EMPI Digital Library National Convention – 2007
18th – 20th March, 2007

Roadmap for Modernization of Libraries and Information Centres in the Emerging Knowledge Era

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Free Online Journals in the Field of Social Sciences: An Analytical Study

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Abstract: Defines free online journals. Lists judiciously selected Open access Journals in the field of social sciences available on WWW. The paper covers the almost all subjects coming under social sciences. The methodology adopted to find out information from the internet is described. The criteria for evaluation of free online journals discussed. The list of open access journals with their websites and bibliographic details is provided which may be useful to the scholars, students, learners, institutions, organizations.

1. Introduction

Since past few years free online digital information sources like e- journals, e- books, e-databases has increased considerably. The traditional library systems are transforming itself into hybrid information systems having a mix of digital and traditional paper resources. In the present scenario because of tech development in science and technology and information technology the form of sources and services is witnessing a drastic change. Digital library and services through electronic media are the prestigious issues of modern library concept. The user community has become more familiar with the medium over time and has started to actively bid for alternative forms of access. Technology improvement in the communication network paired with the decreasing cost of hardware, create greater incentives for innovation.

Internet information resources can be defined as resources in digital format that provide information indicator to the information and are accessible over the internet. Online availability of information enables the user to get relevant information and acquaint with latest development taking place in the respected field.
In Indian university libraries, information centers are also preparing databases of books, journals, theses etc. Online subscription to journals is becoming very popular now-a-days. On the internet several journals are freely available. In online subscription we get access to the current issue of journals along with some back volumes form part of Social Science are not listed here. A variety of different kinds of resources are available in all these subjects’ areas on the internet.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Year</th>
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<tr>
<td>1965</td>
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<tr>
<td>1984</td>
<td>2453</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2001</td>
<td>Thousands of Databases</td>
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</table>

However depth and quantum may vary from area to area.

1.1. Objective
The Objective is to provide a list of free-online journals of social sciences. It provides the users to access the latest researches in their respective field, and enables them to the latest developments and get relevant information. The free on-line journal list will also help in updating individual knowledge of the users so that they can fulfill the demand of their profession.

1.2. Methodology
Various search engines have been used for searching the free on-line journals in the field of social sciences. There are various types of search engines such as (1) General search engines like; Google.com, Excite, NorthernLight.com, Altavista.com, Lycos, ask.com, times.com, deja.com, Egroups.com etc. (2) Meta search engines like; Altaseek.com, C4.com, Metracrawler.com, Genieknows.com etc. (3) Subject specific search engines like; SOSIG, vlib.org etc. After finding out the titles of Journals these were verified from the actual sites and their details like publishers, editors, periodicity, coverage and medium of availability (print/online/CD-ROM) have been ascertained.

1.3. Criteria to evaluate the web documents/journals
The Internet hosts a lot of information resources but all sources available on the internet are not equally valuable or reliable. A search executed on an search engine such as Google or Alta vista on any topic brings out thousands of links to information resources, most of which are often found irrelevant or found to have ceased to exist.

So, it is highly recommended that page must be evaluated. Some of the criteria employed for evaluating printed information resources are also used for evaluating the internet resources. Commonly these points are known as ASTAFS.
1.3.1 Authority
First of all the author and publisher of the web documents should be identified. It is very difficult to find out the author and publisher of a website on internet but we can easily find out the organization, which hosted the site and is responsible for content generation.

1.3.2 Scope
After identifying the authority the subject covered by the website must be checked. Which authors have contributed to the website in case there are many contributors? What is the recent level of the website? Whether they links to other sites are given; if so whether they are working or not.

1.3.3 Treatment
Here we have to check whether, information given is recent or out dated.

1.3.4 Arrangement
The most common feature to be checked is the style of rendering information and the style must be easily expressive?

1.3.5 Format
We have to check that in which form the document is. Here format means basically audio, video, text and image format.

1.3.6 Special feature
After checking the above all points finally we have to see is there any specific feature associated with the document. Indexing has been done, download given etc.

Out of the above criteria of evaluation there are several alternatives also available to evaluate the online resources. These can broadly be divided into the following four categories:

- **Initial appraisal:**
  Initial appraisal of an Internet resource may be made based on the following criteria:

  **Author:** Author’s credentials, i.e. institutional affiliation, educational background, other scholarly works, experience, etc.

  **Date of publication:** Date of publication or date of last revision is an indication of currentness.

  **Edition or Revision:** Revision or updation reflects changes in the subject contents.

  **Publisher:** Publication from a university press or scholarly society is likely to be treated as of high scholarly value.

  **Title of journal:** Is the journal popular or scholarly.
Suitability of resource:
Scanning the contents and indices to determine the resource on the following criteria:

Scope and coverage: Since most of the internet resources do not have a formal introduction or preface, determining the scope and intended audience can be a daunting task. The time period covered in an information resource is also an indication of coverage.

