



Library for Research: The Context of Chhattisgarh

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ABSTRACT

The study "Library for Research: The Context of Chhattisgarh" explores the evolving role of research libraries in advancing higher education and knowledge creation in Chhattisgarh. As the state progresses in agricultural, medical, and technical education, libraries have emerged as vital hubs supporting research, innovation, and information access. The paper highlights the structure, objectives, and functions of various types of research libraries academic, agricultural, medical, and digital and their contributions to preserving regional knowledge, promoting digital literacy, and enabling open access to information. Drawing insights from prior studies, the review of literature indicates that libraries in Chhattisgarh are transitioning toward hybrid and digital models while facing challenges such as inadequate funding, limited ICT infrastructure, and skills gaps among professionals. Technological transformations through automation systems (KOHA, SOUL 3.0), e-resources (e-ShodhSindhu, NDLI), and institutional repositories (Krishikosh) are reshaping the research landscape. The paper concludes that research libraries play an indispensable role in fostering academic excellence, cultural preservation, and socio-economic development. Strengthening digital infrastructure, promoting collaboration, and creating a state-level research library network are recommended to make Chhattisgarh a model for library-based research in central India.

KEY WORDS

Research Library, Academic Libraries, Digital Library, Higher Education, Research Support, ICT.

INTRODUCTION

Libraries form the cornerstone of academic and research institutions, functioning as reservoirs of knowledge, centers of innovation, and spaces for intellectual growth. In Chhattisgarh a state renowned as the “Rice Bowl of India” with rich cultural, educational, and natural resources libraries are critical in supporting research across fields such as agriculture, forestry, mining, tribal studies, biodiversity, and rural development.

Since its establishment in 2000, Chhattisgarh has experienced significant growth in higher education and research. The development of universities, technical colleges, and agricultural institutes has increased the demand for well-equipped research libraries. Institutions like Indira Gandhi Krishi Vishwavidyalaya (IGKV), Raipur; Pt. Ravishankar Shukla University; IIT Bhilai; and AIIMS Raipur rely on libraries as intellectual hubs that provide access to global databases, local archives, and scientific information.

Meaning and Significance of Research Libraries

A research library is specifically designed to support advanced academic inquiry and knowledge creation. Unlike public libraries, which cater to general readers, research libraries serve faculty, postgraduate students, and scholars engaged in generating new insights. According to the American Library Association (ALA), a research library “maintains extensive collections of scholarly materials and provides comprehensive services to support research.”

In Chhattisgarh, research libraries are crucial for strengthening the research ecosystem, ensuring access to credible sources, and preserving regional knowledge—including tribal culture, forest biodiversity, and indigenous agricultural methods. They enable scholars to address state-specific issues, such as enhancing rice productivity, promoting sustainable mining techniques, and studying forest-based livelihoods, thereby contributing to socio-economic development.

Objectives and Functions of Research Libraries in Chhattisgarh

The primary objectives of research libraries in the state include:

- 1. Supporting Academic Research:** Providing access to resources and services that aid researchers in data collection, analysis, and dissemination.
- 2. Preserving Local Knowledge:** Documenting tribal cultures, regional dialects, biodiversity, and indigenous agricultural practices.
- 3. Providing Digital Access:** Offering online journals, databases, and repositories for remote access to international and national research.
- 4. Promoting Research Ethics:** Training scholars in citation practices, plagiarism prevention, and ethical research conduct.
- 5. Encouraging Collaboration:** Facilitating interlibrary cooperation through networks like INFLIBNET, DELNET, and NDLI.

Libraries such as the Central Library of IGKV, Raipur, maintain extensive collections of agricultural research papers, theses, and reports that are invaluable to students and researchers.

