# A Modern Law Library Action: The Future of Digital Books in Indian Law Schools

**Dr. Atul Bhatt**
**Associate Professor,**
**Department of Library and Information Science,**
**Gujarat University, Ahmedabad, India**

**Abstract -** Academic Law Libraries have sound practice to support multiple formats of resources for decades, from paper and microforms to electronic resources. However, the digital medium has presented a wider scope and new opportunities to serve patrons in better ways. In academic law library young generation users' prefers E-books and electronic resources to pursue their academics and legal research and for law libraries it offers economic value than print books, cost effective to the law libraries in processing, Circulation and storage. This article examines the value of E-books and it reports on an assessment of the E-book collection in the academic law libraries of India, the current practice of E-books in academic law libraries, Patron Driven Acquisition (PDA), Demand Driven Acquisition (DDA) and various open access platforms also discussed.

**Keywords -** *E-books, Law Library, Online Resources, E-resources*

## I. Introduction

With this ever changing technological scenario, law libraries are forced to understand current change, accept the current trend and work proactively to satisfy the needs of Library users. The time comes for the traditional libraries to keep tune with latest technological advancement to serve stake holders in better way. With subscription/procurement of e-books, law Libraries will enable to serve user community with potential of increasing the quality of services. An academic Law Library is quite different by its content, management, organization and users' needs. The Law Library is far more than a research center where students and faculties come to study and to find legal information. For academic law libraries, the development of E-books in the area of law offer academic law libraries to new opportunities and challenges to serve their patrons it is cost effective for the law libraries and save the time in processing and circulation whereas due to accessibility of 24x7 it becomes very popular in users' community. To Focus on and develop Analytic Research Skill in Emerging Scholars of the Institute and assist them in Legal Research, Law Libraries should be planned to procure some of the significant E-books related to Law field to provide Library Services more excellent way.

## II. **Literature Review**

Number of studies have been carried out too assess the value of E-books in academia some of prominent studies are Yatin, Talati and Bhatt, Atul (2016) study indicates that IITs and NITs are having sound collections of E-books but IITs comprised with outstanding resources and effectively provide access of E-books to their users in compare to NITs. Jean, O'Grady (2012) Collaboration of law librarians and legal publisher will able to make success of E-books in law libraries. E-books platform may require an iterative process of testing and improving, identifying challenges, and inventing new solutions and require open mindedness and creative thinking. Tony Horava (2013) Studied OCUL a provincial consortium of twenty-one publicly funded universities in Ontario, Canada and depicts the consortial strategy and philosophy for E-book licensing in OCUL, innovative service model are also highlighted. Also described that they learn many lesion and developed collaborative ethos, deal with publisher for E-books is always challenges in a consortial framework. Barbara, C. Glackin, RoyW. Rodenhiser and Brooke Herzog (2014) examined the impact of E-books and mobile devices in students learning and revealed that having two or more mobile devices significantly increased frequency of accessing E-books, the students have explored their willingness to using E-books and mobile technology in the classroom, accessibility and cost savings were found as pros; while functionality and pedagogy were reported as drawbacks to mobile device usage. Dimitrios Kouis and Nikolaos Konstantinou (2014) revealed that students do not use e-textbooks as textbooks, mainly because their reading habits, many obstacles and impractical interface, but they responded that E-books technology will replace printed books in near future. Siriginidi Subba Rao (2004) E-books presents many opportunities for users in new, convenient and cost-effective ways. New medium has their own potential to replacement for paper-based books.

## III. **Digital Environment in Law Libraries of India**

In academic law libraries of India E-books are currently accessible in premier law schools and most of National Law Universities provides access of E-books to their patrons, in compare to traditional books is changing at a rapid pace in academic law libraries of India, and following case studies reflects on the high value of E-books in Law Libraries of India. Yatin Talati and Bhatt, Atul (2016) observed that that most of ILNU law students found library resources according to their expectation and users overall assessment on print and online resources depicts that online resources are very sound but need to add more E-books. Rai, Bakshi and Singh (2016) described that National law University Delhi providing sound collection to access of E-books from various and made available search facility with OPAC for users benefit. Maitrayee Ghosh (2016) depicts that reading E-books in India started recently and chances to boom in coming days, E-book industry show a great deal of promise in the Indian book market. Due to cost effective India has huge potential for e-books but technological awareness hamper the growth of E-books in India.

