

A Report on National Conference on Role of Academic Libraries for Excellence in Research (ROALER) 2018

Dr. Kshema Prakash

Deputy Librarian, Indian Institute of Technology Jodhpur

Central Library, Indian Institute of Science Education & Research Bhopal organized a *National Conference on Role of Academic Libraries for Excellence in Research (ROALER) 2018* during 18-20 January 2018. The backdrop of the conference was to come up with a wider view that Academic Libraries can play a key role in achieving excellence in research and learning. Libraries can sensitize the user community about the appropriate use of information through training, research and capacity building programs. Increasingly, more emphasis has been given for improving quality in teaching, learning and research productivity. Developments like Incubation Centers, Science Parks, Research Parks, Skill Development Centers, Startup Support Centers have increased expectations from the libraries in their respective academic institutions. As a result, academic libraries have been working hard to make themselves relevant and playing a meaningful role to fulfill the vision and mission of the parent institution. Academic libraries in their respective institutions are redefining their collection development policies, resource sharing mechanisms, new services and reconfiguring their space. It is with this concern and in order to navigate successfully through these developments, the three-day national conference on has been organized.

The major objectives of this conference were:

1. To provide an opportunity to library professionals to share their innovative ideas, experiences, new initiatives, research work, and best practices;
2. To discuss different sets of library services provided to support the research work at the parent institutions;
3. To understand as to how the academic libraries are transforming themselves in the midst of rapid Information and Communication Technology (ICT) developments;

4. To learn about the best and innovative management strategies, tools & technologies used to create and deliver research support services; and
5. To discuss current issues, recent developments and their impact, and future challenges to prepare future academic libraries for excellence in research.

Ahead of time, under the major theme of *Role of Academic Libraries for Excellence in Research*, articles falling under the following sub-themes were invited from library & information professionals in the country, for the conference.

1. Academic libraries and assessment of research;
2. Research & innovation in science & engineering;
3. Library and information services in academic libraries;
4. Technology trends for academic libraries; and
5. Demonstrating value of libraries in academic & research work.

Total 37 articles and papers were published in the conference proceedings, which was released during the inaugural session of the conference. Around 160 participants from various parts of country and different institutions, like IITs, NITs, IISERs, IIMs, CSIRs, DAE, DBT, central universities, state universities, IUCAA, INFLIBNET, RRI, etc., participated in the conference. The following paragraphs provide a detailed account of the conference.

The *Inaugural Session* was graced by dignitaries from IISER Bhopal, Dr. Jagdish Arora, Director, INFLIBNET, and Dr. T. S. Kumbar, Librarian, IIT Gandhinagar and Chair, Program Committee, ROALER2018. Post inaugural session *Keynote*

Addresses were delivered by Dr. Jagdish Arora, Dr. Ramesh Gaur from Indira Gandhi National Centre for Arts, Dr. B. Sutradhar, Librarian, IIT Kharagpur. The *Technical Session 1* had an invited talk by Dr. G. Mahesh from National Institute of Science Communication and Information Resources, New Delhi. Talking about “*Ethics in our pursuit of excellence*” followed by six paper presentations by enthusiastic authors and two product presentations. In the post lunch session, the delegates participate in a *Workshop “Embarking Journey of Excellence in Academic Libraries”*, which was conducted by Mr. Kishore Ingle from Tata Consultancy Services, Pune. The *Technical Session 2* had an invited talk from B. P. Prakash, Global Head, Information Resource Center, Tata Consultancy Services, Pune on “*Best in Class: Ensuring service excellence through process & review: TCS Libraries, a case in point*” followed by three paper presentations and two product presentations. Towards the end of the day, a *Panel Discussion* on “*Role of Library in Handling of Institute Research Performance Indicators*” was held. The panel consisted of library professionals from various IITs.

The second day of the Conference started with *Technical Session 3* which had four invited talks, two from library professionals from abroad and two more from senior librarians in India. Dr. Karrie Peterson, Head, Liaison, Instruction, and Reference Services at the MIT Libraries addressed the gathering on the topic “*The Future of Knowledge and the Academic Library Ecosystem*”. Dr. Kathryn La Barre, Professor, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign, addressed the gathering on “*Stewarding Excellence at the University of Illinois Library System*”. She is currently visiting India on a Fulbright Specialist Program. Dr. Nabi Hasan, Librarian, Aligarh Muslim

University, and Dr. Jaykumar Chockalingam, Librarian, IIT Roorkee shared their thoughts on crowd sourcing and citation analysis. Four product presentations followed thereafter. In *Technical Session 4*, Dr. Ambar Jain, Assistant Professor, Department of Physics, IISER Bhopal presented an invited lecture on topic “*Examineer.in: A Library of Assessment content and App publishing platform*”. Also, seven authored papers and four product presentations were presented. In the post-lunch session a *Workshop* on developing android apps for libraries was conducted by Darshan Shivkumar and Dr. D. P. Tripathi. Thereafter, a *Panel Discussion* on “*Innovation in Academic Libraries: Librarians’ perspective*” was held. The delegates were taken to Central Library, IISER Bhopal for a visit.

On the third day, Professor V. K. Singh, Director, IISER Bhopal, joined the gathering and addressed the delegates, followed by the *Technical Session 5*. In this session, there were two invited talks by Professor Vinita Gowda, Assistant Professor, Department of Biology, IISER Bhopal on “*Library Consortia: A hidden need in India for historical literature and efficient biodiversity studies*”, and Dr. Prabhat K. Pandey, Librarian, SNGGPGC Bhopal on “*Best Practice in Library and Information Services*”. Also, seven delegates presented their papers. The opening talk of the *Technical Session 6* was by Dr. T. S. Kumbhar on “*Predatory Publishing: What Librarians need to know and do*”. It was followed by eight paper presentations by various library professionals. The last and final *Technical Session 7* included four paper presentations. The Conference Report was read out by Dr. Kshema Prakash, Chief Rapporteur,. Thus, the well attended conference concluded successfully with a vote of thanks proposed by Dr. Sandeep Pathak, Deputy Librarian, IISER, Bhopal.