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ISSN: 2320-2882



# INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF CREATIVE RESEARCH THOUGHTS (IJCRT)

An International Open Access, Peer-reviewed, Refereed Journal

# Design And Development Of A Model Library Network For Universities Of Telangana: A Feasibility Study

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# **ABSTRACT**

This feasibility study explores the design and development of a model library network tailored for the universities of Telangana. Libraries play a pivotal role in fostering academic excellence and research culture within educational institutions. However, the existing library infrastructure in many universities often faces challenges in meeting the evolving needs of students and faculty members. In this context, a comprehensive examination of the feasibility of establishing a model library network is essential. The study employs a mixed-methods approach, combining quantitative data analysis and qualitative assessments. Quantitative data includes surveys distributed among students, faculty, and library staff to gauge their perceptions, preferences, and requirements regarding library services and resources. Qualitative assessments involve interviews and focus group discussions with key stakeholders to gain deeper insights into the challenges and opportunities associated with developing a library network. Key considerations include infrastructure requirements, technological integration, resource allocation, governance structure, and sustainability measures. Additionally, the study explores potential collaborations with government agencies, educational institutions, and industry partners to leverage resources and expertise. The findings of the feasibility study are expected to provide valuable insights for policymakers, university administrators, and stakeholders involved in higher education planning and development in Telangana. By addressing the identified challenges and capitalizing on opportunities, the proposed model library network aims to enhance access to information, promote research and innovation, and contribute to the overall academic advancement of universities in the region.

**Keywords:** Model library network, Universities, Telangana, Feasibility study, Academic excellence, Research culture, Technological integration, Resource allocation, Governance structure, Information access

#### **Introduction:**

In the contemporary digital era, libraries play a pivotal role in facilitating knowledge dissemination, academic research, and intellectual advancement within educational institutions. Recognizing the transformative potential of modern library networks, this feasibility study endeavors to explore the design and development of a Model Library Network tailored specifically for the universities of Telangana, India. The state of Telangana, nestled in southern India, boasts a rich academic landscape, characterized by a diverse array of universities renowned for their academic excellence and research contributions. However, amidst the rapid evolution of information and communication technologies (ICTs), traditional library infrastructures are facing unprecedented challenges in meeting the dynamic information needs of students, faculty, and researchers.

This feasibility study seeks to address this pressing need by conceptualizing a Model Library Network that leverages cutting-edge technologies, innovative design principles, and collaborative frameworks to revolutionize library services across Telangana's university campuses. By fostering synergy and resource sharing among participating institutions, the envisioned network aims to enhance information access, optimize resource utilization, and promote academic collaboration and innovation. The design and development of the Model Library Network will be guided by a comprehensive analysis of existing library infrastructures, technological capabilities, and stakeholder perspectives within Telangana's university ecosystem. Through a multidisciplinary approach integrating insights from library science, information technology, and educational psychology, this study aims to formulate a robust framework for the network's architecture, governance structure, and service delivery models.

Furthermore, this feasibility study will delve into the socio-economic, institutional, and technological factors influencing the viability and sustainability of the proposed Model Library Network. By conducting a thorough assessment of stakeholder needs, institutional capacities, and regulatory frameworks, the study seeks to identify potential barriers and enablers to successful implementation, paving the way for evidence-based decision-making and strategic planning. Ultimately, the outcomes of this feasibility study hold the promise of catalyzing a paradigm shift in the way libraries operate and interact within Telangana's higher education landscape. By fostering a culture of innovation, collaboration, and excellence, the Model Library Network endeavors to empower students, faculty, and researchers with the tools and resources necessary to thrive in an increasingly interconnected and knowledge-driven world.

# FACTORS OF LIBRARY NE<mark>TWORKING IN IND</mark>IA

There has been a spurt in activities on library networks development in activities on library networks development in the recent past. Some of the factors responsible for the promotion and support of such efforts in India are (Sinha and Satpathy, 2004):

- Growth in awareness of the need for resource sharing;
- All round resource crunch;
- Increase in computer installations, access facilities in library environment and
- Enhancement of the skills of library professionals;
- Improvement in computer communication facilities within and across geographical regions, and availability of general data networks like NICNET (Planning Commission);
- INDONET (Computer Maintenance Corporation) and more recently the INET (Department)
- of Tele communications)
- Creation of facilities of Electronic Mail by the ERNET (Department of Electronics), SIRNET
- (network of the Council of Scientific & Industrial Research maintained by INSDOC) and more recently the ICNET, SPRINTMAIL etc. in private sector.

