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Attitude of Library and Information Science Professionals Towards Resource Sharing and Networking of Academic Libraries

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ABSTRACT

Information explosion is the common phenomenon in the modern era in which no library can stand alone in fulfilling the information needs and requirements of its users. Resource sharing provides the means to maximize the usage of library collection irrespective of its type. Networking of libraries facilitates resource sharing among the participating libraries in an effective manner and it indirectly facilitates marketing of library sources among a group of libraries. Technology alone is not sufficient to bring together the sources. The attitudes of the people involved in the information dissemination are also a decisive factor in determining the success of resource sharing through networking of libraries. This chapter presents the attitude of information professionals for effective resource sharing and networking of academic libraries in the southern districts of Tamil Nadu, India. The study revealed that library and information science professionals have a positive attitude towards resource sharing and networking of libraries.

INTRODUCTION

Information explosion is the common phenomenon in the modern era in which no library can stand alone in fulfilling the information needs and requirements of its users. Influence of ICT in information processing and dissemination, nature and types of collections, namely print and electronic form, scope of individual libraries, disparity in funding, limited budget allocation by parent institution, space and lack of expertise force the libraries for a mechanism to share their resources. Resource sharing provides the means to maximise the usage of library collection irrespective of its type. Networking of libraries facilitate resource sharing among the participating the libraries in an effective manner and it indirectly facilitate marketing of library sources among a group of libraries. Networking of libraries in a region ensures the accessibility of information sources to its users beyond the physical boundaries. Technology alone is not sufficient to bring together the sources. The attitude of the people involved in the information dissemination is also a decisive factor in determining the success of resource sharing through network of libraries. This chapter presents the attitude of information professionals for effective resource sharing and networking of academic libraries in the southern districts of Tamilnadu.

Knowledge Sharing

Knowledge sharing is a platform for the students, faculty and researchers to share their expertise, unique deployments, best practices or any relevant topic of their interest. Knowledge sharing is the distribution of knowledge or what has been learned and it is this concept which is at the heart of the learning organization (Senge, 1990). Knowledge sharing requires a sharing mindset which entails: a sharing of vision, a sharing of values, a sharing of knowledge, a sharing of communication and information, openness and trust (Ipe, 2003).

In the changing scenario of information explosion, “no library can effectively satisfy its users within its walls” (Song, 2000). This statement clearly depicts that no academic library, however large, could be completely self-sufficient to fulfill the expectations of its users. Library co-operation, resource sharing and networking are used interchangeably as synonymous terms for collaborative efforts taken by the libraries for information exchange among libraries with the intention to satisfy the information needs of its users.

RESOURCE SHARING AND NETWORKING

Resource sharing is the process of inter library co-operation for exchange of information or resources with other libraries. Group of libraries work together in co-operation for a common purpose of mutual benefits can be termed as resource sharing system (Sangal, 1984). Thus, the term ‘library co-operation’ has been replaced by a new coinage “Resource Sharing”. Resource sharing is more attractive and makes better sense in this age of inflation, budgetary reduction and use of ICT in libraries and information centres.

Networking is resource sharing through computers and telecommunication link which transmit information or data from one library to another. According to Zhang (1990), “Networking is more structured type of co-operation in which definite regions or areas or definite organizations are connected by electronic or other means to promote inter-library learning materials, in-service training and sharing of other resources. Thus, library co-operation and resource sharing have been replaced by term networking

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