Academic Library in Transition from Library as a Place to Library as a Learning Centre: A Case Study of Indian Institutes of Management

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ABSTRACT

This paper is based on a study conducted in seven Indian Institute of Management (IIM) libraries, viz., IIM-Ahmadabad, IIM-Bombay, IIM-Calcutta, IIM-Indore, IIM-Kozhikode, IIM-Lucknow, and IIM-Shilong. It discusses in detail the comparative status of the resources, implementation of IT, viz., software being used to automate library functions and provide remote access to library. Decreasing reliance on local collections is transforming the library as a physical destination. It also discusses about different information products and services provided by the libraries to their users to convert them as a learning centres.

Keywords: Indian Institute of Management, academic libraries, management libraries, learning centres

1. INTRODUCTION

Library is an integral part of an academic institution and is affected by changes in the academics. Changes in higher education and teaching and learning approaches have created a need for a reconceptualisation of librarian's role and responsibilities. With the development of newer technologies and their decreasing implementation cost, the academic library has been compelled to think of the design, development and delivery of its products and services afresh. While the primary objective of the library is to support teaching and learning, the concept has been enhanced considerably given the needs and expectations of users today. The changes in and around libraries have been summed by Nyamboga & Kemparaju[1] as "..the famous line from Thomas Carlyle," the real university is a collection of books' may have been right in his days, but it is not true today. This is an electronic age where universities and their libraries are expected to be much more than collections of books. In addition, the creation of knowledge is unstoppable, and it is being communicated at expanding rates. Indeed, this is causing profound changes in both the economics and the technology of libraries. As we have entered the 21st century, information technology is now a buzzword with incredible fitness and strength that has changed the very nature of how we share, store and disseminate information. The application and accessibility of information technology facilitate the free flow of information, creative expression, and effective management. The use of information technology in libraries has tremendously increased due

to its enhanced user satisfaction, cost effectiveness, faster and simpler programs, rapid communicative interaction (resource sharing) and easier operational procedures."

1.1 Changing Role of the Academic Libraries

An academic library has been the 'heart of the educational institution' serving the academic community of its parent body. It offers the students curriculum support by providing a wide range of services. Efforts need to be made by libraries to improve and gain importance in the teaching-learning process. In this context, King[2] states. 'The critical issue for academic libraries then, as now, included the need to reposition from custodian of locally held collections to the gateway to information from beyond the library walls; accommodating the rapid growth of information resources in electronic form; the investment and increasing dependence on information technology as the enabler in the delivery of library and information services; the changing teaching and learning environment and the converging roles of libraries and information technology providers'. There has been a continuous discussion and concern regarding the role and status of the academic library. Many authors have stated a need for change and reconceptualisation the roles and responsibilities academic librarians and libraries. Library buildings mainly play three major functions for its users: First, they house books and other documents. Second, they provided space to its users for the purpose of reading and studying. Third, they provide a place to the users to consult/discuss with library staff members for their information needs. But with the passage of time, development

of technologies and their reducing implementation cost forced libraries to migrate its resources and services from physical format to digital format[3]. Over the time of the last two decades information technology (IT) has revolutionised the way that libraries meet the needs of its users. Reading and research are becoming continuously less dependent on users' location. To access library resources to a certain extent, it is not necessary to visit library building. These trends wonder whether there is much future for library buildings on academic institution campuses.

Crowley[4] considers this situation as a serious threat. According to him the subscription of online resources, in many cases, has reduced personal visits to the library by its users. Reducing budgetary provisions in higher education, a situation is arising in which some academic institutes may find it reasonable to reduce or eliminate physical libraries.

Current trends suggest that the role of academic library as information centre will continuously loose its importance. The University of Texas at Austin[5,6] shifted the 90,000 volumes from its undergraduate library to a different location of the campus. The new campus of the University of California[7] at Merced, have a capacity to shelve a collection of only 250,000 volumes, a tiny number for a research library. Decreasing dependency on physical collections will likely result in compact shelving of print documents, zero-growth collections, shifting of less used materials to remote locations, and increased demand for facilities like interlibrary loan (ILL) and document delivery services. Freeman[8] summarises his view of the academic library as place: The primary role of a library is to support and enrich the students' in education. However, a library plays an important role in the development of society. Here people come together on levels and in ways that they might not in a residence hall, classroom or off-campus location.

