



NATIONAL DIGITAL LIBRARY OF INDIA

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Abstract:

The National Digital Library of India (NDLI) is a National Mission Project initiated by the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) on education to engage, facilitate and inspire all learners across the country regardless of the age, demographics and ability. The National Digital Library of India is a melting pot of knowledge and information that holds an extensive variety of lectures, courses, archives in various media forms curated, collected and created by the best institutions of the country. It is a platform designed to make digital educational resources accessible to all citizens of the country to inspire, empower and encourage learning. The present study is an attempt to provide an overview of the National Digital Library of India to understand its advantages, features and collection in the global digital space.

Keywords: National Digital Library of India, Digital Library, National Library, E-learning.

Introduction

Human Resource Development Ministry has launched the National Digital Library of India (NDLI) project to develop a framework of virtual repository of learning resources with a single-window search facility. This enables learners to find the right resource with least effort and in minimum time. It has been projected under the National Mission on Education through Information and Communication Technology (NMEICT).

The National Digital Library of India is a virtual repository of learning resources which is not just a repository with search/browse facilities but provides a host of services to the learner community. This project, funded by the Ministry of Human Resources Development, was started on National Reading Day, on 19th June 2018 by IIT-Kharagpur

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with the aim to create a national online educational asset for students interested in research and innovation. “While procuring international content is one aspect, being inclusive and open is also important. The information should be made available in all forms, be it data, technology or content,” said Professor P. P. Das, who is the in-charge of NDLI. This project commissioned to engage, enable and inspire all learners across the country irrespective of age, demographics and ability. The initiative is an open- source single-window search platform that uses metadata to guide students and customize their search according to their individual needs. It holds a wide variety of lectures, courses and archives in various media forms curreted, collated and created with the best institutions in the country. NDLI is a melting pot of knowledge and information sorted by subject, degree of complexity, nature of media and much more. It is a platform designed to empower learners with a choice of languages, with specific resources for the differently able and with technology that learns and grows with you. Currently there are more than 17 million-plus digital resources in 200-plus languages from more than 170 institutions available through the NDL and it has wide repository across subjects and are forever growing. NDLI is an open, inclusive, digital, knowledge based and forever learning. Main objective is to make quality digital educational resources available to all citizens of country to empower, inspire and encourage learning.

Access

- NDLI can be accessed through ndl.iitkgp.ac.in
- Library can be accessed at ndp.iitkgp.ac.in. User registration is open to users from around the world.
- Contents from some popular sources are only freely accessible to registered users.
- Library has mobile app, which can be accessed by both iPhone and Android users. App is downloaded over 6.70 lakh times
- Users can search for content using various parameters like subject matter, source, content type and more. App is available in 3 languages- English, Hindi and Bengali.

File formats

Learning resources are available in multiple formats. Some of them are tabulated as follows:



Sr No	Category	File type
1	Text	PDF, HTM/HTML, DOC, PPT, XLS, TXT, ZIP, XLXS, DOCX, SGML, XML, ETC.
2.	Image	JPEG/JPG, PNG, TIF/TIFF, GIF, etc.
3.	Audio	MP3, FLAC, MP4/MPG4, etc.
4.	Video	MP4/MPG4, FLV, F4V, MPEG, AV, etc.

Main Features

- Educational materials are available for users ranging from primary to post-graduate levels.
- The major advantage of this portal is that the interface is interactive and participative.
- Repository hosts contents from multiple subject domains like science & technology, humanities, agriculture, computer science, health & medicine, engineering, social sciences, legal studies, military science, languages, literature and arts.
- More than 60 types of learning resources are available. These learning resources are available in audio, video and PDF, PPT, DOC, HTML etc. in multiple formats. These contents are either born- digital object or digital surrogate of a physical object or digital metadata of the physical object. The library also has over 95000 theses by researchers from various Indian institutes.
- 15, 00,000+ Items have been authored by 1.5 lakh authors. Students simply need to register on the online portal with their e-mail and confirm the same, following which all material will be freely accessible.
- Items are available in more than 70 languages.
- The NDLI does not store contents, it only ingests metadata for search and browse full text content is delivered from source. The library combines contents from different Indian digital repositories.
- The stakeholders of the NDLI include the content contributors such as authors, publishers, cataloguing service providers, contributing institutions. Consumers are



another set of stakeholders that can access the repository and cover students, teachers and general users, consumer institutions. And then obviously there are ministry and government who sponsor the initiative. (Das et al.,2016)

- UGC has instructed universities and other institutions to digitise the books and study material in their collections so that they can be added to the National Digital Library, and made accessible to all students across the country.
- The archive helps students prepare for various entrance and competitive exams, such as IELTS, TOEFL and GRE. Researchers can explore multiple resources from different inter-linked sources. Students are able to download technical reports, monographs, technical manuals, law and other documents, videos and even software free of cost.

Considering that huge volumes of material are available in a single place, it will help students save the time, which they would have otherwise wasted in going through multiple websites to get the required resources. Also it will be the largest national knowledge depository, accessible to everyone without any charge.

NDL India provides a single window search facilities to act as a one-stop shop for all digital resources. Information can be personalized based on the education level, choice of languages, difficulty level, media content and such other factors while other Digital libraries may not include all these choices. This is like a 'customised service' provided in a 24x7 integrated environment to suit a user's requirement and will be like a one-stop shop for all. With the NDL application, anyone can access the wide collection of e-books which are a part of the library's knowledge bank. Some of the content available on the repository includes NCERT textbooks, textbooks of 8 state education boards, IITs, IIMs, JEE, GATE, UPSC question papers/these from Indian Institute of Science, Indian Statistical Institute, IISERs, etc. Publications from the laboratories of Council of Scientific & Industrial Research (CSIR) and Indian Council of Agriculture Research (ICAR) can also be accessed online.

Issues of the NDL India

There are some issues of NDL India like responsibility for contents, technical problems, copyright challenges, digitization problems, hardware and software standards, technological obsolescence. Contents are freely available or donated/ contributed institutionally at NDL India. The accountability for validity, relevance, inclusiveness, reliability and suitability of these contents rests with the respective institution from where the contents are sourced. NDL India takes no responsibility for hosting these contents. It is



easy to find a book through search window but sometimes it is not available due to technical issues. NDL India is supposed to provide full-text of books, articles, these, etc. available to readers but copyright challenges have not made it entirely possible. Like many sources have made available their books free of cost but some sources like Springer, provide only part of it instead of full-text that requires authorization. NDL is not responsible for the digitization problems such as quality, accuracy, visibility and readability as it is the responsibility of the contributing sources to digitize the documents. There is not any standardization in formats and reading software. Multiple formats create enormous problems for service providers and confuse end users. This is the major disadvantage of the NDL India. Technical obsolescence is the inevitable progress due to the rapid advancements in technology. The sources available in today's technology can't be used with tomorrow's technology. Therefore readers have to convert the sources from one format to another but it is not a simple process and in some cases it is technically impossible.

The National Digital Library of India has long way to go to assimilate the information explosion itself in India. Being countries of millennium skilled IT enabled youth and readers. Scientific and cultural productivity of India is marching ahead with emerging new technology, economy, research and development became the destination for India and to meet the new philosophy of "Digital India" National Digital Library will serve a milestone.

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