Factual Vs Opinion: The information contents should be factual it should not be propaganda, advertisement or opinion.

Primary Vs Secondary: Access whether the information is primary or secondary in nature. Books, articles in encyclopedia, etc. are secondary sources while research articles in journals and conference proceedings are primary sources of information.

Audience: An information resource on Internet should clearly define its potential audience.

Content analysis:
It covers the following aspects:

Accuracy: The contents of a resource should be reliable and error – free.

Authority: The reputation of an author as an accomplished authority in his field of study is an important criterion of evaluation. An author’s affiliation to an organization of repute is also an indication to his/her authority.

Objective: Information contents of a resource should be factual, unbiased and written most objectively.

Currency: The date of last update given on the site indicates currency of a resource.

Completeness: The information contents of a website should be complete and comprehensive.

Structure and Presentation:
It covers the following aspects:-

Writing Style: In general, the text should be easy to read and should follow the basic rules of grammar, spelling and literacy compositions.

Structure: The information resource should be organized logically with major points or headings clearly presented. The resource should follow the basic principles of graphic design, wherever applicable.

Design and Layout: Layout and design of a website should communicate a sense of location to the user, based on apparent patterns and consistent use of visual element such as headings.
Easy to Use: The information source should be easy-to-use even for a novice user.

Accessibility and Reliability: The information should be easily accessible and quick to load.

2. Process Logic

The different search engines produced different results. The use of logic and actual verification of the sites and their contents is required in every case. The process of evaluation of Internet resources consists of the following steps.

2.1 Identification of Links to Resources

Identification of information resources was done using mailing lists, distribution lists, other meta resources, internet resources newsletter, internet search engines, specialty search engines, directories of internet resources, etc.

2.2 Follow a Link to Find Out More about the Resources

Following a link to the document where the link is originally referred can provide details about the intended scope and audience and whether the information is likely to be updated and how often.

2.3 Analyses the URL

The URL (Uniform Resource Locator) provides useful information for evaluation of an internet resource.

3. Limitation

The uses of search terms and various indexing techniques by the different search engines. The comprehensive list of all free online journals could not be extensively prepared because if it is prepared extensively, the project will be much lengthy and need much more time.

4. Suggestions and Conclusion

Out of several searched e-journals it is found that many journals available in full text form, free of cost. The facility has been provided by the publishers to subscribe these journals in their e-mails and can have regular receiving without missing of issues, because these are programmed and customized according the automatic online subscription, so that a user may enjoy reading and update their knowledge base.

The following problems and difficulties were encountered and accordingly suggestions and observations are as under

- By using the leading search engines, the result for the request comes in bulk and it is not easy to find the appropriate title of journal, title of article, name of author, name of publisher, place etc.
There is no specific gateway for finding the social science journals except www.sosig.ac.uk.

The subject and titles are found scattered on the internet.

There are no standards for presenting the bibliographical details of the journals on the internet. In some journals editors, sub-editors, frequency, place etc. are not found.

Many e-journals were detected available full text in first round of search, but a few journals found missing in the second round of search, so that it very difficult to rely on the sites.

It has been observed that information should be organized on the internet in a better way, so that accurate piece of information can be found timely. The search engines should eliminate the bulk list of search by using the latest IT search techniques.

A common gateway for e-journals is required to access or search journals by subject, country, title of journal, title of article, name of author, name of publisher etc. like http://www.openj-gate.com

The publishers or the editors of the sites should provide complete bibliographical details on the site, and presentation of bibliographical details, a standard catalogue format should be followed.

The journals once published on the internet should be archived by some permanent repository, so that these can be accessed even after the original sites of the journals expires or stop their services.

The listed journals are regular in their periodicity and their articles are properly edited and published by the concerned authority with regular editors and publishers. While going through the text of these journals articles, it is noticed that highly useful information is available in these journal articles which is very highly useful for the social science professional in providing/delivering the latest researches and developments taking place in the field of social science. So this highly useful information can be utilize to the students, teachers, researchers, scholars, philosophers and all other user community for fulfill their information needs to their concerned knowledge areas.

