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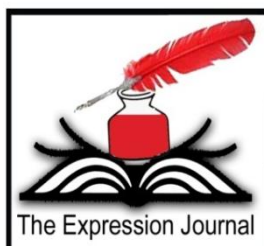
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EVALUATION OF ONLINE NATIONAL DIGITAL ARCHIVES IN SELECT DEVELOPED AND DEVELOPING COUNTRIES

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Abstract

Online National Digital Archives are sophisticated ,multi-tiered repositories of storage system providing long term access to the information .The study delves deep into its finer nuances and attempts to evaluate and analyse the collection, services, publications and necessary tools of the digital archives selected from developed and developing countries ,so as to differentiate the preceding studies and provide a fresh and up-to-dated information concerning the various developments alterations and additions made in these achieves. In its subtlety besides having through review of recorded literature, the method applied to evaluate the National Archives from developed and developing countries was “online survey” .These countries were sealed through World Trade Organization’s defined Gross Domestic Product. The websites of individual archives were visited and surveyed in order to collect maximum relevant information concerning these archives .Besides all these, “Self Checklist/schedule which was based on predefined parameter, which guided this kind of methodology .Data was analyzed by using statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) software. The study overtaken with the fact that the features governing the advancement and ease of accessing various tools of the National Digital Archives of Developed countries is highly sophisticated and sync with the latest trends of the archive as compared to the National Digital Archives of Developing countries.

Key-Words

Digital Archives, Collection, Services, Publications.

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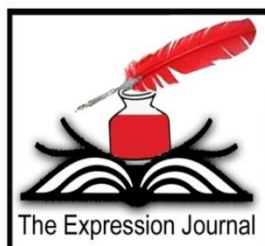
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I. INTRODUCTION

In the 21st century the overwhelming majority of newly created information is digital. The digital collections of collecting institutions such as archives, libraries and museums consist of either digitized or 'born digital' content. The belief that digital objects can be managed with the same methodologies developed over the years for physical objects is misconstrued. While digital objects are easier to copy, transfer and repackage, they present new risks and challenges, and are not inherently easier to preserve, or give access to, over the long term. A Digital Archive fulfils the same role in a digital world as traditional archives have in the paper world. It is broader than a digital repository storing digital items. It ensures that digital records are professionally created, managed and preserved with their content, structure and context intact. This supports the evidential integrity of the record, accessibility and usability over time. It encompasses the technical infrastructure, standards, policies and procedures and support services for managing and providing access to digital objects and their associated metadata.

Digital archive is a repository that stores one or more collections of digital information objects with the intention of providing long-term access to the information. A digital archive can be a sophisticated, multi-tiered storage system. Digital archiving aims to preserve the accessibility of digital records through time. Digital Archiving helps in the identification, appraisal, description, storage, preservation, management and retrieval of electronic records, including all of the policies, guidelines and systems associated with those processes, so that the logical and physical Integrity of the records is securely maintained over time.

II. Statement of the Problem

Digital archive bestow sustenance to every systematic investigation so as to explore and establish

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the facts and simultaneously provides an intellectual and problem oriented platform for distinguishing differentiating the historical facts with challenging and demanding trials, digital compilations are intricately integrated and legally attested records of lasting value which are preserved so that they are readily accessible. Digital archives are live life-line and active connections connecting the marvelous and magnificent works of scholars, researchers and intellectual of past with the present .National Digital Archives are treasure houses of a nation and as such are highly valued and preserved. Many such National Archives makes their rich collections available online. The study thus attempts to evaluate collections and services available in select online National DigitalArchives.

III. Scope

The scope of the study is confined to the evaluation of Collections and Services available in online National Digital Archives from select developed and developing countries.

IV. Objectives

The main objectives of the study are:

1. To identify different online National Digital Archive in selected Developing and Developed countries.
2. To document relevant information about such online National Digital Archives.
3. To have a detailed analysis /assessment of National Digital Archive by distinctive /exclusive framework or Parameters.

V. Methodology

The methodology applied for identification of online National Digital Archives from Developed and Developing countries was based on online survey. The Developed and developing Countries were identified through World Trade Organization (WTO) based on Gross Domestic Product (GDP). The websites of individual archives were visited and survey in order to collect maximum relevant information pertaining to such archives. The methodology materialized for detailed analysis for national digital Archives was “Self Checklist/Schedule” based on distinctive parameter.

VI. Literature Review

The literature review reveals that many studies have been carried on various facets of digital archives ranging from collection preservation, digital archiving, use of social media etc. The main observations and revelations of such studies are presented in different headings.

