

# Status, Techniques, Programs, and Problems Faced by Library Staff and Authorities during Resource Sharing: A Case Study

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## ABSTRACT

*Resource sharing has emerged as a fundamental service in modern library systems, particularly in the context of rising costs, digital transformation, and user expectations for seamless access to information. This study investigates the status, techniques, programs, and problems faced by library staff and authorities during resource sharing, with special reference to academic libraries in India. The research adopts a case study method, supported by survey data collected from library professionals and supplemented with secondary data from recent scholarly publications.*

*The study reveals that over 70% of libraries actively participate in resource sharing networks, mainly through interlibrary loan (ILL), consortia subscriptions, and digital repositories. Techniques such as automation, networking, union catalogues, and document delivery services are widely implemented. Programs like INFLIBNET, DELNET, and UGC-Infonet Digital Library Consortium play a crucial role in facilitating collaboration.*

*However, significant challenges persist, including lack of infrastructure (45%), copyright issues (38%), staff shortages (42%), and technological barriers (50%). The study concludes with recommendations for strengthening resource-sharing frameworks through policy support, training, and technological innovation.*

**KEYWORDS:** Resource Sharing, Interlibrary Loan (ILL), Library Networks, INFLIBNET, Digital Libraries, Academic Libraries, Case Study

## 1. INTRODUCTION

In the contemporary knowledge-driven society, no single library can fulfill all the information needs of its users. The concept of **resource sharing** has therefore gained prominence as a strategy to optimize access to information resources across institutions. Resource sharing refers to the **mutual exchange of library materials and services among libraries**, enabling users to access resources beyond their parent institution. This includes interlibrary loans, document delivery services, shared catalogues, and cooperative acquisitions.

The shift from **ownership to access** has been accelerated by factors such as:

- Rising cost of academic publications (serials crisis)
- Growth of digital resources
- Increased user expectations for instant access
- Budget constraints in libraries

In India, initiatives like **INFLIBNET and DELNET** have significantly contributed to resource-sharing practices.

## **2. REVIEW OF LITERATURE**

Several studies have examined different aspects of resource sharing:

- Panda & Mallappa (2016) highlighted the role of **INFLIBNET in interlibrary loan and document delivery services**, emphasizing collaborative networks among universities.  
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.1080/1072303X.2016.1218400>
- Chaithra & Adhinarayanan (2018) conducted a study of **54 university libraries in Karnataka**, demonstrating widespread adoption of resource-sharing practices.  
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.51983/ijiss.2018.8.2.512>
- Weible & Sander (2025) analyzed the **cost-benefit aspects of resource sharing**, suggesting that participation in consortia improves efficiency and reduces operational costs.  
DOI: <https://doi.org/10.23974/ijol.2025.vol10.4.564>
- Studies on interlibrary loan indicate that technological advancements have significantly improved workflows but also introduced new challenges related to licensing and digital formats.

## **3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

- ✓ To examine the current status of resource sharing in libraries
- ✓ To identify techniques used for resource sharing
- ✓ To study major programs supporting resource sharing
- ✓ To analyze problems faced by library staff and authorities
- ✓ To suggest measures for improving resource sharing services

## **4. SCOPE OF THE STUDY**

The present study focuses on analyzing the **status, techniques, programs, and problems faced by library staff and authorities during resource sharing**, particularly in academic library environments. The scope of the study is defined as follows:

1. **Geographical Scope:** The study is primarily confined to selected **academic libraries in India**, including colleges and universities. The findings reflect the practices and challenges specific to this regional context.
2. **Institutional Scope:** The research covers:
  - University libraries
  - College librariesIt does not include public libraries, special libraries, or corporate information centers.

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3. **Functional Scope:** The study emphasizes key aspects of resource sharing such as:
  - Interlibrary Loan (ILL)
  - Document Delivery Services (DDS)
  - Library consortia and networks
  - Digital resource sharing
4. **Technological Scope:** It examines the use of:
  - Library automation systems
  - Digital repositories
  - Networking tools (e.g., INFLIBNET, DELNET)
5. **User and Staff Perspective:** The study focuses on:
  - Library professionals (librarians, assistants)
  - Administrative authorities involved in decision-making
6. **Time Scope:** The study reflects **current trends and practices**, especially the transition toward digital resource sharing.

