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Factors Affecting Acquisition Policies in Libraries: A Comparative Study of Centrally Funded Technical Institutes(CFTI) and Central Universities

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The information life cycle in a library involves acquisition as one of the steps which involves acquiring documents for the library. Relevant resources are procured for use by the users. The process of library acquisition has witnessed a drastic change in recent times due to factors like digitalization, financial disruptions, various modes of delivery etc. The purpose of the present research is to understand the factors affecting acquisition policies of libraries of central universities and CFTIs. Literature review for the study was done from reputed databases like Emerald, Taylor and Francis and Web of Science and a Prisma model was developed to narrow down the literature review process. NVivo was used to understand the literature gap with TreeMap and Word cloud. A structured closed ended questionnaire having components related to acquisition was sent to library staff in the ranks of librarian, deputy librarian and assistant librarian for primary data collection. Descriptive statistics was applied to understand the demographic data and comprehend the importance of various components of acquisition. A comparative analysis was done with respect to the two types of institutions - centrally funded technical institutions and central universities. The conclusion of the research work is that the library staff of centrally funded technical institutions and central universities have different preferences for the factors affecting

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acquisition. The library staff of centrally funded technical institutions had the top priority for 'ease of acquisition' whereas their counterparts in central universities looked for 'significance of the resources' the most.

Keywords: Acquisition, library, factors, databases, collection development

1 NATURE OF THE STUDY

The field of library and information science is changing gradually with the evolving information and communication technology. It is not just enough to collect library resources in great volume but obtaining the right library resources for the right reader at the right time is also very crucial ¹. The American Library Association² in its guide for written collection policy statements defines collection development policies as “documents which define the scope of a library’s existing collections, plan for the continuing development of resources, identify collection strengths, and outline the relationship between selection philosophy and the institution’s goals, general selection criteria, and intellectual freedom”. Edelman³ defines acquisition in the library context “as the process that implements in turn the selection decision. It is the process that actually gets the materials in the library. In this fast paced technological environment, the academic libraries need to be more flexible than before. But many countries especially the developing ones are in progress and transition from acquiring print resources to e-resources^{4, 5} and acquiring them from consortia^{6,7and8}. Acquisition process in a library shows evolution in collection management vis-a-vis changing formats of resources and their availability channels⁹. The process of acquisition of resources involves various practices and policies including guidelines that monitor the overall process. The identification of collection needs, planning of resource sharing and evaluation of the collection are also to be kept in mind. There are various factors or antecedents which affect the process of acquisition ranging from monetary factors to significance of the resources. The relative worth of these factors in different environments needs to be studied to understand the importance of the factors.

2 LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Systematic and comprehensive literature review- A systematic and comprehensive literature review was undertaken to assess and explore the literature relevant to the area of study. The procedure of review of literature along with the method used is delineated here. A comprehensive literature review was undertaken in the field of factors affecting the acquisition policy in libraries. The systematic and comprehensive literature review is based on the procedures given by Dubey et al ¹⁰ and Gupta et al ¹¹. Web of Science, Science Direct and Springer databases were searched as shown in Figure 1. These databases are considered adequate regarding the quality and quantity of literature. Keywords such as “library” and “acquisition” were used to fetch results. Additional keywords like “factors” and “institutions” were added as and when required. The search for the keywords was done each time on Web of Science and other mentioned databases using “OR” operator amidst the keywords. Later the outcome of the search was combined using “AND” operator in the mentioned databases while the search syntax is mentioned in Table 1. The search resulted in 110 journal articles in the first level search with the keywords “Library” and “Acquisition” in WoS database. In the Science Direct database, there were 128 results with the matching keywords. The same search when performed in the Springer database yielded 458 responses. Since the number of results was high, additional search was done by more keywords “Factors” and “Acquisition” which finally ended up into 198 research papers. Further, non-duplicate citations screen process was done with the help of Mendeley reference manager. This resulted in 73 non-duplicate citations. Application of inclusion/ exclusion criteria at this point of the evaluation was necessary to reduce the number of unwanted results. Thus, final 64 articles were studied to understand the researches done. Research papers discussing school and institution library were also studied to understand the factors responsible for acquisition. The results can be cross checked in respective databases but as these databases are dynamic and updated actively so the results may vary in the number of documents¹². The factors of acquisition in the libraries were studied from these research papers. Some relevant research papers have been cited in this research.