Digital Archiving

Kaplan, (2000) reveals that archives are sites of objective historical truth. They became

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the major players in the business of identity construction and identity politics. However **Falk, (2003)** highlights that there has been a growing interest in digital archive development in universities, colleges and in government institutions at different levels. This has come about owing to the rising tide of digital documents created by faculty and students, growing dissatisfaction with pricing and practices in traditional journal publishing. While **Burrows, (2006)** divulges that electronic archives in any complex area deserves more attention, particularly in a library/archive setting. The study further highlights the lack of practical investigations aimed at developing guide lines for last practice and procedures for handling different kind of material.

Collection and Its Preservation

Brown, (2006) studies that the need to divert existing resources or to attract new ones, digitization is becoming a core activity in most of the archives. Archivists devote time and resources to digitizing collections and to mounting digital images online. Advantages to collection, services and users are considered in the context of the archival mission and user expectations. Digitization benefits to archive service, particularly in terms of outreach and promotion and improving services such as reprographics and creating new opportunities for cataloguing and preservation. **Wang and Chang (2014)** reveals that both pricing strategies and business models related to digital archives are very important. The preservation of digital archives permanently and making them accessible are the most important research issue. The author adopts the TRIZ method to establish a pricing strategy for digital preservation. The pricing strategy for digital preservation using an innovative method of creative problem solving theory from the perspective of the archives institutes, materials providers and consumers.

Resource Accessibility and Harvesting:

Yu, Chen and Chang (2005) studied the planning and building of union catalog and open archive initiative. The Open Archive Initiative framework has received much attention from scholars of library and information science. The sharing mechanism of open archives is important to digital archives as it allows the sharing with each other and provides user with a transparent access channel. The OAI provide a low-barrier interoperability model for service providers and data providers to communicate more easily and allow users to access information correctly and instantly. While as **Yu-shiang, (2006)** studies that different technological practices and standards which were developed for digital archives and manages existing operational process in libraries and digital archive system. To integrate digital archive system, the core of these systems revolves around XML for the standard of cataloguing markup and operates with OAI-PMH for union catalogue and distributed retrieval.

Collection/Records

Cushing, (2010) studies two research traditions in information science: archives and record management and personal information management. The author compares a corpus of archival literature written by archival community with the concepts and challenges posed by Catherine Marshall. Many of the personal digital archiving challenges that Marshall identifies are related to discussions in archival community. The author suggests that certain aspects of the archival literature may be utilized to address Marshall's identified challenges. The future

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collaborations between members of the archival community and members of the personal information management community may prove useful in addressing the challenges of personal digital archives. While as **Johnson, Ranade and Thomas (2014)** studies that the National Archive Research has shown that it is possible to digitize large volume of records to replace paper originals using rigorous procedures .Consequent benefits included being able to link across large data sets so that further records could be released. In digital archives the technical capability, plus space and cost savings will result in increased pressure to retain. However **Yakel and Tibbo (2010)** studies the conceptualization development and testing of Archival Metrics Toolkit. It supports the management of both analog and digital collection. The Archival Metric Toolkit comprised of five user based evaluation instruments for archives and special collections in colleges and universities: researcher, archival websites, online finding aids, student researchers and teaching support. This represents a first step toward standardized evaluation

Multimedia Collection:

Lalanne, Ingold, Von, Behera ,Mekhaldi and Popescu-Beli (2005) presents the four steps for creating a strong link between static documents and multimedia meeting archives. First a document centric melting environment is introduced .Then a document analysis tool is presented which build a multi-layered representation of documents/speech and document/video alignment methods. Finally a document based browsing system integrating the various alignment results.

Social Media Support

Ziyu and Haining, (2012) divulges that web2.0 technology has been applied in the digital archives management and services. Although there are some user and their lack of understanding the author thinks. At present has many advantages, relying on personal quick and convenient, zero cost the more and more users in the future. With the officers and popularity of constantly improve the management and services of digital archives will display a new vitality. Moreover **Hrubes, (2016)** studies that the focus on the use of technology in archives, libraries and museum. Twitter feeds, digitize obsolete media, provide better online access to collection, automate workflows for patron-driven requests, conduct forensic recovery of born-digital objects and manage long-term access and preservation of diverse digital collection. Similarly **Greshan and Higgins (2012)** identify web2.0 technologies likely to improve browsing ability. He revealed that web2.0 improve browsing ability for certain user groups, more fundamental improvements such as improved catalogue data were expected to be more effective . The use of web2.0 by archives has been shown to be experimental in some cases, resulting in a spread of web2.0 tools across different areas of archive website, possibly affecting user browsing experience in areas other than the catalogue.

