

EFFECT OF SERIALS CRISIS ON GOA UNIVERSITY LIBRARY: AN EVALUATION

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ABSTRACT

Rapidly rising serial prices has affected many libraries all over the world. Libraries are unable to serve their readers with the required journals they need. One of the main causes of these problems is cost of journal subscription which gets increased every year, which directly affect the library's budget and because of these libraries are subscribing to fewer journals titles. Hence libraries are facing a problem called 'Serials Crisis'. This study was conducted on Goa University Library, Goa to see the impact of serials crisis on the journal subscription of the library. Past ten years data (i.e. 2004 to 2014) was collected from the periodical section of the Goa University Library which shows the average subscription cost on journals. This study highlights the problems and discusses possible solutions including the emergence of open access as one of the solutions.

Key words: Journals, Scholarly publications, Open Access, Serials Crisis

INTRODUCTION

In modern society library plays an important role. It is a social Institution. Libraries provide access to ideas, histories and biographies, and scientific theories in a various formats, including books videotapes, DVDs, electronic content, electronic databases, and the Internet.

We can acquire information through different types of information sources which are available in library. Among these, journals are important sources of information on latest research. Researchers always looked up to these journals for articles as it is difficult to find these articles in any other publications.

A journal is defined as publications which are published on a regular basis (monthly, quarterly, etc.) in a number of connected series. Most of the libraries are now providing e-journals facilities. These journals can be accessed, downloaded, shared to anyone as these facilities are available 24x7 hours. But many libraries are unable to serve their readers with the required journals because of various reasons. The main cause of these problems is cost of journal subscription which gets increased every year. Due to price increase from the past few years, library budgets have either decreased or remained smooth, and because of these libraries are subscribing to fewer journals titles. Hence libraries are facing a problem called 'Serials Crisis'.

The term serial crisis refers to the rapidly increasing subscription cost of many scholarly journals, particularly journals which are published by publishers for the purpose of making profit.

The term serials crisis has become common shorthand to describe the constant subscription cost increases of many serial publications such as scholarly journals. The prices of these institutional or library subscriptions have been rising much faster than the Consumer Price Index for several decades, while the funds available to the libraries have remained static or have declined in real terms. As a result, academic and research libraries have regularly canceled serial subscriptions to accommodate price increases of the remaining current subscriptions.

Libraries increasingly have to cancel subscription or limit the payment for ongoing journal subscription as the formal system of scholarly communication is in crisis. Scholarly communication is the process by which academics, scholars and researchers share and publish their research findings so that they are available to the wider academic community for teaching, research, and scholarship and beyond. The academic journals are the most preferred guide of scholarly communication for publishing primary research results. Scholarly communication is the loss of access to scholarly research literature, as the rising costs of journal subscription has been increasing much faster than

the institutional library budget. In the context of university library this is even more important, as university library also provide journal services and most of the researchers visit the university libraries for journals only.

IMPACT OF SERIAL CRISIS ON ACADEMIC LIBRARIES

Libraries are among the first to be affected by rising prices of scholarly journal subscription that came as a result of commercialization. Due to rapidly rising cost of journals it is not possible for libraries to satisfy their users fully. Increase in journal price has caused libraries to purchase fewer monographs.

Libraries are subscribing only to the most important journals; either it may be print or online journal. As prices of journals began to rise, most of the libraries around the world have faced a problem of sudden cut in their budget over the years. University libraries' purchasing of monographs has declined steadily over the past twenty-five years, as more of the library budget has been allocated to journals.

However, costs of journals subscription have continued to raise without corresponding increases in libraries budgets. So therefore libraries are providing subscription of only few journals whose cost is low. The decrease in subscription cost has made publishers to charge even higher prices to maintain their profits.

Academic libraries provide the newest journals in all the subjects covered by its parent institution. But many libraries are unable to serve their readers due to high cost. Library budgets have not been able to keep up with the price increases and inflation for journals.

Libraries especially academic libraries face a problem that can cause harm to their very existence and challenges the fundamental structure of the scholarly publishing system. Academic libraries cannot continue to pay the cost of regularly increasing subscription prices for scholarly journals that the publishers demand each year. As described by various authors, academic libraries face a crisis that has continued for many years, by bringing face to face a business model that can cause harm to the goals of these libraries. The financial crisis caused due to journal price increase must be brought face to face in a well-planned manner by academic libraries if they are to continue providing the resources and services expected of them.