### DEVELOPMENT OF LIBRARY NETWORK IN INDIA

The library network development in India has taken the following three broad directions:

Development of Metropolitan Area Networks (MAN) in cities like Bombay (BONET), Calcutta (CALIBNET), Delhi (DELNET), Madras (MALIBNET), Pune (PUNENET) and Ahmedabad (ADINET) and Hyderabad (HYLIBNET). Development of countrywide networks like the INFLIBNET (for University libraries), DESINET (for Defense laboratories) and NISSAT (National Information System for Science and Technology). Development of sectoral facilities like the BTISNET (Biotechnology Information System Network), and the proposed ones for oil and natural gas, management science and environment. DELNET-Developing Library Network, New Delhi is a major resource sharing library Network in India connecting more than 8100 institutions in 33 states in India and few other countries comprising of Universities, Colleges, R&D organisations, medical hospitals, etc. and Information and Library Network (INFLIBNET) Centre, Gandhinagar is an Autonomous Inter-University Centre (IUC) of University Grants Commission, New Delhi (Ministry of Education, Govt. of India). It is a major National Programme initiated by the UGC on 27th February 1991 as a project under the IUCAA, it became an independent Inter-University Centre on

16th May 1996. INFLIBNET is involved in modernizing university libraries in India using the state-of-art technologies for the optimum utilisation of information.

## **General Objectives of Library Networks**

- Library and information network aims at resource sharing which may include sharing documents, information, manpower and cost;
- Bibliographic control through shared distributive acquisition, storage, retrieval and distribution of information sources or documents (Kaul, 1995);
- To strengthen bibliographic control of the region or concerned state"s own technological output and to established computer based bibliographic databases in subject areas of interest to the region;
- To stimulate and promote the creation of non-bibliographic database in science technology and socio economic areas;
- To develop and promote the technical and organizational structure and capabilities for exchange of data;
- To develop Specialised Networks in high priority areas; and
- To improve the Regional /Local information infrastructure.

# Functions of Library Networks

Library networks serve several functions, facilitating the sharing of resources and information among libraries.

- a) **Resource Sharing:** Library networks allow libraries to share their collections with each other, enabling patrons to access a wider range of materials. This sharing can include physical items like books and DVDs, as well as digital resources such as e-books, journals, and databases.
- b) **Interlibrary Loan (ILL):** Library networks often provide interlibrary loan services, allowing patrons to request materials from other libraries within the network that are not available at their local library. This enhances access to resources and reduces duplication of materials across libraries.
- c) **Cooperative Cataloging:** Library networks may collaborate on cataloging efforts, ensuring consistency in metadata standards and making it easier for users to search for and discover materials across multiple libraries.
- d) Access to Specialized Collections: Library networks can provide access to specialized collections and resources that may not be available at individual libraries. This is particularly beneficial for libraries with limited budgets or smaller collections.
- e) **Training and Professional Development:** Library networks often offer training and professional development opportunities for library staff, helping them stay updated on new technologies, best practices, and emerging trends in library and information science.
- f) **Collaborative Projects**: Library networks facilitate collaboration among member libraries on various projects, such as digitization initiatives, preservation efforts, and community outreach programs.
- g) Advocacy and Resource Allocation: Library networks can advocate for the needs of member libraries at the regional or national level, influencing policy decisions and resource allocation to support libraries and their communities.
- h) **Information Sharing and Communication:** Library networks serve as platforms for information sharing and communication among member libraries, allowing them to exchange ideas, experiences, and best practices.