### Free online journals in the field of social sciences: an analytical study.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sr. No.</th>
<th>Title</th>
<th>URL</th>
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<td><a href="http://www.intellectbooks.co.n.europa/index.html">http://www.intellectbooks.co.n.europa/index.html</a></td>
<td>Department of French, University of Exeter, Queen's Building, The Queen's Drive, Exeter EX4 4QH, London, UK; Tel: 01392 264221; Fax: 01392 264377; email: <a href="mailto:K.C.Cameron@exeter.ac.uk">K.C.Cameron@exeter.ac.uk</a></td>
<td>London</td>
<td>English</td>
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<td>J-SOT: Journal of Social and Political Thought</td>
<td><a href="http://www.yorku.ca/spot">http://www.yorku.ca/spot</a></td>
<td>York University</td>
<td>Canada</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>1996-</td>
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<td>American Communication Journal</td>
<td><a href="http://acjournal.org">http://acjournal.org</a></td>
<td>The American Communication Association</td>
<td>South Carolina</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>1997-</td>
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<td>Connexions</td>
<td><a href="http://www.open.ac.uk/Arts/connex">http://www.open.ac.uk/Arts/connex</a></td>
<td>Tom Dickins, School of Psychology, University of East London, Keith Francksh, Department of Philosophy, The Open University</td>
<td>London</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>1997-</td>
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<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Contemporary Issues in Early Childhood</td>
<td><a href="http://www.wwwords.co.uk/ciec/content/maincontents.asp">URL-CHttp://www.wwwords.co.uk/ciec/content/maincontents.asp</a></td>
<td>SYMPOSIUM JOURNALS a division of wwwwords Ltd PO Box 204, Didcot, Oxford United Kingdom OX11 9ZQ, (United Kingdom)</td>
<td>United Kingdom</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>2000-</td>
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<td>10</td>
<td>Culture Machine: Generating Research in Culture and Theory</td>
<td><a href="http://culturemachine.tees.ac.uk">http://culturemachine.tees.ac.uk</a></td>
<td>The University of Teeside in the USA</td>
<td>USA</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>1999-</td>
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<td>13</td>
<td>AntePodium (AP)</td>
<td><a href="http://www.vuw.ac.nz/z/antp/">http://www.vuw.ac.nz/z/antp/</a></td>
<td>Victoria University of Wellington, School of Political Science and International Relations</td>
<td>Wellington, New Zealand</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>1995-Freq:-Quartely</td>
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<td>15</td>
<td>Chimera</td>
<td><a href="http://www.usafrica.org/chimera.html">http://www.usafrica.org/chimera.html</a></td>
<td>The USA/Africa Institute, Florida, USA.</td>
<td>Florida, USA.</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>2003-Freq:-Quarterly</td>
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<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>M E R I A Journal (Middle East Review of International Affairs)</td>
<td><a href="http://meria.idc.ac.il/">http://meria.idc.ac.il/</a></td>
<td>Professor Barry Rubin, Global Research International Affairs (GLORIA) Center, IDC Israel.</td>
<td>Israel.</td>
<td>English, French, Spanish, and Turkish.</td>
<td>1997-Freq:-Quarterly</td>
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<td>No.</td>
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<td>22</td>
<td>Northwestern University Journal of International Human Rights</td>
<td><a href="http://www.law.northwestern.edu/journal">http://www.law.northwestern.edu/journal</a></td>
<td>Northwestern University School of Law, 357 East Chicago Avenue, Chicago, IL 60611-3069</td>
<td>English</td>
<td>2005-2007</td>
<td>Annual</td>
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</table>
1)  http://www.intellectbooks.com/europa/index.htm
2)  http://www.rdg.ac.uk/RevSoc/home.htm
3)  http://www.yorku.ca/spot
4)  www.anthroglobe.ca
5)  http://acjournal.org
6)  http://www.ascilite.org.au
7)  http://www.umich.edu/~historyj/index.html
8)  http://www.africa.ufl.edu/asq/
10) http://ciiss.net/html/user.php
11) http://www.hindawi.com/journals/ddns/index.html
12) http://www.siu.edu/SOCIOLOGY/journal/
13) http://www.japonesestudies.org.uk/contents/intro.html
14) http://eserver.org/clogic/interests.html
15) http://www.usafrica.org/chimera.html
16) http://www.pips.org/
17) http://www.law.northwestern.edu/journals/jihr/ssion
18) http://www.acme-journal.org/contents.html
19) http://www.iofssm.org/index.cfm
20) http://dizzy.library.arizona.edu/ej/jpe/jpeweb.html
21) http://www.webasa.org/crossroads.htm
22) http://www.law.harvard.edu/students/orgs/hrj/
23) http://meria.iidc.ac.il/
24) http://www.open.ac.uk/Arts/connex/
25) http://www.socresonline.org.uk/home.html
27) http://www.vuw.ac.nz/atp/
28) http://www.ejeg.com/about.htm
29) http://cultuemachine.tees.ac.uk
30) http://www.wwwwords.co.uk/ciec/content/maincontents.asp
31) http://vlib.org world wide web virtual library - social sciences
32) American Journal of Political Science
   www.library.iisc.ernet.in/access/wklistsper/newjournal.html
33) http://www.ap.net.com/journals or www.ap/about.htm academic press
34) http://www.clas.ufl.edu/users/gthurby/sossci/ejournal.html-Register
    of Leading Social Sciences E-journals
35) http://www.elsevier.com/homepage/sae/econworld/menu.htm- ECONbaes
    Elsevier Science
36) http://www.psycline.org/journals/psycline.html-PSYCLINE
38) Information Please -www.infoplease.com
39) International Social Science Journal