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BRIDGING RESOURCE GAPS: USER PERSPECTIVES ON THE ROLE OF CONSORTIA IN SEMINARY LIBRARIES

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Abstract

The evolving landscape of higher education demands that libraries, particularly seminary libraries, adapt to rapid technological advancements and economic challenges. This study investigates the perceptions of users at St. Thomas Apostolic Seminary Library, Vadavathoor, regarding the adequacy of library resources and the potential role of consortia in bridging resource gaps. Using a descriptive survey design and collecting responses from 81 users, the study examines usage patterns, resource adequacy, awareness of library consortia, and the perceived necessity of collaboration for intellectual formation. Findings reveal significant concerns about the inadequacy of electronic resources and limited user awareness regarding consortia, despite a strong acknowledgment of the need for collaborative efforts. The study concludes that participation in library consortia is crucial for enhancing access to diverse academic resources essential for seminary formation, particularly in intellectual development. It recommends strategic initiatives to promote consortia awareness, improve electronic resource availability, and strengthen the role of library staff in guiding users effectively.

Keywords

Library consortia, seminary library, seminary formation, intellectual formation, library collaboration

1. INTRODUCTION

The landscape of higher education reports rapid changes. The heart of higher education, the library, plays an indispensable role and is central to the holistic development in the academic circle and faces multifaceted challenges in the digital and technological age. Growing library budgets, replacing the primacy of print resources by electronic, uncertainty regarding the specific roles of emerging technologies, construction of physical and technological infrastructure to compromise today's information needs are some of the pinpointed problems faced by libraries in the higher education to take wise decisions for the future of libraries. Then the specific and important question comes: What would be the future of library? It is clear that "in the digital age, it is important to remember that every user is a creator and every creator is a user; therefore, it is imperative for libraries to be more than just gatekeepers of information" (Tippey, 2020).

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A seminary is both an educational and Church institution. From the catholic point of view, seminaries are the educational institutions where the candidates for priesthood are formed intellectually, spiritually, pastorally and human. Therefore it can be considered as a distinct category of higher education institution and stand out from other higher education institution as it is differentiated by their unique emphasis more on ethical values, vocational calling, and spiritual education (Chmielecki, 2022). Formation of priestly candidates is about the interior life of a person and it is more than learning or training. "Formation changes the person from the inside out as he/she appropriates the lessons and practices his/her environment" (Clancy, 2008). The post-synodal apostolic exhortation of Pope John Paul II, *Pastores Dabo Vobis* specifies of four areas of seminary formation such as human, spiritual, pastoral and intellectual formation (John Paul II, 1992). Intellectual formation gives rational tools to understand how to serve the community and how to deal with them, and impacts on human, spiritual, and pastoral areas of formation. The importance of seminary library during the formation period is due to its academic role and it gets highest value as it assists in intellectual training. Library is the first place where the candidates of priesthood encounter the rich body of literature in the Catholic tradition.

"Changing user habits necessitate new environment learning procedures" (Abraham et al., 2020). The seminary library has no exception regarding it. In the context of seminary, the library is not merely a repository of books but a vital component contributing to the education and formation of future religious leaders. Seminary library collaborates with intellectual formation by providing access to theological resources, fostering intellectual inquiry and critical thinking, and serving as a central hub for learning and collaboration (Robertson, 2005). Though seminary libraries are instrumental in the process of intellectual formation, they encounter significant obstacles in playing their roles due to limited budgets, restricted collections, and unavailability of specialized resources. These obstacles hinder the ability of the seminary libraries to provide the comprehensive collections necessary for the academic growth of future priests.

