

*Overlapping in Periodical Acquisition: A Study
of Special Libraries of Lucknow*

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It is being experienced that libraries do not have enough money to purchase all or even a part of required reading material for their users mainly because of:

- (i) Inflation;
- (ii) Escalation in cost of reading material; and
- (iii) Literature growth.

The budget allocation of all the libraries are either shrinking or remaining constant, which results in reduction of purchasing powers. Even the richest libraries are being hit hard by inflation.

THE GROWTH OF THE LITERATURE

The growth of literature is a most familiar phenomena with all of us since 1920. The output of American titles as reported in *Publishers' Weekly* was 40846 titles in 1974 whereas it was 29579 in 1969. This registered 38% growth in 5 years. The world growth of scientific literature is estimated at 6 to 7%¹ a year. *World List of Scientific Periodicals* indexed only 25,000 periodicals in its first edition during 1900-1922 and it increased to 70,000 in 1968². *Science Citation Index* alone included 3,53,000 source articles in 1973³. The growth of the articles has been estimated at the rate of 4.14% a year and is now about 5,00,000⁴. On an average, each journal is also increasing slightly in size at the rate of 1.38% a year⁵.

PRICE RISE OF PERIODICALS

During the 1960s the average price rise of selected groups of periodicals published in the United States increased by 130%. Some of the scientific journals in Physics and Chemistry showed the increase by over 200%⁶. The price rise of British publications is even faster than US publications. The cost of *Biological Abstract Chemical Abstract* which was \$170.00 in 1926 and \$9250.00 in 1907 respectively, has reached an alarming price rise. The present subscription of these journals are \$2500.00 and \$6400.00 during 1984 respectively. According to the annual Survey of periodicals, prices by *Blackwells* for 1983 revealed an overall increase of 10.3% on 1982 prices. Analysing the prices by country, USA and Canada had a 13.7% increase; UK 10.9% and other countries 4.1%. The following tables give a view of the overall trends in periodical price rise :

PERIODICAL PRICES : SUBJECT INCREASE 1983⁷

Subject :- Journals priced between 50 p and £ 25

	No. of Titles sampled	%age increase on 1982	Index 1970= 100	Average price 1983	
				£	P
Humanities and Social Sciences	472	10.0	341.7	16	26
Medicine	31	12.7	220.3	19	93
Science & Technology	209	10.7	216.9	18	02

PERIODICAL PRICES—NATIONAL INCREASE 1983⁸

Name of the country	No of titles sampled	%age increased in 1982	Index 1970= 100	Average price 1983	
				£	P
Great Britain	371	10.9	293.2	16	56
USA and Canada	208	13.7	214.3	17	18
Other countries	133	4.1	232.4	17	61

Scientific and Research Libraries are hard-pressed due to this trend of price rise. Consequently, libraries are spending more on library materials but are adding only a few volumes.

In such situations we are in a dilemma. On one hand, there is a constant pressure to purchase more and more materials for our pattern, on the other hand, our purchasing power is decreasing or remaining constant due to reduced or Stable funds. Special libraries are fighting hard to keep themselves up-to-date with the growth of literature. The acquisition of periodicals has become more important and crucial than books because of their higher usage which is evident from the following table⁹ :

USAGE OF BOOKS AND JOURNALS

Type of Publication	Subject	
	Science %	Technology %
Books	12	14
Periodicals	82	70
Other including reports etc.	6	16

In spite of all these obstacles, our goal remains unchanged i.e. to provide maximum service within the limited resources. Every body is convinced that self-sufficiency is impossible, especially in the present age. Therefore, we shall have to find the solution in mutual-sufficiency, though every scholar or even the librarian himself would prefer that all required material be easily accessible in their own library, which has become an impossible proposition.

If we can avoid duplication of collection at local level especially in acquisition of periodicals it would be a significant step towards resource sharing. After all, how many journals can a library subscribe to? The answer is—as many as a particular library can afford. It is difficult to say that a particular journal is not relevant to this library because of interdisciplinary research. Even the articles belonging to social sciences are appearing in Science and Technology journals and vice-versa. However, we have to give serious consideration to avoid duplication as far as possible. Let us consider why we have duplication of journals among various libraries :

- (i) The overlapping of titles in various libraries may be caused due to sheer ignorance. One library may not know what

is being subscribed to in other libraries. This happens due to non-availability of union list of periodicals and lack of coordination.

- (ii) The second obvious reason can be that the library can afford to subscribe to periodicals which are subscribed by other libraries locally for more convenience. Even then, is it not an unwise spending ?