Types of Research Libraries in Chhattisgarh

- 1. Academic Research Libraries:** Serve universities and colleges to support teaching, learning, and research.
 - Pt. Ravishankar Shukla University Library, Raipur
 - Guru Ghasidas Vishwavidyalaya Library, Bilaspur
 - IIT Bhilai Central Library

2. Focus on applied research in agriculture, animal sciences, and environmental studies.
 - IGKV Library, Raipur
 - Krishi Vigyan Kendra (KVK) Libraries
3. **Medical and Health Science Libraries:** Support research in medicine, biotechnology, and public health.
 - AIIMS Raipur Central Library
 - Chhattisgarh Institute of Medical Sciences (CIMS), Bilaspur
4. **Special Libraries:** Concentrate on niche areas like tribal studies, archaeology, and environmental research.
 - Tribal Research and Training Institute Library, Raipur
5. **Digital Libraries:** Provide access to e-resources through platforms such as NDLI, Krishikosh, and e-Granth for agricultural and scientific research.

Review of Literature:

- **Academic Libraries and State Development:** Verma & Shukla (2012) highlighted that university libraries in Chhattisgarh play a pivotal role in research, especially in agriculture and technical disciplines.
- **Digital Transformation Challenges:** Tiwari (2016) examined the shift to digital resources in central Indian libraries, noting constraints like limited funding and ICT skill gaps.
- **Agricultural Research Support:** Sinha & Dewangan (2019) emphasized the contribution of agricultural libraries, especially IGKV, in facilitating rice research and crop diversification studies.
- **Library Automation and INFLIBNET:** Patel & Sahu (2020) discussed the adoption of INFLIBNET's e-ShodhSindhu, providing cost-effective access to international journals.
- **Institutional Repositories and Open Access:** Chandrawanshi (2021) analyzed the growing trend toward digital repositories and open access in Chhattisgarh universities.
- **Librarians' Role in Research Skills:** Verma & Thakur (2023) highlighted the importance of library professionals in training students in citation, reference management, and plagiarism detection.

The literature underscores that libraries in Chhattisgarh are evolving toward digital, service-oriented centers, although challenges related to funding, infrastructure, and training persist.

1. **Preserving Tribal and Cultural Knowledge:** Digitization of tribal traditions, arts, and indigenous technologies.
2. **Agricultural Innovation:** Providing access to research that enhances crop productivity.
3. **Medical and Technical Research:** Advanced resources for AIIMS Raipur and IIT Bhilai researchers.
4. **Academic Development:** Supporting universities in journal publication and promoting research culture.
5. **Policy Support:** Supplying information to policymakers and development planners.

Technological Transformation

- **Library Automation:** KOHA and SOUL 3.0 systems implemented across major universities.
- **E-Resource Access:** Platforms like e-ShodhSindhu, NDLI, and Krishikosh facilitate global research access.
- **Institutional Repositories:** IGKV and Guru Ghasidas University maintain online archives of theses and publications.
- **Digital Literacy Programs:** Workshops on citation tools (Mendeley, Zotero) and plagiarism detection (Turnitin) enhance user skills.

Libraries are now hybrid centers, integrating digital and print resources for learning and research.

Challenges

1. Insufficient funding for subscriptions and digital resources.
2. Limited ICT infrastructure in rural research centers.
3. Skills gap among library professionals in digital archiving and data management.
4. Copyright restrictions limiting access to international research.
5. Preservation challenges in digitizing and maintaining historical records.

Future Prospects

- Developing a State Research Library Network connecting all universities.
- Establishing comprehensive digital repositories for theses, Government reports, and indigenous knowledge.
- Promoting open access to make research widely available.
- Creating “Smart Libraries” with AI-driven search and recommendation systems.
- Integrating libraries with policy research units for improved decision-making.

These initiatives position Chhattisgarh to become a model for library-based research development in central India.

CONCLUSION:

Research libraries are fundamental to Chhattisgarh’s academic and scientific advancement. They preserve regional knowledge, support innovation, and connect local research to global resources. Institutions such as IGKV, IIT Bhilai, AIIMS Raipur, and Pt. Ravishankar Shukla University illustrate how robust library systems elevate research quality. Continued investment in digital infrastructure and library development will be key to fostering a knowledge-driven and sustainable society.

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