INTER LIBRARY LOAN SERVICE IN AGRICULTURAL LIBRARIES IN INDIA

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Importance of inter-library loan service is stressed. Inter-library loan relations of the agricultural libraries is studied. The type and number of documents borrowed and lent is discussed including the response. Certain steps for effective inter-library loan service are suggested.

INTRODUCTION

Library is a growing organism and no library is self-sufficient enough to procure all the documents of its interest [5]. A large number of institutions in the world are actively engaged in increasing agricultural production and, therefore, they are the generating points of agricultural information. Access to all the information produced by them is not possible by any single library. It is, therefore, obligatory on the part of libraries to cooperate with each other for inter-library loan [3].

Inter-library loan service is a courtesy offered by a library to another. The standing committee of IFLA in its guidelines for inter-lending, also recommended that each country should have a centre for international lending [2].

The success of the service depends upon the cooperation of the participating libraries and the individuals. Sharma and Varma [6] suggested that the libraries which are richer in their collection should come forward to help their counterparts which are deficient in book collection. It is further suggested that some national or international inter-library loan code may be adopted for specification of the reading materials to be lent.

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the study are to find

a) the popularity of the inter-library loan service in agricultural libraries,
b) the types of documents borrowed and lent and

c) the response of libraries to borrowing the documents.

METHODOLOGY AND SCOPE

Sixty eight libraries of the agricultural university establishments, 62 libraries attached to the ICAR institutions and 22 other research institute libraries were approached to furnish the information with the help of questionnaire. 65 percent of the libraries responded and the results thus obtained are analysed.

POPULARITY OF THE SERVICE

Seventy six percent of the agricultural university main campus libraries (AUML), 63 percent of the off campus agricultural college libraries (OACL) and 60 percent of the off campus veterinary and fishery college libraries (OVCL) have established good relations with other agricultural libraries in India for borrowing and lending of documents.

Among the libraries of ICAR institutes, all the libraries attached to the national research institutes (NRIL), 91 percent of the discipline oriented research institute libraries (DRIL), and 80 percent of the commodity research institute libraries (CRIL) and 64 percent of the libraries attached to other research institutes of miscellaneous interest have established good contacts with other libraries for borrowing and lending of documents.

In general, around 73 percent of the agricultural libraries have established good relations with each other. Thus a healthy precedent is set up by the national research institute libraries which needs to be emulated by all other libraries.

The data relating to the number of inter-library loans in a number of agricultural libraries is lacking. However, a few libraries have maintained the statistics. There are eleven such agricultural libraries with the number of contacts ranging from 10 to 100 per institute.
BORROWING OF DOCUMENTS

All AUML, 40 percent of the OACL and 83 percent of the OVCL, all NRIL and CRIL and 90 percent of the DRIL were found borrowing documents from other libraries. Seventy one percent of the libraries attached to other research institutes of miscellaneous interest also reported borrowing documents.

Types of Documents Borrowed

An effort was made to study the types of documents borrowed by various agricultural libraries for catering to the needs of their users. Forty five percent of the agricultural libraries under study were found to borrow books, periodicals, reports, theses and other documents from other libraries, whereas 12 percent of the various agricultural libraries have borrowed books, periodicals and reports for the use of their clientele. Books and periodicals were borrowed by 26 percent of agricultural libraries concerned with agricultural production, whereas 17 percent of the libraries attached to various agricultural institutes have been borrowing books for their clientele. The data showed that the most popular types of documents borrowed were books (100%) followed by periodicals (83%), reports (56%) and theses (44%) and the data is presented graphically in Figure 1. This might be attributed to the non-cooperation extended by the lending libraries in the case of non-conventional literature.

LENDING OF DOCUMENTS

Among the agricultural libraries studied, 70 percent of the AUML, 69 percent of the OACL and 40 percent of the OVCL, all the NRIL, 91 percent of DRIL and 80 percent of the CRIL are lending books and other documents to other libraries. Among the libraries attached to other research institutes of miscellaneous interest, 64 percent were found to lend documents. The most popular documents lent were books (100%) followed by periodicals (82%), reports (59%) and theses (24%) and the same is presented in Figure 1.

The number of documents (periodicals, reports, theses) lent and received/borrowed by the agricultural libraries were found to be not similar. The agricultural libraries were found to borrow more number of documents, when compared to the number of documents they lent. This may be due to the number of agricultural libraries participating in the ILL service. Also, as mentioned earlier few libraries (viz. IARIL, UASCL, MPAUCL, PKUCL) which are more resourceful appeared to have issued more number of documents to other libraries than what they borrowed from them.

RESPONSE TO BORROWING OF DOCUMENTS

An effort was made to obtain the response of various agricultural libraries in respect of borrowing. The response for the request of book loans was considered to be positive by 92 percent of the AMUL, 67 percent of the OACL and 83 percent of the OVCL. Among the libraries attached to ICAR institutes, 60 percent of the NRIL, 90 percent of the DRIL and 40 percent of the CRIL also received good response in borrowing the books and other documents from other libraries. Fifty percent of the libraries attached to other research institutes of miscellaneous interest received the documents requested for.

