

*Chapter - 7*

**TRANSFORMATION IN  
LAW LIBRARIES DUE TO  
APPLICATION OF ICT**

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## CHAPTER - 7

# TRANSFORMATION IN LAW LIBRARIES DUE TO APPLICATION OF ICT

### 7.1 INTRODUCTION

The advancement of ICT has changed in the outlook of libraries and the responsibilities of librarians. The change is always permanent, and the librarians should be striving to cope with the change. The library design and architecture are forced to accommodate the new advancements. Print resources are being replaced with DVDs and online resources, reading rooms are being converted to PC rooms, the mode of access to information is shifting from desktop to laptop and smartphone. The vocabulary of librarianship have been changed - ‘dissemination’ is being replaced by ‘communication’, ‘database’ by ‘repository’, ‘literature’ by ‘knowledge’, ‘search’ by ‘navigation’, etc. (Akintunde, 2004).

“Earlier the primary legal sources - statutes and case laws - had been available on to those who had access to law libraries, understood legal terminology, were skilled in locating information in the intricate hardcopy reference sources, and could afford the photocopies!” (Hutchinson, 2014). But, now the method and the format of access to legal information are also transforming. Computer Assisted Legal Research tools, such as SCC Online and Manupatra moved from CD based database to web based solutions with additional resources and can be accessed 24/7 from anywhere through Internet. The faculty, students, researchers, lawyers can immediately get access to not only subscribed resources but open access law resources such as Indiakanoon, LII of India, JUDIS, IndiaCourts etc.

The role of librarian is transforming along with the new information sources. The librarians are expected to play a number of different roles, and most important one is as a knowledge manager. It is necessary for a librarian to be abreast with the advancement of technologies to tackle new responsibilities and requirements of library. (John, 2009). “In this rapidly evolving technological environment, and in the face of constant change, what are the new roles for librarians? Technology does not replace human expertise, and law librarians are called upon to provide guidance in a pro active way, reaching out to their audience, since the audience may not go to

them.” (Germain, 2007). Technology has provided the way to reach the audience using the tools like web 2.0 but at the same time technology poses new challenges for information professionals. (Spiranec & Zorica, 2012).

## **7.2 LIBRARY AUTOMATION**

Library automation is the basic activity towards the application of ICT in library functioning and providing ICT based library services. For library automation, there are various commercial softwares available in the market like SOUL, SLIM, Alice for Windows, Netlib, LibSys, etc. There are many open source softwares available for library management as EverGreen, Koha, NewGenLib, ABCD, PhpMyLibrary, OpenBiblio, etc. Library automation makes it easy to provide ‘right information to the right user at the right time in a right form’ which is the basic aim of libraries. The techniques like RFID (Radio-frequency identification) helps in circulation, stock checking and to prevent the theft of library material.

The OPAC and WebOPAC as well are the results of library automation which facilitates library users to access library information from anywhere within organisation or globally at any time and saves their time also. The other modules of the library automation softwares like Acquisition, Technical Processing, Circulation, Serial Control, Administration etc. makes functioning of library sections easy and integrated.

## **7.3 DIGITAL ARCHIVES**

After library automation, another field where ICT have great impacted the libraries is digital archiving. The information, digitally born and converted to digital, is being preserved to make accessible it to the end users and also for the coming generations globally.

In academic sector digital archives are well known as digital libraries and institutional repositories:

### **7.3.1 Digital Library**

“Digital libraries are about new ways of dealing with knowledge - preserving, collecting, organizing, propagating, and accessing it.” (Witten, Bainbridge, & Nichols, 2010). In the view of H. Travis, full text digital law libraries arguably got

their biggest start in the legal profession, with Lexis/Nexis and Westlaw predating the Web by almost two decades (Pande, 2012). Manupatra, SCCOnline, West Law India and some other comprehensive legal databases are available for Indian laws. The user interface, provision of the search strategies, presentation of the search results and the statistical information about the case laws citation are important characteristics of the legal databases which help the end users for getting quick and most relevant results.