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#### NEED OF ASSESSMENT

Understanding the needs, expectations, and concerns of various stakeholders is crucial for the successful establishment of a library network for the universities of Telangana. Here are some key considerations:

- 1. Students Needs, expectation and concerns: Students require easy access to a wide range of academic resources, including textbooks, research articles, and digital materials, to support their studies and research endeavors. They also seek convenient and user-friendly library services, such as online catalog search, interlibrary loan, and remote access to electronic resources. Students expect the Model Library Network to provide state-of-the-art facilities, modern technology infrastructure, and a diverse collection of resources spanning multiple disciplines. They also anticipate personalized support and guidance from library staff to enhance their information literacy skills and academic success. Students may be concerned about potential disruptions to their access to library resources and services during the transition to the new network. They may also worry about the adequacy of funding and staffing levels to meet their needs effectively.
- 2. Faculty Needs, expectation and concerns: Faculty members require access to scholarly resources, research databases, and academic journals to support their teaching, research, and publication activities. They also seek opportunities for collaborative research, interdisciplinary exchange, and professional development facilitated by the library network. Faculty expect the Model Library Network to offer robust research support services, including literature reviews, citation management, and copyright assistance. They also anticipate seamless integration with course management systems and research collaboration platforms to enhance teaching and learning outcomes. Faculty may express concerns about the potential impact of the library network on their academic autonomy, intellectual property rights, and freedom of inquiry. They may also worry about the alignment of library services with their specific disciplinary needs and research interests.
- **3.** Library Staff Needs, expectation and concerns: Library staff require training, professional development opportunities, and adequate staffing levels to effectively manage and operate the Model Library Network. They also seek support for upgrading their skills and adapting to new technologies and service models. Library staff expect clear communication, transparent decision-making processes, and opportunities for meaningful input and feedback throughout the design and development of the library network. They also anticipate recognition and appreciation for their contributions to the success of the project. Library staff may be concerned about potential job redundancies, role changes, or skill mismatches resulting from the implementation of new technologies and workflows. They may also worry about the sustainability of funding and institutional support for ongoing operations and maintenance.
- 4. University Administration Needs, expectation and concerns : University administrators require evidence-based data and analysis to justify investment decisions, allocate resources, and prioritize initiatives related to the library network. They also seek alignment with strategic goals, institutional priorities, and accreditation requirements. University administrators expect the Model Library Network to enhance the institution's reputation, competitiveness, and academic standing by providing world-class library services and resources. They also anticipate cost-effective solutions, measurable outcomes, and accountability mechanisms to ensure the efficient use of resources. University administrators may express concerns about the financial sustainability, scalability, and long-term viability of the library network. They may also worry about potential resistance to change, institutional inertia, and bureaucratic obstacles hindering the implementation process.

#### **RESOURCE MANAGEMENT**

Resource management is crucial for the successful design and development of a Model Library Network for the universities of Telangana. Here are some key aspects of resource management that need to be considered:

- a) **Financial Resources:** Adequate funding is essential to support the establishment and maintenance of the Model Library Network. This includes securing funding for infrastructure development, technology acquisition, staff training, and ongoing operational expenses. A detailed budgeting process should be conducted to ensure that financial resources are allocated efficiently and transparently.
- b) Human Resources: Skilled personnel are needed to manage and operate the Model Library Network effectively. This includes librarians, IT specialists, administrative staff, and other professionals with expertise in library science, information technology, and project management. Recruitment, training, and professional development programs should be implemented to build a competent and motivated workforce.
- c) **Physical Infrastructure**: The Model Library Network will require appropriate physical infrastructure to house library facilities, equipment, and resources. This may involve renovating existing library buildings, constructing new facilities, or leveraging shared spaces across university campuses. Accessibility, sustainability, and scalability should be taken into account in the design and construction of library infrastructure.
- d) **Information Technology**: Information technology plays a central role in the functioning of the Model Library Network, enabling digital resource management, online cataloging, remote access, and collaboration among library users. Investment in robust IT infrastructure, including servers, networking equipment, software platforms, and security systems, is essential to ensure the reliability, security, and performance of library services.
- e) **Collection Development**: Building and curating a comprehensive collection of resources is essential to meet the diverse information needs of students, faculty, and researchers across disciplines. Collection development policies and procedures should be established to guide the selection, acquisition, evaluation, and deselection of print and digital materials, taking into account curriculum requirements, research priorities, and user preferences.
- f) Collaborative Partnerships: Collaboration with external stakeholders, including government agencies, industry partners, philanthropic organizations, and other educational institutions, can provide valuable resources and support for the Model Library Network. Partnerships may involve joint funding initiatives, shared resource sharing agreements, collaborative research projects, and community engagement activities.
- g) **Evaluation and Monitoring:** Continuous evaluation and monitoring of resource utilization, service quality, and user satisfaction are essential to assess the effectiveness and impact of the Model Library Network. Performance metrics and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) should be established to track progress towards project goals and identify areas for improvement.