Though the changes in the pedagogical aspects of seminary education make a tremendous impact on seminary libraries, the crucial factor is the rapid changes in information technology. These are accompanied by economic constraints, institutional revaluation, commercial publishing interests, and globalizing impact of the internet (Vorp, 2004). Therefore, beyond the campus, collaborative networks should be appreciated among the seminary libraries. This collaboration with other libraries and information resources would give access to a wide

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range of information resources (Hotta, 2004) where the focus is shifted from acquisition to access. Library consortium is a cooperative agreement among several libraries enabling them to pool resources, services, and expertise. It allows the member libraries to access more academic materials than they could individually do. This study highlights the pressing need for enhanced access to electronic resources and greater collaboration through library consortia to meet the upcoming academic demands in the priestly formation.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Wang et al., (2023) offers empirical insights on how resources and institutional settings affect the theological education and primarily the formation process. The study stressed that maximum utilization of available resources for ongoing learning and growth in the changing contexts would determine the intellectual formation. The study of Abraham and Sabu (2022) regarding the library resources and services of Pontifical Institute of Theology and Philosophy Always at Mangalapuzha campus analyzed the library resources and services from the users' perspective. It was found that there is a lack of basic ICT facilities and infrastructural facilities from accessing the library resources and services. Inadequate or outdated collections of the library affect the satisfaction of the library users. This study recommended that there should be serious concern to enhance electronic database though the satisfaction level of the library resources is high.

Ogbenika and Akalue (2021) examined the importance of digital competences and access to digital libraries for seminary education and mainly for intellectual formation. This study argued that the intellectual formation should embrace the tools of digital age and the library has the highest implications to provide latest resources in this regard. The research of Reekie (2010) to find out the role of library in ministerial education and training pointed out the role of cooperative initiatives among the libraries of theological education. The study noted that the budgetary pressures were surpassed by the collaborative programmes of the libraries, and it recommended that the cooperation could be extended more to print resources as the study was conducted among the libraries geographically close to each other. The sharing of resources would help academic fertility only when there is a full utilization of the available resources by raising resource awareness. Though the research affirmed that academic staff and students prefer printed resources more as they lacked basic technological skills to make use of electronic resources, the seminary libraries should embrace more electronic resources through the collaborative initiatives.

3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

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The study was conducted with the following specific objectives:

1. To assess the frequency and purpose of library usage.
2. To evaluate the adequacy of print and electronic resources in the seminary library.
3. To determine the awareness and perceived necessity of users regarding library consortia.
4. To examine the role of library resources and particularly consortia in the intellectual formation of seminarians.

4. METHODOLOGY

This study follows a descriptive survey design and aimed to investigate the use of library resources and perceived the necessity of library consortia among the users of St. Thomas Apostolic Seminary Library, Vadavathoor. The population for this study comprised all categories of library users at the seminary. A structured questionnaire was distributed to a total of 90 library users, of which 81 completed responses were received, the response rate is 90%. To ensure the inclusion of all categories of users, a purposive sampling technique was applied. The structured questionnaire consisted of both closed and open-ended questions, and to capture the diversity of users' experiences and expectations, the questionnaire allowed for multiple response options. By assuring anonymity and confidentiality, the questionnaire was distributed physically to library users with clear instructions. The collected data were coded into Microsoft Excel and later analyzed by using SPSS statistical software. They were analyzed using descriptive statistics such as frequencies and percentages and applied chi-square test to examine the association between users categories and their responses on various variables. This is limited in scope to a single seminary library and should be cautions enough while generalizing to other seminary libraries in different contexts.

5. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

5.1 Number of Respondents

The following table (*Table 1*) gives the information on the respondents of this study. A structured questionnaire was distributed to 90 users of St. Thomas Apostolic Seminary, Vadavathoor, Kottayam and 81 users completed the questionnaire. The percentage of responses is 90%. And 9 users did not complete the questionnaire and their percentage is 10%.

| No. of Questionnaire Distributed | Respondents | | Non-Respondents | |
|----------------------------------|-------------|------------|-----------------|------------|
| | Number | Percentage | Number | Percentage |
| 90 | 81 | 90% | 9 | 10% |

Table 1 Number of Respondents

5.2 Category of Users

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This is about the nature of respondents. The 81 respondents of library users fall into four categories like Philosophy, Theology, Master of Theology, and Faculty.

| Category of Users | Number | Percentage |
|--------------------------|-----------|-------------|
| Philosophy (Ph) | 30 | 37.04% |
| Theology (Th) | 35 | 43.21% |
| Master of Theology (MTh) | 11 | 13.58% |
| Faculty (Fa) | 5 | 06.17% |
| Total | 81 | 100% |

Table 2 Category of Users

Table 2 shows that 43.21% of respondents belong to the category of theology students whereas 37.04% is from the philosophy section. The other two categories are students doing Master of Theology (13.58%) and Faculty members (06.17%).

