

# Selection and Acquisition of E-resource Collection in Selected Libraries of R&D Institutions in Kolkata city: A Survey of Current Practices

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## Abstract

*The study evaluates various aspects of current practices of selection and acquisition of e-resources in selected libraries of R & D institutions in Kolkata city. Selection of information resources is the core collection development function and the objective is to satisfy user needs. The study highlights the responsible authority, method, criteria, availability and mode of subscription of e-resources in R & D libraries. The emergence of e-resources have changed role of selectors and now selectors must address the new issues of access, technological, licensing and pricing concerns as part of the selection and acquisition processes. For planning, selection and acquisition of e-resources, it is recommended to assign a 'acquisition library staff' post who have knowledge about the latest issues and challenges of e-resources.*

**Keywords:** E-resources; Acquisition; R & D Libraries; Collection Development.

## 1. Introduction:

In the present ICT based academic environment, the explosion of information, in multidimensional form has urged the libraries to adopt new philosophies and technologies for developing relevant collection. Today, e-resources play an important role for the creation, storage and dissemination of scholarly information. E-resources are available in different forms i.e. e-journals, e-books, full text (aggregated) databases, indexing and abstracting databases, reference databases, numeric and statistical databases, e-theses and dissertations. The Anglo American Cataloguing Rules-2 defined electronic resources as machine readable data file; “a body of information coded by methods that require the use of a machine (typically a computer) for processing” (Kumbar & Hadagali, 2007, pp. 33-43).

‘Collection’ means the holding of materials. Collecting latest documents relevant to the aims and objectives of the parent organization within the constraints of the available funds and infrastructure is the most important task for any library. Acquisitions work begins with planning and selection of materials. Ranganathan’s five laws still provide the basic ideas that decide the principles of effective selection of reading materials. Chatterjee (2011) mentioned some important criteria for consideration of acquiring of information resources i.e., relevance, quality, currency, format, duplication, content, price and cost effectiveness. According Gelfand, acquisition programme is a plan for carrying out the objectives of the library with respect to the development of collection. It should be a long-range plan, flexible in nature and subject to periodic review and revision (Khan, 2013). Today’s e-resource raised some new issues and challenges and has changed the traditional concept of collection building. There is a perceptible shift from ownership to access based library model. Now, library just gets the permission to access the content under certain terms and conditions laid down in the license agreement but they cannot own the content of e-resources.

## **2. Review of related literatures:**

Raza & Eqbal (2003) in their study stated that selection of e-journals involve a large number of additional issues i.e., networking, hardware and software compatibility, availability of documentation, licensing, access, quality, training, retrieval, search reliability, availability of vendor and support etc.

Hatua & Geetha (2004) showed in their study that a library can access maximum number of journal titles through aggregators from various publishers without direct agreement with the publishers. Aggregator removes the need to negotiate a set of individual licenses and prices with a number of different journal publishers. But before getting the license or going for agreement, library should be careful and follow some check list.

According to Kiondo (2004) selection of e-resources is a complex process because there is an array of related factors that need to be considered such as equipment, costs, printing charges, technical and vendor support. Other issues include content, speed and effectiveness of use, volume of use and networked access for remote locations, license restrictions on access as well as maintenance of hardware and software.

Maharana, Chowdhury & Dutta (2004) surveyed R & D libraries of Kolkata city and revealed that the libraries subscribed various kinds of e-information resources. Subject relevance, quality to meet users' need, authenticity of information was the most important criteria for selection of resources. It also showed that most libraries depend on users and faculty recommendation for the selection of e-resources.

Kaur & Satija (2007) discussed various trends in collection development in digital environment. They revealed that the major challenges for collection building of e-resources are: complicated procurement, preservation system, technological obsolescence, financial constraints and access related problems etc.

Kumbar & Hadagali (2007) in their paper stated that the current trends in electronic environment suggest a complete revolution in the status of collection development policy. The library of the future will be more a portal through which students and faculty will access the vast information resources of the world. It will concentrate on access and knowledge management rather than on physical ownership of materials.

Das (2010) addressed the acquisition of electronic information resources and its collection development policy. A three step strategy is put forwarded to introduce e-resources in library i.e. link of library websites to open e-resources available freely in public domain, become a part of existing library consortia and recruit an electronic resources acquisitions librarian for independent subscription.