Journal price have increased much faster than increase in library budgets and this has diminished the libraries' power of buying journals significantly. This made academic

libraries forcibly to cancel their journal subscriptions. In order to purchase a smaller number of high priced journal titles, academic libraries has to spend the money which is meant to be use for other expenditure. Prices of Science, Technology, and Medicine (STM) journals are very high and they consume an ever-increasing share of library budgets. This has affected mostly academic libraries as these libraries contain journals mostly on science and technology. This is having a negative impact on other acquisitions, such as research monographs, textbooks and journal titles in other fields.

In response to the rapidly rising prices of academic journals, many libraries in order to increase their buying power and secure greater access to their users, have turned to site licensing, mostly the research libraries because research libraries contained the strong collection of research publications. These licensing agreements, usually negotiated by libraries as a group (library consortia), have greatly improved access to scholarly publications in the last several years and provided some hope from the problem of serials pricing crisis.

Over time, librarians at their institutions are losing their ability to shape the content and quality of journal literature. In order to serve their readers by providing them the resources they require librarians have no other choice than to pay the price that publisher charges.

This problem is even more critical to those libraries whose budget is very low, especially for smaller college, universities and institutions in the developing world. But to deal with this crisis many efforts have been made; one of which is, open access movement which has been found most useful and brought a little change for most of the libraries especially academic libraries.

The term 'open access' refers to the removal of price and permission barriers to scholarly research. An essential goal of the open access (OA) movement is free availability of research outputs on the internet. OA involves scholarly and scientific literature, so unlike most other creative fields, such as fiction writing, music and movies, scholarly journals do not pay authors for their submissions.

Open access journals differ from traditional academic journals only in making their contents freely available to all online, usually without any embargo period. Open access journals are peer reviewed journals published online. The Open Access movement involves free access to peer reviewed research. Open access articles have limited copyright and licensing restrictions, so any person with access to the Internet may read, download, copy and

distribute the article.

The present study was conducted on Goa University Library to see whether serial crisis has its impact on Goa University Library or not. Goa University in the State of Goa is one of the renowned centers' for higher education in the country.

Many libraries mostly academic libraries are facing a serious problem of serial crisis, due to which they are cancelling their subscription. In the context of Goa University Library this is even more important as Goa University Library also provides journal facility.

Goa University Library is a member of consortia group of UGC Infonet digital Library Consortia which helps Goa University Library to serve their users with required scholarly journals. So to know whether like these libraries Goa University Library is also running through the same situation or not research on Goa University Library was done.

OBJECTIVES

1. To study the concept of serial crisis.
2. To know the impact of serial crisis on Goa University library.
3. To study various factors which leads to the 'Serial Crisis'
4. To take an account of problems faced by the library due to serial crisis.
5. To know the methods/measures taken to solve the problems.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The present study was undertaken by collecting data of the past 10 years (i.e. from 2004 to 2014) from the records of Goa university library. The data contains the subscription expenses of total national and international journals subscribed by the Goa university library

Serials crisis has affected many academic libraries. Thus with the help of the data collected, an attempt has been made to show the impact of serial crisis on Goa University Library.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

This study was conducted to see weather serial crisis has its impact on Goa University Library or not. Past ten years data from the periodical section of Goa university library was collected and based on the findings results were analyzed.

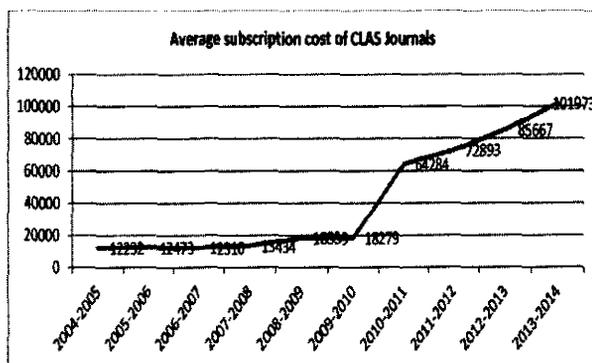
Firstly subject wise data for cost of journal subscription

was collected. The data contain total 25 subjects which include Biotechnology, Botany, Chemistry, CLAS, Commerce, Computer Science, Economics, Electronics, English, French, Geology, Hindi, History, Konkani, Marathi, Management, and Marine science, Mathematics, Microbiology, Philosophy, Physics, Political Science, Sociology, Zoology and General.