Lewis[9] provides a strategy for academic libraries in what is left of the first quarter of the 21st century. There are five components of the model: (a) complete the migration from print format to digital format; (b) retire legacy print collections; (c) redesign library space; (d) reposition library and information tools, resources, and expertise; and (e) shift the focus of collections from purchasing to curating content. Each component of this strategy and their interactions will be considered and is expected that the result will provide an effective roadmap for academic libraries and their parent organisation.

Twenty years ago, parameters of an excellent academic library were: Impressive physical facilities, vast collection of documents and subscription of large number of journals, huge space for seating a large number of student, a big budget, and services provided by specialists in the disciplines taught at the parent organisation. Presently, these measures are of lesser importance, and others have arisen with significant prominence[10]. Accordingly, measures of accreditation for libraries are less accepted than they used to be.

1.2 Indian Institute of Management: A Historical Overview

After independence of India in 1947, the Planning Commission was responsible to supervise and direct country's development. India developed rapidly in the 1950s. Under its industrial policy in the late 1950s, the Commission started facing problem in appointing competent managers for these public sector enterprises. To solve this problem, in 1959 the Planning Commission[11] invited Professor George Robbins, University of California, to assist in the establishment of an All India Institute of Management Studies. The Government of India on the basis of his recommendations, decided to establish two elite management institutes named as 'Indian Institutes of Management' (IIM) at Calcutta (now Kolkata) and Ahmedabad these mainly offer courses at postgraduate, doctoral level and executive education programs. These IIMs are public, autonomous institutes of management education and research in India. The establishment of IIMs was initiated by our first Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru[12]. The IIMs are registered as societies under the Indian Societies Registration Act[14]. Each IIM is autonomous in nature and exercises independent control over its day-to-day functions. However, the administration of all IIMs and the overall strategy of IIMs are supervised by the IIM Council headed by Minister of Human Resource Development (MHRD), India and consists of the chairpersons and directors of all IIMs and senior officials from the MHRD of the Government of India[15,16]. There are 13 IIMs (Table 1), but this study is confined to the IIMs established earlier than 2010,i.e., IIMS. IIMs established in and after 2010 are at the stage of their infancy so have not been included in the study.

2. OBJECTIVES

Primary objectives of this study is to understand:

(a) Comparative status of collection in IIM libraries;

(b) Comparative status of IT application in IIM libraries;

(c) User services provided by IIM libraries; and

(d) How IIM libraries are transforming from traditional libraries to learning centres.

3. METHODOLOGY

A questionnaire was prepared for data collection. The questionnaire was divided into different headings

Table 1. Indian Institutes of Management (in order of establishment year)[13]

S. No.	Name of institute	Abbre.	Year of establishment	Location	Website address
1.	Indian Institute of Management Calcutta	IIM-C	13 Nov 1961	Kolkata, West Bengal	www.iimcal.ac.in
2.	Indian Institute of Management Ahmedabad	IIM-A	11 Dec 1961	Ahmedabad, Gujarat	www.iimahd.ernet.in
3.	Indian Institute of Management Bangalore	IIMB	1973	Bangalore, Karnataka	www.iimb.ernet.in
4.	Indian Institute of Management Lucknow	IIM-L	1984	Lucknow, Uttar Pradesh	www.iiml.ac.in
5.	Indian Institute of Management Kozhikode	IIM-K	1996	Kozhikode, Kerala	www.iimk.ac.in
6.	Indian Institute of Management Indore	IIM-I	1996	Indore, Madhya Pradesh	www.iimidr.ac.in
7.	Indian Institute of Management Shillong	IIM-S	2007	Shillong, Meghalaya	www.iimshillong.in
8.	Indian Institute of Management Rohtak	IIM-R	2010	Rohtak, Haryana	www.iimrohtak.ac.in
9.	Indian Institute of Management Ranchi	IIM-Ranchi	2010	Ranchi, Jharkhand	www.iimranchi.ac.in
10.	Indian Institute of Management Raipur	IIM-Raipur	2010	Raipur, Chhattisgarh	www.iimraipur.ac.in
11.	Indian Institute of Management Tiruchirapalli	IIM-T	2011	Tiruchirappalli, Tamil Nadu	www.iimtrichy.ac.in
12.	Indian Institute of Management Udaipur	IIM-U	2011	Udaipur, Rajasthan	www.iimu.ac.in
13.	Indian Institute of Management Kashipur	IIM-Kashipur	2011	Kashipur, Uttarakhand	www.iimkashipur.ac.in

