# Technology impact in access to information: creating possibilities for learning environment

**Dr. Sanghamitra Pradhan**
**Dept of Library and Information Science**
**Faculty of Arts**
**The Maharaja Sayajirao University of Baroda**
**Vadodara-2**

# Theme of the paper

- Discusses what impacts does the technology have on students' learning?
- Brings out issues relating to technology impact in physical and intellectual access to relevant information that the academic libraries need to address.
- Resolves how technology could help librarians in creating possibilities for a learning environment where learning and sharing of knowledge will be increasingly interactive and enriching.

# Introduction

Library's role in education has long been acknowledged and is considered to be indispensable.

Today both higher education and academic libraries witness an unprecedented change in knowledge creation-dissemination-use chain triggered by technology ever than before.

# Technology impact in access to information

- Conventional boundaries between libraries, student supports, academic departments and IT has been blurred by the rapid change that now permeates into higher education.

- Today the challenge lies in how far the whole gamut of technology can be applied effectively to the world of information for access and use.

- Technology influences
  - **Physical access to information**
  - **Intellectual access to information**

# ➢ Impact in physical access to information

Increasing availability of information in electronic formats, varying physical demands of users, associated technology applications and connectivity are some of the major issues that require librarians to review their practices.

Factors to be considered to overcome the problem of physical access to information are:

➢ Library facilities
➢ Library portals
➢ Course management systems
➢ Resource sharing

# ▪*Library Facilities*

Academic library…

- still is a place where the print materials and the electronic ones coexist.
- undoubtedly a hub where information is shared and learned collectively.

To overcome the barriers in physical access to information availability of the following facilities in adequate number is recommended:

- computer stations
- e-readers
- laptops
- networked platform
- creation of standardized databases
- disabled friendly hardware and software

# ▪ *Library Portals*

Aimed at to provide single user interface or the like of 'one-stop shop' internet search engines for access to a wide range of resources and library services – irrespective of format and location.

A well-structured subject portal should be embedded with the principles of the flow of scientific information and an information literacy component.

Important service components of web portal

- intuitive and customizable web interface
- personalized content presentation
- federated searching
- relevancy ranking
- link resolution
- security
- communications and collaboration

# ▪ *Course Management System*

It is one of the technology assisted learning tools.

Problems in developing quality CMS because
- lack of library involvement in planning and creation of CMS tools and
- lack in completely bridging technological gap that exists between CMS and library services

A good CMS should contain:
- Simple and hierarchical course structures prepared with audio-visual aids
- Creative web pages containing e-courseware designed with the help of power point presentations and animation software to enhance presentation and understanding.

# *Resource Sharing*

Resource sharing and consortia based purchase is deeply ingrained in libraries of today...

- to augment their individual collection through sharing and seamless access to many more materials to users of member libraries
- to counter the skyrocketing cost of scholarly research journals and electronic databases
- to provide shared centralized resources from worldwide services that offer immense benefits to the local learning environment to gain global perspective of knowledge

# ➢ Impact in Intellectual Access to Information

- Users not only should know where to get the information but also how to get it is equally important.

- Since most of them lack basic lower and higher order research skills they face problems in getting results on...

  - bad search terms
  - too many options for finding information
  - multiple search interfaces, and
  - too much information to process and synthesize

*Five major constraints that hamper intellectual access to information*

1) defining the problem,
2) defining where to go for information,
3) developing search strategies,
4) finding materials in library, and
5) developing insights and extrapolation.

# *How to address these issues*

⊙ Technology based instructional strategies for better search concepts, interactive learning and hands-on learning through smart-boards can be used as tools for teaching how to find, evaluate and apply information.

⊙ Integration of information literacy with higher education curricula. This requires the librarian and the faculty work together closely in planning research assignments and schedule multiple library skills sessions throughout the academic period.

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▪Library orientations on various academic library services are being conducted by streaming video tours link from the library home page so that basic layouts and location of information is introduced to students.

▪Compiling and publishing of library manuals and guides through audio-visual and animation based instruction would help in understanding how to scan images; evaluate websites; and search databases.

▪Adoption of collaborative uses of wikis and personal response systems (PRS) as learning tools

# Conclusion

- The integration of technology in learning field has implications for academic libraries. The new approach of higher education is to take students beyond classroom experience and to develop among them a combination of skills in information technology, critical thinking and information-seeking strategies.

- Equally crucial is to hone information literacy skills among the students in order to make them confident and comfortable in access to information.

- And finally to realize the objective of creating enriched learning environment, where the students are active, independent learners and are contributors to knowledge as well rather than passive recipients of information, academic librarians need to develop a higher level of collaboration with the campus community.

# Thank You