### **5. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY**

Despite careful planning and execution, the study has certain limitations:

1. **Limited Sample Size:** The study is based on a sample of only **50 libraries have been selected out of 75 libraries**, which may not fully represent all academic libraries in India.
2. **Geographical Restriction:** Since the study is limited to specific regions, the findings may not be fully generalizable to other countries or different types of libraries.
3. **Exclusion of Other Library Types:** Public libraries, special libraries, and corporate libraries were not included, which limits the broader applicability of the results.
4. **Reliance on Self-Reported Data:** Data collected through questionnaires and interviews depend on respondents' perceptions, which may introduce **bias or subjectivity**.
5. **Rapid Technological Changes:** Library technologies and digital resource-sharing tools evolve quickly, so some findings may become outdated over time.
6. **Limited Statistical Tools:** The study uses basic statistical techniques (percentage and tabulation), which may not capture deeper correlations or predictive insights.
7. **Access to Data Constraints:** Some institutions were reluctant to share complete data due to **policy restrictions or confidentiality concerns**.
8. **Focus on Academic Libraries Only:** The study does not consider interdisciplinary or cross-sector resource-sharing models.

### **6. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY**

#### **6.1 Research Design**

A **case study method** combined with a **survey approach** was used.

#### **6.2 Sample**

- 50 academic libraries (colleges and universities)
- 75 library professionals

### 6.3 Data Collection Tools

- Structured questionnaire
- Interviews
- Secondary data from journals

### 6.4 Data Analysis

- Percentage analysis
- Tables and charts
- Comparative analysis

## 7. STATUS OF RESOURCE SHARING

### 7.1 Participation in Resource Sharing Networks

Status	Number of Libraries	Percentage
Active Participation	35	70%
Partial Participation	10	20%
Not Participating	5	10%

Interpretation: The findings show that **70% of libraries actively participate**, indicating strong adoption.

### 7.2 Types of Resource Sharing Services

Service Type	Percentage
Interlibrary Loan (ILL)	80%
Document Delivery	72%
Consortia Access	65%
Digital Resource Sharing	78%

Interpretation: ILL remains the most widely used method.

## 8. TECHNIQUES OF RESOURCE SHARING

Modern libraries employ various techniques:

**8.1 Interlibrary Loan (ILL):** The most traditional and widely used method for sharing resources.

**8.2 Library Networks:** INFLIBNET, DELNET and OCLC, These networks enable communication and cooperation among libraries.

**8.3 Union Catalogues:** Union catalogues help identify resource availability across institutions.

**8.4 Automation and ICT:** Automation tools and integrated library systems improve efficiency.

**8.5 Digital Repositories:** Institutional repositories allow sharing of research outputs.

**8.6 Discovery Tools:** Tools like J-Gate enhance access and resource sharing efficiency

## 9. PROGRAMS SUPPORTING RESOURCE SHARING

### 9.1 INFLIBNET

- Supports UGC-Infonet Digital Library Consortium
- Provides access to e-resources

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### **9.2 DELNET**

- Facilitates interlibrary loan and document delivery

### **9.3 National Digital Library of India (NDLI)**

- Provides open access resources

### **9.4 International Programs**

- IFLA initiatives
- OCLC networks

These programs significantly enhance access to global resources.

## **10. STATISTICAL ANALYSIS OF RESOURCE SHARING PRACTICES**

### **10.1 Frequency of Resource Sharing Requests**

<b>Frequency</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Daily	25%
Weekly	45%
Monthly	30%

### **10.2 Turnaround Time for Requests**

<b>Time</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Within 24 hours	20%
2-3 days	50%
More than 3 days	30%

### **10.3 Satisfaction Level**

<b>Level</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Highly Satisfied	40%
Satisfied	45%
Dissatisfied	15%

## **11. PROBLEMS FACED BY LIBRARY STAFF AND AUTHORITIES**

### **11.1 Technological Problems**

<b>Issue</b>	<b>Percentage</b>
Lack of Infrastructure	50%
Poor Internet Connectivity	35%
Software Issues	30%

### **11.2 Administrative Problems**

- Lack of policies
- Coordination issues
- Budget constraints

### 11.3 Human Resource Problems

Issue	Percentage
Staff Shortage	42%
Lack of Training	38%

### 11.4 Legal and Copyright Issues

- Licensing restrictions
- Copyright limitations, E-book sharing is particularly affected due to licensing barriers

### 11.5 Financial Problems

- High subscription costs
- Limited funding

## 12. DISCUSSION

The study indicates that resource sharing is **widely practiced but unevenly implemented**. While large institutions benefit from advanced networks, smaller libraries struggle due to resource constraints.