Data Source	Search Syntaxes	Number of results obtained
Web of Science	Title Search="Library" AND Title Search "Acquisition" AND "Collection Development"	110
Science Direct	Title Search="Library" AND Title Search "Acquisition"	128
Springer	Title Search="Library" AND Title Search "Acquisition" AND Title Search="Acquisition" OR "Factors"	198

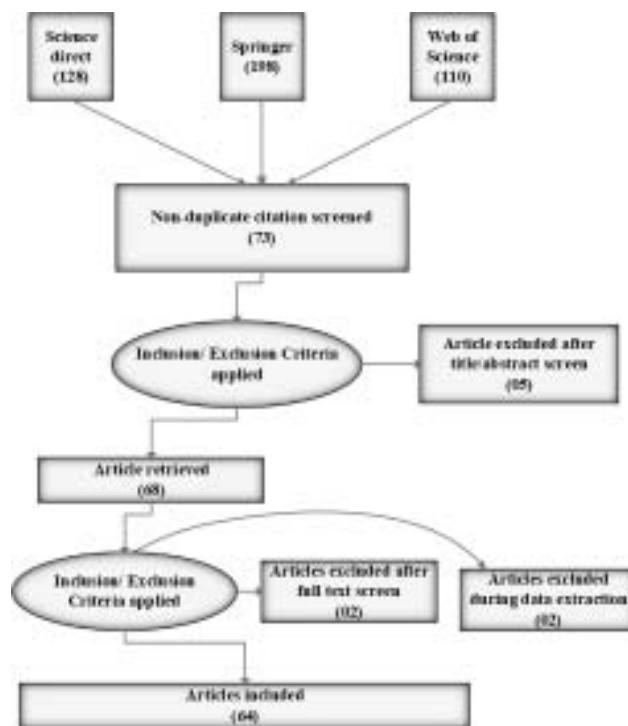


Figure 1: Prisma Model for identification of research papers

2.2 USAGE OF NVIVO

NVivo is a software which can be used for qualitative data analysis and also for researches which are done using mixed methods. The word cloud as shown in Figure 2 can be used to understand and identify the latest and relevant themes in the literature. Sub areas like acquisition, electronic, policies, competency etc can be seen in the periphery of the central construct.

A tree map is a diagrammatic representation of the hierarchy in data portrayed in set of rectangles varying in sizes as they appear in the literature review. Frequency of the text is mapped accordingly in the tree map. Figure 3 depicts the various areas related to library and information science where acquisition is one of them.



Figure 2: Word Cloud with the literature on acquisition of resources

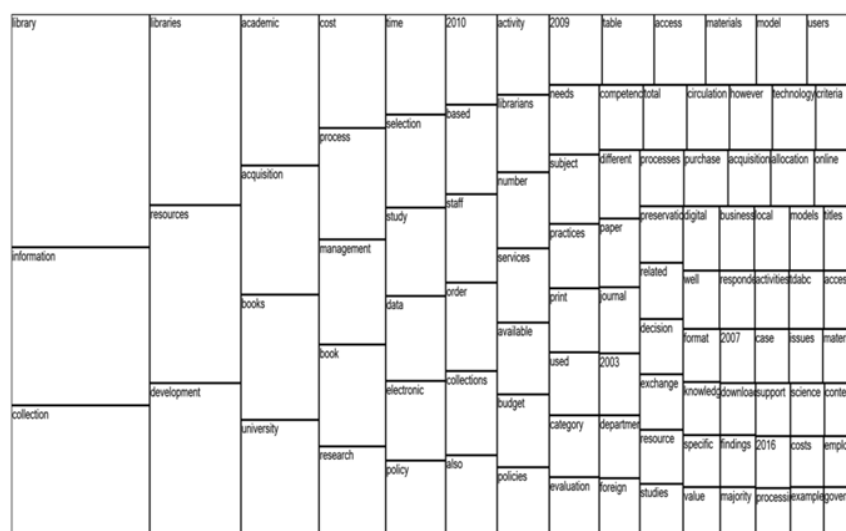


Figure 3: Tree Map depicting various sub areas related to acquisition

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study proposes largely to identify and analyse the online buying practices of libraries of higher educational institutions of India governed and/or funded by the central government. The specific objectives are to:

1. Identify the factors and components capable of influencing acquisition policies of libraries of higher educational institutions funded by Government of India and
2. Compare the relative worth of the factors influencing acquisition policies of centrally funded technical institutions and central universities

3.2 NATURE AND SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The proposed research work is empirical to compare the relative worth of the factors and components related to acquisition. In order to achieve the

objectives of the study, at the first instance literature review was carried on to identify the various antecedents and its components of acquisition practices of the libraries of higher educational institutions followed by in-depth personal interviews with some of the senior officers of select libraries of CFTIs and central universities constituted the population of the study and the number was 212. The institutions included IITs (Indian Institute of Technology), National Institute of Technology (NITs), Indian Institute of Information Technologies (IIITs), Indian Institute of Management (IIMs), Central Universities and some other institutes like National Law University (NLUs). Since, IIITs didn't have the requisite staff it was omitted from the survey. The institutions were selected ratio wise and it was in the ratio of 4:7:12:3:11. The sample size of the respondents was obtained at 95% confidence level confidence interval of 7% was 102 using the stratified sampling method of sampling.

3.3 RESEARCH INSTRUMENT AND DATA COLLECTION

The primary data collection was done with the help of a structured closed ended questionnaire having factors and components related to the procurement policies of select libraries in higher educational institutions governed and funded by Government of India. A pilot survey was done on 30 staff members in libraries of higher educational institutions in the rank of librarian, deputy librarian, and assistant librarian. The reliability and validity of the questionnaire after the pilot was found to be acceptable. A few changes were made for easy understanding. Finally the questionnaire was distributed among the sample respondents who were 102 in number. Few institutions in Delhi NCR and nearby cities were personally visited by the researcher to get the questionnaire filled from the respondents. The rest library staff of the institutions were contacted by mailing the questionnaire via Survey Monkey and Google Form.

3.4 DATA ANALYSIS

The overall demographic data of the sample has been represented after careful tabulation from the questionnaire. Data analysis was done meticulously in IBM SPSS Statistics 22.

3.4.1 Demographic Representation of Data

The number of respondents (and their percentage) falling under each category of the total data has been mentioned in tables 2-4 below.

Table 2: Demographic data of the respondents 'Rank' Wise

Rank	Number	Percentage
Assistant Librarian	76	74.50
Deputy Librarian	26	25.50

Table 3: Demographic data of the respondents 'Number of years served' wise

Number of years served	Number	Percentage
Less than 15 years	71	69.60
More than 15 years	31	30.40

Table 4: Demographic data of the respondent 'Age' wise

Age of the respondents	Number	Percentage
Below 40	36	35.29
Above 40	66	64.71

3.4.2 Reliability

The initial measure of scale testing is to check the internal reliability. It is done by computing Cronbach's alpha¹³. The main survey was conducted

on 102 staff of library in the rank of assistant librarian, deputy librarian of centrally funded institutions. The reliability of the survey instrument was 0.92 which is above 0.7, the minimum acceptable.¹⁴

Table 5: Reliability of total items

Cronbach's Alpha	Based on Standardized Items	No. of Items
0.921	0.922	40

4. FINDINGS

The relative worth of the components have been studied to understand the importance of each factors. The comparison of relative worth of the components and factors as perceived by the library staff of CFTIs and central universities has been discussed in this section.