as major components viz., library details, library staff, budget, collection, IT infrastructure, and users services, etc. It was sent to respective libraries by e-mail to library staff members. For further clarification, where required, things were discussed by e-mail as well as telephonically. The following description of IIM libraries is based on the data received in the questionnaires sent to the libraries.

4. ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

All the seven IIM libraries provided the essential details requested in the questionnaire and the collected data is analysed.

4.1 IIM Library Overview

All the libraries have their own webpage with links on the homepage of the Institute website.

4.2 Library Budget

On the budget, information was sought only for the current year. In terms of budget allocation, it is very much clear that all IIM libraries are spending more than double on electronic resources (e-resources) in comparison to print material. The IIM-A, IIM-B, IIM-I libraries had made provisions for IT infrastructure and in remaining IIMs' IT infrastructure budget is part of the institute's IT budget. The budget in Table 2 doesn't include subscription charges of e-resources subscribed through INDEST-AICTE consortium and

UGC INFONET Digital Library Consortium. This budget allocation is for e-resources and databases subscribed by IIMs through IIMs consortium and direct from publisher/aggregator.

4.3 Library Collection

Library collection is a sum of total library materials that make up the holdings of a library. The data are presented in the Table 3.

The largest collection of books, i.e., 188024 is in IIM-A library, and IIM-S library that is the youngest library in IIMs has least collection of 11622 books. IIM-A is subscribing largest number of e-resources and least by IIM-S as it was established in 2007 and still in its child growth.

4.4 Electronic Resources through Consortium

The IIMs are subscribing e-resources through IIM Consortium; INDEST-AICTE Consortium, UGC INFONET Digital Library Consortium, and as well as directly from publisher/aggregator.

4.4.1 IIM Consortium

IIM Consortia[17] was set up in 2000. IIM-K took an initiative in the establishment of the IIM Consortia, and its first meeting held at Calicut. The formal approval of the consortia came from the IIM Directors meeting held at IIM, Kozhikode in August 2001. The objective was: To ensure among

Table 2. Library budget (in lakhs)

Budget Head / IIMs	IIM-A	IIM-B	IIM-C	IIM-I	IIM-K	IIM-L	IIM-S
Books	73.55	30	90	10	100	20	} 400
Journals/E-resources/Databases	560	436	500	400	250	4.10	
IT Infrastructure	2.75	24	--	10	--	--	--

Table 3. Library collection (as on 31.12.2014)

Documents	IIM-A	IIM-B	IIM-C	IIM-I	IIM-K	IIM-L	IIM-S
Books	188024	191462	142924	28000	35000	43887	11622
Current Periodicals	222	168	208	80	270	440	50
Theses							
— Print Format	300	160	154	22	8	28	--
— Digital Format	300	160	--	--	8	--	--
Electronic Resources							
— E-journals	14453	2090	1771	1700	20000	1500	1200
— E-books	11000	1400	1024	20000	200000	60000	--
— Company/Country Databases	71	20	42	13	50	42	10

the IIMs, optimum utilisation and enhancement of the resources, and to minimise the expenditure by consortia-based subscriptions to the commonly subscribed databases and journals.The meetings with publishers/aggregators proved constructive and fruitful. During its first meeting, a number of electronic resources were jointly purchased by IIMs at very competitive prices, and remaining publishers/aggregators promised to provide their resources at discounted price. In 13th meeting of IIM Consortium[18], held at IIM Raipur, the members felt that the IIM Consortium's presence should be strengthened in the INDEST Consortium. It was also decided that from next year, in IIM Consortium Annual Meet, a representative of INDEST Consortium to be invited.The Consortium negotiates for the better price for the e-resources to be subscribed by all IIM libraries that are not available in other consortia or don't contain journals as per their requirements. Payment of subscription charges of these resources is made by each IIM directly to the publisher/aggregator.

