

Networking among College Libraries in Nagaland

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Abstract

The advent of computer networks ushers a new path to the traditional jobs of the library such as retrieval and dissemination of information. Modern library collaboration is a direct result of the proliferation of internet databases and resource sharing networks. Libraries have profited substantially from the expansion of their access to information resources made possible by the Internet and other networks. The value of resource sharing networks among Nagaland's university libraries is the central argument of this article. Colleges that are associated with Nagaland University are the ones that students choose to attend. Sharing resources is now a possibility because to advancements in information and communication technologies. Consequently, school libraries in Asian countries need a system for exchanging resources and networking. A resource sharing network may be easily constructed in any Asian nation. In addition to bringing people together as a global village, the internet now has the potential to unite all of the world's libraries into a single global library via the development of resource-sharing networks. Looking at the bigger picture, it seems that Resource Sharing might be a great benefit that has to be implemented more consistently and expertly in Asian countries university and faculty libraries. This programme has the potential to save significant amounts of government resources while simultaneously making people very happy.

Keywords: Resource Sharing, Library Networks, College Libraries, Nagaland.

Introduction: We are in the 21th century today and have entered a period of change, the impact on which could be far reaching than ever before. Making the right to information available to the right to information available to the right person at the right time is the aim of any library service today. Libraries as well as librarians are slowly adjusting with the changes being made by information technology. Libraries that participate in library networking programs will be better placed to derive the benefits of the application of information technology to libraries. (Rajasekharan, K. 1992)

Resource sharing through computer networking has enabled the user in one library to gain access to several libraries through computer terminals, and is gaining popularity as no library alone can cater to the diverse information needs of all its users.

Today almost all activities in the library present themselves as ideal areas of applications for computer technology. The effectiveness of resource sharing depends on the availability of appropriate communications, technology and delivery systems.

“Networking is more structured type of cooperation in which definite regions or areas or definite organizations are connected by electronic or other means to promote inter-library loaning of materials, in-service training and other sharing of resources”. (Zhang, 1990). “Library networks are often termed because the centres of resource sharing. The conception of resource sharing among libraries isn't new. Taking clue from the experiences of the society and compulsions of reciprocity all told spheres of man's journey of development, the libraries additionally resorted to

networking and resource sharing for increasing the employment of their resources and satisfying the growing users demand. There has been the tremendous growth of knowledge and it becomes extraordinarily tough to amass all revealed materials by a library even in its specialised field. The ungoverned data generation, escalating the value of materials, increasing the value of process of documents and information creation, decreasing budgets and advances in IT have stressed the requirement of network based mostly cooperation". (Srivastava, Pushpalata:2007)

Library Networks:

The term 'networking' expresses clearly the impact of new technology to libraries. It is used in place of resource sharing or cooperative system for two important reasons;

Firstly, "the potential improvement of library and information operations by interconnecting individual library systems with the more recently developed facilities for data and information transfer and; Secondly, because of the significant role played by the computer telecommunications and new reprographic techniques". (Bavakutty, M, M.C.K.,2002)

Resource sharing via networks implies automation, data communication and effective cooperation. The sharing can be among all libraries, a group of libraries, or libraries belonging to a particular region.

An information centre or library network is "a cooperative system established by libraries and information centres, which are brought together by common subject, geographical proximity to share informational resources, human resources and all other elements essential for providing effective information service," as Miller puts it.

Without appropriate funding, no library could provide its own information resources. Because of this, the fundamental idea behind any networking system is the sharing of resources.

A combination of factors, including libraries' dispersed locations, rising publishing costs, and insufficient staffing levels, has made networking an absolute need. Thus, one approach to get the most out of the least amount of effort is to network your library.

The two basic types of networks are Local Area Networks(LAN) which is a communication channel that spans a limited geographic area and, Wide Area Network(WAN) which interconnects different sites, computer installations and user terminals and enables LAN's to be networked together irrespective of distance.