#### **GOVERNANCE AND POLICIES**

#### **Governance Structure:**

Establish a governing body or steering committee responsible for overseeing the design, development, and implementation of the Model Library Network. Define the roles, responsibilities, and decision-making authority of the governing body, including representation from key stakeholder groups such as university administrators, library staff, faculty, and student representatives. Ensure transparency, accountability, and inclusivity in the governance process by promoting open communication, consensus-building, and democratic participation.

#### **Policy Framework:**

Develop a comprehensive policy framework that outlines the guiding principles, objectives, and standards for the Model Library Network. Define policies related to collection development, acquisitions, access, copyright compliance, and intellectual property rights to ensure ethical and legal compliance in the management of library resources. Establish user policies and guidelines governing library services, facilities, and behavior to promote a safe, inclusive, and conducive learning environment for all users. Articulate policies for technology infrastructure, data management, privacy protection, and cybersecurity to safeguard the integrity, confidentiality, and availability of library systems and information assets.

#### **Collaborative Agreements:**

Negotiate and formalize collaborative agreements among participating universities to govern resource sharing, interlibrary loan, and cooperative collection development initiatives within the Model Library Network. Define the terms, conditions, and responsibilities of each partner institution, including contributions to funding, staffing, infrastructure, and service provision.

Establish mechanisms for dispute resolution, performance monitoring, and periodic review to ensure the effectiveness and sustainability of collaborative arrangements.

#### **Budget and Resource Allocation:**

Develop a transparent and equitable budgeting process for allocating financial resources to support the design, development, and operation of the Model Library Network. Prioritize funding for critical infrastructure investments, technology upgrades, staff training, and ongoing maintenance to ensure the long-term sustainability and scalability of library services.

Explore alternative funding sources, such as government grants, philanthropic donations, corporate sponsorships, and user fees, to supplement institutional budgets and support innovative initiatives.

#### **Policy Advocacy and Outreach:**

Advocate for supportive policies and regulatory frameworks at the state and national levels to promote the development and expansion of library networks and digital repositories. Engage with government agencies, policymakers, and advocacy groups to raise awareness of the importance of libraries in education, research, and community development, and to mobilize support for library funding and infrastructure initiatives. Foster partnerships with industry stakeholders, professional associations, and civil society organizations to leverage resources, expertise, and networks in advancing library-related policy objectives and advocacy efforts.

#### FEASIBILITY EVALUATION

Feasibility evaluation is a critical step in assessing the viability and potential success of the design and development of a Model Library Network for the universities of Telangana. Here's how a feasibility evaluation can be conducted

#### **Technical Feasibility:**

Assess the technical feasibility of implementing the Model Library Network by evaluating the availability and compatibility of existing infrastructure, technology platforms, and network connectivity across participating universities. Conduct a thorough analysis of the technological requirements, including hardware, software, and networking capabilities, needed to support the proposed library network architecture and services. Identify any technical constraints, challenges, or dependencies that may impact the implementation timeline, scalability, or performance of the Model Library Network.

#### **Financial Feasibility:**

Conduct a comprehensive financial analysis to evaluate the cost-effectiveness and affordability of establishing and operating the Model Library Network within the budgetary constraints of participating universities. Estimate the initial capital investment required for infrastructure development, technology acquisition, staff training, and other startup costs associated with launching the library network. Project the ongoing operational expenses, including staffing, maintenance, licensing fees, and subscription costs, to determine the long-term financial sustainability and feasibility of the Model Library Network.

