

Digital Resource Sharing and Networking of Management College Libraries

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Abstract

The purpose of the paper is to understand availability of digital resources, presence of various library networks and their resource sharing activities in management academia. It focusses on Management College libraries in Bengaluru city and covers digital resources and existing networks. The paper highlights the various library networks established for resource sharing activities, the reasons for joining such networks, and problems encountered while accessing resources during its participation. Survey method has been employed to conduct this study and stapled data related to digital resource sharing and networking in the libraries of management colleges. Total 128 questionnaires were distributed, of which 100 responded with a response rate of 78.13 percent.

Keywords: Information resources; Resource sharing; Library networking; Management college libraries; Bengaluru city

1. Introduction

Throughout their existence, libraries have been continually adopting contemporary changes in consonance with the developments in the educational system influenced by media changes and the technological developments. In earlier periods, sharing of resources was initiated on cooperation basis and gradually consortia networks emerged to meet the greater demands of the users. Information became currency for the knowledge economy, and the revolution in the information industries led by incessant technological growth leading to digitization of libraries of resources and rejigging of various services. The growth of information has resulted in scattering of information over a wide variety of literature, rising of prices of documents, ever growing demand of patrons, and inadequacy of effective skills among library staff to cope up with the situation. These developments have posed problems to libraries in acquiring information resources in accordance with user needs which created wide gap between user access and resources. Current innovations of ICT provided a potential environment for enriching information resources, and introduction of new information services. However, the inability of librarians to cope up with the situation forced them to seek for alternate ways.

2. Resource Sharing in the Digital Environment

Modern academic libraries are establishing resource sharing networks as a mode of library operation where all or part of individual library functions would be shared among several libraries. The primary objective for participating in resource sharing activities is to enhance the accessibility of resources and services at a lesser expense. Library resources always stapled with various formats of reading and non-reading materials like human capital, tools, services, methods, abstracting and indexing databases, full-text databases, cooperative acquisition, union-catalogues, and intellectual expertise (Shivalingaiah, 2003). The advancement of information technology has made significant progress in handling access of information resources and encouraged resource sharing activities between libraries. In the pace of technological improvement, present libraries derive to have great interest in mutual library cooperation at national and international level. Technologies removed all geographical barriers and provided alternative opportunities to everyone. The pressing need of resource sharing has witnessed the emergence of several local, regional, national and international level library networking such as INFLIBNET, MANLIBNET, DELNET etc.

2.1 Why Digital Networking and Resource Sharing?

Various authors have outlined the reasons for networking and resource sharing of libraries (Geronimo & Aragon, 2005; Jaswal, 2006; Etim, 2006; Dhanavandan et al., 2008; Sangeeta Kaul, 2010; Chen, 2013; Krishnappa, 2014; Sayed & Burnett, 2014; Amitabha Chatterjee, 2015). The main reasons attributed by them for establishing Digital Networking and Resource Sharing are:

- To provide a digital platform to bridge the gap among various types of libraries, and establish cooperative links among organizations, professionals and users involved in R&D and manufacturing activities in the country;
- To establish local, regional, national and international cooperation for exchange of information and expertise through digital network;
- To provide digital assistance through education programs and training for users;
- To build digital information resources and provide quick access to them.
- To offer digital-based support and services to the specialized community of users working in various subject areas;
- To enable sharing of resources and services including online lending of books, periodicals, SDI service, online union catalogue of books, periodicals, preprints/reprints, document delivery, information retrieval and dissemination;
- To ensure minimal expenditure and greater access to resources and build a global model;

- To optimize information resources through shared cataloguing, ILL services, collection development and avoiding duplication;
- For revenue generation.

3. Method of Study

In order to study the availability of digital resources and sharing of resources, survey method was employed among the management college libraries in and around Bengaluru city. Total 128 colleges were selected and questionnaires were distributed to the librarians of all the institutions. Out of these 100 were returned after filling up with a response rate of 78.13 percent. Of these, 7 were government colleges, 5 were aided and 88 were private self-financing institutions.

4. Electronic resources in Management College Libraries

In the recent past, academic libraries have been investing most of their collection building budget for procurement and archival of various electronic resources. This is mainly due to the exponential growth of electronic information resources in various formats like databases, e-books, e-journals, audio documents, audio-video, multimedia etc. These electronic formats have made it possible quick access and retrieval of information along with high storage capability. The availability of electronic resources in management college libraries in Bengaluru is presented in table 1.

