

## OUTSOURCING IN LIBRARY ISSUES AND CONCERNS

**Nandkishor R. Motewar\* Dr. Shashank S. Sonwane\*\***

**\* Librarian,**  
Khare Dhere Bhosale  
College,  
Guhagar, Maharashtra,  
India.

**\*\* Assistant Professor,**  
Dept. of Lib. Inf. Science,  
Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar  
Marathwada University,  
Aurangabad, Maharashtra,  
India.

QR Code



**ABSTRACT:** - *The study highlights on the need of outsourcing in college Libraries. Libraries of Management institution libraries of Konkan region were selected for the survey conducted for the study. The required primary data for the study is collected through the structured questionnaire. The study collected information on the available human resources in libraries. The paper reveals that majority of the Libraries appointed qualified Librarian but lacks the professionally skilled human resources i.e. support staff to handle ICT and other non-core activities of the Libraries. Maximum Libraries does not have written outsourcing policy.*

**KEY WORDS – Outsourcing, Privatization, Contracting out.**

**1.Introduction:** Outsourcing is an act of contracting of the operations and other management responsibilities of specific business functions to a third party service provider. In the present competitive world to cope up with the frequent changes in Information and communication technology and growth in the use of Information and communication technology i.e. ICT, outsourcing is now increasingly used as a strategic management tool by various organizations. Use of outsourcing is always linked with the availability of human resources.

Espino-Rodriguez, T. F. and Padron-Robaina, V. (2006 ) defined outsourcing as -“Outsourcing is a strategic decision that entails the external contracting of determined non-strategic activities or business processes necessary for the manufacture of goods or the provision of services by means of agreements or contracts with higher capability firms to undertake those activities or business processes, with the aim of improving competitive advantage.”

For the modernization of libraries the need of outsourcing is becoming essential. The ICT

expertise is expensive and difficult to obtain and keep in-house for the libraries. For the effective implementation of ICT in libraries it is essential to take a review of available human resources, the skills they possess, their learnability, the budgetary provisions for outsourcing functions and financial capacity of the library or institution to spend for the implementation of ICT applications. Since the long period the staffing pattern of higher education institution libraries in India has not been modified as per the changing environment. It is adversely affecting on the functioning and modernizing of the college libraries. Presently in India the University library system has the provision to appoint a post of Information scientist to handle all the ICT applications of the Library but at college level neither such provision nor any guideline is available so the researcher undertook this study with following objectives.

## **2. The objectives of the study:**

1. To study the Importance of outsourcing used in Library Management
2. To examine the nature of available human resources in libraries.
3. To investigate the difficulties in outsourcing
4. To identify the reasons for outsourcing in Libraries

**3. Scope of study:** The scope of the present study is limited to the 55 Management college (Institution) Libraries of Konkan region of Maharashtra. The management institutions which

cater Post graduate education in the subject of Management science were selected for the study. The survey method, with a structured questionnaire as the data collecting instrument was used.

## **4. Literature Review**

**Benaud and Bordeianu (1998)** opined that thorough analysis of library functions might reveal that some operations commonly considered core services are not. Librarians have differing perceptions of where core services end and peripheral services begin. For example, Cataloguing and selection, once taken for granted as core services, are now being outsourced by some libraries.

**Hill (2009)** examined in the PhD dissertation the discourse surrounding the contracting process when a public library's management and staff are outsourced. He studied the power relationships between the community members, the local government, and the contractor as well as the library contracting process. This study is the description of outsourcing as a larger phenomenon rather than a detailed look at one particular library. This research focuses on the public library management contracting that has occurred in the United States and does not examine what is happening in other countries.

**(Hastings 2014)** has created useful guide to outsourcing technology. The author described the tips on everything about outsourcing from the initial contract to setting up and managing a variety of outsourced technology, including

software, Web development and even outsourced IT staff further introduced with the latest trends in Library outsourcing and enlisted the software and hardware used by the libraries.

**James, Shamchuk, & Koch (2015)** studied changing roles of Librarians and Library technicians in the study conducted on Libraries of Canada. The results of the study suggested that both librarians and library technicians perceive their roles as growing in scope and complexity and that the lines of responsibility were blurring. A majority of respondents indicated that they perceive a change in their roles in the past five years and commented on what the perceived changes were. Further stated that Librarian and library technician roles may be shifting away from what may be viewed as traditional or clearly defined responsibilities and both librarians and library technicians may be taking on new tasks as well as experiencing task overlap. All library staff will need to be fluid, adaptable, and open to change. Library school curricula and workplace training need to incorporate the development of these competencies.