5.3 Time Spent in the Library

Users come to the library for a variety of reasons. Their time spent in the library reflects how they use the library and benefits from the available library resources and services. The following table (Table 3) contains the information regarding the typical amount of time spent by users in the library. The majority of users stay in the library for one to two hours. This implies that a very short or extended amount of time is not typical when compared. Short and long visits occur less frequently according to the data. This is the indication that long study or research activities are less frequent among the respondents.

| Category | Ph | Th | MTh | Fa | Total | χ^2 value | p-value |
|---------------------|----|----|-----|----|-------|----------------|---------|
| Less than 1 Hour | 5 | 13 | 2 | 1 | 21 | 6.13 | .727088 |
| Between 1 – 2 Hours | 16 | 12 | 7 | 2 | 37 | | |
| Between 2-3 Hours | 6 | 6 | 1 | 1 | 14 | | |
| More than 3 Hours | 3 | 4 | 1 | 1 | 9 | | |
| Total | 30 | 35 | 11 | 5 | 81 | | |

Table 3 Time Spent in the Library

(Ph=Philosophy, Th=Theology, MTh=Master of Theology, Fa=Faculty) The result is not significant at $p < .05$.

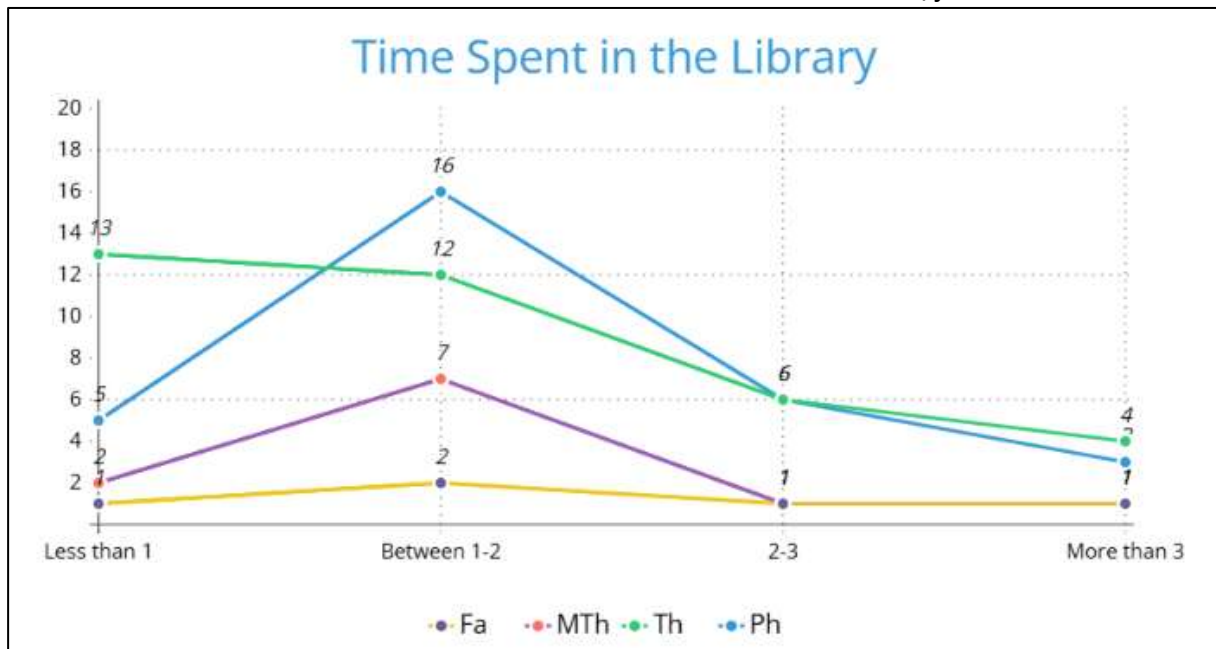


Figure 1 Time Spent in the Library

The chi-square result suggests that there is no statistically significant association between the variables related to time spent in the library and the p-value (0.727088) is much greater than the standard threshold of 0.05. The result indicates that the category of users does not make any systematic difference in the amount of time spent in the library. This points out that the library services and resources are being used in a similar way by students and faculty members.