Tyagi (2015) in his study revealed the current practices of e-resources related to acquisition, selection and mode of procurement, promotion and development policy of Management Libraries in National Capital Region (NCR) of Delhi. He reported that subscription of databases is very popular among e-resources and subject relevancy is the main focus area for selection of e-resources.

### **3. Objectives of the Study:**

The objectives of the present study are to:

- i. study the methods used for selection of e-resources and criteria followed for selection of e-resources in libraries of R &D institutions.

- ii. reveal the availability of e-resources, mode of subscription and participation in different consortia for acquiring e-resources in libraries of R &D institutions of Kolkata city and
- iii. explore the current practices of selection and acquisition of e-resources in R & D libraries of Kolkata city.

#### 4. Scope and Methodology:

The present research study is restricted and limited to only libraries attached with Central Govt. research and development (R & D) institutions in Natural Sciences and Technology discipline in Kolkata city, West Bengal. Nine such libraries attached with R & D institutions have been selected for the present study, in which it has been tried to find out the planning, policies and strategies adopted by these R & D libraries for building and managing e-collections.

Data has been collected through the survey of selected libraries attached with the central R & D institutions by using questionnaire and interview methods. Furthermore, annual reports and websites of respective institutions are also consulted and scanned to collect necessary data for the study. The data obtained from the above sources were recorded separately and then used MS-Word and MS-Excel to organize and tabulate the necessary data for the study.

**Table 1: List of R&D Institutions in Kolkata city.**

Sl. No.	Name of the R & D Institutes	Funding Agency
1.	The Bose Institute (BI)	The Department of Science and Technology (DST)
2.	Central Glass and Ceramic Research Institute (CGCRI)	Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR)
3.	The Central Inland Fisheries Research Institute (CIFRI)	Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR)
4.	Indian Association for the Cultivation of Sciences (IACS)	The Department of Science and Technology (DST)
5.	Indian Institute of Chemical Biology (IICB)	Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR)
6.	Indian Statistical Institute (ISI)	Ministry of Statistics & Programme Implementation (MSP)
7.	The Saha Institute of Nuclear Physics	Department of Atomic Energy (DAE)

	(SINP)	
8.	S. N. Bose National Centre for Basic Sciences (SNBNCBS)	The Department of Science and Technology (DST)
9.	Variable Energy Cyclotron Centre (VECC)	Department of Atomic Energy (DAE)

## 5. Data Analysis and Interpretations:

The primary data was collected through structured questionnaire from the respondent librarians and the secondary data was collected from the websites and annual reports of R & D institutions. The collected data on various aspects of current practices of selection and acquisition is then analyzed and interpreted in the following sections:

### 5.1. Distribution of Library Committee and sub-committee in libraries of R & D institutions:

Table-2 presents the distribution of library committee, collection development sub-committee and separate acquisition library staff in R & D libraries of Kolkata city. It is seen from the table that every R & D library has a library committee to function efficiently and effectively. But yet no library has formed collection development sub-committee or separate e-collection development sub-committee.

**Table 2: Distribution of Library Committee and sub-committee in libraries of R & D Institutions.**

Committee	Name of the R & D Institutes								
	BI	CGCRI	CIFRI	IACS	IICB	ISI	SINP	SNBNCBS	VECC
Library Committee	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Separate CD sub-committee	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×
Separate E-CD sub-committee	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×