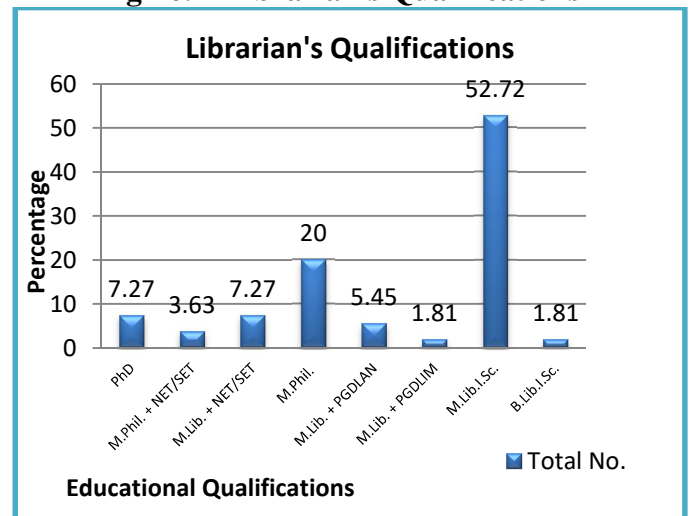
## 5. Data analysis and interpretation (Findings)

### Librarian's Qualifications

*Table No.1. Librarian's Qualifications*

Educational Qualification	Total No.	Percentage
PhD	4	7.27
M.Phil. + NET/SET	2	3.63
M.Lib. + NET/SET	4	7.27
M.Phil.	11	20
M.Lib. + PGDLAN	3	5.45
M.Lib. + PGDLIM	1	1.81
M.Lib.I.Sc.	29	52.72
B.Lib.I.Sc.	1	1.81
<b>Total</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Fig no. 1 Librarian's Qualifications**



From table No.1 and fig. no. 1 it is observed that Qualified and competent Librarian is essential for the effective functioning of a Library. It is observed that most of the management institution libraries have employed trained and qualified library staff having Master's degree in Library and Information science are 52.72%, With additional qualifications like NET/SET 7.27%, with M.Phil.20%, with M.Phil.+ SET/NET 7.27% whereas only 5.45% Librarians have completed PGDLAN and 1.81% Librarian has completed PGDLIM. Only one librarian (1.81%) is found appointed on basis of the qualification Bachelor's degree in Library and Information science.

*Table 2- Availability of staff as per staffing pattern*

Response	Number	Percentage
Yes	27	49.09
No	23	41.81
NR	5	9.09
<b>Total</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>100%</b>

Availability of requisite staff is essential for strengthening efficient Library management process. Table no.3.3.6 shows that 49.09% management institution Libraries has the Library staff as per the staffing pattern whereas 41.81% libraries reported that they does not have the Library staff as per staffing pattern means some staff positions are vacant or not filled in these Libraries. Total 5 9.09 respondents did not reply to this question.

**Table 3 Availability of technical staff for ICT Management**

Technical staff	In-house (Appointed by the Institution)	Outsourced	Neither In-house Nor Outsourced/ No Provision
System analyst	3 (5.45%)	0	52 (94.54%)
Network administrator	8 (14.54%)	0	47 (85.45%)
Programmer	2 (3.63)	0	53 (96.36%)
Institutions dedicated IT dept. Support	4 (7.27)	0	51 (92.72%)

Table No. 3 reveals that out of 55 institutions 5.45% institutions has appointed the system analysisist and 94.54% institution does not; 14.54% institutions has appointed Network administrator and 85.45% institute does not; 3.63% institutions has appointed Programmers while 96.36% institutions does not and 7.27% institutions has their own IT departments at the institutional level which supports the Library for all the ICT related requirements whereas 92.72% institutions does not have such provision. No formal outsourcing of technical staff is reported for the Library ICT Management.