The data revealed that out of 100 libraries, only 59 libraries have E-Books, 33 have audio books, 68 subscribe to electronic journals, while majority (84%) libraries possess CD/DVDs, and 62 subscribe to online databases and 36 libraries have developed institutional repositories. The

Table 1
Electronic Resources in Management Libraries

Library Type	E-Books	Audio Books	E-Journals	Databases	CD/DVDs	Institutional Repository
Govt. (N = 7)	0 (0%)	0 (0%)	2 (28.57%)	2 (28.57%)	6 (85.71%)	1 (14.29%)
Aided N = 5)	2 (40%)	1 (20%)	3 (60%)	1 (20%)	3 (60%)	2 (40%)
Private (N= 88)	57 (64.77%)	32 (36.36%)	63 (71.59%)	59 (67.05%)	75 (85.23%)	33 (37.5%)
Total (100)	59 (59%)	33 (33%)	68 (68%)	62 (62%)	84 (84%)	36 (36%)

disparity among the government, aided and private colleges is quite conspicuous. Among the 7 government colleges, none of them possesses e-books and audio books, only 2 (28.57%) have e-journals and databases. Only 1 (14.29%) has developed institutional repository. Compared to them, aided colleges are better in their collection. Out of the 5 colleges, 40 percent have e-books, 60 percent have e-journals. But they also lag behind in the subscription of databases. Private colleges are way ahead of both government and aided colleges in terms of the possession of e-books, e-journals and databases. The only area where all the different types of colleges excel is in the case of possession of CDs/DVDs. It can be seen from the data that 74 percent of libraries are yet to establish their institutional repositories.

5. Library Networks

Getting connected with other libraries to avail their resources and services can be a potential benefit for any library. These networks enhance the access to various resources, and reduce the financial burden. Further, it leads to satisfy the user demands on time without much investment. Fig.1 indicates the current library networks with other college libraries in Bangalore city. Large majority (83%) libraries of the selected population have established their networks with other libraries.

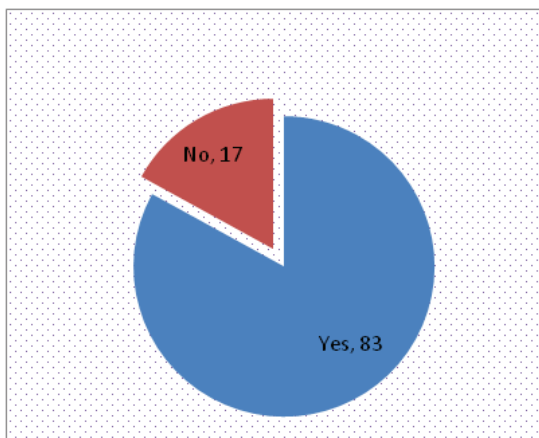


Fig. 1
Membership in present library networks

6. Membership in Existing Library Networks

It is clear from the table 2 that various connections have been established with the existing networks by the libraries for sharing resources and services.

The data shows that the networks in which the libraries have taken membership are DELNET (66%), VTU Consortium Network (37%), INFLIBNET (23%), MANLIBNET (5%), E-Shodhsindhu (3%), and PUNENET (1%). It was observed from the survey that DELNET is

Table 2

Membership in Existing Library Networks

Network Name	Libraries	Percentage
DELNET	66	66.00
INFLIBNET	23	23.00
VTU	37	37.00
MANLIBNET	5	5.00
E-SHODHSINDHU	3	3.00
PUNENET	1	1.00

very active and efficient in sharing resources and services. Hence, many libraries have opted for DELNET services, particularly for availing document delivery service (DDS). However, it is surprising that membership in MANLIBNET, a network exclusively for management is very much less.

7. Institutional Membership

Sometimes, institutional membership plays a greater role in meeting the needs of users. Small libraries, particularly, always opt for institutional membership for availing facilities like borrowing, photocopying, document delivery etc. It is learnt from the data that 68% of libraries are using membership with other institutional libraries to avail possible benefits. However, 32% libraries have not taken any institutional membership. Further, it is found that few libraries manage independently by establishing informal network with local libraries. Fig. 1 depicts that libraries' collaboration with other institute libraries.

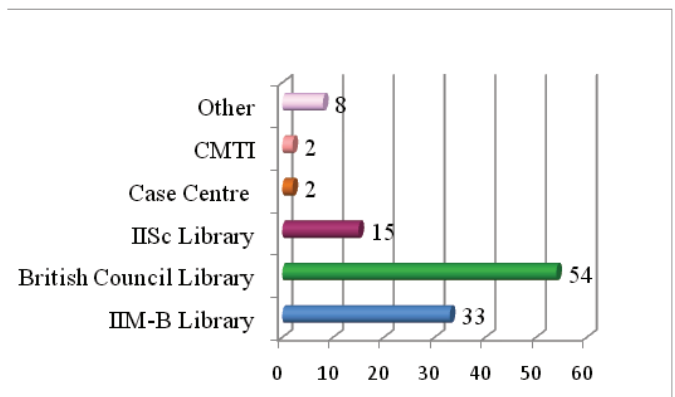


Fig 1 Institutional membership

The figure reveals that 54 percent libraries have taken membership with British Council Library (BCL), 33 percent with IIM-Bangalore Library, 15 percent with IISc Library and 2 percent each with Case Centre (CC) and CMTI membership. Only 8 percent have got tie ups with other local institutions. A sizeable number of libraries have taken membership of British Library since it enables them to avail of database facilities along with other regular services.

8. Reasons for joining existing Library Networks

It is a well-known fact that user demands are increasing and library budgets are shrinking due to lack of financial constraints. And, libraries are finding new ways to satisfy their user needs. To understand the reasons for establishing current networks with other libraries, related information was sought from the respondents and the data are presented in Table 3.