The transition from print to digital has introduced both opportunities and challenges. Although digital resources improve access, they also bring **licensing restrictions and technical complexities**.

## 13. FINDINGS

1. Resource sharing is widely adopted (70%)
2. ILL is the most common method
3. ICT tools significantly improve efficiency
4. Major challenges include infrastructure and staff shortage
5. Programs like INFLIBNET play a vital role

## 14. SUGGESTIONS

- Strengthen infrastructure
- Provide staff training
- Develop clear policies
- Promote open access resources
- Enhance collaboration among libraries

## 15. RESEARCH GAPS

Despite the growing body of literature on resource sharing in libraries, several significant gaps remain that warrant further investigation:

1. **Limited Empirical and Large-Scale Studies:** Most existing studies, including the present one, are based on **small or region-specific samples**. There is a lack of **large-scale, nationwide or cross-country empirical research** that can provide a more comprehensive understanding of resource-sharing practices. ..

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2. **Insufficient Focus on Digital Resource Sharing Challenges:** While traditional resource-sharing methods like Interlibrary Loan (ILL) are well documented, **digital resource sharing**, especially involving e-books, licensed databases, and institutional repositories, remains underexplored. Issues such as **digital rights management (DRM), licensing restrictions, and access control mechanisms** require deeper analysis.
3. **Lack of User-Centric Studies:** Many studies focus primarily on **library staff and administrative perspectives**, with limited attention to **user satisfaction, user behavior, and information-seeking patterns** in resource-sharing environments.
4. **Inadequate Analysis of Emerging Technologies:** The application of advanced technologies such as:
  - Artificial Intelligence (AI)
  - Machine Learning (ML)
  - Block chain in library networks has not been sufficiently explored in the context of resource sharing.
5. **Scarcity of Comparative Studies:** There is a noticeable absence of **comparative studies between developed and developing countries**, or between different types of libraries (academic vs. public vs. special libraries).
6. **Policy and Legal Framework Gaps:** Limited research has been conducted on **copyright laws, licensing agreements, and national policies** affecting resource sharing, particularly in the Indian context.
7. **Evaluation Metrics Deficiency:** There is a lack of standardized **performance indicators and evaluation models** to measure the effectiveness and efficiency of resource-sharing services.

## **16. FUTURE SCOPE OF THE STUDY**

Based on the identified gaps, the following areas offer promising directions for future research:

1. **Nationwide and International Studies:** Future research can be expanded to include:
  - Larger sample sizes
  - Multiple regions or countriesThis will help in developing **generalizable models and best practices**.
2. **Integration of Advanced Technologies**

Studies can explore the role of:

  - AI-based recommendation systems for resource discovery
  - Block chain for secure and transparent resource sharing
  - Cloud-based library networksThese technologies have the potential to **transform resource-sharing mechanisms**.
3. **User Behavior and Satisfaction Studies**

Future research should focus on:

- User expectations and experiences
- Impact of resource sharing on academic performance
- Usability of digital platforms

#### **4. Economic and Cost-Benefit Analysis**

More detailed studies are needed to evaluate:

- Cost-effectiveness of library consortia
- Return on investment (ROI) in resource-sharing programs

#### **5. Policy-Oriented Research**

Research can contribute to:

- Development of national-level policies
- Standardization of licensing agreements
- Open access initiatives

#### **6. Inclusion of Diverse Library Types**

Future studies should include:

- Public libraries
- Special libraries
- Corporate and research Centers

This will provide a **holistic view of resource sharing**.

#### **7. Development of Standard Evaluation Models**

There is scope to design:

- Performance measurement frameworks
- Benchmarking tools
- Quality assessment models

#### **8. Impact of Open Access Movement**

The growing trend of **open access publishing and institutional repositories** should be studied in relation to its impact on reducing dependency on traditional resource sharing.

### **CONCLUSION OF SECTION**

Addressing these research gaps and exploring future directions will significantly enhance the effectiveness, accessibility, and sustainability of resource-sharing systems in libraries. It will also help libraries adapt to the rapidly evolving digital information environment.

## **CONCLUSION**

Resource sharing is essential for modern libraries to meet user demands efficiently. Despite challenges, the increasing adoption of digital technologies and collaborative networks indicates a positive future. Libraries must continue to innovate and collaborate to overcome barriers and enhance service delivery.

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