5.4 Purpose of Visit to the Library

The table presents data on the purpose of library visits and respondents are permitted with multiple responses. The table describes both the number of respondents and percentage of each purpose.

| Purpose of Visit | Number | Percentage |
|--|--------|------------|
| To Gain Current Awareness and to Keep up to date | 56 | 69.14% |
| To Find Specific Information in Your Field of Interest | 68 | 83.95% |
| To Read Newspapers and Magazines | 39 | 48.15% |
| To Photocopy Periodical Articles and Other Items | 28 | 34.57% |
| To Access E-resources | 48 | 59.26% |
| For Academic Study or Research | 67 | 82.72% |
| Other Purposes | 18 | 22.22% |

Table 4 Purpose of Visit to the Library

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It is concluded from the data presented in the above table that the most common reasons for library visits are to find specific information in their field of interest (83.95%), academic study or research (82.72%), and gaining current awareness and keeping up to date (69.14%). The purposes like accessing e-resources (59.26%) and reading newspapers and magazines (48.15%) stand at a moderate level. As a whole, the data concludes that the library is primarily used for academic and research related activities.

5.5 Adequacy of Print Resources

The following table presents the data on how different user categories perceive the adequacy of print resources in the library. The responses range from strongly agree to strongly disagree. The table suggests that a majority of users believe that print resources available in this institution are adequate as this is reflected in the responses for “strongly agree” (34) and “agree” (21). But a notable proportion of users express their dissatisfaction with the available print resources. A small portion of users (12) remain neutral with this. Therefore, there is a need to acquire more print collection based on user surveys along with improving the awareness of users to locate the adequate print resources. The theology students show the most disagreement whereas faculty members express the least dissatisfaction. There is general agreement that the print resources of the library are adequate.

| Options | Ph | Th | MTh | Fa | Total | χ^2 value | p- value |
|--------------------------|----------|----------|---------|---------|----------|-------------------|-------------|
| Strongly Agree | 11 (37%) | 16 (46%) | 4 (36%) | 3 (60%) | 34 (42%) | 4.655 | .031 |
| Agree | 9 (30%) | 9 (26%) | 2 (18%) | 1 (20%) | 21 (26%) | | |
| Neutral | 5 (17%) | 4 (11%) | 2 (18%) | 1 (20%) | 12 (15%) | | |
| Disagree | 3 (10%) | 4 (11%) | 1 (9%) | 0 (0%) | 8 (10%) | | |
| Strongly Disagree | 2 (7%) | 2 (6%) | 2 (18%) | 0 (0%) | 6 (7%) | | |
| Total | 30 | 35 | 11 | 5 | 81 | | |

Table 5 Adequacy of Print Resources

(Ph=Philosophy, Th=Theology, MTh=Master of Theology, Fa=Faculty) The result is significant at $p < .05$.

The high chi-square (4.655) value indicates that there is a meaningful pattern followed in the responses of the library users. As the p-value is smaller (0.031) than the standard significant threshold, it specifies that there is a statistically significant result. It can be noted

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that the meaningful different perceptions of user category are due to their different research needs or reliance on print resources.

