster access to information by the user communities, the library needs to spend more money for subscribing required electronic resources, and make them available and accessible to its users. The provision for allocation of necessary budget in subscribing electronic resources reflects the decision to shift from print to electronic subscriptions. Electronic resources always raise new issues that require more budgets to maintain it. Decisions to subscribe electronic resources, particularly electronic journals require careful consideration, because of the implication that the subscription is a long term commitment. The administrators of the library themselves conduct user studies. This is necessary to take action in order to identify the pattern of use of electronic resources by user community to assess whether it will benefit their teaching, learning and research processes. By studying the potential use of electronic resources, the libraries can plan and manage the delivery of and access to electronic resources in a more user centered approach that will ultimately satisfy the user expectations. Hence, the statement of the problem chosen for the study is “Use of Electronic Information Resources by Students and Faculty Members of Management Studies in Karnataka State”.

1.4 Need for the Study

Information technology is an amalgam of some wonderful inventions of the 20th century in electronics and communication. During a very short span of time, it has acquired an important place in almost all aspects of human life and particularly in the field of education. Management education is not an exception. Management education which was almost unknown in the 19th century has become a dynamic force for change in many educational institutions including universities and in the societies of both developed and developing countries. In this era of emerging knowledge societies and global competition, management education and management institutes play a significant role in the development of society by producing many skilled and knowledge oriented
people. The contribution management education to economic growth has been highly promising in the present scenario. The opportunities in management education in India are immense. Furthermore, the increasingly globalised nature and context of business in the Indian economy require an expanded horizon of management and leadership, which can be achieved through continuous improvement and up-gradation of capabilities, skills and change of mindset of the management graduates.

India is the second largest producer of MBAs in the world, with over 4800 B-schools producing over 140,000 management graduates every year in India and over 14,000 students pass out from more than 200 universities offering management courses both at the first degree and advanced levels (Cygnus, 2010). According to Cygnus estimation business education market in India which was about Rs.30 billion in 2008 (campus and distance education together) with growth rate of 12% Compound Annual Growth Rate (CAGR) grew up to 35 billion in 2010. Out of the total market size, Rs 20 billion is campus MBA market and the balance is distance education. With the growing demand for management education, there has been a tremendous growth of management institutes in our society. Indian B-school structure includes national B-schools like Indian Institute of Management (IIMs) (7), Indian Institute of Technology (IITs) (20), University departments (200), All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE) and approved autonomous PGDBM (180), affiliated colleges (940), and B-schools under private universities (150), etc.

The impact of IT on university libraries and more so on the business school libraries is bound to be drastic, if not detrimental. The print material is forced to beat a retreat. It is an essential element in libraries today, which has been providing new dimensions to the way libraries acquire, process, store and disseminate information. Today most of the business school libraries including universities have access to online information sources and provide them for wider access. There are several types of electronic resources available which are produced by aggregators such as Ebscohost, Proquest, ABI inform and in databases produced by electronic journal publishers such as Sage, Springer, Emerald, Blackwell, Elsevier etc. The access to electronic resources is not only limited to those controlled information resources that are subscribed by the
libraries, but also include those available free over the World Wide Web. The use patterns of faculty and students of management education is certainly coupled with their keenness on the use of various electronic journals, online databases and other forms of electronic resources available in the broad subject areas of management such as economics, finance, marketing, international business, human resource management, and more (Swain and Panda, 2009).

The increasing availability of electronic resources has led to an increased demand on libraries to deliver more in terms of services and products. Libraries have an obligation to meet the needs of their primary users. As a result libraries are required to make critical decisions regarding services and collections and examine their policies on information access. Moreover, electronic resources are a significant investment in many libraries and it must be ensured that patrons are capable of getting a good return on that investment. In the online world, libraries must understand that access to resources is more important than collection building as they continue to develop new capabilities and services on par with the changing demands of the users. Therefore, it is necessary to know whether faculty and students do make use of the electronic resources available both in the library as well as on the Internet and whether the use of these resources genuinely helps students with their assignments and faculty with their teaching and research responsibilities. An understanding of user's behaviour and needs on information resources is pertinent in addressing the challenges ahead. It is to find out the information resources that are available and accessible to them, their perceptions and use of the information resources, as well as factors that influenced their use of these resources. Therefore, it is hoped that the results of this report shall assist administrators of the university libraries in developing a more complete understanding of information needs of its users and to take optimum measures on the broader and more effective use of electronic resources and also encourage new directions for further research on electronic resources.
1.5 Objectives of the Study

The following are the main objectives of the present study:

1. To study the availability of electronic information resources in the university libraries of Karnataka State.

2. To study the nature of accessibility to electronic information resources in the university libraries in Karnataka State.