The relative worth of the factors and the ranks for the centrally funded technical institutions are as follows:-

Table 6: Factors with their Mean and Rank for CFTI's

Factor	Mean	Rank
Source of Information	3.38	4 th
Financial Aspect	3.30	5 th
Ease of Acquisition	3.71	1 st
Significance of the resources	3.65	3 rd
Quality of the resources	3.66	2 nd

The factor **Ease of Acquisition** is ranked 1st with a mean value of 3.7. There are various factors and reasons which enhance the process of

acquisition and which makes it important for the library professionals in the CFTIs. The condition varies where mode of payment sometimes becomes important when there are various options for the payment. Most CFTIs would prefer the online method of payment. **Quality of the resources** is ranked 2nd with a mean value of 3.66. Every institution strives to get the best resources available. For the institutions like IITs, NITs, IIITs the student body is very selective and engaged in studies. No institutions would prefer to procure any outdated material. If the periodicals are indexed in renowned databases it definitely adds to the reason of acquiring the materials and this is highly useful for the users of the technical institutions as it increases effectiveness of the resources. The availability of search engines like truncation search and proximity indicator also increase the effectiveness and quality of the resources as it makes their access easier. **Significance of the resources** is ranked 3rd with a mean value of 3.65. It is pertinent for any institution to opt for the significant resources among all other resources. For the CFTIs the significance is third most important criteria in the process of acquisition. It is a matter of great concern for these institutions that they acquire the resources which have scope for ample usage by the users. **Source of the information** is ranked as 4th with a mean value of 3.38. The source of the information is not that important like the other factors as the libraries assume that all the sources by which the resources are procured are trustworthy and can be relied upon. It is because of the fact that a majority of the vendors and publishers are already in touch with the librarians for the purpose of acquisition. **Financial aspect** is least important for the libraries of CFTIs with a mean value of 3.30 and is ranked as 5th. The CFTIs are governed by the MHRD directly so they are financially better off receiving balanced grants for resource development in the libraries.

The relative worth of the factors and the ranks for the Central Universities are as follows:-

Table 7: Factors with their Mean and Rank for CFTI's

Factor	Mean	Rank
Source of Information	3.48	3 rd
Financial Aspect	3.45	4 th
Ease of Acquisition	3.43	5 th
Significance of the resources	3.61	1 st
Quality of the resources	3.58	2 nd

The **Significance of the resources** is ranked 1st with a mean value of 3.6. The universities feel that the resources used in the libraries should be very useful for the users at a large scale. The degree of attractive user interface plays a great role in attracting the students to use the internet and the computer system. If a user is technically weak but if the interface is user friendly it will help the user to use the resources efficiently. **Quality of the resource** is ranked as 2nd most important factor with a mean value of 3.58. The quality of any resource comprises a lot of components and the university library considers it as important factor. The resources should be recent and updated as the users want documents reporting results of the latest studies and researches. University libraries wish to acquire periodicals which are indexed in renowned databases. **Source of information** is ranked as 3rd with a mean value of 3.48. In the university libraries the source of the information is given due importance. There can be various sources of information. All of them cannot be authentic so it has to be seen where from the resources have to be procured. The universities feel that information procured through publishers' and vendors' catalogue is reliable. **Financial aspect** is ranked as 4th with a mean value of 3.45. It is not given enough consideration as the fund comes directly from the UGC. If the resources are good as per quality and standard, the university libraries acquire it. **Ease of acquisition** is ranked as 5th with a mean value of 3.43. In spite of many

easy options for the payment like that time period, electronic method, etc. this factor for the university library hardly matters.

5 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The objective of the research is to identify the factors which have a role to play in the acquisition in libraries of CFTIs and central universities. The factors in the questionnaire measure the weightage of the components showing their relative worth. A comparative study was done to understand which factors are more important for the library staff of the different institutions. The staff of libraries of CFTIs and central universities in the rank of assistant librarian, deputy librarian and librarian were consulted for their valuable feedback. The relative ranking and mean provided the insights as to which components have more importance for the library staff. The implication of the research work is that the factors having higher relative worth in CFTIs and central universities is stressed upon by the library staff. The factors like Ease of Acquisition and Quality of Resources were the most important for the Centrally Funded Technical Institutes whereas factors such as Significance of the Resource and Quality of Resources mattered the most for the staff of central universities. The research can guide in the acquisition process of these institutions.

6. LIMITATION

The research work has compared the factors of acquisition for the two types of institutions. More types of institutions like private universities and state governments' universities can be included in the further researches. A potential research can be done which links 'acquisition policies' to 'perception of users regarding library resources' in libraries.

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