5.6 Adequacy of Electronic Resources

The following table represents the data on library users' perceptions regarding the adequacy of electronic resources. A majority of users express their dissatisfaction (29 "disagree" and 16 "strongly disagree") and it suggests of their concerns regarding the availability of electronic resources. A very much smaller proportion of users (6 "strongly agree" and 10 "agree") finds that the available electronic resources are adequate. The neutral position of 20 users should not be ignored and indicates their uncertainty. The table concludes that significant concerns regarding the adequacy of electronic resources for the academic needs of the users and suggests a critical need for improvement.

| Options | Ph | Th | MTh | Fa | Total | χ^2 value | p-value |
|--------------------------|----------|----------|---------|---------|----------|----------------|---------|
| Strongly Agree | 3 (10%) | 3 (9%) | 0 (0%) | 0 (0%) | 6 (7%) | 2.904 | .0884 |
| Agree | 4 (13%) | 4 (11%) | 1 (9%) | 1 (20%) | 10 (12%) | | |
| Neutral | 6 (20%) | 9 (26%) | 4 (36%) | 1 (20%) | 20 (25%) | | |
| Disagree | 11 (37%) | 12 (34%) | 4 (36%) | 2 (40%) | 29 (36%) | | |
| Strongly Disagree | 6 (20%) | 7 (20%) | 2 (18%) | 1 (20%) | 16 (20%) | | |
| Total | 30 | 35 | 11 | 5 | 81 | | |

Table 6 Adequacy of Electronic Resources

(Ph=Philosophy, Th=Theology, MTh=Master of Theology, Fa=Faculty) The result is not significant at $p < .05$.

The value of chi-square (2.904) is relatively low and concludes that the differences of the responses are not strongly pronounced. The p-value (0.0884) is greater, and the responses are not statistically significant. Therefore, it is not possible to conclude that library users strongly lean toward any specific opinion. Although there is no statistical significance, the high number of negative responses of library users regarding electronic resources should lead the library authority to investigate the reasons and later provide better guidance and improve the availability of electronic resources in future. Collaboration with library consortia could enhance access to a broader range of digital resources, addressing gaps in availability.

5.7 Sources of Information about E-Resources

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The table presents the data on various sources through which library users acquire information about e-resources. The respondents are allowed to identify four sources. The table reflects the dominance of internet and social media (90.12%) and this demonstrates that the increasing dependency on digital media to find out academic related communication. There is a strong influence of peer networks in knowledge sharing about e-resources as “peer recommendation” (85.19%) is selected as the second key source of information. The options like library catalogue (53.09%) and workshops/seminars/conferences (46.91%) reflect on their role in spreading knowledge of e-resources. It is to be noted that the role of librarians or library staff (38.27%) has become minimal. The role of librarians in this technological revolution is to empower the library users to be independent researchers and to equip them to find the right information and evaluate its quality.

| Sources | Number | Percentage |
|----------------------------------|--------|------------|
| Newsletters | 36 | 44.44% |
| Internet and Social Media | 73 | 90.12% |
| Library Catalogue | 43 | 53.09% |
| Workshops/Seminars/Conferences | 38 | 46.91% |
| Librarian/Library Staff | 31 | 38.27% |
| Orientation/Awareness Programmes | 34 | 41.98% |
| Peer Recommendation | 69 | 85.19% |

