

## Resource Sharing and Library Networks: An Overview

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### Abstract:

This paper discusses the library resource sharing & networks. The concept of resource sharing, with particular attention to the interlibrary loan and programmes for the cooperative acquisition and storage of materials, is examined in relationship to library networks. Networking and Resource Sharing are supplementary to each other. Networking is done for only resource sharing. No one library can afford alone the demand of users. Libraries have to depend upon one another. For fulfilling these demands, networking is required for the library. Almost all the Indian library network like INFLIBNET; NICNET; INDONET; CALIBNET; DELNET; PUNET;ADINET; MALIBNET; ERNET; SIRNET; VIDYANET; etc. are discussed here in the article. It also covers almost all the point related to resource sharing.

**Keywords:** Library, Information, Resource sharing, Library cooperation, Library Networks,

### Introduction:

In the present information age, every day huge publications are published throughout the world. So it is impossible for any library to pose all the resources to meet the various needs of the users. Several factors such as rapid growth of publications, shrinking resources, escalation of prices and ever increasing expectations of users have made the libraries to look for alternative means of resources through networks. One of the important means is sharing of resources among themselves with the help of networks. The most important goal of resource sharing is to maximize the availability of materials and services at the minimum cost. Library cooperation, networking and resource sharing are synonymous with cooperation and collaborative activities of library and information centre. Resource Sharing is typically composed of two activities. The

first is collaborative collection development, whereby subject specializations are intended to be distributed among libraries. Most libraries did not, do not and will not have all the information resources that their patrons need. Needs of information resources can be met through the mechanism of library cooperation of sharing of resources through networks. The appreciation of the need for cooperation leads to the formation of library consortium. To materialize the concept, first of all several libraries are required to come together for the mutual benefit of the respective user in the form of library cooperation. Libraries linked together with the help of communication system in terms of networking and finally they come together to acquire traditional and e-resources under technological platform.

### **What is Resource Sharing?**

Resource sharing denotes “a mode of operation whereby the functions are shared in common by a number of libraries”.

### **What is Library Network?**

A library network is broadly described as a set of inter-related information systems associated with communication facilities, which are cooperating through more or less formal agreements in order to implement information handling operations to offer better services to the users.

### **Need for Resource Sharing:**

The advancement in the field of enabling technologies has made a significant impact on our life and work. There is a clear cut shift from audio to video channels. There is a dominant trend towards resource sharing via networking. Different types of library and information networks have made this possible across the globe. In fact, the factors, such as knowledge explosion, declining library budgets, growing user expectations, rising prices of publications, and vested interests have made it impossible for standalone libraries to satisfy their users. The only alternative is to share the scarce resource at local, regional, national and global level.

Bibliographic utilities, such as OCLC, RLIN and WLN in the US have played an important role in this direction. UNESCO, IFLA, British library and BID - ISI etc. Have also contributed a lot towards promoting the concept of resource sharing via networking. In India INFLIBNET is

an ambitious programme for resource sharing at national level and also for promoting the use of library resources and services. Other local area networks, such as, DELNET, MYLIBNET, ADINET, PUNENET etc are playing significant in this direction. Other networks, such ERNET, NICNET, I-NET, CSIRNET, RENIC and other sectoral information networks have also done a commendable work in resource sharing and scholarly communication. International collaboration in learning, teaching, publishing and research work is possible now via these networks. These networks have also contributed in implementing the concept of distance learning and sharing the course materials available across the world.

### **Objectives of Resource Sharing and Networking:**

- Increase availability of resources.
- Extend the accessibility of resources.
- Sharing of the burden of purchasing materials.
- Sharing of the burden of processing the materials.
- Sharing of services.
- Sharing of human expertise.
- Promote full utilization of resources.

### **Areas of Resource Sharing:**

- Inter-library loan
- Cooperative acquisition
- Specialized purchasing programs
- Centralized processing
- Shared Cataloguing
- Sharing of bibliographical data
- Centralized periodical collection for loan purposes
- Cooperative microfilming
- Preparation and maintenance of union catalogue and union list of serials
- Exchange of publications
- Exchange of expertise.