Multilingual Support

Foster, (2013) focuses on the construction of a relevant consistent subject languages that aids in providing access to digital archives of materials for an electronic art work. The use of this framework draws attention to the character of digital archives and enables users to perceive information organization both as a form of relevance/accreditation production and exchange of information.

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Latest Trends /developments

Barrott, (2009) highlights that the trends on the archiving examine the impact of the internet on archives and archiving activity among user groups and the application that could be shaped to match these trends internet has introduced new challenges to archivists, whose roles are changing rapidly .This can be seen as daunting intimidating and something to be resisted the archival community to break the past and embrace the new user trends and find a new place at the heart of cultural activity by supporting offsite and online initiative. While **Barry, (2010)** reveals that the archivists, information managers and records managers can gain insight into current and future issues, managing electronic records by becoming good observers of changing technologies and their use by generations soon to enter the workplace approaches to technological designs for record keeping and a broader view of the potential for better integration of cultural information of all kinds in archives, libraries and museum, as a mean of better serving researchers and society. Moreover **HSU, Chen, Fan, Lin and Chiu (2015)** reveals that the appropriate disclosure of information regarding archiving can effectively improve the satisfaction of participants in the online community to archive channel richness of communication, information transparency and accessibility of archive significantly affect the brand images of archive and the trust of participants to archivists and finally affect the satisfaction of participants in the online community towards archive management.

VII. Data Analysis/Interpretation

While assessing the search interface of selected online digital archives, the study revealed there were four most important search interfaces like, Basic search, Advance search, Image search and Name search.

Search Facilities

The study found all the archives offer 'Basic search' while as 'Advance search' was offered by 70%. Image search and Name search were offered by 50% each by the selected digital archives.

Table1: Search Interface of Digital Archives.

Search Interface (Number of Archives, N=30).				
	Basic Search	Advance Search	Image Search	Name Search
Yes	30 (100)	21 (70)	15 (50)	15 (50)
No	0 (0)	9 (30)	15 (50)	15 (50)
Total	30 (100)	30 (100)	30 (100)	30 (100)

Collection Holdings

Having thorough assessment about the various collections like photographs, microforms,

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digital records, paper based records, audio-visuals, maps and charts, public records, newspapers, magazines and articles present in selected digital archive.

The facts that we deduced was that almost in every digital archive photographs, digital records, paper based records, audio-visuals, maps and charts, public records were available.

The finding also revealed that there was also a great substance of microforms and magazines & articles touching to 93% each and a good amount of the stock of newspapers comprising 83% (Table-2).

Table 2: “Collection Holding” of Digital archives.

Collection Holdings of Digital Archives(N=30)									
	Photographs	Microforms	Digital Records	Paper based Records	Audiovisuals	Maps and charts	Public Records	Newspapers	Magazines and Articles
Yes	30 (100)	28 (93)	30 (100)	30 (100)	30 (100)	30 (100)	30 (100)	25 (83)	28 (93)
No	0 (0)	2 (7)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	0 (0)	5 (17)	2 (7)
Total	30 (100)	30 (100)	30 (100)	30 (100)	30 (100)	30 (100)	30 (100)	30 (100)	30 (100)

Publication Types

Most of the digital archives were laced with ‘Newsletter’, ‘Periodicals’ and ‘Paper & podcasts’ forming 90% each. Adding more richness to digital archives was ‘News archive’ forming 87% followed by ‘Research guides’ forming 70% (Table-3).

Table3: Publications of Digital Archives

Publications of Digital Archives (N=30)					
	Research Guides	Newsletter	News Archives	Papers and Podcasts	Periodicals
Yes	21 (70)	27 (90)	26 (87)	27 (90)	27 (90)
No	9 (30)	3 (10)	4 (13)	3 (10)	3 (10)
Total	30 (100)	30 (100)	30 (100)	30 (100)	30 (100)

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Events and Activities

While analyzing Events/Conference/Seminars/Announcements etc. organized by digital archives it was clearly evident that the 'announcements' were the frequent tool used by selected digital archives constituting about 97%. The other promoting Events and activities like 'research workshop' constitute 73% and 'conference' (70%) Table-4.

Table4: Events and Activities of Digital Archives.