## 5.2. Selection of E-resources:

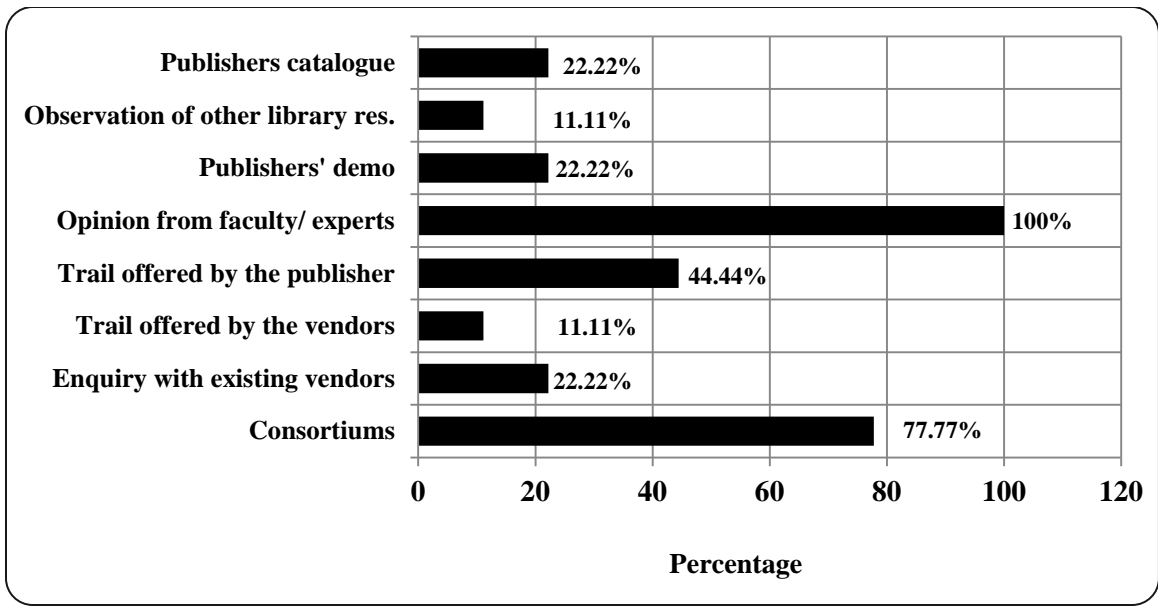
Table 3 illustrates the distribution of responsible authority for planning and selection of e-resources in libraries of R&D institutions. It is evident from the table that Library committee plays the significant role for selection of e-resources and Librarian acts as an important member in this committee for planning and selection. In case of VECC and CGCRI, subject experts also play an important role to take the decision for selection of e-resources. It is very disappointing to note that these nine R & D libraries do not have any acquisition library staff for planning and selection of e-resources.

**Table 3: Distribution of responsible authority for planning and selection of e-resources in libraries of R&D Institutions.**

Responsible Authority	Name of the R & D Institutes								
	BI	CGCRI	CIFRI	IACS	IICB	ISI	SINP	SNBNCBS	VECC
Library Committee	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
Subject Expert	×	√	×	×	×	×	×	×	√
Librarian	×	×	×	√	√	×	×	×	√
Acquisition Library Staff	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×

## 5.3. Methods for Selection of e-resources:

Table 4 and figure 1 reveal the distribution of selection method of e-resources in libraries of R & D institutions. SINP consider maximum six (06) methods to select e-resources followed by VECC and IACS library with 5 methods. All the respondent librarians (100%) confirmed that they select e-resources based on ‘opinion from faculty/ experts’. This is followed by ‘consortiums’ methods (77.77%) and ‘trail method offered by publishers’ (44.44%).



**Figure 1: Methods used for selection of e-resources in libraries of R & D Institutions.**

**Table 4: Distribution of methods used for selection of e-resources in libraries of R & D Institutions.**

Tools	Name of the R & D Institutes									Total Population 100%
	BI	CGCRI	CIFRI	IACS	IICB	ISI	SINP	SNBNCBS	VECC	
Publishers catalogue	--	--	--	√	--	--	√	--	--	22.22
Observation of other library resources	--	--	--	--	--	--	√	--	--	11.11
Publisher's demo	--	--	--	√	--	--	--	--	√	22.22
Opinion from faculty/experts	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	100
Trail offered by the publishers	--	√	--	√	--	--	√	--	√	44.44
Trail offered by the vendors	--	--	--	--	--	√	--	--	--	11.11
Enquiry with existing vendors	--	--	--	--	--	--	√	--	√	22.22
Consortiums	√	√	√	√	--	--	√	√	√	77.77
Total =	2	3	2	5	1	2	6	2	5	



#### 5.4. Criteria for selection of e-resources:

Table 5 and figure 2 depict the distribution of criteria used for selection of e-resources. It is seen from the table that 'subject coverage and relevance' is the most preferred criteria i.e. 88.88% for selection of e-resources. This is followed by 'full text availability in PDF or HTML' and 'cost effectiveness' with 55.55% each respectively.