Table 7 Sources of Information about E-Resources

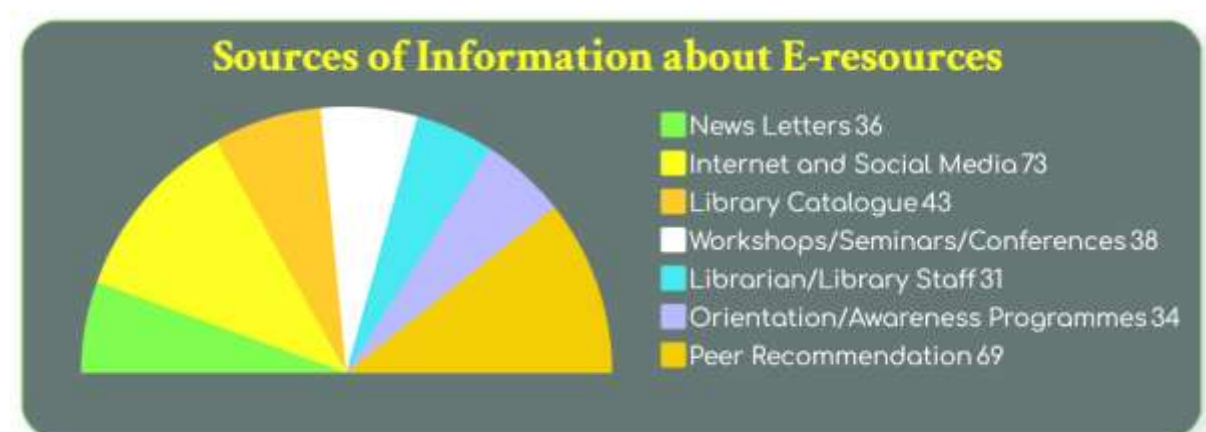


Figure 2 Sources of Information about E-Resources

The results of this study indicate that while the traditional sources of information such as library staff or newsletters or orientation programmes contribute to identifying the e-resources, the domination is for digital media and peer networks. Therefore, there is the

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necessity to improve the interactions among library users and staff to strengthen information dissemination in the right way.

5.8 Necessity of Guidance of Library Staff

In order to ensure that the library resources are used effectively, library users are to be properly assisted by library staff in finding and accessing both digital and print resources. The following table presents the data on the necessity of guidance from library staff. All categories of library users (79%) find that guidance of library staff is necessary. Among the respondents, both theology (83%) and master of theology students (83%) specifically appreciate the guidance of library staff. This indicates that library users, including students and faculty rely significantly on guidance in accessing and utilizing the library resources. This points to the critical role of library staff in assisting the users. A minority of respondents (21%) suggested that they do not need guidance, and it would be an indication that they feel confident in navigating library resources independently.

| Response | Ph | Th | MTh | Fa | Total | χ^2 value | p-value |
|----------|----------|----------|---------|---------|----------|----------------|---------|
| Yes | 22 (73%) | 29 (83%) | 9 (83%) | 4 (80%) | 64 (79%) | 0.95 | 0.3297 |
| No | 8 (27%) | 6 (17%) | 2 (17%) | 1 (20%) | 17 (21%) | | |
| Total | 30 | 35 | 11 | 5 | 81 | | |

Table 8 Necessity of Guidance of Library Staff

(Ph=Philosophy, Th=Theology, MTh=Master of Theology, Fa=Faculty) The result is not significant at $p < .05$.

The test result of chi-square suggests that there is no statistically significant association in the responses of library users regarding the need for guidance from library staff. As the chi-square value (0.95) is low, the responses are not large enough to suggest a strong association. The p-value (0.3297) is greater than the standard significant threshold, a meaningful trend cannot be observed in the case of necessity for guidance. It specifies that the guidance of library staff is uniform for all categories of users. As a larger number of users prefer guidance from library staff, the institution should with the help of library staff, initiate guidance services with additional qualitative feedback systems.

5.9 Users' Opinion Regarding Library Staff

The following table shows the data regarding the helpfulness of library staff in assisting. The responses are classified into very helpful, helpful and not helpful. A significant portion of respondents (65%) consider that library staff is very helpful in supporting their resource needs

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in which the highest percentage belongs to philosophy and theology students. It throws lights on the crucial role of library staff in guiding users. A considerable portion (26%) finds library staff helpful; it indicates that users need more specified assistance. While majority of the responses are positive, the presence of a small number of “not helpful” (7) response suggests that there are areas in the service sector to be improved and the institution should reinforce positive staff practices so that the concerns raised by the users could be solved positively.

| Opinion | Ph | Th | MTh | Fa | Total | χ^2 value | p- value |
|--------------|----------|----------|---------|---------|----------|-------------------|-------------|
| Very Helpful | 21 (70%) | 24 (69%) | 5 (45%) | 3 (60%) | 53 (65%) | 4.279 | 0.0386 |
| Helpful | 7 (23%) | 7 (20%) | 5 (45%) | 2 (40%) | 21 (26%) | | |
| Not Helpful | 2 (7%) | 4 (11%) | 1 (10%) | 0 (0%) | 7 (9%) | | |
| Total | 30 | 35 | 11 | 5 | 81 | | |

Table 9 Users' Opinion Regarding Library Staff

(Ph=Philosophy, Th=Theology, MTh=Master of Theology, Fa=Faculty) The result is significant at $p < .05$.

