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## CONCEPT OF RESOURCE SHARING

Resource sharing refers to the sharing of library resources by certain participating libraries among themselves on the basis of the principle of co-operation. This is applicable in sharing of documents, manpower, services, space, and equipment. In another word “A term used to describe organized attempt by libraries and Information Centres to share materials and services cooperatively so as to provide one another with resources that might otherwise not be available to an individual institution. It represents an attempt to expand the availability of specialized, expensive, or just plain not-owned resources beyond the bounds of a single institution.”

Resource sharing extends the scope of 'library cooperation to include certain reciprocity and partnership in which each participant has something useful to contribute as well as to receive from others. There is willingness and also the capability to make it available when required. Efforts were made during the 1950's and 1960's to formalise the concept of resource sharing largely because of inadequate library budgets and the sudden spurt in the cost of books and subscription of periodicals.

### **Definition:**

Allen Kent provides descriptions to some of the concepts associated with resource sharing in the following terms: Resource sharing in libraries is defined as a mode of operation whereby functions are, shared in common by a number of libraries in its most positive effects: Resource sharing entails reciprocity, employing partnership in which each member has something useful to contribute to others and in which every member is willing and able to make available when needed. The term 'Resource' is used to designate any or all of the materials, functions, services and the expertise of the professional and non-professional staff. Resource implies a thing, a person or an action to which one turns for aid and help in time of need.

Secondly the term sharing implies apportioning, allotting or contribution something that is to benefit others. It implies partnership for mutual benefit. Library resources encompass print and non-print materials as well as human resources that are eligible to be shared in ways that enhance the quality of service."



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### **Objectives of Resource Sharing:**

The objectives of resource sharing are very idealistic. They are aimed at providing convenient access to information to library users irrespective of the location of the resources. In other words, libraries go beyond their own resources to satisfy the user requirements. This is achieved by sharing the resources of other libraries. The main reasons for this activity are-

- Reduction in all round cost;
- Avoidance of unnecessary duplication of information resources and their processing and maintenance costs;
- Provision of greater access to information resources to a wider category of users; and
- Development of specialised areas of collection building, each library concentrating on areas of its own concern.

The basic activity of resource sharing is aimed at maximising the availability of library materials and services at the minimal expense. The emphasis is on provision of access to information sources rather than possession and ownership of such resources, although ownership is, not completely excluded. The basic assumption is that no library can possess all the world's literature and, hence, has to depend on other libraries for serving all the needs ' of its clientele.

### **Need of Resource Sharing:**

Today documents are available in plenty and their cost is kept on increasing. The growth of literature is also increasing day by day in each and every field of knowledge. They are available in variety of formats so there is always scope of being duplicated. The cost of current publications has increased and all the libraries are unable to acquire all the documents that are need. On the other side available of multiplicity of documents in different subjects, languages and formats with upcoming of new subjects and subject specialization. Resource sharing enables libraries to function effectively and efficiently by overcome this difficulty. They would share the documents by overcoming the problem of increased prices and space for storing them. Libraries by sharing would have access to large number of documents. This way they can satisfy the increasing demand of users. By sharing libraries would provide its users to use documents in different formats. It would also allow them to share the expertise of staff, saving costs and the time of the



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staff. There is always increase in number of users and information seeker and for users, it is importance to obtain basic knowledge in their subject fields and in their specialized areas. Therefore, it is the responsibility of the library to acquire relevant documents like books, journals, reference tools, advanced treatises, reports etc., which would provide a comprehensive coverage of literature as per the concerned subject fields. Today's library has a dynamic and dual role to play and to provide information pin-pointed, exhaustive and expeditious to the research community. Many books and other documents usually go out of print within a short time of their publishing, so majority of the libraries are unable to purchase such titles, space for books as well as other library equipment is limited, increase in the number of books and readers necessitates more space for readers in reading hall as well as for library staff. It is impossible for any library to acquire this unlimited and endless knowledge. The need for library resource sharing can also be explained through the five laws of library science by S.R. Ranganathan: The demand of first law is to fulfill if particular book belongs to a particular library is not in demand by the users. The book must be allowed to send/gave on inter library loan. To satisfy the second and third law of library science is in the context satisfaction of library users assumes new importance. Every reader his/her book and every book its reader requires special care and attention. The user must get his/her reading whether it is available with the library where he/she is registered or any other library. Similarly every book demands its user. In both the cases user demand and the demand of the book to use is require strengthening. For this library cooperation/ resource sharing is an essential activity, for the modern library to maximize library use with minimum resources. Fourth law speaks for saving of time of readers and library staff. With the introduction of inter library cooperation by using modern technologies like computer, the time is naturally saved. The Fifth law "library is a growing organism" states that collection of library is tend to increase every year by addition of new documents. This leads to a Problem of storage of books. Thus the problem of shortage of space, with/the help of library cooperation/resource sharing can be solved to some extent. Due to knowledge explosion users need of pinpointed, exhaustive and expeditious information sources and services. The increased access to information and services by various users at different places in limited cost at same time and access to the existing information and services timely at less cost is answer to libraries must have resource sharing.