3. To study the awareness and use of electronic information resources by the students and faculty members of management studies in Karnataka State.

4. To evaluate factors that influenced the usage of electronic information resources by the students and faculty members of management studies.

5. To analyse the impact of students and faculty demographics on utilization of electronic information resources and considering it as an authentic source of information.

6. To analyse the level of usefulness felt by the students and faculty members of management studies to support their academic activities.

7. To study the problems faced by students and faculty members, while using the electronic information resources.

8. To analyse the efficiency brought about by the electronic information resources in effective learning, teaching, research and other allied academic activities.

9. To suggest measures to be undertaken by the university libraries to popularise electronic information resources among the user community and realise optimal benefits from the same.

1.6 Key Research Questions

This study has attempted to answer the following key questions:

a. What is the level of utilisation of information resources among students and faculty members of management studies?

b. To what extent the students and faculty members are utilising electronic information resources?
c. What is the level of knowledge and their skills in utilising electronic information resources?
d. What is the purpose behind using Internet and method adopted to access information on the Internet?
e. What are the prioritized areas of management disciplines in which users intend to depend on electronic information resources?
f. What problems hinder the students and faculty members utilising electronic information resources?
g. What recommendations could be made that can bring turnout in utility derived by the students and faculty members in using electronic information resources?

1.7 Research Hypothesis

The study aims at testing the following hypothesis:

"Factors that drives and hinders students and faculty members in utilizing the diverse electronic information resources" which is further classified into the following sub-hypothesis.

1. Frequency of usage of information resources is independent of respondents' demographics.
2. Usage of electronic information resources by the respondents is independent of their demographic characteristics.
3. Application of Internet for respondents expected utilities are independent of their demographics.
4. Factors qualified as hindrances for using Internet resources are independent of the respondent demographics.
5. Frequency of usage of databases has no significant influence on respondent demographics.
6. Factors qualifying as hindrances for using databases are independent of respondent demographics.
7. Perceptions towards associate features of electronic information resources are independent of influence of respondent demographics.
8. There is no significant difference in terms of qualifying factors acting as hindrances in utilizing the electronic information resources.
1.8 Scope and Limitations of the Study

This study is designed to examine the usage of electronic information resources by students and faculty members of management studies. The study is confined to the universities of Karnataka State viz., Kuvempu University, University of Mysore, Karnataka University, Gulbarga University, Bangalore University, Mangalore University, Tumkur University, Davangere University, Karnataka State Women’s University and Vijayanagara Shri Krishnadevarya University. The respondents of the study limited to students and faculty members of Master of Business Administration (MBA), and also librarians from the universities under the study. Although the study does not depict the scenario of the entire country’s condition, it provides us with a clear view of what happened in various universities in Karnataka State. This research has been conducted, as a contribution towards understanding of how students and faculty members of management studies in Karnataka use the electronic information resources for pursuing their academic activities.

1.9. Operational Definitions of Terms

Operational definitions of the terms used in this study include:

a. **Use:** According to Abbott (1989) ‘use’ seems to be a complex term that has a wide range of meanings and is very difficult to define. Use means the number of times an electronic information resource is being used by Students and faculty members in university libraries. For the purposes of this study the term ‘use’ referred to searching, browsing locating, examining and obtaining information from electronic information resources available in library and on the Internet by a user.

b. **Information:** Any input that can be processed intellectually or cognitively for the development of meaning. Meaning indicates something that contributes to problem solving, decision making or...development (Boon, 1992).

c. **Students:** Students for the study mean the Post-Graduate students pursuing Business Administration/Management Studies (MBA) in the universities of Karnataka State.
d. **Faculty Members:** Faculty members for the study are the teaching staff in the departments of Business Administration/Management Studies (MBA) offered by universities of Karnataka State.