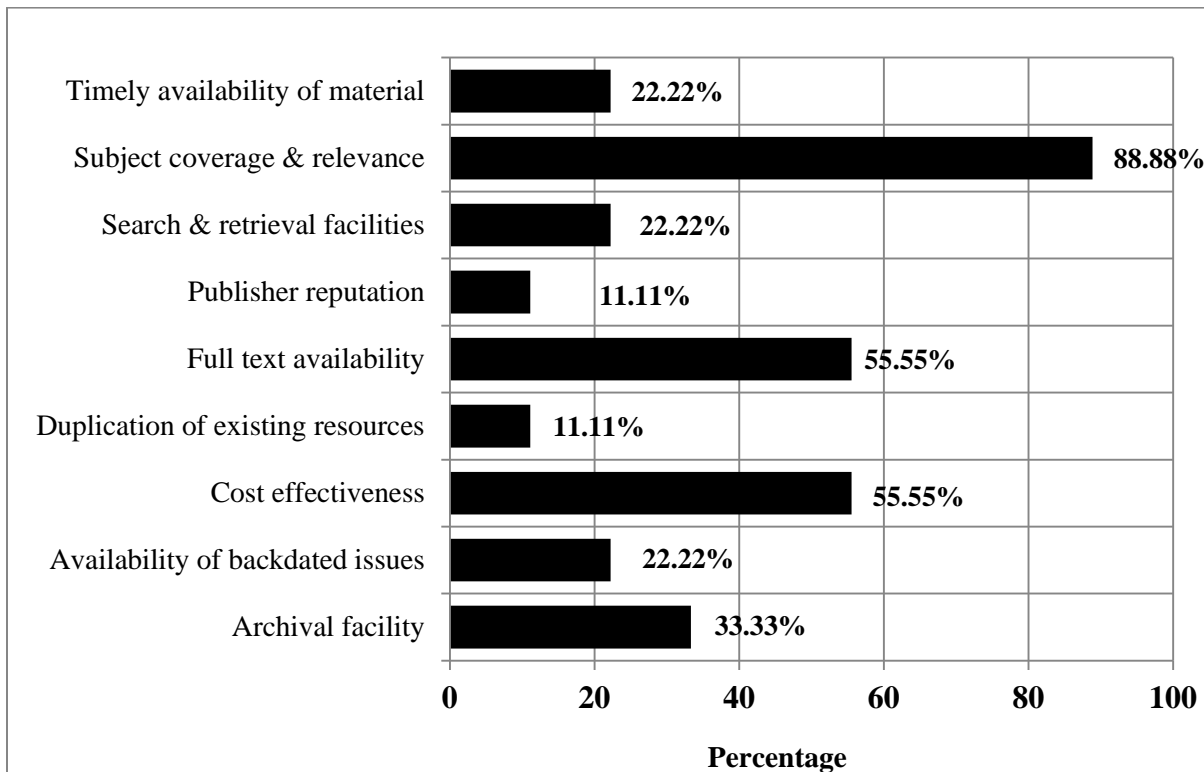


Figure 2: Criteria for selection of e-resources in libraries of R&D Institutions.

**Table 5: Distribution of criteria used for selection of e-resources in libraries of R&D Institutions.**

Criteria	Name of the R & D Institutes									Total Population 100%
	BI	CGCRI	CIFRI	IACS	IICB	ISI	SINP	SNBNCBS	VECC	
Archival facility	--	√	--	--	--	√	--	√	--	33.33
Availability of backdated issues	--	--	--	√	--	--	--	√	--	22.22
Cost effectiveness	√	√	√	--	--	--	√	√	--	55.55
Duplication of existing resources	√	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	11.11
Full text availability in PDF or HTML	--	√	--	√	--	√	√	--	√	55.55
Publisher reputation	--	--	√	--	--	--	--	--	--	11.11
Search and retrieval facilities	--	--	--	--	--	--	√	--	√	22.22
Subject coverage and relevance	√	√	√	√	√	--	√	√	√	88.88
Timely availability of material	--	--	--	--	--	√	--	--	√	22.22

### 5.5. Availability of e-resources:

Table 6 states the availability of e-resource collections in libraries of R & D institutions. All the R&D institutes library under DST and CSIR have maximum e-journal collections as they have the membership of NKRC consortium (National Knowledge Resource Consortium). ISI has maximum 1, 30,000 (approx.) of e-books collections followed by SINP library with 1260 e-books and IACS library with 500 e-books. BI has maximum 15 databases collections followed by ISI with 12 databases. Furthermore, SINP library have maximum 173 e-theses and 1115 CD-ROM/ DVD collections.