## Resource Sharing Through Networks:

In the past two decades, information technology has made significant progress. The current state of information handling is indeed sufficient to support and encourage the sharing of resources among libraries. The pace of technological improvement shows no signs of abatement and libraries will find it rewarding to explore the realm of networking possibilities that this new technology makes feasible. Especially, the present decade has seen a greatly renewed interest in library cooperation and mutual benefits, prominently at national and international levels.

## Types of Networks:

Presently, there are three types of computer networks:

- **Local Area Network:** A LAN is a number of related computers and electronic devices that share information over a transmission media. A typical use of LAN is to tie together personal computers in an office so that they can all use a single printer and a file server. The LAN can be within a building or a campus wide network.
- **Metropolitan Area Network:** Attempts are being made to develop this type of network in metropolitan areas such Delhi, Calcutta, Bangalore, Madras, etc.
- **Wide Area Network:** A large-scale network, involving offices in different cities and countries is referred to as WAN, which is specially designed to interconnect data transmission devices over wide geographical areas.

## Major Indian Library Networks:

**ADINET:** Is an Immolation Network of Libraries in and around Ahmedabad. ADINET was registered as a Society in October 1994. Initially it was sponsored by National Information System for Science for Science and Technology (NISAT), Department of Scientific and Industrial Research, Government of India.

**BALNET:** This network established in 1995 for promote sharing of resources among the libraries in Bangalore by developing a network of libraries, by collecting, storing and dissemination of information and offering computerized services to the users community.

**BONET:** To promote cooperation among libraries in Bombay. It serving online catalog; online document delivery. IRS; interlibrary loan dissemination of information.

**CALIBNET:** To promote sharing of resources among the libraries in Calcutta by developing a network of libraries, by collecting, storing and dissemination of information and offering computerized services to the users and found accounting.

**DELNET:** Established in 1988 by India International Center with the initial financial support of NISSAT and later officially registered as a society in June 1992. Its main objective is to promote sharing of resources among the libraries located in Delhi and outside Delhi. It is the first operational library network in India.

**DESINET:** Is belongs to Defense Science Information Network. Its Activity is focus on scientific, research and defense communities.

**ERNET:** India is an autonomous scientific society of Ministry of Communication & Information technology (Govt. of India). ERNET has made a significant contribution to the emergence of networking in the country. ERNET is largest nationwide terrestrial and satellite network with point of presence located at the premiere educational and research institutions in major cities of the country. Focus of ERNET is not limited to just providing connectivity, but to meet the entire needs of the educational and research institutions by hosting and providing relevant information to their users. Research and Development and Training are integral parts of ERNET activities.

**INFLIBNET:** Information and Library Network centre is an autonomous inter- university centre of university grants commission involved increasing infrastructure for sharing of library

and information resources and services among academic and research institutions. INFLIBNET works collaboratively with Indian university libraries to shape the future of the academic libraries in the evolving information environment.

**MALIBNET:** The need for interconnecting libraries and information centres in Chennai was visualized by INSDOC in 1991. INSDOC undertook a feasibility study which was completed in March 1992. MALIBNET was registered as a society in Chennai in Feb. 1993.

**MYLIBNET:** Members of this network is 116 Institutions and major objective of this network developing software tools; conducting seminar; workshops/training programs; conduct surveys. Its services MYLIB Database; E-journals; food patents; CFTRI Library Bulletin; public services

**PUNENET:** This promotes sharing of resources among the libraries in Pune. Members of this network are accessing data, using the e-mail and internet facilities.

### **Conclusion:**

These are no place for standalone libraries, as no library can be self-sufficient in the face of growing universe of knowledge and declining library budgets. The convergences of computer and communication technologies have made resource sharing possible via various networks. Real time access to quality information is now possible thru networks. It is high time that we formulate a national information policy and develop national information infrastructure to reap the benefits of enabling technologies. This can be done by changing the mindset of the professionals and end users.

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