As there is a higher chi-square value (4.279), the differences in the responses of library users regarding the opinion of library staff are meaningful and it is not just by chance. The p-value (0.0386) is less than the standard significance threshold, confirming that the differences in responses are statistically significant. The results in the table imply that there is a strong indication of good user support and service quality. This table highlights the vital role of library staff in supporting the library users.

5.10 Awareness about the Library Consortium

The following table presents the data on the awareness of library users about the library consortium. Out of 81 respondents, 38% reported that they are aware of library consortia whereas 62% were unaware. It suggests that majority of the users do not have proper awareness of library consortium. Faculty members have the highest level of awareness (80%) whereas the students' groups have relatively lower level of awareness. Students of theology and master of theology have highest level of non-awareness (66%); it is followed by the philosophy students (63%).

| Awareness | Ph | Th | MTh | Fa | Total | χ^2 value | p-value |
|-----------|----------|----------|---------|---------|----------|-------------------|---------|
| Yes | 11 (37%) | 12 (34%) | 4 (36%) | 4 (80%) | 31 (38%) | 3.9703 | .264687 |
| No | 19 (63%) | 23 (66%) | 7 (66%) | 1 (20%) | 50 (62%) | | |

| | | | | | | | |
|--------------|----|----|----|---|----|--|--|
| Total | 30 | 35 | 11 | 5 | 81 | | |
|--------------|----|----|----|---|----|--|--|

Table 10 Awareness about the Library Consortium

(Ph=Philosophy, Th=Theology, MTh=Master of Theology, Fa=Faculty) The result is not significant at $p < .05$.

The result shows that there is no statistically significant association between the variables tested regarding the awareness of library consortia. The chi-square statistic of 3.9703 indicates a slight difference in “yes” and “no” responses, but there is no strong relationship between the tested variables. The p-value is quite high here and suggests that the differences in the opinion of library users are likely to be due to random chances rather than a real effect. The results imply that awareness levels among the library users do not show a clear trend that can be affiliated with any underlying factor. It can be finally argued that there is no meaningful impact on the awareness of users regarding consortia based on the factors like user demographics, usage patterns etc. Therefore, targeted initiatives like workshops and promotional materials are to be implemented to increase knowledge about library consortia among the users.

5.11 Need for Library Consortia

The opinion of library users regarding the need for library consortia is presented in the five-point scale in the following table (table 11). A chi-square test was conducted to examine whether there is a significant association between academic groups and their opinion. 40% of respondents strongly agree that library consortia are needed while 38% agree with the need for library consortia. 15% of respondents are neutral and 5% and 2% disagree and strongly disagree regarding the same. The data in the table suggests that library users significantly favour the need for library consortia.

| Options | Ph | Th | MTh | Fa | Total | χ^2 value | p-value |
|--------------------------|----------|----------|---------|---------|----------|----------------|---------|
| Strongly Agree | 14 (47%) | 12 (34%) | 5 (45%) | 1 (20%) | 32 (40%) | 6.637 | .0100 |
| Agree | 10 (33%) | 15 (43%) | 3 (28%) | 3 (60%) | 31 (38%) | | |
| Neutral | 5 (17%) | 5 (14%) | 1 (9%) | 1 (20%) | 12 (15%) | | |
| Disagree | 1 (3%) | 2 (6%) | 1 (9%) | 0 (0%) | 4 (5%) | | |
| Strongly Disagree | 0 (0%) | 1 (3%) | 1 (9%) | 0 (0%) | 2 (2%) | | |
| Total | 30 | 35 | 11 | 5 | 81 | | |

Table 11 Need for Library Consortia

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(*Ph=Philosophy, Th=Theology, MTh=Master of Theology, Fa=Faculty*) The result is not significant at $p<.05$.

The result shows that there is a higher chi-square value (6.637). The p-value 0.01 is below the standard significance level ($p<0.05$). It means that the differences in responses of library users are statistically significant and there is a clear preference in the responses for the establishment of library consortia. It recommends that library consortia play a crucial role in meeting the academic needs of users and the institution should advocate for stronger consortia collaborations. Since faculty members and students express a high level of agreement, initiatives to implement and promote consortia services are to be begun by the institution.