Events and Activities of Digital Archives				
	Research Workshop	Conference	Newspaper Clipping	Announcements
Yes	21 (70)	21 (70)	15 (50)	29 (97)
No	9 (30)	9 (30)	15 (50)	1 (3)
Total	30 (100)	30 (100)	30 (100)	30 (100)

Resource Accessibility and Harvesting

Digital archives provide the list of all archival resources/bibliographic items in a 'Catalogue'. While analyzing the 'catalogue' in selected digital archives it was revealed that they provide web catalogue and OCLC(world cat)and the study found that web catalogue was provided by 83% while as OCLC(world cat)provided by 20%.Table 5.

Table5: "Resource Accessibility and Harvesting"

Catalogue Features of Digital Archives		
	Web Catalogue	OCLC World Cat
Yes	25 (83)	6 (20)
No	5 (17)	24 (80)
Total	30 (100)	30 (100)

Access Methods of Digital Archive

In terms of accessing the information from digital archives .There were two access methods like by search and by browse.It was revealed that search method was provided by all the digital archives while as browse method was offered by 60% of the digital archives (Table 6).

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Table 6: Access Methods of Digital Archive

Access Methods of Digital Archives(N=30)		
	Search	Browse
Yes	30 (100)	18 (60)
No	0 (0)	12 (40)
Total	30 (100)	30 (100)

Browsing features of Digital Archives

Digital archive makes it easy to refine users result list to specific categories of documents by providing an essential features “Browse by”. User can browse by subjects, by places, by archival institutions, by authority record, by format, by digital objects.

The study revealed that the archives provide the browse by ‘subject’, ‘place’ and ‘digital objects’ constitute 57% each, than followed browse by ‘format’ 53% and ‘archival institutions’ and ‘authority record’ forming 37% and 33% respectively(Table 7).

Table 7: ‘Browsing features of Digital Archives’

Browse by Feature of Digital Archives(N=30)						
	Subjects	Places	Archival Institutions	Authority Record	Format	Digital Objects
Yes	17 (57)	17 (57)	11 (37)	10 (33)	16 (53)	17 (57)
No	13 (43)	13 (43)	19 (63)	20 (67)	14 (47)	13 (43)
Total	30 (100)	30 (100)	30 (100)	30 (100)	30 (100)	30 (100)

Services provided by digital Archives

Digital archives provide many fundamental services like reprography, training program, access to records, download forms, history programs, automation/ ICT etc.

Among these services surveyed ,it was found that “Access to record” was the most pioneering services provided ranking at top 90% then followed reprography 83%, history program 77%.Besides these good percentage of other services like training program 67%, automation 63% followed by download forms 43% were also featured by digital archive(Table 8).

Table 8: “Services provided by digital Archives”.

Services of Digital Archives(N=30)						
	Reprography	Training Programmes	Access to Records	Download forms	History Programme	Automation/ ICT
Yes	25 (83)	20 (67)	27 (90)	13 (43)	23 (77)	19 (63)
No	5 (17)	10 (33)	3 (10)	17 (57)	7 (23)	11 (37)
Total	30 (100)	30 (100)	30 (100)	30 (100)	30 (100)	30 (100)

Login facilities of Digital Archives

Digital archives incorporate some methods (authentication/authorization) for verifying the identity of a user before permitting the access to the requested resources. They are ‘registration’, ‘member login’ and ‘admin login’.

The findings reveal that the member login was available in most of the archives comprising 70% .while as registration and admin login comprising of 67% and 53% respectively(Table 9).

Table 9: Login facilities of Digital Archives

Login Area by Feature of Digital Archives			
	Registration	Admin Login	Member Login
Yes	20 (67)	16 (53)	21 (70)
No	10 (33)	14 (47)	9 (30)
Total	30 (100)	30 (100)	30 (100)

Information Access Mode

In terms of accessing the information from digital archives .The study reveals that the most of the information accessed by users was ‘Free’ comprising 97%.Only a small amount of Archives 4% opt to ‘subscription mode’ for retrieving the information from Digital archives(Table-10).

Table 10: “Information Access Mode” of Digital Archives.

Information Access Features of Digital Archives		
	Subscription Based	Free
Yes	4 (13)	29 (97)
No	26 (87)	1 (3)
Total	30 (100)	30 (100)

Web 2.0 Tools

To boost the effect of digital archive in today’s technological and tech-savvy world, they employ various propagating channels / web2.0 tools like Face book, twitter, Google+, LinkedIn, and RSS feed.