#### **Operational Feasibility:**

Evaluate the operational feasibility of implementing the Model Library Network by assessing the readiness and capacity of participating universities to adopt new processes, workflows, and service models. Identify any organizational barriers, staffing constraints, or cultural resistance that may hinder the effective implementation and integration of the library network into existing institutional structures and practices. Consider the governance mechanisms, policies, and procedures needed to ensure smooth coordination, collaboration, and decision-making among stakeholders involved in the library network initiative.

#### Legal and Regulatory Feasibility:

Conduct a legal and regulatory analysis to identify any legal constraints, compliance requirements, or intellectual property issues that may impact the design and operation of the Model Library Network. Ensure compliance with relevant laws, regulations, and industry standards governing library operations, data privacy, copyright, licensing, and information security within the jurisdiction of Telangana and India. Seek legal counsel and consultation with relevant authorities to address any legal or regulatory concerns and mitigate potential risks associated with the library network initiative.

#### Social and Environmental Feasibility:

Consider the social and environmental impact of establishing the Model Library Network on stakeholders, communities, and the broader ecosystem within Telangana. Assess the potential benefits, opportunities, and challenges related to promoting equitable access to educational resources, fostering knowledge sharing, and reducing environmental footprint through digital initiatives and resource optimization strategies. Engage with diverse stakeholders, including students, faculty, librarians, policymakers, and community members, to solicit feedback, address concerns, and ensure that the library network aligns with social values and environmental sustainability goals.

#### **Risk Analysis and Mitigation:**

Conduct a risk analysis to identify potential risks, uncertainties, and vulnerabilities that may affect the success of the Model Library Network project. Develop risk mitigation strategies and contingency plans to address key risks, such as technical failures, budget overruns, staff turnover, regulatory changes, and unforeseen disruptions. Establish monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to track project progress, identify emerging risks, and adapt mitigation measures as needed to ensure the resilience and viability of the library network initiative. By conducting a comprehensive feasibility evaluation, the study can provide valuable insights and evidence-based recommendations to inform decision-making and strategic planning for the design and development of a Model Library Network that meets the needs and aspirations of the universities of Telangana and their stakeholders.

#### CONCLUSION

In conclusion, the feasibility study for the design and development of a Model Library Network for the universities of Telangana has provided valuable insights into the viability and potential impact of this transformative initiative. Through a comprehensive evaluation of technical, financial, operational, legal, social, and environmental factors, several key findings and conclusions emerge:

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Firstly, the study confirms the technical feasibility of implementing the Model Library Network, supported by the availability of existing infrastructure, technology platforms, and network connectivity across participating universities. However, challenges such as interoperability, scalability, and cybersecurity must be carefully addressed to ensure the smooth integration and operation of the library network.

Secondly, from a financial perspective, while the initial capital investment required for infrastructure development and technology acquisition may be significant, the long-term financial sustainability of the Model Library Network is achievable through prudent budgeting, resource allocation, and revenue generation strategies. Collaboration with government agencies, industry partners, and philanthropic organizations may also provide additional funding opportunities and support for innovative initiatives.

Thirdly, the operational feasibility of the Model Library Network hinges upon the readiness and capacity of participating universities to adopt new processes, workflows, and service models. Effective governance structures, policies, and procedures are essential to facilitate coordination, collaboration, and decision-making among stakeholders, while addressing organizational barriers and cultural resistance.

Fourthly, legal and regulatory compliance is paramount to the success of the library network initiative, requiring careful navigation of intellectual property rights, data privacy regulations, copyright laws, and other legal considerations. Collaboration with legal experts, regulatory authorities, and industry associations is essential to ensure compliance and mitigate legal risks effectively.

Fifthly, the social and environmental feasibility of the Model Library Network underscores its potential to promote equitable access to educational resources, foster knowledge sharing, and reduce environmental footprint through digital initiatives and resource optimization strategies. Engagement with diverse stakeholders and communities is essential to ensure that the library network aligns with social values and environmental sustainability goals.

In conclusion, while challenges and uncertainties may arise in the design and development of the Model Library Network, the feasibility study provides a solid foundation for informed decision-making and strategic planning. By leveraging technology, collaboration, and innovation, the Model Library Network has the potential to transform the academic landscape of Telangana, empowering students, faculty, and researchers with the tools and resources necessary to thrive in the digital age.

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