LIBRARY RESOURCE SHARING: AN OVERVIEW

Ajay Kumar Saini
Library professional
&
Teacher,
School Education Department,
Govt. of Jammu and Kashmir (UT)

ABSTRACT

Library resource sharing is a tool and is very important due to enormous explosion of information in every field of knowledge. In today's world, the demand of information is increasing and an individual library cannot fulfill the information need of its users. Library resource sharing is a powerful tool which is helpful to fulfill the information requirements of users. It is playing a vital role to increase the library users by satisfying them and also maximise the use of libraries. It saves the cost and building spaces. In this paper, we will discuss in detail about library resource sharing, need of resources sharing, its different types and also discuss its advantages and disadvantages.

KEY WORDS: *Library resource sharing, Library network, Internet.*

INTRODUCTION

The growth of information is increasing so rapidly due to publication work in each and every field and the demand of information is also increasing day by day. An individual library cannot fulfil the demands of library users or we can say that an individual library cannot meet the requirements with its resources. Therefore, the resource sharing is method of overcoming the limitations of an individual library. It is a method of sharing resources such as man power, equipments, building space, reading materials, catalogue, etc. among two or more participating libraries. The resource sharing is a mutual cooperation among the participating libraries. It saves the cost, time, and space of the member libraries. The users of the participating libraries can use the resources of not only their own library but also those of, all the participating libraries. It develops the spirit of cooperation, and collection among the member libraries.

Concept of library resource sharing:

Library resources such as print and non-print materials, equipments, storage, etc. which support library services and personal need of the users; resource sharing is the process of give and take on the principle of cooperation. Resource sharing is a method of sharing resources among the participating libraries on the principle of cooperation. The sharing of resources such as reading material, catalogues, building space, manpower, equipments etc. increase the usability of participating libraries. It increases the collection and resources of member libraries and these libraries can fulfil the requirements of the users.
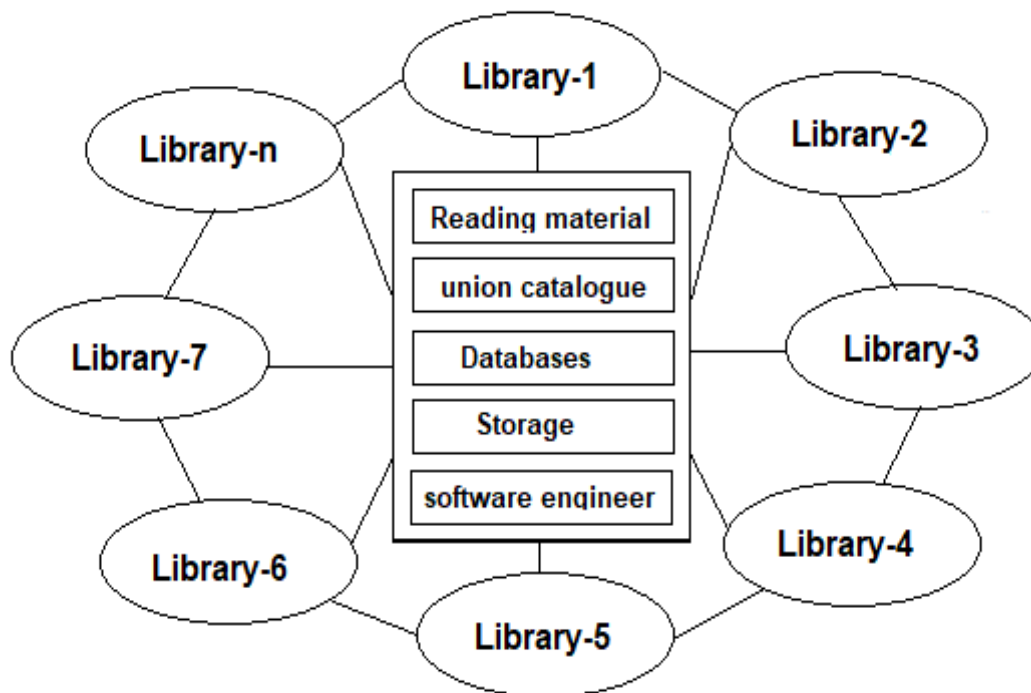
Figure1. Structure of library resource sharing

According to **Cargil and Graves (1990),** "no library can afford to acquire even half of all published material, both in terms of cost, and the investment in space and personnel time required to process and provides access to burgeoning quantity of Information"

Need of resource sharing

The committees of different libraries experience the need of resource sharing due to the following reasons.

