

Evaluation of State University Library Websites in Andhra Pradesh, India

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ABSTRACT

Web technology is developing more rapidly compared to previous technologies. The present higher education institutions are significantly influenced by the Internet. The library websites of universities play a major role in the dissemination of information and resources. Any website must be carefully and systematically developed. It's also crucial to evaluate websites before using them. The goal of this study is to evaluate the services, resources, and other data accessible on the websites of the libraries at 27 state universities in Andhra Pradesh that have links to their libraries. A checklist for evaluation has been created based on earlier studies. The findings of this study show that the majority of university library websites include information on collections, hours, and electronic resources. Very few libraries provided feedback and Web 2.0 features. However, there aren't any multimedia, FAQs and updated information.

Keywords: Website Credibility, Content Analysis, Webometrics, Website Evaluation, Library Website, University Libraries Websites,

1. Introduction

Web technology is developing more rapidly compared to previous technologies. An academic institution's website serves as an extension of it. One of the most crucial tools for promoting the institute's operations is this. Information on programs, admissions, exams, fees, faculty, an events calendar, internships, research and publications, library resources, etc., can be found on a university's website. Thus, library websites play a major role in the dissemination of information and resources. It serves as the university's trustworthy mirror. The careful and methodical creation of websites is crucial. It's also crucial to evaluate websites before using them. Much web content will be published without verifying its accuracy and reliability. Library web pages must be evaluated.

2 State Universities in Andhra Pradesh

State universities in India are public universities that are overseen by the state governments of each of the country's union territories and states. They are typically created by an act of the local legislative assembly. The University Grants Commission Act of 1956 grants the University Grants Commission (UGC) its authority. 15 professional councils are also created, each of which is in charge of a different aspect of accreditation and coordination. The lists of state universities are published and updated frequently by the UGC. The UGC lists 455 state universities as of June 24, 2022 (wikipedia, 2022)[1].

After bifurcation in 2014, New Andhra Pradesh took on a different shape as a state. According to the UGC (2022)[2], there are 27 state universities in Andhra Pradesh during the academic year 2022–23.

3. Significance of the study

The heart of the university is the library. The study looked into the information on the library websites accessible at Andhra Pradesh state universities. State university libraries have websites that allow visitors to get information about useful books, resources, and services without physically visiting the library, saving them time. This study evaluates the sources and services offered by state university library websites.

4. Review of Literature

Hirwade (2006)[3] evaluated the websites of Indian universities with a special focus on the web pages of their libraries. 91 of the 273 colleges have websites with information on their libraries. As a result of the investigation, important conclusions and recommendations were reached, and a list of Indian university websites was created.

In their 2009 study, Ramesh Babu, Narendra Kumar, and Gopalakrishnan [4] evaluated the many factors of the credibility of university websites' trustworthiness in Tamil Nadu. They discovered that while universities had their own websites, they lacked structure and a standard design.

In his research, Kaushik (2015)[5] examined the services, resources, and other data made available on the websites of the libraries of the National Institutes of Technology (NITs). The survey indicated that there was a need to enhance the NIT library webpages. These studies support maintaining the high standards and variety of resources offered by the 28 NIT libraries in India. In his study, Manjunatha (2016)[6] analysed eight special library websites in Bengaluru, Karnataka. He offers some advice that will be useful to the person designing or creating the library website as well as to the creation of a more educative, dynamic, and appealing library website. It will be helpful to website visitors who utilise the library.

Sampath Kumar, Basavaraja, and Shivakumara (2015) [7] conducted a study using a check list to analyse the content of seven IIT library websites in recent years. The survey states that all library websites provide general library information. The majority of libraries have given information on documents only available in their libraries and not a single library provides services like email alert, library blog, SMS alert, and RSS feed. Also, some guidelines are framed to make library websites more clear, attractive, and error free.

A study of Delhi's central university libraries by Gautam Virendra Kumar and Singh (2016)[8] was done to assess the content provided. According to the report, most libraries have well-designed websites and also have e-resources. According to the rating criteria used in this study, the library website at Jawaharlal Nehru University is the best, while the library website at South Asian universities is the worst.

The status of the central university library websites in South India was analysed by Ramesh Kuri and Maranna (2018)[9]. A checklist was designed and enriched by gathering the data. Every library website's contents are discovered to vary. Creating an efficient and dynamic library website is essential.

In their study, Rahman and Batcha (2020)[10] analysed the usability, correctness, accessibility, and services offered by 10 different college libraries that are affiliated with the University of Delhi. A checklist was used to collect data from the universities chosen for the study. According to the survey, most college libraries have information about themselves, their staff, their hours, and how to join on their websites. This study also indicates that none of the library websites include options for feedback, social networking tools, or regular updates.