### **7.3.2 Institutional Repository**

“An institutional repository is a system that collects, preserves, and disseminates the intellectual output of an institution. It is open to worldwide access, often without any restrictions.” (Witten, Bainbridge, & Nichols, 2010). It is a web-based database of an institute’s scholarly materials including theses, dissertations, preprint of research papers, working papers, images, data sets, course materials, or anything else a contributor deposits in accordance with the policy.

## **7.4 VIRTUAL LIBRARY**

“A virtual library is a library for all practical purposes, but a library without walls - or physical books” (Witten, Bainbridge, & Nichols, 2010). In other words it is “a collection of resources available on one or more computer systems, where a single interface or entry point to the collection is provided” (Dahibhate, Patil, & Mugade, 2014).

## **7.5 CLOUD APPLICATIONS**

“Cloud computing is an alternative to traditional computing where the operating systems hardware and software are rented over the Internet” (Yuvaraj, 2015). “Law librarians use online applications and data storage to collaborate with colleagues and to provide library services. Many of these tools also fall within the definition of Web 2.0, social software, and probably other terms. But whatever the name, if a tool can be used to help legal researchers access information, law librarians will help them use it.” (Murley, 2009). The areas of library management wherein cloud computing can be executed (Rai., Singh, & Bakshi, 2015):

- Library Automation
- Digital Library Development
- Web-Scale Discovery

Reference Service

Resource Sharing

Other Day-to-day Activities

## **7.6 USE OF WEB 2.0 TOOLS IN LIBRARY**

“Library 2.0 is about doing more with the same or fewer resources. It’s about efficiency without sacrificing quality.” (Casey & Savastinuk, 2007). “The concept of library 2.0 derived from web 2.0. The library 2.0 encompasses a range of new and contemporary products and services of ICT that used for evolving collaborative environment required for library 2.0. Owing to library’s services, have focusing more on the facilitation of information transfer and information literacy rather than providing controlled access to it.” (Parvez, 2011). Maness defined “Library 2.0” for the library community as “the interactive, collaborative, and multi-media web-based technologies to web-based library services and collections” (Maness, 2006). Nowadays libraries are providing their services using one or more web 2.0 tools and techniques like Blog, Delicious, Flickr, Instant Messaging, Mashups, Podcasting, RSS Feed, Social Bookmarking, Social Networking, Tagging, Twitter, Virtual tour, Wiki, Youtube Video etc.

### **7.6.1 Blog**

A blog is a web site made up of posts that are arranged chronologically, and are archived by date and category. A blawg is a blog on the law. (Germain, 2007). “Many libraries have successful blogs that keep patrons abreast of everything from the library’s collection to change in laws that affects the patron base” (Wertkin, 2014). It can be used as a platform for discussion, sharing the ideas and opinions by the library users besides to keep abreast them about the library resources, services and current activities.

### **7.6.2 Flickr**

Flickr is an online service for hosting images and videos. It allows users to store, edit, organise, share, geo-preference, generate products of images, define forms of access to images, take part in discussion forums and maintain contact within an online photography community. The librarians can archive and generate new means of access to an interaction with their patrons, as well as broaden the knowledge of

such heritage to a larger and more diverse audience. (Goswami & Choudhury, 2014). “Libraries can share their catalog of images with the users or share an event by uploading photos of event to flickr.” (Glankler, 2009).

### **7.6.3 Instant Messaging**

Instant Messaging is real-time online communication between two or more people. The medium enables people to “chat” via the Internet by rapidly exchanging text messages. (Foley, 2002). Academic libraries provide virtual reference services to the users by using Instant Messaging. This is an additional tool to interact with the library users and to provide them latest information. “Ask a Librarian” is a popular service by reference librarians using instant messaging in libraries.

### **7.6.4 Mashups**

Mashups are described as a single graphical interface for a distinctive service that is created when content and functionality from more than one web application are brought together or ‘mashed up’. There are many ways to use the Mashup features in libraries for example libraries can collaborate with various commercial database vendors to linkup their catalogues with them. (Goswami & Choudhury, 2014).