**Table 4. Availability of Library support staff**

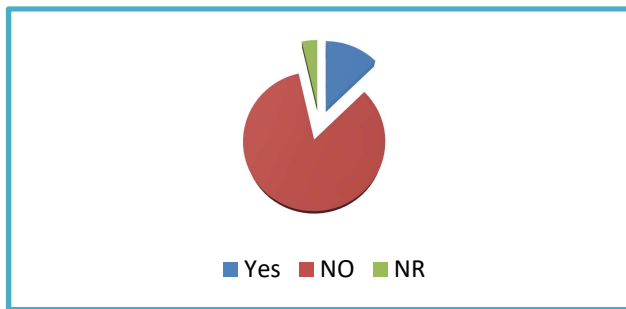
Library Support staff	In-house (Appointed by the Institution)	Outsourced	Neither In-house Nor Outsourced/ No Provision
Data Entry Operator	4 (7.27%)	1 (1.81%)	50 (90.90%)
Reprography Operator	7 (12.72%)	1 (1.81%)	47 (85.45%)
Security Guards	4 (7.27%)	5 (9.09)	46 (83.63%)
Sweepers	6 (10.90%)	6 (10.90%)	43 (78.18%)

Table No.4. reveals that out of 55 institutions 7.27% institutions has appointed and 1.81% institution has outsourced the data entry operator whereas 90.90% institution neither appointed nor outsourced such position; 12.72% institutions has appointed and 1.81% institution outsourced Reprography operator and 85.45% institutions neither appointed nor outsourced such position; 7.27% institutions has appointed and 9.09% institutions has outsourced the security guards whereas 83.63% institutions neither appointed nor outsourced; 10.90% institutions has appointed and 10.90% institutions outsourced the sweepers whereas 78.18% institutions neither appointed nor outsourced the sweepers.

**Table 5. Availability of Institutional written outsourcing policy**

Written Outsourcing Policy	No.	Percentage
Yes	7	12.72%
No	46	83.63%
Not Replied (NR)	2	3.63%
Total	55	100%

**Fig. No. 02**  
*Availability of Institutional written outsourcing policy*



From the table No. 5 and fig.no.2 it is observed that only 12.72% institutions has written outsourcing policy and 83.63% institutions does not have any written outsourcing policy. Total 3.63% institutions did not respond to this question. Formal documented policies provide guidance on how to make a decision.

**Table 6. Allocation of budget for the outsourcing activities**

Does Institute allocate budget for outsourcing	Number	Percentage
Yes	10	18.18%
No	45	81.81%
<b>Total</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Fig. no. 3**  
*Allocation of budget for the outsourcing activities*

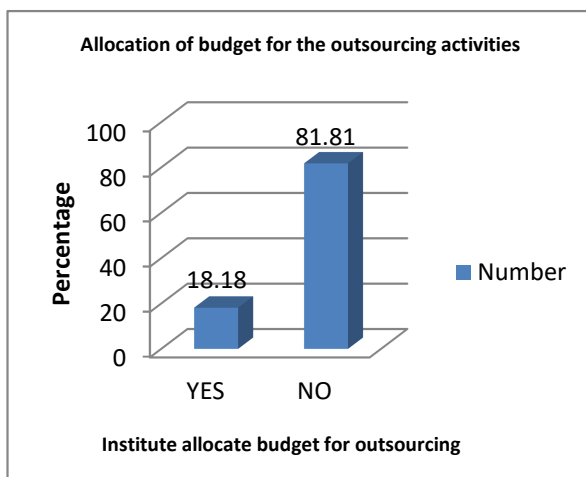


Table No.6 and fig. No.3 shows that well planned budgetary provision is essential for the effective implementation of a project and helps to keep focus on the goals. From Table No. 3.9 it is observed that 18.18% libraries have made a budgetary provision for the implementation of necessary outsourcing activities and 81.81% Libraries did not make any budgetary provision specifically for the outsourcing activities.

**Table 7. Financial assistance for outsourcing specific product or service of the Library**

Financial support for outsourcing	Number	Percentage
UGC	1	1.81%
AICTE	3	5.45%
Philanthropists	0	00%
None	51	92.72%
<b>Total</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Fig. no.4**  
*Financial assistance for outsourcing specific product or service of the Library*