**Why E-books now?**

Due to advancement of ICT and growth of online resources/E-resources the role of E-books in law libraries is very clear, and there is considerable development of in availability of E-books. Various technologies for reading and using e-books are available and convenient. The law libraries should be a special hybrid with conventional and non conventional resources to support the academic and research mission of law school. A number of researches have been carried out on the need for E-resource/E-books among libraries. Recent developments in online access and retrieval have posed a major challenge on the viability of law libraries. Rojeski, Mara (2012) concluded that it is perfect opportunity to replacing traditional resources with e-books, it will helps for students success with better use of collection. Usage of E-

books is much higher than print books and found that revealed that students are highly satisfied with E-books. Cavanaugh, Terence (2002) revealed that E-books are having the unique features and capabilities such as various abilities, text size, text-to speech, languages etc. and this technology is very valuable for learners and many consider e-books will be future of print. Connaway (2003) described that advancement of internet has provided new opportunities and challenges to librarians to deliver book content; if we do not provide electronic resources we may become obsolete. Penny Gerrod (2003) E-books are well established in US libraries and it is just a matter of time before Europe catches up.

**Remember the Open Access E-book platforms,**

This era is known as ICT era and due to advancement in technology and development of Open Access has benefited learner community in great way, many Blogs, Publishers and organizations' are providing access of law books as Open Access E-Books. Some of prominent open access platforms are as follows:

**Project Gutenberg**

Project Gutenberg (Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation) is established by Michael Hart in July 1971, as a community project to make books available freely to all, at the moment offers 54,000 E-books on public domain where you can access world's great literature which copyright has expired. Project Gutenberg was the first provider of free electronic books, to access the same users does not require fees or registration. For law students can access world's great literature from this open domain platform, thus Project Gutenberg, is the oldest digital library. Project has created multiple "mirror" Web sites around the world where E-books stored and made available to the user community in plain text, using simple ASCII charectoristic, HTML and PDF available in some of works.

**Internet Archives**

Internet Archive is established by Brewster Kahle in May 1996, at San Francisco. IA is non-profit Organisation offers millions of E-books digital library also offers movies, & audio files, plus billions of saved web pages. Internet Archive encompasses over 150 billion capture collected from 1996 to the present culled from every domain, over 200 million web sites and 40+ languages.

**The online book page**

The Online Books Page is founded by John Mark Ockerbloom in 1993 at Carnegie Mellon University, School of Computer Science while he was student and maintained it there until 1999 then the project moved at University of Pennsylvania in 1999 who has provided require infrastructure for the project. The online book page provides the access of books that are freely available on internet. They provide online books on virtual shelves and classified according to Library of Congress. Many subjects covered in this online books including law.

**Open Access Publishing in European networks (OAPEN)**

The OAPEN foundation is Netherland based not-for-profit organisation and its registered office in The Hague. OAPEN is providing access quality collection of open access books/freely accessible academic books in the area of humanities and social sciences. OAPEN provides services to libraries, publishers and research funders for deposit, dissemination and digital preservation. OAPEN was established for 30 months projects for 2008-2010 to improve the visibility and usability of high quality academic research in Europe.

**Directory of Open Access Books (DOAB)**

The Directory of Open Access Books (DOAB) is a service of OAPEN. DOAB primarily aimed to increase discoverability of Open Access books. DOAB is developed in close cooperation with Lars Bjørnshauge and Salam Baker Shanawa. DOAB covers various subject areas including Law and Political Science where approx. 340 law books and 600 books are accessible in the area of Political Science. DOAB is also open to publishers to index their open access peer reviewed books.

**E-books Acquisition (Procurement/Subscription) modules:**

At the moment when we are assessing current practices of Indian law libraries, we found that law libraries are having good collection of print books and developing it in scientific way, at the same primer law schools are having sound collection of E-resources whereas small and grant-in-aid law collages are having strong print collection and they are initially in very primary stage in develop the collection of e-books. E-book possession is always not the owner but they will be licensees unlike the owners of a physical book, they can't have the unlimited right to lend an e-book, give it away, resell. If it's bought for their iPad, they won't be able to read it on their Kindle. And if Amazon or the other sellers don't like what they've done with it, they can take it back, without warning. Various law publishers offer E-books on procurement/subscription basis with various modules. Aggregator Subscription Packages, Publisher-direct subject specific Package Purchase Short Term Loan (subscription based), Demand-Driven Acquisition, Patron-Driven Acquisition, Evidence based selection, Title-by Title purchasing, Subscription of E-books database. Law libraries may start procurement of E-books according to above modules offers by publishers on the basis of Patrons Driven Acquisition (PDA)/ Demand Driven Acquisition (DDA), now-a-days this is phenomenal practice implemented in the western countries to procure E-books.

