

North East India Library Network Challenges and Opportunities



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Special libraries of Assam and Staff Empowerment through Resource Sharing: a case study

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Abstract

No matter how much a library is well funded or have professionally qualified staff, in terms of collection development, no library can say it has got self-sufficient collection, as because, it is not feasible to find a library where every collection will be available. As such to bring wider array of collection access to users of a library, the concept of Resource Sharing or Networking amongst libraries is the best possible answer.

The term Resource Sharing or Networking amongst libraries is always studied from the point of view of use of ICT, but in this paper the authors have tried to build a blue print model of Resource Sharing amongst chosen five (5) special libraries of Assam, not only from the use of ICT but also non ICT methodologies by using primary source of data where the the concept of Resource Sharing is basically at its infancy. This paper is basically an attempt to show how Resource Sharing or Networking among these special libraries would initiate not only a beneficial collaboration amongst the libraries but also empowerment of the staff working for those libraries.

Keywords: Special library, Staff empowerment, Resource sharing

1. Introduction:

There are many factors influencing the library environment. These include budget economic constraints with libraries and within the parent organization changing nature of the information publishing industry, impact of ICT, choosing of appropriate reader's service, supply service levels in terms of quality delivery to readers', apt for interdisciplinary research to name a few and apart from that it is unlikely that any collection will be self-sufficient. It is essential to develop systems and service models which support these changes and which met today's reader's expectation of accessing information anywhere and anytime.

Special libraries are no exception to these challenges. Infact the challenges are more challenging in case of special libraries due to its nature, collection and special clientele. Developing and incorporating Resource Sharing will help in fulfilling major objectives:

- To build sharing and building adequate collection ;
- To cooperate in processing of information resources ;
- To deliver quality service to today's techno-readers ;
- To provide extensive facilities to use full text databases and electronic journals;
- Staff empowerment through expertise sharing; etc.

2. Special Libraries of Assam and Resource Sharing

Resource sharing of special libraries in Assam is still in its infancy stage where as in many developed countries resource sharing activities have been in operation since long. Even the oldest form of "Inter-Library Loan" is also not a common feature amongst the special libraries of Guwahati. It cannot be denied that in Guwahati a good numbers of special libraries are there with their respective collection. On observation, it can said that these special libraries are also undergoing the best known challenges. To understand how by developing and incorporating Resource Sharing, will help these special libraries in moving towards a betterment of challenges being faced. Henceforth an attempt has been made to model a Resource Sharing amongst the Special Libraries of Assam.

3. Methodology

The methodology used for the present study is questionnaire based survey. Due to time constraints the authors have collected the data from MLISc 4th Semester Students, who visited Special Libraries for doing their Dissertations. The available literature on the topic has also been studied and reviewed.

After analyzing the filled-in-questionnaire data, five (5) special libraries have been chosen as the basis for studying the model of Resource Sharing amongst the Special Libraries. These libraries are:

Sl. No.	Library	Year of Establishment	Website
1.	IIBM	1982	www.iibm.ac.in
2.	IIE	1994	www.iie.nic.in
3.	NIPCCD	1978	www.nipccd.nic.in
4.	NIRD-NERC	1983	www.nirdnerc.nic.in
5.	OKDISCD	1989	www.okd.in

4. Resource Sharing: The Model

In terms of understanding the concept of Resource Sharing, it is always understood in form of sharing documents, but the lesser known aspect of Resource Sharing is the Professional Staff's Participation in form of sharing ideas and above all the Philosophy of Librarianship. That's why the concept of Resource Sharing has two faces:

- Developing Resource Sharing through ICT and
 - Developing Resource Sharing through Professional Expertise.
- In this paper the highlight has been the second aspect of Resource Sharing and also the areas where the Resource sharing can be done amongst these libraries.

Professional Staff and Resource Sharing Model:

a. Subject Coverage and Resource Sharing:

Table 1: Subject Collection

Sl No.	Library	Subject Collection
1.	IIBM Library	Human Resource Management; Microfinance ; Rural Development ; Self-Help group study etc.
2.	IIE Library	Enterprise Planning ; Self Employment ; Small Scale Industries ; Self- Employment etc.
3.	NIPCCD Library, Guwahati	Early childhood care and development ; Nutrition and Health Education; Women's empowerment and Gender mainstreaming; Manpower Development in Social Development sector etc.
4.	NIRD-NERC Library	Rural Development; Local Self Government ; Women Empowerment; Rural Livelihood etc.
5.	OKDICS Library	women empowerment programme ; labour market ; tribal studies ; participatory democracy etc.