5.12 Library Consortium and Intellectual Formation

The perception of users regarding the impact of library consortium on the teaching and learning process are presented in the following table (table 12). The responses are categorized by the academic groups and presented in five-point scale. A total of 82% support the positive impact of library consortia and show a strong agreement on their role in intellectual formation. 44% strongly agree with its benefits while 38% agree with the statement. The analysis based on the users category, faculty members, philosophy and theology students show highest agreement levels, whereas a slightly higher proportion of neutral and disagreeing responses are displayed from the master of theology students. The result underlines the positive relationship between the library consortia and intellectual formation.

| Options | Ph | Th | MTh | Fa | Total | χ^2 value | p- value |
|--------------------------|----------|----------|---------|---------|----------|-------------------|-------------|
| Strongly Agree | 16 (53%) | 13 (37%) | 4 (36%) | 3 (60%) | 36 (44%) | 11.612 | 0.0007 |
| Agree | 10 (33%) | 17 (49%) | 3 (27%) | 1 (20%) | 31 (38%) | | |
| Neutral | 3 (10%) | 3 (9%) | 2 (18%) | 1 (20%) | 9 (11%) | | |
| Disagree | 1 (3%) | 2 (6%) | 1 (9%) | 0 (0%) | 4 (5%) | | |
| Strongly Disagree | 0 (0%) | 0 (0%) | 1 (9%) | 0 (0%) | 1 (1%) | | |
| Total | 30 | 35 | 11 | 5 | 81 | | |

Table 12 Library Consortium and Intellectual Formation

(*Ph=Philosophy, Th=Theology, MTh=Master of Theology, Fa=Faculty*). The result is significant at $p<.05$.

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The chi-square result (11.612) shows that the variation in the responses is meaningful, and they are not occurring by chance. The p-value (0.0007) is much smaller than the standard significance threshold ($p < 0.05$) and is extremely significant. This shows that there is a clear preference in favour of consortia benefiting the intellectual process of the library users. This is a clear indication that the library should go forth with a policy for maintaining consortia participation to enhance the library resources for academic purposes.

6. CONCLUSION

The study administered among the users of St. Thomas Apostolic Seminary Library provides critical insights into the usage patterns of available library resources and the level of awareness of library consortia. The findings of the study indicate that library has a central role in the academic and spiritual development of its users. As this analysis notes of notable gaps in the adequacy of electronic resources, it is necessitated that collaborative efforts are necessary for supporting academic and intellectual formation. In the context of increasing budgetary constraints, rapid technological changes, and evolving needs of electronic resources, the formation of library consortia among the seminary libraries is not just beneficial but essential. The intentional collaboration between libraries would not only help to overcome financial difficulties but also help to achieve the benefits than a single library could have achieved.

While praising and paying attention more to seminary libraries for joining consortia agreement, a set of issues like allocation of costs, staffing, management, participation, standardization, etc. are not even fully solved. "Consortia efforts are time-consuming, frustrating, and difficult to build and sustain. But still, they are potent, social, economic and political forces in reducing the unit cost of e-information and increasing the resource and user base and help libraries to achieve more collectively than they could accomplish individually" (Malviya & Kumar, 2007). More than a cost-saving measure, it is always necessary to look at the wider picture of the library consortia for their benefits.

Formation of library consortia or joining in any of consortia cannot be placed as the only solution before the seminary libraries for consortial agreements may not adequately address the unique needs by providing sufficient theological and ecclesiastical resources. It should be noted that seminary libraries, the rich academic libraries with vast collection are still using the outdated systems for all library services and it is expected that sooner or later these libraries should be digitalized. The physical collection of the library will not be substituted by the digital evolutions, rather the dual approach of the hybrid library where the physical collections complement the digital and vice versa would be more accepted in near future (Loon,

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2022). The findings of this study is from a single institution, therefore, the generalization is restricted while the findings are applied to other institutions.

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