

Review of: "[General Review] Digital Transformation of Government Public Library Services in Bangladesh"

Lara Corona¹

¹ Universitat Internacional de Catalunya

Potential competing interests: No potential competing interests to declare.

The abstract points out that the topic of the potential advantages of digitizing public libraries in Bangladesh has not been investigated, but it has already been studied (For instance, see

<https://doi.org/10.34105/j.kmel.2020.12.019><https://doi.org/10.1108/DLP-03-2021-0025>.

<https://doi.org/10.1109/ICAEE.2017.8255431>)

The introduction does not provide an overview of the structure of the paper. Additionally, it does not highlight the research gap, the aim of this paper, and its contribution to advancing knowledge.

It would have been interesting to include a discussion based on previous studies about digitisation's main advantages and disadvantages.

Here are some potential advantages to consider:

1. Improved Access to Information:

Increased availability: Digitizing public libraries can make information accessible to a broader population, overcoming physical barriers.

Remote access: Digital libraries allow users to access resources anywhere, reducing geographical limitations.

24/7 availability: Digitized resources can be accessed anytime, allowing users to retrieve information outside regular library hours.

1. Enhanced Search and Discovery:

Efficient search capabilities: Digital libraries offer advanced search features, enabling users to locate relevant information quickly.

Metadata and tagging: Digitization facilitates the organization and categorization of resources using metadata and tags, making it easier for users to find what they need.

Recommendations and related resources: Digital libraries can provide personalized guidance and suggest related resources, enhancing the user experience.

1. Preservation and Conservation:

Long-term preservation: Digitization helps preserve rare and fragile materials by reducing physical handling and exposure to deterioration.

Disaster recovery: Digital copies can serve as backups, protecting valuable resources from loss or damage due to natural disasters or accidents.

1. Cost and Space Efficiency:

Reduced physical space requirements: Digitization minimises the need for extensive physical library infrastructure, saving space and costs for maintaining a large building.

Economies of scale: Digitized resources can be shared across multiple libraries, allowing for cost-sharing and reducing duplication.

1. Efficient Library Management:

Streamlined workflows: Digital libraries enable automated processes for cataloguing, lending, and tracking resources, improving overall management efficiency.

Data-driven decision-making: Digital libraries generate valuable usage data to inform collection development and resource allocation decisions.

Here are some potential disadvantages of digitizing public libraries in Bangladesh that you can explore in your research:

- Limited Internet Connectivity:

Infrastructure challenges: Bangladesh may face limitations regarding internet connectivity, particularly in rural areas, which could hinder widespread access to digitized library resources.

Affordability: The cost of internet access and digital devices may be a barrier for some individuals, limiting their ability to use digital library services.

- Technological Divide and Digital Literacy:

Technological barriers: Lack of access to digital devices, limited technical skills, and low digital literacy rates among specific population segments may hinder their ability to benefit from digitized library resources fully.

Language barriers: Language-specific digital resources may be limited, making it difficult for users who primarily speak local languages to access relevant materials.

- Exclusion of Marginalized Populations:

Socioeconomic disparities: Digitization may inadvertently exclude marginalized communities with limited resources,

exacerbating existing information access inequalities.

Accessibility challenges: Digital resources may not be accessible to individuals with disabilities unless specific measures are taken to ensure inclusive design and assistive technologies.

- Digital Divide in Content Availability:

Copyright restrictions: Digitizing copyrighted materials may be subject to legal limitations and licensing restrictions, potentially reducing the availability of specific resources.

Limited digital collection: Digitization efforts may initially focus on popular or high-demand materials, leaving less popular or niche resources underrepresented in the digital library collection.

- Loss of Tangible Experience:

Loss of physical browsing experience: Digitization may diminish the serendipitous discovery of materials through browsing physical library shelves.

Loss of traditional library atmosphere: The digitization of libraries may shift away from the standard library environment, reducing the sense of community and social interactions that physical libraries offer.

I suggest conducting a thorough literature search to find specific papers that delve deeper into these advantages and disadvantages to provide evidence from case studies or empirical research in the context of digitizing public libraries, particularly in Bangladesh

Finally, the paper does not indicate the limitations of the study, practical implications, and recommendations for further research.