- **Shortage of resources**: There is need of resource sharing due to the shortage of resources in all individual libraries. To fulfill the need of resources, there must be resource sharing among other libraries.
- **Lack of environment:** Each individual library has no such type of environment having all the equipments such as costly IT equipments, so there is a need of resource sharing among other libraries for better environment.
- **Growth of new knowledge, subjects and specializations:** The growth of new subjects, knowledge and specialization in different fields are increasing so fast. So, it is difficult for an individual library to acquire the reading material of all the new subjects having high cost. Therefore, there is need of resource sharing.
- **Increase in the cost of publication:** Day by day, the cost of publication is increasing

so high that is why, the budget of all the individual libraries cannot allow for purchasing all the different types of publications.

- **Demand of full-scale, quick and latest information:** Due to the enormous explosion of information, the demand of information is also increasing. Researcher, students, and seekers of information want complete and latest information in quick as early as possible.
- **Limited funding:** All the individual libraries have limited funds to use for library resources.
- **Increase in numbers of users:** Due to population explosion, awareness of education and competition, the users of libraries increasing day by day and it is impossible for all the individual libraries to full fill the requirements of different users.
- **Variety needs of students:** All the different users of library having different choices of information, to meet the information choices of different users, there is need of resource sharing.

Objectives of library resource sharing

Following are the objectives of library resource sharing:

- **To co-operate member libraries:** The main purpose of resource sharing is to cooperate all the member libraries in each

and every field to enhance the creditability of libraries.

- **To control the library budget:** The main reason behind resource sharing is to control the budget of all the individual libraries. Each library has limited funds to purchase all the new resources. The resource sharing helps to overcome this issue.

- **To solve space problem:** There is need of building space for the entire individual library due to increasing growth of publication and increase in ICT equipment. So, one of the objectives of resource sharing is to solve the space problem.

- **To fulfil the increasing demand of users:** The purpose of resource sharing is to fulfil the information requirements of different users.

- **To maximize library use:** The resource sharing is the best option to increase the creditability of all the individual libraries by satisfying the user's need.

- **To increase library users:** To increase the library users is also one of the objectives of resource sharing.

- **To improve the library environment:** To share manpower, equipments, reading materials and building space among the member libraries, improve the library environment of each participating libraries.

- **To reduce duplication of resources:** This is also an objective of resource sharing is to reduce the duplication of resources.

- **To exchange the resources:** Exchanging of resources is also a purpose of library resource sharing.

- **To share experience:** Sharing of experience among member libraries enhance the creditability of libraries, is also one of the objectives of resource sharing.

Areas of library resource sharing

The library resource sharing covers the following common areas for sharing:

- **Storage:** Every individual library has no. of book and non-book material that is not useable but requires space for storage that is why resource sharing overcomes this issue by sharing storage space.

- **Training:** Any type of refresher courses, workshops, seminars are to be conducted at common in cooperative way by all the participating libraries to achieve the common goal.

- **Softwares:** There are different library management softwares available in the market with high cost, so the member libraries, share he common software to save the money.

- **Inter-library loan:** Inter library loan sometimes called inter-loan, inter-landing, or inter library service in which a user of one library can borrow the books, DVD, music, etc. that are owned by another library due to non-availability of such materials required by a particular user from his/her own library.

- **Cooperative acquisition:** Cooperative acquisition is also an important area of resource sharing in which all the member libraries form a common committee for purchasing books and non-book materials. The common committee members select the books, place the order, send reminder to supplier, then they purchase the books in cooperative manner for their common or individual requirements which save the time, labour and have maximum discount.