**Table 6: Distribution of e-resource collections in libraries of R&D institutions.**

Name of the R&D Institutes	Collection of E-resources				
	E-journals	E-books	Database	E-theses	CD-ROMS/ DVD
BI	7550+	190	15	130	--
CGCRI	7000+	--	4	--	--
CIFRI	3000+	--	1	--	--
IACS	7000+	500	8	--	300
IICB	7146+	--	4	--	743
ISI	2,500+	1,30,000	12	--	750
SINP	2788	1260	5	173	1115
SNBNCBS	7035+	--	5	--	40
VECC	51	15	5	30	180

### 5.6 Mode of subscription of e-resources:

Table 7 demonstrates the distribution of mode of subscription of e-resources in libraries of R & D institutions. It is seen from the table that all libraries i.e. 100% use 'consortia method' to subscribe e-resources and 88.88% libraries also subscribe e-resources 'directly from

publishers'. All the respondent librarians informed that except exclusive 'agent/ vendor', they doesn't prefer 'agent/ vendor' for subscription of e-resources.

**Table 7: Distribution of mode of subscription of e-resources in Libraries of R&D Institutions.**

Mode of subscription	Name of the R & D Institutes									Total
	BI	CGCRI	CIFRI	IACS	IICB	ISI	SINP	SNBNCBS	VECC	
Through direct	√	√	×	√	√	√	√	√	√	08
Through consortia based	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	√	09
Through Agent/ vendor	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	×	00

### 5.7. Consortia Approach in Acquisition of e-resources:

Table 8 explores that all the libraries of R & D institutions except ISI have centrally funded consortia membership for subscription of e-resources. All DST and CSIR libraries i.e. BI, IACS, SNBNCBS, CGCRI, IICB have NKRC (National Knowledge Resource Consortium) membership and CIFRI have CeRa (Consortium for e-resources in Agriculture) membership for subscription and acquisition of e-resources. Further, BI has taken FORSA membership for acquiring of additional e-resources. VECC and SINP have DAE consortia membership whereas ISI does not have any centrally funded consortia membership. ISI subscribe e-resources directly from publisher or exclusive agent.

**Table 8: Participation in centrally funded consortia by the libraries of R&D Institutions.**

Consortia	Name of the R & D Institutes								
	BI	CGCRI	CIFRI	IACS	IICB	ISI	SINP	SNBNCBS	VECC
NKRC	√	√	--	√	√	--	--	√	--
CeRA	--	--	√	--	--	--	--	--	--
DAE	--	--	--	--	--	--	√	--	√
FORSA	√	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

## 6. Conclusion:

In the present digital environment, e-resource collection form an important part of R & D library collection along with traditional print collection. The analysis clearly indicates that there is a shift in the collections of these libraries towards e-collections and a huge amount of money has been spending for e-resources. All the R & D libraries select e-resources based on ‘opinion of expert/ faculties’ and ‘subject coverage & relevance’ is the most preferred criteria for acquiring of e-resources. The phenomenal growth of consortia over the past decade has accelerated the use of e-resources among participating libraries. All the R & D libraries except ISI have the membership of centrally funded consortia. Besides, additional need based e-resources have been purchased directly from publisher/ exclusive agent.

The growth and popularity of e-resources has forced to review the library services and structures. Libraries now need new guidelines to address the changing issues of developing an effective e-collection. Separate budget should be allotted for e-resources to procure new e-resources and renewal of existing e-resources. Further, a comprehensive written collection development policy of e-resources must be framed and maintained by the libraries to set a standard practices for selection, acquisition and management of e-resources. In many R & D libraries, supporting staff is inadequate and the personnel serving at a lower hierarchy are less qualified which is harming the quality of library services. Therefore, a separate skilled ‘acquisition library staff’ post may be sanctioned for planning, selection and acquisition of resources.

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