On clear observance of the collection of these five (5) libraries, the following subject coverage (see diagram) can be dealt upon for sharing amongst these libraries:

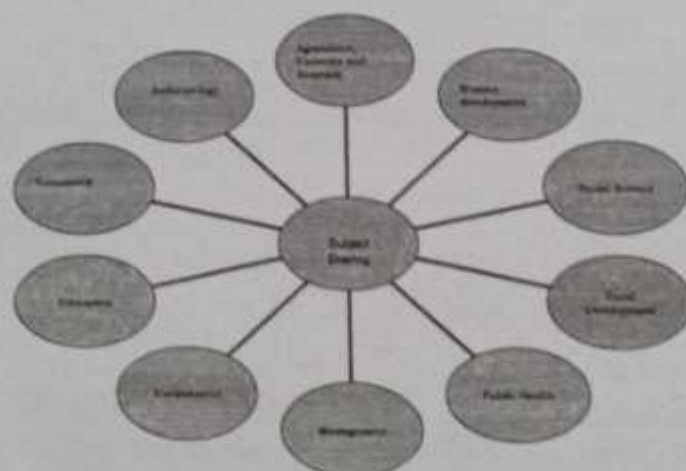


Fig 1 : Subject Sharing

These shall help the libraries to overcome to a great extent the economic constraints in respect to the budget allocated in terms of purchasing hardcopies of documents as well as electronic resources relating to subjects.

b. Services and Resource Sharing:

Table 2: Services Offered

Sl.No.	Library	Services Offered						
		C A S	S D I	R E P	D D S	I S	R S	C I S
1	IIBM	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
2	IIE	√	√	√	-	-	√	√
3	NIPCCD	√	-	√	-	-	-	-
4	NIRD NERC	√	√	√	√	√	√	√
5	OKDISCD	√	√	√	-	√	√	√

From the above **Table no. 2** it can be observed that almost every service offered by these libraries are at par except in the case of Document Delivery Service. Henceforth, Document Delivery Service can be started amongst these Libraries so that the respective libraries can offer extended referral service for its clientele.

c. Interlinking of Websites and Web OPAC and Resource Sharing:

Table 3 : Website and Software Status

SINo	Library	Website	Software
1	IIBM	Yes	CDS/ISIS
2	IIE	Yes	In house
3	NIPCCD	Under construction	Book Self Plus
4	NIRD	Yes	E-Granthalaya 3.0
5	OKDISC	Yes	Soul 2.0

From the above Table No 3, except one library, rest of the libraries have website and do use different software, as such interlinking of websites amongst these libraries and providing the facility of Web-Opac is another area where the librarians can provide extended services for its reader.

d. Expertise Sharing and Resource Sharing:

Table 4: Qualification and year of experience of the librarian

SlNo	Library	Qualification of Librarian	Experience
1	IIBM	B.Sc, MLISc, Ph.D.	30 years
2	IIE	MSc, MLISc.	27 years
3	NIPCCD	B.A, MLISc,	18 years
4	NIRD	B.A, B.Ed, MLISc, PGDCA	6 Years
5	OKDISC	B.A, MLISC, PGDCA	3 years

On analysis of Table 4, it is observed that all the librarians of these special libraries are Professionally qualified with good years of experience in their field and are very well aware of the challenges being faced by libraries, henceforth sharing of their expertise and experience through these mediums which are mentioned below, can ensure for building up a strong Resource Sharing base :

E-mail: It is basic method for building a Resource Sharing. Through having email id's of each other, one library professional can share his/ her problems or can offer solution to the other library professional. Email is the most pervasive means of resource sharing amongst the libraries.

Conference: Arranging conferences amongst the libraries, will help not only in generating ideas but also developing personal contacts, which is the most essential philosophy of Resource Sharing.

Workshop: Library tasks and technology used for these tasks are in constant change. As such the library professionals should conduct shared workshop to know the latest know-how.

Consortium Membership: Collaborative Consortium membership is another area, where jointly the Librarians can work together.

Publications and Papers: Publications and paperwork are the appropriate means for sharing professional expertise. The positive aspects of published or presented papers are several: (1) the librarian is rewarded with a positive consequence of their time and effort; (2) the library gains a measure of credit and recognition among the conferees or readers; and (3) both the librarian and the library stand to gain acknowledgement as the person/library who knows about procedure "X" or that is pursuing task or activity "Y."

5. Conclusion

The benefit of developing Resource-Sharing through Professional Expertise can be summed up in the following manner. The main impact of this kind of resource sharing is Staff Empowerment amongst these librarians in the form of learning education and opportunity. Resource Sharing provides vast opportunity for practical knowledge ; know-about how to resolve an issue in uniformity; fosters staff creativity ; broaden the work horizons ; developing contacts with others who are engaged in the same task ; redefining the mode of disseminations of information and services to the clientele; and above all Resource Sharing through Professional Expertise helps to fulfill the Philosophy of Librarianship as well as the Five Laws of Library Science.

Reference

- David J. (Winter, 1995). Staff Empowerment and Library Improvement through Networking. *Journal of Education for Library and Information Science*, 36, (1), pp. 46-51