

Editorial

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When writing an editorial today it is impossible not to comment on the effect of the pandemic on libraries and digital libraries throughout the world. Many libraries have had to close their doors to users who would normally be able to come inside to find books on the shelves on their own, and instead must limit their services to retrieving books that users have requested and to giving them out at the front desk. Without online catalogs the task would be daunting or impossible, and without other online resources services libraries would be extremely limited in what they could offer. Although the articles in this issue do not directly address how libraries have coped with the pandemic, the infrastructure that they discuss is integral to our ability to serve people who depend on the information that we manage.

M. P. Singh and P. P. Kushawaha write about technical competencies in their article on “An Assessment of Information Communication Technology Skills and Competencies of Library and Information Science Professionals Working

in Eastern State University Libraries, Uttar Pradesh: a study”. They report that their findings “have revealed that majority of the library professionals were facing problems, in some form or the other, in developing the required skills and competencies-”² In their conclusion they plead for “LIS professionals to hone their skills and competencies so that the needs of the information community can be fulfilled.”³

In an article on “An Evaluation of Using Library Resources and Services by the Agriculture Scientists in Postgraduate Agriculture College Libraries: special reference to Chhattisgarh state, India” the two authors, D. S. Mahipal and M. Verma, examine which “library resources and services are really useful” to agricultural scientists and their students.⁴ In conclusion the authors recommend that librarians not just fulfill users’ immediate needs, but that they should aim equally at developing the “entire community through offering various library services.”⁵

J. Verma and N. Ahmad write in their article on “Usage and Influence of E-resources on

¹Humboldt-Elsevier Advanced Data and Text

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³ P. 85

⁴ P. 87

⁵ P. 93

Academic Efficiency in Govind Ballabh Pant University of Agriculture and Technology Pantnagar, India” about the “influence of the use of e-resources on academic efficiency of faculty and technical staff of India’s first Agricultural University...”⁶ The findings showed that electronic journals and books are the preferred type of resource.⁷ While this may seem unsurprising, the results show us that many of our expensive resources, including databases, are less actively used.

In “Global Machine-learning Research: a scientometric assessment of global literature during 2009–18” the authors, S. M. Dhawan, B. M. Gupta, and N. K. Singh, offer a bibliometric study using the Web of Science database and note that machine learning is an intensive growth area that has evolved as a multidisciplinary field that includes artificial intelligence and Bayesian methods, as well as philosophy and psychology.⁸

In their Figure 2 “Machine learning research: global share of top 10 countries during 2009–18” India has a respectable rank between Canada and Australia.⁹ In conclusion they note that “international collaboration is critical to upgrade the quality and quantity of research and machine learning.”¹⁰

S. Khowaja and N. Fatima address a topic of broad interest in “Web 2.0 Tools: awareness and extent of use among visually impaired students.” The study used a structured survey technique that collected data from 83 visually impaired students, one third of whom had more than 3 years of experience using various tools. Among the problems that students had were screen reader compatibility and the non-availability of essential software in all languages.¹¹

I hope you will enjoy reading this issue and will learn from the articles.

⁶ P. 95

⁷ P. 102

⁸ P. 106

⁹ P. 106

¹⁰ P. 119

¹¹ P. 130