The finding revealed that the most effective tool put to work to its optimum capacity were electronic mail and face book forming 100% and 80% respectively followed by twitter and RSS feed forming 77% and 67% respectively, while as Google+ and LinkedIn forming 53% and 40% respectively.(Table 11)

Table 11: “Web2.0 tools” of Digital Archives

Web2.0 Tools of Digital Archives(N=30)						
	email	Face book	Twitter	Google	LinkedIn	RSS feed
Yes	30 (100)	24 (80)	23 (77)	16 (53)	12 (40)	20 (67)
No	0 (0)	6 (20)	7 (23)	14 (47)	18 (60)	10 (33)
Total	30 (100)	30 (100)	30 (100)	30 (100)	30 (100)	30 (100)

Manuscripts & Exhibition

The digital archives provide a real and practical touch to knowledge by ‘age-old manuscripts’, exhibitions and other practical activities.

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Table 12 reveals that 'manuscripts' and 'exhibitions' are very highly ,most revered and more practical feature provided by digital archives, former having 83% and later 80%.(Table 12)

Table12: "Manuscripts & Exhibition" of Digital Archives

Museum and Exhibition of Features of Digital Archives		
	Manuscripts	Permanent exhibition
Yes	25 (83)	24 (80)
No	5 (17)	6 (20)
Total	30 (100)	30 (100)

Funding Organization

To keep digital archives and their services going, they need proper and regular monetary support. This support is provided by various funding agencies and organizations like federal Govt., state Govt., institution funding

While search thoroughly this aspect of funding the study found that the institution funding provide the leading support in this respect 87%, apart from this state Govt. contributes to 78%, followed by federal Govt. 60%. (Table 13)

Funding Organization by Feature of Digital Archives			
	Federal Govt.	State Govt.	Institution Funding
Yes	18 (60)	23 (78)	26 (87)
No	12 (40)	7 (23)	4 (13)
Total	30 (100)	30 (100)	30 (100)

Table 13: "Funding Organization" of Digital Archives.

Miscellaneous Feature

Mostly digital archives provide abundant features, but still there are some features which are confined only to free archives like 'Time reference' 'projects' 'links' 'member archives' 'feedback' and 'multiple language'.

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The case study revealed that the feature of links is provided by 23 out of 30 selected digital archives having a percentage of 77% followed by 'projects and 'multiple language 'each contributory 73%

The feature of feedback is provided by just 19 out of 30 selected digital archive i.e (64%). In addition to it the features of 'member archive' and 'time reference' have least percentage of 43% and 11% respectively.

Table 15: "Miscellaneous Feature of Digital Archives"

Miscellaneous Feature of Digital Archives						
	Time Reference	Projects	Links	Member Archives	Feedback	Multiple Language
Yes	11 (37)	22 (73)	23 (77)	13 (43)	19 (64)	22 (73)
No	19 (63)	8 (27)	7 (23)	17 (57)	11 (37)	8 (27)
Total	30 (100)	30 (100)	30 (100)	30 (100)	30 (100)	30 (100)

Findings and Conclusion

Adhering to the research undertaken to studying minutely .The wholesome facets of selected National Digital Archives, counting to thirty (30) in Numbers. The following main findings are listed below-

- 1 .All selected Digital archives provided the 'Basic Search Interface' (100%), but fielded less satisfactorily among other interfaces like image search (50%).So there is dare of wooing users to these kinds of search interfaces.
2. Almost all Digital Archives have abundance of vast 'Collection Holdings' like photographs 100%,digital records 100%,newspapers 83%,magazines 93% which makes them more usable and effective in decimating information as it is .Thus rich collection substantiates their idealistic approach .
3. Though excelling in 'Digital publication' of papers and podcasts (90%) and Newsletter (90%), but there is need to gear up the momentum of publication of Research Guides (70%),so that new ,refined and innovative methods do flourish in chapters of Digital Archive.
- 4.Digital Archive remain mostly abuzz with different 'Events and Activities' like Announcements (97%),conference and research workshops (70%),but still more needs to be done in field of newspaper clippings which contribute 50% only.

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5. In context to the cataloguing features, featured by Digital archive .The study amounts to 83%, somehow stable but dismal performance is shown in the field of OCLC (worldcat)(60%).So a comprehensive methodology is to bring into effect to elevate its percentage.

6. Optimizing the search access method's to its fullest all Digital archives providing the 'search access methods' is common and more favorable than 'Browse access methods' (60%).

7. Browsing the content of Digital archiving by different features like subject ,places, format etc., is not so promising .Not so much users browse by- subject (57%),places(57%),digital objects (57%)and sufficiently less users browse by format(53%),archival institute(37%)and authority records(33%).

Conclusion:

Digital Archives are not only the basic bone of digitized system but also an ever last source of knowledge. Digital Archives revolutionized the ideology of paperless books by converting handwriting words into highly mechanized and digital form .So giving a hype and providing a safest way to record both present and past for the upcoming times.

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