The data indicates that majority of libraries joined the network because of accessing huge resources (55, X=4.18), cannot afford to costly information (53%, X=4.03), Lack of funds (44%, X=3.56), to avoid duplication (58%,X=3.81), for developing professional network (53%,X=4.11), to avail ILL (47%, X=4.14), to get the benefit of DDS facility (53%, X=4.19), for sharing library catalogs (52%,X=4.02), user demand or requests (51%, X=3.99), and for building Institutional branding (49%,X=4.00). The calculated Mean value of all the variables lay between 3.56 and 4.19 which means that librarians have agreed or strongly agreed with the above mentioned reasons for joining the present library networks. The obtained data indicates that the standard deviation of variables are set between 0.96 and 1.12 and therefore there is not much deviation among librarians' opinion in relation to reasons for choosing their networks.

9. Problems Faced in Library Networks

Most of the libraries face problems for developing resources as per their user needs. Therefore, to meet the needs, library networks have been established to get resources on sharing basis. However, libraries do face problems while accessing resources from the established networks. To understand the kind of problems that are encountered with these networks, the related data was collected from the respondents and presented in Table 4.

The data revealed that majority of libraries are facing manpower issues (43%, X=3.76) such as lack of skills among library staff, inadequate number of staff etc. In some cases, libraries cannot provide access to information resources due to legal or copyright related issues (41%, X=3.58), Delivery related issues (34%, X=3.69) such as high cost and mode of delivery, and issues related to time constraint (32%,X=3.71) like resources are not getting in time or within stipulated period. The calculated Mean value of all the variables related to the problems lies between 3.58 and 3.76, which means that librarians have agreed or strongly agreed to the above mentioned factors as the significant problems which impact on services while availing from other libraries. The data also indicates the standard deviation of variables sets between 1.27 and 1.34, and therefore, there is not much deviation among libraries in relation to the problems faced with other library networks.

Table 3
Reasons for Joining Existing Library Network

Reasons for Joining Existing Network	SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	Standard Deviation
Avoid Duplication of resources	2	11	13	58	10	3.81	1.03
Access to huge resources	4	2	8	55	20	4.18	1.07
Document Delivery Services	2	2	11	53	24	4.19	0.96
Develop Professional Network	3	3	11	53	23	4.11	1.00
Access to Costly Information	3	2	17	53	17	4.03	1.01
Sharing Catalogs	3	3	17	52	16	4.02	1.04
User Request	2	6	16	51	17	3.99	1.04
Brand Building	2	5	21	49	9	4.00	1.12
Inter Library Loan	3	3	13	47	26	4.14	1.05
Due to Financial Constraints	3	12	29	44	6	3.56	1.08
SD = Strongly Disagree, D = Disagree, N = Neutral, A = Agree, SA = Strongly Agree							

Table 4
Problems faced with Library Networks

Type of Problem	SD	D	N	A	SA	Mean	Standard Deviation
Manpower Issues	3	18	18	43	2	3.76	1.27
Legal Issues	4	11	24	41	6	3.58	1.34
Delivery Issues	2	23	23	34	3	3.69	1.32
Time Constraints	2	17	28	32	5	3.71	1.33
SD =Strongly Disagree, D =Disagree, N =Neutral, A =Agree, SA =Strongly Agree							

10. Major Findings of the Study

- Majority i.e. 83% libraries are part of established networks to avail resource sharing benefits.
- It is observed that most of (66%) of management libraries have connections with DELNET, VTU Consortium Network (37%), INFLIBNET (23%), for availing offered services and resources.
- Many libraries have taken institutional membership, mostly with British Library (54%) mainly due to the access provided by them to their online resources, followed by IIM-B with a percentage of 33.
- The main reasons for participating in the library networks are:
 - To access huge resources of the other libraries (55%)
 - Cannot subscribe or purchase costly information (53%)
 - Due to Lack of funds (44%)
 - To avoid duplication (58%)
 - For developing professional network (53%)
 - To avail Interlibrary Library Lending (47%) and Document Delivery Service facility (53%)
 - For accessing and sharing library catalogs (52%)
 - Based on user demand or requests (51%)
 - For the purpose of Institutional branding (49%)
- Major problems faced with library networks are:
 - Manpower related issues (43%)
 - Legal issues or copyright related issues (41%)
 - Delivery related issues (34%)
 - Issues related to time constraint (32%)

11. Conclusion

It is an established fact that working together can accomplish far more than they can do individually. The age of library consortia has already dawned and has already proved to be a tremendous success in the context of an overwhelming array of digital documents. The e-subscription activity under consortia covers not only in related disciplines but also in all the disciplines with the heterogeneous nature institutions. With global application, Management education has emerged as a prestigious area of higher education. It is imperative therefore that world class facilities are provided in B-schools. This calls for a concerted effort for the establishment of a nationwide consortium enlisting the participation of IIMs and prestigious

B-Schools in the country. If India has to emerge as a production hub of the world, strong foundation has to be laid for management education facilitating easy dissemination of related information. This needs concerted efforts from the part of both the central and governments to establish consortia and networks so as to bridge the hiatus between the haves and have nots transcending economic, social and regional barriers.

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