- **Union catalogue:** In resource sharing system, the member libraries prepare a common catalogue to describe their collection called union catalogue which saves the time and cost of each individual library.

- **Reference and information service:** The sharing of essential services like reference service and information service through the medium of Internet, telephone, fax, etc.

- **Sharing of equipments:** Some of the equipments of library are so costly, so there is no need of purchasing these equipments for all the member libraries. They share the equipments on time sharing basis.

- **Sharing of manpower:** The resource sharing also include the sharing of staff such as software engineer, or other technical staff.

- **Creation of common databases:** In resource sharing, all the member libraries create common computerized databases and exchange these among the member libraries.

- **Translation service:** The research papers in foreign languages and other reading materials are to be translated in cooperative manner and share those translated research papers among the cooperative libraries.

Levels of library resource sharing

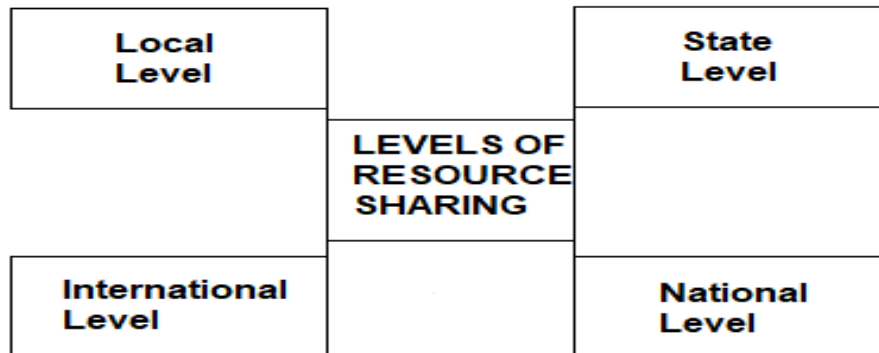These are four levels of resource sharing.

Figure2. Levels of resource sharing

- **Local level:** This level covers the libraries of local area such as Town, City, etc. for resource sharing through the possible medium
- **State or regional level:** This level covers the libraries within the region for resource sharing.
- **National level:** This level covers the libraries of national level for resource sharing.
- **International level:** This level covers the libraries of international level for resource sharing.

Advantages of library resource sharing

These are the following advantages of library resource sharing.

- **Fulfil the user's need:** Resource sharing among member libraries satisfies the users/researcher of each library.
- **Develop efficient communication:** Resource sharing among the libraries develops the efficient communication among the member libraries.
- **Cost effective:** The cooperative activities among the member libraries in resource sharing save the cost.
- **Saves library space:** The cooperative storage among the participating libraries saves the library space.
- **Develop cooperation:** The resource sharing develops the cooperation among the member libraries.
- **Avoid duplication:** Resource sharing among the participating libraries, avoid the duplication.
- **Enhance the quality of resources:** Resource sharing enhances the quality of resources.

Disadvantages of library resource sharing

Following are the disadvantages of library resource sharing.

- Negative impact on the publishing trade due to their sale gets reduced.
- Copyright violation can be possible.
- Some libraries are willing only to share some resources.
- Lack of awareness or training for sharing activities.
- If all the member libraries depend on each other that may cause impact on the development of library collection.

CONCLUSION

This paper concludes that, in present days, the demand of information is increasing day by day due to enormous explosion of information in every field of knowledge. Library resource sharing is very important tool to meet the demand of library users. Resource sharing is playing a crucial role to fulfil the demands of the users or researchers. This tool saves the time, money and building space of libraries and enhances the creditability of libraries. This paper also concludes that there are some barriers in the way of resource sharing such as delay in communication, cost involved, lack of library automation, lack of training of staff members and lack of awareness about resource sharing. Information and communication technology is the best solution to break down the barriers in the way of resource sharing. To breakdown these barriers, all the individual libraries should be automated and strong computer network should be established among all the member libraries. The computer network among all the member libraries would be helpful to enhance the creditability of library resource sharing with the help of Internet.

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