5. Objectives

The primary objectives are:

To identify and categorise the Andhra Pradesh university websites' domain structures.

To evaluate the information on the university library's website

To find out more information about the facilities and services provided by the university library website.

To suggest improvements to the library's websites.

6. Methodology

There were 27 universities spread over the 26 districts of Andhra Pradesh. List of Universities given in Appended-I. There were 26 university websites functioning during the study period. Among them, 20 universities have library links, which were taken for data collection. In the present study, the data was collected using a website evaluation checklist during July 2022. The checklist included domain structure, general information, services, collection and application of web 2.0 and so on. All the selected university library websites were carefully evaluated based on the checklist.

7. Results and Discussion

7.1 Domain Structure

Table 1 lists the domain structure of university websites in Andhra Pradesh.

Table1: Domain Structure

Domain	Number	Percentage
ac.in	15	57.69
edu.in	8	30.76
org	1	3.85
in	1	3.85
nic.in	1	3.85
Total	26	100

Table 1 reveals that there are five types of URL extensions. Out of 26 universities, 7.69 per cent of the universities have.ac.in as an 'URL' extension, 30.76 per cent have edu.in and 3.85 per cent of websites have.org, .in and nic.in as extensions.

7.2 Library Link in the University Website

On the home page of the university websites, the library has a separate link that includes all the information about the library, as shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Library Link in the University Website

Library Link	Number	Percentage
Separate Library URL on Home Page	1	4.76
Separate Library link on Home Page	11	52.38
Library information under Facilities link	5	23.81
Library information under Academic link	3	14.29
Library information under Infrastructure link	1	4.76
	21	100.00

Table 2 reveals that one university, i.e., S.V. University, has a separate URL for its library. The minority of libraries (52.38) have a separate link on their home page where they list all of their library information. Nearly, one fourth of libraries (23.81%) provide information under 'facilities link', followed by 14.29% under 'academic link'. onlyone university (4.76%) covers the library information under infrastructure link'.

7.3 Contact Details

The contact information on the library pages was looked at, and it was found that 11 university libraries have their contact information on their websites or webpages.

7.4 General Information

The results of the study shows that general information of the library have been reported in Table 3.

Table 3: General Information of the Library Website

General Information	Number	Percentage
About	19	90.47
Services	18	85.71
Collection	17	80.95
Library Photographs	13	61.90
Timings	12	57.14
Staff	12	57.14
Automation	10	47.62
Rules	10	47.62
Sections	9	42.86

It is observed from table 3 that information about the library has been given by 90.47%. About 85.71% of websites include services, followed by 80.95% of libraries, which have given information on library collection. 61.90% of libraries have a library photograph. 57.14% of libraries provide information about library hours and staff.

Library rules are informed by 47.62 libraries. Ten (47.62%) of the library's webpages offered automation-related information. Only 9 (15.45%) websites provided information about library sections.

The findings of the current investigation supported those of the Hirwade study (2006)[3]. Her research shows that 65.71% of websites contain photographs in libraries. Similar findings were also reported by Ramesh Babu, Narendra Kumar, and Gopalakrishnan (2009)[4] in their research effort, supporting the findings of the current study. According to their research, around four-fifths of university websites include information on libraries.

7.5 Appearance and Aesthetic Aspects

During the study, the library's aesthetic and physical attributes were examined. The findings from the examination of the library website are presented in Table 4.

Table 4: Appearance and Aesthetic Aspects

Appearance and Aesthetic Aspects	Number	Percentage
Text Clearly legible	21	100.00
Use of graphics	13	61.90
Popup links	7	33.33
Use of Videos	0	0
Use of Animations	0	0
Scrolling text	0	0
Use of Sounds	0	0

Table 4 shows that text is clearly legible in all of the libraries. 61.90% of the colleges have their websites designed with graphics. Only 33.33% of the libraries have popup links. No one library provides multimedia aspects like videos, audio, scrolling text, and animations. Only external multimedia resources are linked.

7.6 Library Staff Details

The information about library staff that is available on university libraries' websites is shown in Table 5.

Table 5: Library Staff Details

Library Staff details	Number	Percentage
Designation and Number of Staff	11	52.38
Name of the Person & Designation	10	47.62
Postal Address	3	14.28
Mobile Number	15	71.43
E-Mail	15	71.43
Bio data of authorities	1	4.76

Table 5 shows that 52.38% of library web sites provide information at staff level is limited to designation and number of staff only. The staff name and designation are provided on 47.62 percent of web pages. Postal addresses provided only 14.28%. In 15 cases (71.43%), mobile numbers and e-mail were provided. It has been noted that only the Dravidians University library provides the profiles of senior library officers.