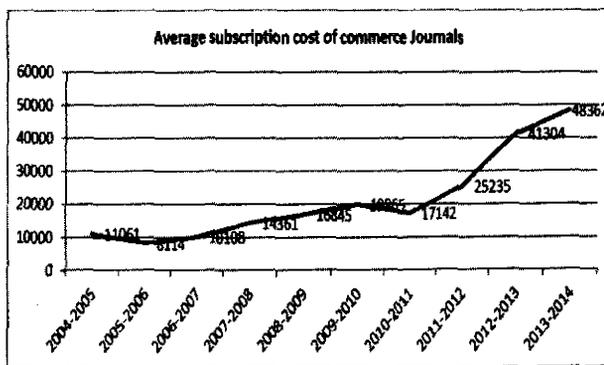
And later Faculty wise data were collected and analyzed, which include faculties – faculty of commerce, faculty of language and literature, faculty of life sciences and environment, Faculty of natural sciences, faculty of management and faculty of social sciences.

SUBJECT WISE ANALYSIS

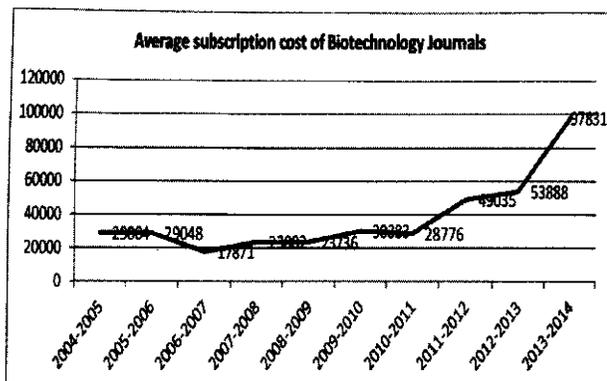
In subject wise analysis it was found that almost in all subjects the average subscription cost went on increasing, but the highest increase in subscription cost of journals from 2004 to 2014 was in CLAS journals where the subscription cost has increased to 733 %, followed by increase in commerce journals which has increased to 337 % and of Biotechnology to 200%. For example It can be seen from the graphs given below(Graph 1,2,3) which shows increase in subscription cost of CLAS, Commerce and biotechnology journals from 2004 to 2014. And graph 4 shows average subscription cost of all subject journals.



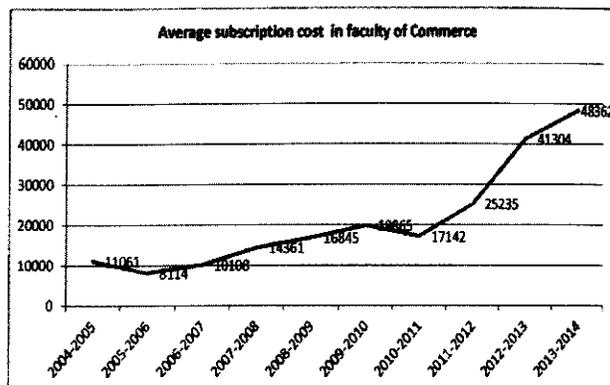
Graph 1: Average subscription cost of CLAS Journals



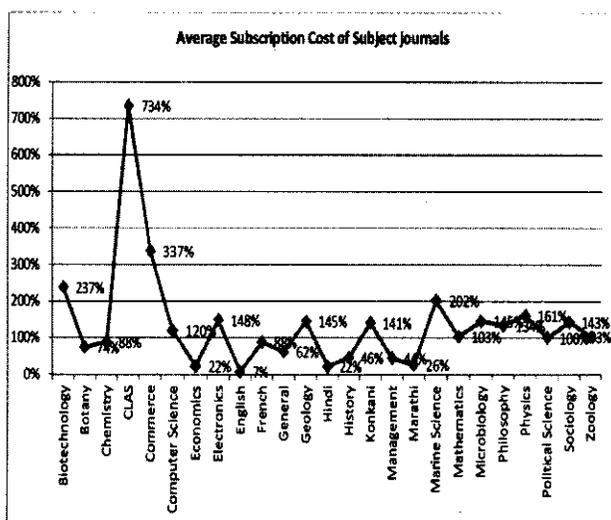
Graph 2: Average subscription cost of commerce journals