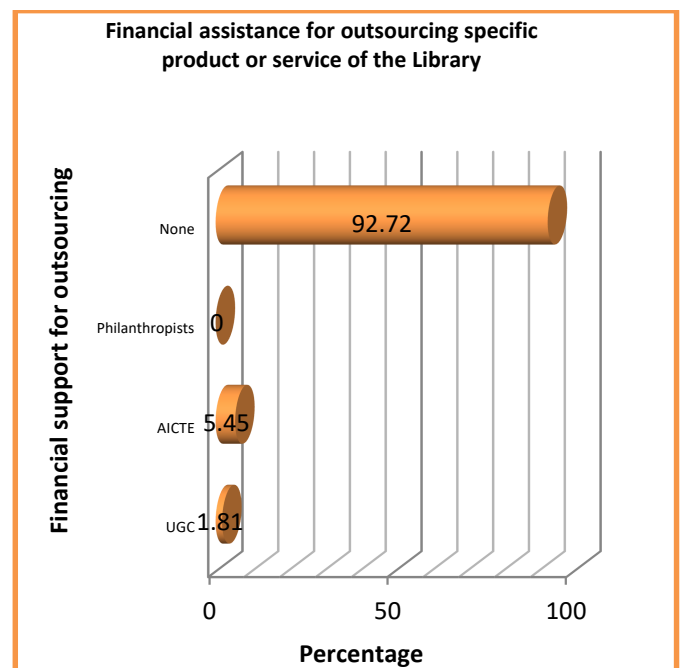


Table No. 7 fig. No. 4 shows that 92.72% libraries did not receive any financial assistance from any Govt. Non-Govt. agency or Philanthropists for the purpose of outsourcing library services or product; 1.81% library reported that it received financial support from UGC and 5.45% libraries received it from AICTE. No Philanthropist has provided financial assistance for the outsourcing a product or service for the Library.

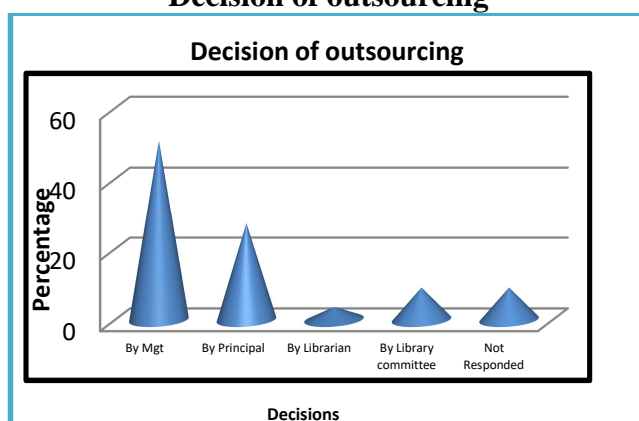
### The decision of outsourcing, If required is taken By

1. Library committee
2. Principal/Director
3. Management
4. Librarian under the delegated powers

**Table no. 8. Decision of outsourcing**

Decision of outsourcing is taken by	Number	Percentage
Decision outsourcing by Management	28	50.90%
Decision outsourcing by Director/Principal	15	27.27%
Decision outsourcing by Librarian	2	3.63%
Decision outsourcing by Library committee	5	9.09%
Not Responded	5	9.09%
<b>Total</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>100%</b>

**Fig no. 5  
Decision of outsourcing**



As per the table No.8 and fig.no.(5),50.90% of the Libraries reported that the decision of outsourcing if required is taken by Management; 27.27% libraries reported that the decision is taken by Principal or Director of the Institution; 3.63% libraries reported that the decision is taken by the Librarian under the delegated power whereas 9.09% libraries reported that the decision is taken by the Library committee. 9.09% Libraries did not respond to this question.

### 6. Conclusion and suggestions:

For strategic and effective use of outsourcing in libraries, policies on “Outsourcing” should be formed at the Institutional as well as the government level. The decision making powers in terms of outsourcing should be given to Library committee wherein the Principal, Librarian and Senior teachers work together. Such provision would be result in completion of time bounded tasks and smooth functioning of the libraries. Modification in staffing pattern or strategic use of outsourcing would be the solution for successful implementation of ICT related library functions and other non-core activities of the Library. There are many elements that affect outsourcing decision and every college or institution functions under different circumstances i.e. size of the collection, No. of users, available human resources, its needs and priorities, roles, responsibilities and operational environments for academic libraries etc. differ substantially from each other. There is no way of giving the unique

tool that tells what, when or how an institution library should outsource. Conclusion that can be drawn from this study is the fact that outsourcing decisions, like all business decisions, are situation dependent.

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