4.4.2 INDEST-AICTE Consortium

The 'Indian National Digital Library in Engineering Sciences and Technology (INDEST) Consortium[19] was set up by the MHRD in 2003 on the recommendation of the Expert Group appointed by the Ministry under the chairmanship of Prof. N. Balakrishnan. The IIT Delhi was designated as the Consortium Headquarters to coordinate all its activities. In December 2005, the Consortium was re-named as INDEST-AICTE Consortium. It subscribes e-resources for the member institutions at discounted rates and on favorable terms and conditions. The Ministry provides funds for subscription of these e-resources.

4.4.3 UGC INFONET Digital Library Consortium

The UGC-INFONET Digital Library Consortium[20] was formally launched by Dr A.P.J. Abdul Kalam, the President of India, in December, 2003. The Consortium proved to be a recipe to university libraries that have been discontinuing subscription of journals because of 'serials crisis'. The crisis

was a result of an increase in the subscription price of journals much faster than the inflation rate, the increase in number of journals and the insufficiency of funds available to the libraries. The Consortium is executed by the INFormation and LIBrary NETwork (INFLIBNET) Centre, Gandhinagar and funded by the UGC.

4.5 Library Staff

Library staff should be qualified/competent and adequate in number to manage the library and its services effectively and efficiently. Number of staff members and their level depends on the factors like size of library collection, annual additions, library budget, library hours, number of users, services offered, information products compiled, level of automation, etc. In all IIM libraries, almost all positions are filled. The position of Librarian is vacant in IIM-L since a long time which affects the functioning and efficiency of library.

4.6 Library Membership

All IIM libraries are providing access to the library, its resources and services to its all their faculty members, staff, and students. Alumni can also use the library in their respective institutes except IIM-K and IIM-S. The IIM-K is at the planning stage to provide this facility to its alumni. All IIMs except IIM-K and IIM-S are providing access to their library to corporate, institutes and individuals on charges basis.

4.7 Application of IT

Rapid developments in IT and their extensive applications in all aspects of everyday life, academic libraries are no exception. Lynch[21] believes that: "IT has affected librarians in three stages of 'rebuilding', 'innovation' and 'transformation'. The first effect of IT was automation and rebuilding. The important characteristic of this stage is the reduction of costs and speeding up of activities. In the second stage, libraries realised the new capabilities of IT. In addition to above advantages, they used it for new services. The third stage began at late 1980s,

and library environments were changed due to the application of IT."

4.7.1 Library Management Software

The IIM libraries are fully-automated using the different library management software. IIM-K and IIM-L are using LibSys while IIM-B, IIIM-C, IIM-I, and IIM-S are using VTLS Virtua. IIM-A is the only library that is using Koha, an open source software (OSS). IIM-I and IIM-C libraries switched over to VTLS Virtua from LibSys in 2005, 2015, respectively, and IIM-A library turned to Koha from LibSys in 2014. Libraries stated reason for migrating to another software is to provide more and better services to their users. They feel that the new software is more efficient in the fully-automated environment. Expectation and requirements of libraries and its users are always keep on changing so library should change the software as per chaining requirements or should get developed the required features into existing software as software development is also an ongoing process. Libraries should carry out SWOT analysis and ROI before switching to other software. In the times of OSS, only one library is using KOHA. It needs to be further researched why other premier institutions like IIMs have not switched over to OSS.

4.7.2 Remote Access

Publishers/aggregators are providing e-resources on IP-based access, allowing the use of these e-resources only within the institution premises. It is to avoid misuse and unauthorised use of the resources through remote access by username and password method. But it is also a limitation for the users. Users always wish to access e-resources from anywhere, anytime. Therefore, libraries are providing remote access to its users using different software. IIM-A, IIM-C, and IIM-K are using RemoteXS; IIM-B ,and IIM-I are using EZproxy, and IIM-L is using Athens software.

4.7.3 Institutional Repository

An institutional repository (IR) is an online locus for collecting, preserving, and disseminating of the intellectual output of an academic institution. To enhance the accessibility and visibility of the research output of the faculty members and research scholar of the institute. Most of the IIMs have created IR to collect, preserve, and distribute the scholarly output of their faculty members and students. These include articles, theses, working papers, annual reports, research projects, etc. The IIM-A, IIM-B, IIM-I, IIM-K are using DSpace whereas IIM-L is using Greenstone. The IIM-C and IIM-S don't have IR.