In general, the response for the request of book loan was considered to be positive by 85 percent of the agricultural libraries under study. Seventy five percent of the libraries for which we were lending expressed the opinion that the request for lending of documents was considerable, whereas the rest of the libraries expressed that it was poor.

NUMBER OF DOCUMENTS BORROWED AND LENT

A comparison was made among various agricultural libraries, between the number of documents borrowed, the number of documents lent and the total document collection.

National Research Institute Libraries

Among the NRIL, the Indian Agricultural Research Institute Library (IARIL), New Delhi is lending, on an average, six times the number of documents it is borrowing. It is quite natural for a national library with a voluminous collection of 4,80,000 documents to be requested for loan of documents. However, it is strange that National Dairy Research Institute Library, Karnal (NDRIL) is borrowing three times the number of documents it is lending. It might be due to earlier literature being available at the library attached to the southern regional station which was started much earlier (1923) as the Imperial Institute of Animal Husbandry than the NDRIL which was established in 1955 [1]. Besides it might be possible that they are borrowing peripheral literature from Indian Veterinary Research Institute Library, Izatnagar which has got collection of 1,25,000 documents.
Among the AUML, all the libraries borrowed and lent, on an average, the same number of documents during the period of study, irrespective of their document collection. However, the University of Agricultural Sciences Library, Bangalore (UASCL), Mahatma Phule Agricultural University Central Library (MPAUCL), Rahuri, Punjabroo Krishi Vidyapeeth Library (PKVCL), Akola, and the Gujarat Agricultural University, Anand Campus Library respectively were found lending comparatively a larger number of documents (136, 79, 54 and 41) than borrowing. The larger number of documents that are being loaned by UASCL might be due to the fact that they are providing literature to off-campus libraries and to scientists at research stations situated away from the main campus.

Off-Campus College Libraries

Among the libraries attached to the off-campus agricultural, veterinary and fishery colleges, Agricultural College Library, Dharwad (now University of Agricultural Sciences, Dharwad) and Agricultural College Library, Bapatla were found to borrow more number of documents when compared to the number of documents lent to other libraries. Whereas the College of Agricultural Library, Junagadh (Gujarat) have lent on an average (28 and 29), a comparatively larger number of documents when compared to the number of documents borrowed (20). The rest of the libraries have borrowed and lent almost the same number of documents.

Discipline-Oriented Research Institute Libraries

The National Academy of Agricultural Research Management Library, Hyderabad (NAARML) and Indian Agricultural Statistical Research Institute Library, New Delhi (IASRIL), of the discipline oriented research institutes category were found to borrow an average of 50 and 35 documents respectively during the period under study and lent 150 and 70 documents respectively. The NAARML is specializing in management of agricultural research and the IASRIL is specializing in agricultural statistics. The higher rate of lending of documents than borrowing by the NAARML and IASRIL might be due to their collection of documents being peripheral to agricultural sciences; the first one specializing in agricultural research management and the second one specializing in agricultural research statistics.

Commodity Research Institute Libraries

The Central Tobacco Research Institute Library, Rajahmundry (CTRIL) of the commodity research institutes category was borrowing a larger number of documents (50) than the number of documents which were lent (18). This high rate of borrowing of documents might be due to the lack of peripheral literature. The rest of the libraries attached to the commodity research institutes were found to borrow and lend almost equal number of documents.

Other Research Institute Libraries

Among the libraries attached to other research institutes of miscellaneous interest the International Crops Research Institute Library, Patancheru was found to be exceptional in respect of exchange of documents than any other agricultural library studied. The ICRISATL borrowed and lent an average number of 230 and 320 documents respectively. The high ratio of lending might be due to its unique collection on the five manda- tory crops involved in dryland agricultural production.

The involvement in the high rate of exchange of documents might also be due to the international nature of the institute.

CONCLUSIONS

a) As per the recommendations of IFLA a national library or any other appropriate institution may be designated as the National Centre for international lending of documents. Further, the supply of micro-fiche copy of the documents requested is suggested than lending the document in hard copy.

b) It is easier and less costlier to lend or borrow the reading material as photo stat/microfiche.

c) Union catalogue of various types of non-conventional document possessed by the agricultural libraries in India should be compiled, in addition, to the union catalogue of serials for interlending purposes.

d) there is a need for cooperative effort in organizing repository libraries on subject basis to store important, rare and less used documents available with the participating libraries as was pointed out by Rao, Diwakar and Rao [4].
Fig. 1. INTER LIBRARY LOAN SERVICE AMONG THE AG* LIBRARIES

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<th>TYPE OF DOCUMENTS</th>
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