### **7.6.5 Podcasting**

Podcasting is the process of capturing audio digital-media files which can be distributed over the Internet. This tool is very useful for sharing audio programmes among the users. Vodcasting is also the same kind of service for video format. (Kumari & Khan, 2015). Podcasting generally used for sharing the interviews and speeches. Libraries can utilize this service for offering library instructions to the users in audio-visual format. These services are used in delivering library web-based services.

### **7.6.6 RSS Feed**

Really Simple Syndication (RSS) is “used for publishing frequently updated content such as blog entries, news headlines, and podcast in a standardized format”. (Goswami & Choudhury, 2014). It can be used in libraries to keep users update and send alert about new books, articles, library news and happenings and even table of contents from new journals.

### **7.6.7 Social Networking**

Social networking websites or tools facilitate people to interact with each other in their office, their community and around the world. Some of the well known social networking tools are Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, MySpace, and Ning. Tools used to distribute intellectual contents are blogs, wikis, slide-sharing, photo-sharing and video-sharing sites. LibraryThing is a social cataloguing web application that allows organizing book collection using the Library of Congress cataloging system and Amazon.com. Librarians can create library's page on Facebook and users can access to this information. Twitter can be used to provide current awareness services. (Glankler, 2009).

### **7.6.8 Social Bookmarking**

Social bookmarking is a method for Internet users which can be used to manage, organise, store and search for bookmarks of resources online. Social bookmarking tools can include annotations and tags to assist in locating resources again and in sharing with others. These tools can foster collaboration and sharing of collections and online contents. (Goswami & Choudhury, 2014). The tool is very useful for sharing the tagged online resources on a particular topic among the library patrons. Social bookmarking sites like Delicious and Diigo help to organise browser's bookmarks.

### **7.6.9 Tagging**

Tagging is a practice where users assign uncontrolled keyword to information resources. The visitors tag various items on the website and this collection of tags is called folksonomy. The tags added to a folksonomy can be arranged into a tag cloud. A tag cloud is a collection of the most popular tags arranged in a cloud-like manner so that the more popular terms are represented with the large font sizes. By using this tool users can participate in the cataloguing the library collection. Library OPAC can allow users to define their own keywords for library resources and to parallel subject headings defined by librarians. (Goswami & Choudhury, 2014).

### **7.6.10 Twitter**

Twitter is also known as Microblog. Twitter's limit to a text based post is a maximum 140 characters. Tweet can be used for quick library updates, to enhance

library publicity, or library messages to the users. It is capable service of providing ready reference. Announcement of new publications or an event in the library can be tweeted.

#### **7.6.11 Wiki**

“Wiki is a piece of server software that allows users to freely create and edit Web page content using any Web browser. Wiki supports hyperlinks and has a simple text syntax for creating new pages and crosslinks between internal pages on the fly.” (Wiki, 2002). Wikis can enable and facilitates the collaborative creation of any kind of document. Libraries have been using Wikis for group learning, sharing knowledge and experiences and for creating subject guides. (Goswami & Choudhury, 2014).

#### **7.6.12 Youtube**

YouTube is a very popular video-sharing website which facilitates users to view, upload and share video clips. It also allows searching and to give rating, to comment, annotate and subscribe the videos. The video player provides facility for sharing videos through social media and embeds code for use in content and learning management systems. (DeCesare, 2014). Being a great sharing and marketing tool, librarians can use for advertising upcoming events and showing the workers as well as students how to perform certain procedures. (Glankler, 2009).

### **7.7 SMART PHONE SERVICES OF THE LIBRARY**

A smart phone has become an integral part of almost all the library users’ life and it is considered as a learning device as well as a tool for delivering library services. (Kumar, 2014). In earlier days, libraries were used to inform their users through notices, circulars, etc. putting on notice boards about the library activities. Nowadays, SMS or message using an app has become a vital mode of direct communication with the users. The usage of mobile phones is not restricted to the message or alert services, the e-resources can be accessed using smart phones. Kumar has described the potential library services that can be rendered through mobile devices:

- i) Library can introduce the SMS services for various purposes:
  - SMS alert about membership status
  - SMS alert for new activities/ services launched



- SMS alert for new arrivals
  - SMS for reference queries
  - SMS alert for issue/ return of books
  - SMS reminder for overdue material/fines
  - SMS request for renewal/ availability/ reservation of books
- ii) The users, those have access to Internet through mobile easily get access to Web-OPAC, library portal, library Blog and other e-resources (subscribed and open access).
- iii) The library can implement Web 2.0 tools for delivering library services efficiently if the users are fond of smart learning devices. (Kumar, 2014).