4.7.4 Low Vision Solution

The IIM-C and IIM-I libraries had thought about low vision solution. The IIM-C has purchased OpenBook, PEARL, and JAWS (Job Access With Speech) from Freedom Scientific. OpenBook[22] converts printed documents or graphic-based text into an e-text format on PC, using high-quality speech and the latest optical character recognition (OCR) technology. This software is designed for people who have low vision or are visually impaired who need access to print and electronic materials. OpenBook and the PEARL document camera create a complete scanning and reading system for work, home, and school.

JAWS[23] is one of the world's most popular screen reader, developed for people whose vision loss deprive them from seeing content on the screen or navigating with a mouse. It provides output in speech and Braille format. IIM-I has Zoom-EX[24], which allows one to convert any printed material into multiple formats such as speech, large print, MP3 or text files, promptly.

5. SERVICES AND FACILITIES

5.1 Circulation

Circulation is an essential service in a library and would continue till the print material is available. Presently, in IIM libraries barcode-based circulation system is in practice. However, IIM-I and IIM-S are the only libraries that have implemented an RFID-based system in their libraries and circulation of books is also based on this technology.

5.2 OPAC

An Online Public Access Catalog (OPAC) is an online database of a library or group of libraries holdings. Users can search to locate documents and other material available at a library by different approaches, like title, author, etc. All IIM libraries are providing OPAC to their users.

Except IIM-L, all other IIMs under this study have developed union catalogue by implementing EBSCO Discovery Services. A user of any IIM can search a book in any other IIM OPAC and also request to his/her library to get it on the loan.

5.3 Inter-library Loan

Inter-library loan (ILL) is a service, one of the oldest service in libraries, where a user of one library can borrow books or get photocopies of documents that are available with another library. All IIMs are providing loan facility of books as well as articles among them without any charges. It saves a lot of time faculty members and research students in getting a required document.

6. INFORMATION PRODUCTS

All IIMs are compiling different information products for their users to keep them up-to-date and build proximity between the library and its users to maximise the use of library resources.

6.1 New Arrival of Books

'New Arrival of Books' is an alert service that updates users about new books added to the library collection during specified period. IIM-A provides this service named as 'New Arrival (Books)' in the form of a pdf file on the weekly basis. It comprises a list of books arranged under different subject headings and contains bibliographic information of the book along with its picture and hyperlink to publisher's website. IIM-B provides the services as 'New Accessions' providing bibliographic details of the book and as a user clicks on the title of a book it directs the user to the catalog of that title. IIM-C has named this service as 'New Arrivals' and provides it on a weekly basis. In it the titles are arranged by broad class numbers and contain a brief abstract of a book along with its bibliographic details.

Only IIM-I library is using Shelfari[25], a social cataloging website for books, for newly added books in the library. It is updated on the daily basis, and a link of it has been provided on library web page 'New Arrival' (Fig.1). Shelfari[25] was founded by RealNetworks alumni and launched on 11 October, 2006. IIM-L provides the service as 'Current Additions' on the monthly basis providing bibliographic details of books.

Figure 1. Shelfari of IIM-I[26]

6.2 New Arrivals of Journals

The IIM-A provides this service named 'New Arrivals (Print Journals)' on weekly basis containing the title of the journal, volume, and issue details. IIM-L has calls it service as 'Current Content Service' and notifies contents of the periodicals as received by the library on the weekly basis.

The title of the journal does not serve much purpose. It should include the title of the article, the name of the author(s) and also abstract, and journals should be arranged subject-wise. Thus, by reading abstract a user can determine whether an article is relevant to him/her or not.