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

In view of the phenomenal price rise in periodical subscription, their acquisition is becoming more and more problematic year by year. It is high time that the librarians handle this situation carefully. The present study was conducted to find out :

- (a) the extent of overlapping of periodicals among scientific libraries in Lucknow; and
- (b) to suggest the measure to avoid such duplication as far as possible:

METHODOLOGY

The periodical collection of the 8 libraries were surveyed. The Library of *Central Institute for Medicinal and Aeromatic Plants* which is situated outside the city was excluded from this study purposely because there is some justification of overlapping of periodicals with other libraries due to its distance from the other Libraries. The list of libraries included in the present study are given below :

- (i) Birbal Sahni Institute of Paleobotany (BSIP)
- (ii) Central Drug Research Institute (CDRI)
- (iii) Central Mango Research Station (CMRS)
- (iv) Industrial Toxicological Research Centre (ITRC)
- (v) King George Medical College (KGMC)
- (vi) National Botanical Research Institute (NBRI)
- (vii) National Research Laboratory for Conservation of Cultural property (NRLC)
- (viii) Tagore Library, Lucknow University (TL)

Latest list of periodicals prepared by each library was taken as source material. Titles of the periodicals of each library were noted on 5"×3" cards along with the name of library where it is being subscribed. After arranging them separately, every library's periodical titles were matched with all other libraries and overlapping was ascertained. Same procedure was followed for the rest of the libraries.

FINDINGS

The study revealed that there is a total duplication of 194 journals out of which 43 journals are being subscribed by more than two Libraries. The Titles of these journals are given in the appendix No. A, B, C, D & E.

The overall findings are given in a tabular form below :

TABLE 1

Number of Overlapping Journals in Eight Scientific Libraries of Lucknow*

Sr. No.	Two Libraries where overlapping exists	Number of such journals
1	CDRI & KGMC	43
2	CDRI & NBRI	25
3	NBRI & CMRS	23
4	NBRI & BSIP	18
5	CDRI & ITRC	10
6	ITRC & NBRI	10
7	BSIP & TL	7
8	NBRI & TL	5
9	CDRI & TL	3
10	CDRI & NRLC	2
11	BSIP & ITRC	1
12	ITRC & NRLC	1
13	ITRC & TL	1
14	NBRI & NRLC	1
15	NBRI & KGMC	1
	Total	151

The table shows that highest duplication exists between CDRI & KGMC where 43 same journals are being subscribed. This is

*This excludes the journals which are subscribed by more than two libraries.

followed by CDRI & NBRI, and NBRI & CMRS with 25 and 23 same journals respectively. CDRI & ITRC and ITRC & NBRI have 10 duplicated journals each.

TABLE 2

Total Duplication in Each Library*

Sr. No.	Name of Library	Total No. of Journals subscribed	Total No of Journals Overlapping with other libraries
1	CDRI	575	83
2	NBRI	545	83
3	KGMC	213	44
4	BSIP	86	26
5	ITRC	277	23
6	CMRS		23
7	TL		16
8	NRLC		4

It is evident from the above table that periodicals being subscribed in CDRI and NBRI have the highest duplication of 83 journals each with other libraries in Lucknow. This is followed by KGMC, BSIP and ITRC, CMRS, TL & NRLC having duplications of 44, 26 and 23, 23, 16, 4 respectively.

Agreed that the libraries should be as sufficient as possible. Is sufficiency attainable? If yes, there is no need for interdependence. If self-sufficiency is not possible, there is an imperative need for cooperative agreement for mutual resource sharing to avoid overlapping of periodicals.

It is a delicate matter for the libraries to discontinue the overlapping titles and replace them by adding new journals on their subscription lists. Patrons prefer all required material in their own libraries without realising the problems with the libraries. Though absolute duplication cannot be avoided yet some measures can be taken towards this direction.

CONCLUSION

In order to minimise duplication the following measures should be adopted :

*These exclude those journals which are subscribed at more than two libraries.

- (i) First of all, the local libraries should find out the core journals in their field of specialisation and rank them in orders of preference in order to give priority to acquisition; the core journals can be ascertained by the citation analysis and frequency of usage, volume of demand, readers appeal etc.
- (ii) The compilation of Union Catalogue of periodical holdings is the pre-requisite for cooperation and coordination.
- (iii) One library should provide equal library services to the members of the other libraries. This implies willingness and a sense of responsibility of one library to the others more than to its own constituency and clientele.
- (iv) Reprographic facilities should be provided at a reasonable price so that the non-availability of the journals in one library is not painful to the scientists
- (v) Functioning of one library as *bibliographical centre* at a local level may be useful where all the indexing and abstracting journals can be subscribed with the exception of some indispensable journals already being subscribed elsewhere in the local libraries. A consortium of cooperating libraries should be formed for the purpose.
- (vi) Whenever journals are to be added to the library or are to be discontinued, the consortium should take such decision after careful study. The users' representatives should also be invited for such decision.

Since mutual sufficiency is the only alternative and also compelling need, the users of the library are to be educated in using the resources of all the libraries of various levels. "Though it is difficult to avoid complete duplication even at a local level yet best possible measures can be taken to minimise it. It is worth noting that after the seminar CDRI and ITRC have reduced the duplication to a large extent.

REFERENCES

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