For law students, instead of turning the pages of huge volumes of AIR or SCC, it has become very easy to access the legal databases anywhere, anytime. This is not the matter of convenience, but to learn the use of electronic devices in their professional life which is indispensable for future lawyers.

## **7.8 OPEN ACCESS MOVEMENT**

ICT has provided the technical platform to open access movement. The “philosophy of open access is to provide free of charge and unhindered access to research and its publications without copyright restrictions. The movement got support from great scientists, educationists, publishers, research institutions, professional associations and library organizations.” (UNESCO, 2015). “Open Access has emerged as an alternative to subscriptions as business model for scholarly journals. Many open access advocates are optimistic that it will enhance scholarly communication by making content broadly available and by providing relief to libraries from continuing large price increase of subscription journals” (Lewis, 2012). “As new models of scholarly communication emerge, librarians are situated to play a key role in the development of these models for academic publishing and dissemination.” (Richard, Koufogiannakis, & Ryan, 2009). “Participation of librarians in open access movement by supporting and promoting library as publisher will felicitate to users in access of internal knowledge of organization as well as knowledge of the rest of the world easily. The important open access resources will not be useful unless libraries communicate their existence and usefulness and

integrate them into their virtual collections. Librarians can alert patrons to open-access venues in a number of ways, including adding an open-access resource in the library catalog or to the library's list of serials." (Schmidt, Sennyey, & Carstens, 2005). The new practice of weaving URLs of free e-resources to the online catalogue has been started in law libraries in India which felicitates the users in finding their desired book and in anticipation to increase the use of e-resources. (Rai, Bakhshi, & Singh, 2016).

### **7.8.1 Free Access to Law Movement**

The Free Access to Law Movement (FALM) is an endeavor at global level to form an international network of Legal Information Institutes (LIIs) under "Montreal Declaration" to provide better access to legal information for the public (Greenleaf, 2008). "The movement advocates for those who value free access to law, and realize the fact that most countries still do not have effective facilities for free access to law. The free access to law movement, centered around university-based legal information institutes, is assisting and encouraging the development of free access law facilities in many countries in the developing world. (Germain, 2007). Legal Information Institute of India (LII of India) became part of this movement as 34<sup>th</sup> member in 2010. The administrative and technical hub of the LII of India is at NALSAR University of Law, Hyderabad and other Indian partner Institutes are (LII of India, 2013):

- National Law University, New Delhi
- National Law School of India University, Bangalore
- West Bengal National University of Juridical Sciences, Kolkata
- The Tamil Nadu Dr. Ambedkar Law University, Chennai
- Gujarat National Law University, Gandhinagar
- Rajiv Gandhi National Law University, Patiala
- Rajiv Gandhi School of Intellectual Property Law, IIT Kharagpur

### **SUMMARY:**

There is an impact of ICT on every walk of life and legal education is not an exception. "No technology is permanent in this world today, and no solution is perfect for any software or services but still efforts are made to make them fit in order to enhance the benefits and reduce the demerits" (Yuvaraj, 2015). Legal education as well as law libraries will continue to be transformed with the advancement in ICT.

Open access movement is one of the positive and important impacts of ICT. This movement is gaining momentum in India and the initiatives taken by INFLIBNET for higher education and by Judiciary and National Law Universities for law are laudable. Law universities played very crucial role in the establishment of LII of India and now its development is in the hand of academic law librarians. Their efforts to participate in FALM are necessary not only for Indian legal fraternity but for global aspirants also.

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