**Patrons Driven Acquisition (PDA)** in which library only procures/subscribes the e-books which are required by the patrons or purchasing titles based on patron suggestions and establishing approval plans. PDA is an e-book acquisition model strictly for e-books final selections are made by the patrons.

**Demand Driven Acquisition (DDA)** where patrons has given chance to discover e-books prior to purchase and depends upon their suggestions, digital content will be purchased / subscribed. Now-a-days PDA and DDA are phenomenal practices of academic libraries in western country to procure digital content for the library.

## IV. **Conclusion**

The traditional concept of ownership in collection development is gradually being replaced by access to information and knowledge without regard to location and format. It is well-known that online resources are more preferred in academia as well as law libraries, E-books are valued resources for law school patrons and E-books technology have bright prospects in academic law library. E-books are hot topic of discussion in Indian law school libraries and premier law schools provide access of E-books to their patrons. Recent time, digital books have become increasingly popular in the academic law libraries of India and having sound future in academia. E-books have the potential to strengthen the collection of law library thus the law libraries in India has a call to action in the allocation of the library budget for the E-books and should be maintained according to requirement of patrons. Procurement of E-books from law books publishers should be followed by PDA or DDA from respective publishers. Some of prominent open access E-books platforms providing free access of E-books and this is high time for law library professionals to create awareness on these open domain platforms.

## V. **References**

1. Barbara, C. Glackin, RoyW. Rodenhiser and Brooke Herzog (2014). A Library and the Disciplines: A Collaborative Project Assessing the Impact of eBooks and Mobile Devices on Student Learning *The Journal of Academic Librarianship,* 40 (2014), 423–428.

2. Cavanaugh, Terence (2002). EBooks and Accommodations: Is this the future of print accommodation? *TEACHING Exceptional Children*, 35(2), 56-61.

3. Connaway, Lynn Silipigni (2003). Electronic Books (eBooks): Current Trends and Future Directions. *DESIDOC Bulletin of Information Technology*, 23(1), 13-18.

4. Dimitrios Kouis, Nikolaos Konstantinou, (2014). Electronic textbooks advantages and challenges for the Hellenic higher education and publishing community, *Library Review*, Vol. 63 Issue: 6/7, pp.531-543, https://doi.org/10.1108/LR-06-2014-0074

5. Garrod, P. (2003). "Ebooks in UK libraries: where are we now?", *Ariadne*, No. 37. Retrieved from Arinda http://www.ariadne.ac.uk/issue37/garrod/

6. Horava, Tony (2013). Today and in Perpetuity: A Canadian Consortial Strategy for Owning and Hosting Ebooks. *The Journal of Academic Librarianship,* 39 (2013), 423–428.

7. Mara Rojeski, (2012).User perceptions of ebooks versus print books for class reserves in an academic library", Reference Services Review, 40 (2), 228 – 241. http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/00907321211228291

8. Maitrayee Ghosh , (2016). E-books in the mobile age: Advocacy and acceptance in India", Library *Hi Tech News*, 33 (6). Retrieved from http://dx.doi.org/10.1108/LHTN-02-2016-0006

9. Rai, Priya, Bakshi, Samar Iqbal & Singh Akash (2016). Weaving E-books in Library Collection: An Experience of National Law University Delhi, India, *DESIDOC Journal of Library & Information Technology*, 36 (1), 5-9.

10. O'Gready Jean (2012). The Future of ebooks in Law Firm and Future of Libraries. *Practice Innovations : Managing in a changing legal environment*, 13(3), 13-15.

11. Siriginidi Subba Rao, (2004). Electronic book technologies: an overview of the present situation, *Library Review*, 53 (7), 363-371. Retrieved from https://doi.org/10.1108/00242530410552304

12. Talati, Yatin & Bhatt, Atul (2016). Effective Marketing Strategy of ILNU Library Service, Resourcesand Products: Special Reference to International Law Resource Centre, *International Journal of Library & Information Science*, 5(3), 91-98.

13. Talati, Yatin & Bhatt, Atul (2016). WEBBASED LIBRARY RESOURCES AND SERVICES: A RELATIVE STUDY OF IITS AND NITS, *Voice of Research*, 5(3), 17-19.