e. **Electronic Information resource (or electronic resource):** Refers to material consisting of data and/or computer program(s) encoded for reading and manipulated by computer using the peripheral device are directly connected to the computer or remotely via a network such as the Internet. Electronic information resource "is a broad term of digital information that comprises of resources such as databases, electronic journals, electronic books, web sites, full text articles published on the Internet and other information that presented digitally." These electronic information resources and services can be accessed electronically via a computing network from inside the library or remote to the library (Shim, 2001).

f. **Electronic database/database:** An electronic database is "any organized collection of information which can be accessed electronically. It may also be called an online database or journal index". It may contain indexes to and abstracts of articles and/or links to the full-text articles.

g. **Electronic Journal (or e-journal):** Electronic journal is a digital periodical that publishes on the Internet or World Wide Web. This is a journal that is available in an electronic format through an online host (Prytherch, 2000) or, in other words, "an electronic representation of a [print] journal" (Lee, 2002). The study focused on electronic journals available in the library and/or on the Internet which students and faculty members' access and use for their academic undertakings such study, teaching and research.

h. **Respondent:** *In simple words* a person who replies to something such as a survey or set of questions. A respondent is a person who is called upon to issue a response to a communication made by another (http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Respondent). It can also be defined as someone who answers questions, especially on a questionnaire (a set of written questions) or for an opinion poll (http://www.macmillandictionary.com). Respondent is being used from many years as the usual term for an individual who takes part in a research project.
j. **Barrier:** Refers to a factor which the individual perceives as hindering his information-related activities. The difficulty that users encounter at any stage in the process of using electronic information resources. In simple words barriers are problems or difficulties that hinder users in accessing and/or using electronic information resources and services.

1.10. **Organization of the Study**

This study is divided into five chapters.

**Chapter-I: Introduction**

This chapter provided an overview of the research and of the organization of the thesis. It introduces the background to the research, presents the research questions, and explains the objectives, propose research hypothesis in relation to the research questions, need of the research and scope and limitations of the research.

**Chapter-II: Literature Review**

This chapter reviewed the relevant literature pertaining to the present study. It introduces the focus and context of the research, and examines the nature of usage of electronic resources. This provides the basis for a conceptual foundation for this research. The chapter highlights the associated factors on perceived utility of electronic resources with an emphasis on the application of information technology.

**Chapter-III: Research Design and Methodology**

This chapter specifies the research design and implementation for the quantitative and qualitative research employed in this study. It discusses design of the questionnaire, selection of the sample, survey procedures, the collection of data, and the analysis of data. The emphasis is on consistency in ensuring the validity and reliability of the research findings.

**Chapter-IV: Electronic Information Resources**

This chapter discussed various formats of electronic information resources and gives brief explanation about historical background of electronic resources. Further, it gives factors to be considered in the selection and evaluation of electronic resources.
Chapter-V: Electronic Information Resources and Services in University Libraries of Karnataka: A Profile

This chapter deals with availability of electronic resources and services in the university libraries in Karnataka State. It covers various aspects associated with the availability and usage of electronic resources in university libraries such as library collection, services, ICT infrastructure, automation, networking, digitisation, users, staff, budget etc.

Chapter-VI: Data Analysis and Interpretation

This chapter presents the research data analysis and interpretation based on the survey for investigating the usage of electronic resources in a university environment. The data collected are analyzed to explore the user behaviour in regard to perceived utilisation of various electronic resources and services, and their perception towards the quality of electronic resources. It shows that students and faculty members of management studies with different purposes play significantly different roles in the process of using electronic resources. More specifically, the relevance, coverage, quality, and quantity of resources available and accessible are the most important factors affecting the use of electronic resources.

Chapter-VII: Respondents Demographics and Impact on utilising Electronic Resources

This chapter examines the influence of respondent’s demographics on the utilization of electronic resources by the students and faculty members of management studies. The hypothesis developed in this study has been tested by using statistical techniques with the help of SPSS software i.e. chi square test and F test or the variance ratio test. It also covers inferences drawn based on the results obtained through chi square test.

Chapter-VIII: Summary of major Findings, Suggestions and Conclusion

The study concludes with a detailed description of the findings and made recommendations/suggestions in improving the utilisation of electronic resources in the university libraries. It also point outs some directions for future research.
References