6.3 Other Information Products

IIM-A compiles a wide range of products to its users. 'IIMA Weekly News Digest' is arranged under two sections-news on IIMA and 'Faculty Column' and as a user clicks on Full Texts/he can read the complete news. In 'Quick Guide to Databases' databases are categorised under seven headings based on the type of information contained. As one clicks on a database, it will redirect to the website of the database. 'Offline Database Installation Guide' is a manual regarding installation of five offline databases on users' computer—ACE Equity, ACE MF, Capitaline PLUS, CMIE Prowess, and Thomson Reuters Eikon. As a user clicks on the Installation Guide, a pdf file opens, describing steps in details to install the database on his/her computer system. Another service 'Student Information Reference Service' is a dedicated service to assist students for information requirements to complete their assignments, projects, class preparation, etc. A dedicated library professional staff member is available in the library from Monday-Friday between 5.00 PM-08:00 PM, who assists the students in addressing their information requirements. The requirements may include help in identifying the appropriate databases for assignments or class work, customised orientation to specific databases, etc. Under heading of 'Industry Information', the resources have been classified into different categories according to their content type. It includes company/industry information, country information, academic literature, e-books, legal information resources, newspaper and magazines, etc., and a brief description of the resource, a user guide and a link to download mobile apps for Android and Apple phones.

6.4 Other Services

IIM-I and IIM-L have also developed 'Children Section' for campus community children. IIM-I has approximately 800 books and its opening hours are as library hours. In this section IIM-L has around 600 books and remains open from 5-7 pm on all working days. It is an excellent initiative of these two libraries to contribute to overall development and to create reading habit among the children. IIM-L library has a similar product for its students, named, 'Reading Beyond Curriculum'. This product is development by the library in consultation with faculty members of the institute. It contributes to the overall development of the students along with

developing a reading habit, and it is also an effort to optimise the usage to library resources.

7. SOCIAL MEDIA

Social media is an application that enables users to create and share content to facilitate much closer relationships between libraries and their patrons. The IIM-K library is the only library that is on Facebook and provides information about institute news and activities. According to a survey conducted by Library Journal's on Public Library Marketing Methods and Best Practices, 86 % of libraries were found using social media. Mainly, two social media platforms, Facebook (99 %) and Twitter (56 %) were used by libraries. Our libraries are yet to take off in this regard.

8. CONCLUSIONS AND SUGGESTIONS

All IIMs libraries are playing a vital role to achieve objectives of their parent institutions. The IIMs are subscribing to a large number of e-resources and providing remote access to their users so that they can access them anytime and from anywhere. Libraries are compiling different services/products and providing personalised reference service to support them in their studies and to build proximity between the library and its users to increase the use of its resources. Libraries are giving users needs and preferences primary consideration

The following measures are suggested to make libraries as learning centres and maximise the use of library resources.

(a) The IIMs are acquiring e-resources from three consortia. Subscribing resources from different consortia is not advisable. It results in duplication of efforts and wastage of time and energy. There should be only one consortium at national level for all type of academic institutions with different sections like of science and technology, business and management, social sciences, medicine, law, etc. and e-resources should be available in it as per their requirements of all institutions. It will strengthen the consortium and its power to bargain for better subscription price, terms and conditions, embargo, access to the back volumes, perpetual access, archival rights, training programmes, etc., because of large number of subscription base.

(b) All IIMs are using different software to automate library functions and services and to provide access to its resources. All libraries may purchase same software so that they can bargain on price and terms and conditions. They can also pressurise vendor to customise the software as per their requirements. One library is using OSS that can be practiced by others also in view of its advantages and trends.

(c) The IIMs are compiling different information products and services for their users. Best practices should be circulated. The libraries should expand the activities of IIM Consortium where the exchange of staff will enhance expertise across libraries. They should increase interaction among library staff members to share and learn from services compiled/provided and practices followed in different libraries. It will develop competencies and broaden understanding of library staff members. Even it can be planned that a library staff of one IIM should visit and stay for some time to another IIM to observe and learn functioning of a section/service(s) provided by the library. After returning to his own institute, s/he can improve functioning of the library.

(d) 'Children Section' at IIM-I and IIM-L and 'Reading Beyond Curriculum' developed by IIM-L is a superb initiative of the library to develop and create reading habit among the children and its students. All other libraries may think in this direction to inculcate reading habits.

(e) Libraries should provide personalised reference service to assist its users in selecting an appropriate resource, do complex search, to use a database to fetch relevant information without wastage of time. Library should invite publishers/aggregators to conduct training programmes for e-resource/databases and how to creation of alert services.

(f) All libraries should be on social media. It is appropriate to keep the users up-to-date and marketing of library services and information products.

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