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### Areas for Resource Sharing:

Today resource sharing involves several activities such as interlibrary loan, cooperative acquisition, specialised purchasing programmes, centralised processing, shared cataloguing, sharing of bibliographical data, centralised periodical collection for loan purposes, cooperative 7 microfilming, preparation and maintenance of Union Catalogue and Union List of Serials. By various means of co-operation libraries all over the world can certainly run their operations smoothly and satisfy majority of readers. There are many ways and means to overcome the problems discussed above. Following are the areas of resource sharing:

**Inter-library loan Service:** This service is to provide documents as well as information available to every reader whatever he needed and wherever it is available. If some document is not available in one library, an arrangement is made to procure this for the reader, from any other library of locality, region or country. The practice of inter-library loan is confined mainly in big cities because the document can be easily located, procured and returned.

**Cooperative Acquisition:** While purchasing the books and periodicals all the libraries has to go through purchasing channels and formalities in purchasing like selection, placing the orders, reminders to the suppliers, passing the bills, arranging the foreign currency for periodicals. The libraries of a same region or locality can team up to become a central agency for purchasing of books and periodicals for all the libraries of the region. This way multiple copies of the books can be purchased on behalf of other libraries and on these are distributed as per requirements of each library. Such a practice is beneficial to member libraries in saving the labour of member libraries, brings down the cost of acquisition and can have maximum discount and lot of time saving is also there.

**Centralized /Co-operative Cataloguing:** Libraries are always facing problems of funds and to reduce the cost and to save the time centralized and cooperative cataloguing the best scheme. Under centralized cataloguing, a central agency or single library does the cataloguing job while in co-operative cataloguing, two or more libraries share the work, Machine Readable Catalogue (MARC) is the best example of centralized cataloguing. This improvement of quality and standers with uniformity and saving of time.

**Cooperative Reference and Information Services:** The importance of reference and information services in any library can't be under-estimated. In research libraries such a service is



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essential. These days, when the means of telecommunication and computers are available everywhere, providing such a service through internet, telephone or fax, should be fully fruitful.

**Sharing of Equipment:** A reprographic facility is the best way as many costly and rare documents of libraries need to be conserved through microfilming or through scanning. There is no need to purchase equipment by all the libraries this can be done on co-operative basis. Main frame Computers are needed for automation in libraries. It is costly so every library cannot purchase. Co-operating libraries can use such a computer on a time-sharing basis.

**Exchange of Staff:** There is shortage of expert manpower in the field of library software and operations. Library staff for such specialized jobs is not easily available. It is being felt by all the libraries that expertise of such personnel can be fully exploited by exchange of staff from one library to other. Such experts can train the staff members of other libraries.

**Translation Services are necessitated:** The published work in foreign languages can be translated in to the local or deism language. For this, research publications can got translated on co-operative basis. The services of translators can be sought by co-operating libraries by pooling resources.

#### **Levels of Resource Sharing:**

1. **Local:** When the libraries seek resource sharing in the nearby areas in town, city and metropolitan cities, it is called local cooperation. This activity can be monitored through telephone as well as by local manager.
2. **Regional:** In this situation resource sharing libraries do not fall within the single town but belong to a region may be north or west. The whole regional libraries will be benefited to a large extent.
3. **National:** National level resource sharing may be achieved among the libraries in country. If the resources of all the libraries of a nation are cooperatively used then, inter library loan services will be facility at national level. For example national bodies like INSDOC, ICSSR, UGC academic Libraries public libraries, and National library Kolkata are providing inter library services in the field of sciences, social sciences, respectively.
4. **International:** The best example of international cooperation and resource sharing programmed is UNISIST. It has also established world science information system. International agencies like IFLA and FID are also extending their cooperation in this regard. The UNESCO Vitiated deposit and exchange of reading material of their libraries is done among the member nation.