Need for Resource Sharing: Data is the building block of every human endeavour. Essential to the maintenance and growth of socio-financial well-being, it serves as a platform for the exchange of ideas and a valuable resource for study and improvement. We have to resort to this phenomena since we require a ramification of statistics and there are numerous problems in its distribution and access. A number of reasons have contributed to the present rate of resource sharing, including:

- The arrival of more efficient information technology; and most importantly;
- We are shifting our focus from material ownership to client-centered approaches, from document delivery to information delivery, and from holding to communal access.
- Reducing spending limits and budget sizes;
- Trends in inflation that are rising with time;
- Relative scarcity and exponential expansion in publishing;
- Growing willingness to share resources;

Colleges in Nagaland: Nagaland is one of the States of the Indian union located in the far north-eastern corner of the country. The State has a population of 19,88,636 with a literacy percentage of 67.11. The state has 59 educational institutions imparting both general and professional instructions. Of these 42 colleges are affiliated to Nagaland University.

The affiliation status of these colleges is as given below:

1. Colleges with permanent affiliation 17
2. Colleges with temporary affiliation 22
3. Colleges with provisional affiliation 03

The number of colleges offering various degree level instructions is as follows:

1. Colleges offering only Arts Degree 24
2. Colleges offering only Commerce Degree 01
3. Colleges offering only Science Degree 01
4. Colleges offering Arts and Commerce Degree 07
5. Colleges offering Arts and Science Degree 03
6. Colleges offering B.Ed. Degree 03
7. Colleges offering L.L.B Degree 03

The majority of these institutions are located in the two districts of Kohima, the State capital with 15 colleges, and, the commercial hub of the state, Dimapur, with 16 colleges.

College Libraries in Nagaland: College libraries are the heart of the academic system. They form a major part of the academic libraries in the state. Of the 42 colleges affiliated to Nagaland University, almost every college has a library whose collections vary from institution to institution. Except for a few of these colleges, computerized facilities and services are almost non-existent. Library services are still practiced in the old traditional methods in most of the college libraries.

The awareness that almost all these libraries have very negligible budget provision resulting in limited procurement capacity of books and other documents and non-documentary resources, the concept of resource sharing and networking among the college libraries even within the same city is yet to take root. Efforts to have resource sharing among the libraries was taken up by some of the colleges in the State wherein the University was asked to take the initiative, but till date no visible progress to this end has been made.

Reasons for Absence of Resource Sharing Network in Nagaland: Some of the possible reason which may be attributed to this present scenario may be highlighted as follows:

1. Shortage of qualified manpower to handle such activities.
2. College libraries in Nagaland have no proper budget, and even the fund allocated to the libraries is very negligible.
3. There exists difference between the services rendered and the real users need.
4. Many college librarians have not actually realized the need and potential of cooperation.
5. Inter-use of libraries is considered more important than inter-library lending.
6. There is no central body to administer and pool cooperative activities.
7. Lack of interest on the part of education system developers on libraries.

A Proposal for Networking among College Libraries in Nagaland

The only college libraries in the state can cope with the rising costs of informational material and increased demands from users is by better coordination, cooperation and sharing of resources with libraries having similar interests.

No library can be entirely self-sufficient. Therefore, libraries in any region necessarily develop interdependence and depend on each other. "Networking and modernization are becoming very important in all types of libraries as they enable the users to have access to the resources of many

other libraries in addition to their own one". College libraries in Nagaland are also likely to benefit themselves by participating in networks.

Conclusion: Computers entered the area of library services during the recent years in a big way, and have been put to use for providing library services successfully. Computer application in library and information activities has manifold advantages.

It is time to review the present situation of college libraries in the state and take positive steps to keep up with other developed states in the country. To this end, there should be collective efforts from the libraries, authorities of the institutions, the State government and the financial grant sanctioning authority for improving the condition of libraries in the state.

The change of attitude of the management and the librarians in the state, so also the teachers and students of the colleges are very much needed. The concepts of collective ownership and service to all should be widely accepted to make it a success altogether. It has become a truism to say that the problems associated with resource sharing have more to do with behavior modification than with technology i.e. attitude, practices and policies, need to change if college libraries in Nagaland are to truly benefit themselves and their community users by application of new technologies.

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