7.7 Library Collection

Information about library collections found on library websites is presented in Table 6.

Table 6: Library Collection

Library Collection	Number	Percentage
Total Collection Number	17	80.95
Only list of various kinds of Resources	16	76.19
Kind of Resources & Number	11	52.38
Detailed Information of the Collection	1	4.76

Table 6 shows that information regarding the library's collection is provided by 17 libraries. About 76.19% have provided only a list of various kinds of documents. The only list of various kinds of documents provided by 16 libraries (76.19%) and 52.38% of them has revealed the type and number of the documents. Only one library provided detailed information about the collection. The findings of the current study supported those of Hirwade's (2006)[3] study, which found that 80% of conventional universities' web pages contain library collections.

7.8 Library Services

During the study, the information about library services provided on the library pages of engineering college websites was examined. The findings are presented in Table 7.

Table 7: Library Services

Library Services	Number	Percentage
List of library services only	14	66.67
Each service is explained briefly	7	33.33
Each service is explained in details with additional Hyperlink	1	4.76

Table 7 shows that 66.67% of university libraries provided details on the variety of services they offer. Each library service is explained briefly in 33.33% of the web pages. Only the Acharya Nagarjuna University library provides each service has a detailed description and further links.

7.9 E-Resources and other Services

The information on e-resources and other services listed on the library pages was examined. Table 8 reports the observations.

Table 8: E-Resources and Other Services

E-resources and Other Services	Number	Percentage
Access to e-journals	16	76.19
Access to E-books	16	76.19
Links to Databases	16	76.19
Open Access Books/ Journals/databases etc.	11	52.38
OPAC Search	2	9.52
Digital Library	6	28.57
Web 2.0 Technology	2	9.52

Table 8 reveals that more than three-fourths of the libraries (76.19%) provided access to e-journals, e-books, and databases that can be accessed online on their websites. The information about open access journals, databases, etc. was provided by 52.38% of the libraries. Only 9.52% of libraries have links to their online public access catalogues on their library websites. Digital Library information is provided by 28.57% of libraries on their web pages. On the websites, just two libraries made use of web 2.0 technologies.

7.10 Search, Feedback and Retrieval Interface

On the library websites, information on the search, feedback, and retrieval interfaces is examined. The findings are listed in Table 9.

Table 9: Search, Feedback and Retrieval Interface

Criteria	Number	Percentage
Home link	19	90.48
Search	12	57.14
Feedback	1	4.76
Update information	1	4.76

The search, feedback, and retrieval interfaces that are provided on the library's website are clearly shown in Table 9. It turns out that most libraries (90.48%) have links to their homes. 12 libraries (57.14%) provided that search feature. and only one library (4.76%) provided a feedback facility and updated information. No one library provides FAQs and site maps on their websites. Madhusudhan and Ahmed conducted a similar study (2014)[11]. It shows that there was just one library that offered FAQs. Haneefa and Venugopal (2010)[12] did a study of a similar nature and found that many libraries offer a site map and search function on their websites.

8. Suggestions

- University websites should include a separate library link.
- University websites should include a separate library home page.
- It should be mandatory to update websites regularly.
- It should be easy to navigate.
- OPAC should be searchable
- Library collection link should provide detailed information about print and electronic resources.
- Each service and section of the library should be discussed in details with further hyperlinks.
- The website should have a FAQ, sitemap, and search function to improve accessibility.
- There should be developed certain standards for the design of university websites and their library webpages.

9. Conclusion

The evaluation of state university library websites in Andhra Pradesh reveals significant disparities in the quality, content, and functionality of these digital platforms. The survey found that although the majority of university websites offered basic information about their libraries, such as contact information and service offerings, multimedia elements, thorough staff biographies, and thorough descriptions of library holdings were conspicuously absent. Furthermore, only few libraries provided cutting-edge features including frequent updates, feedback choices, and online public access catalogues (OPAC). These gaps demonstrate the necessity for a more methodical and approachable approach to the design of library websites in order to guarantee that these platforms can function as efficient means of disseminating information and encouraging user participation.

Several significant changes are recommended in order to improve the effectiveness and user experience of these library websites. These include the development of specific library homepages, the inclusion of searchable OPACs, and the delivery of comprehensive details on print and digital resources. Additionally, the report suggests adding crucial navigational aids like sitemaps, search features, and FAQs, all of which may greatly increase accessibility. In order to guarantee uniformity, dependability, and frequent updates, university libraries must set design guidelines for their websites. The websites of Andhra Pradesh's state university libraries can better play the role as essential resources for researchers, teachers, and students by solving these issues.

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