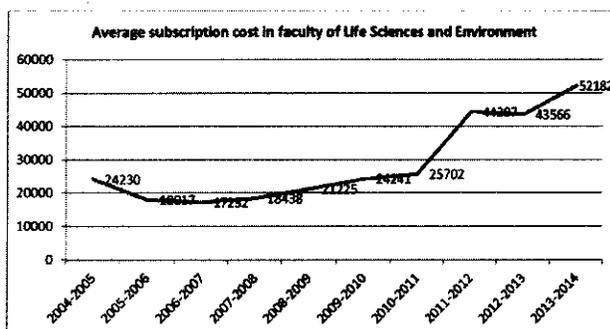
Graph 3: Average subscription cost of biotechnology Journals



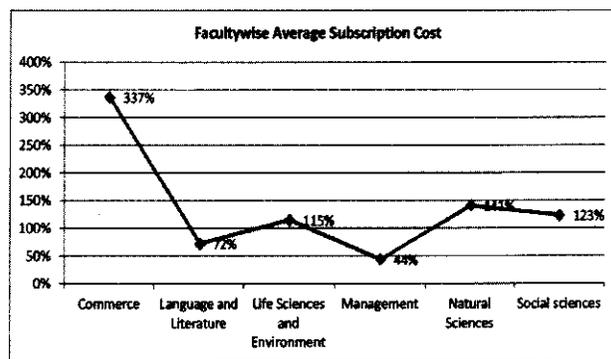
Graph 5: Average subscription cost of commerce faculty



Graph 4: Average Subscription cost of all Subject Journals from for ten years from 2004-2014



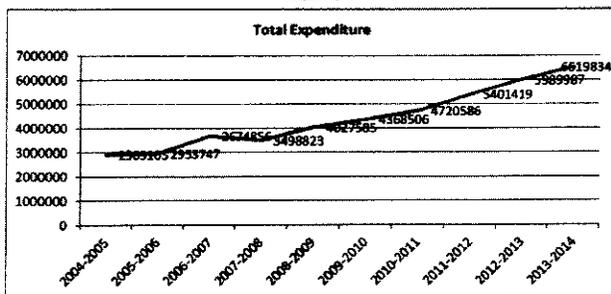
Graph 6: Average subscription cost in faculty of life sciences and environment.



Graph 7: Faculty wise Average Subscription Cost of Ten Years

FACULTY WISE ANALYSIS OF DATA

To know the average subscription cost of journals used by each faculty, faculty wise data from 2004 to 2014 on cost of journals was collected. Goa University has total six faculties which includes faculty of commerce, faculty of language and literature, faculty of life sciences and environment, Faculty of social sciences faculty of management and faculty of natural sciences. The data were collected and analyzed to see faculty wise average increase in subscription cost of journal from 2004 to 2014. And it was found that compared to all faculties the highest increase in the subscription cost of journals from 2004 to 2014 was in faculty of commerce where subscription cost increases to 337 %. Followed by increase in subscription cost of life sciences and environment journals; where subscription cost increases to 115%. Some of the examples (Graph 5, 6, 7) of increase in subscription cost of faculty wise journals are given below:



Graph 8: Total Expenditure of ten years (from 2004 to 2014).

FINDINGS

The finding of the study shows that during past ten year's subscription cost of journals in Goa University Library have been increasing from the year 2004 to 2014. Findings show that though there is increase in journal prices Goa University Library has continued to subscribe journals from the expenditure made from their budget. From 2004 to 2014, almost in most subjects the subscription cost of journals is increasing. Results also shows that the highest increase in subscription cost of journals from 2004 to 2014 was in CLAS journals where the subscription cost has increased to 733 %, followed by increase in commerce journals which has increased to 337 %. The results shows that increase in subscription cost of Biotechnology and marine science journals are above 200%.

Faculty wise average subscription cost of journals in Goa University Library also shows increase in subscription cost. The finding shows that the highest increase in the subscription cost of journals from 2004 to 2014 was in faculty of commerce where subscription cost increases to 337 %. The results show that in faculty of life sciences and environment the average subscription cost was 115% where as in faculty of natural sciences the subscription cost increases to 141 %. In faculty of social sciences the average subscription cost was around 123%. So we can say that, increase in the subscription cost in faculty of life sciences, Faculty of Natural sciences, and faculty of social sciences are almost same that is above 100%.

The findings show that the expenditure of Goa University Library on journal subscription has increased from past ten years. It clearly shows that as journal prices goes on increasing the expenditure of Goa University Library is also increasing every year from 2004 to 2014. It shows that in 2004 expenditure of library on journal subscription were 2909105 which have increased to 6519834 in 2014 with an average increase of 3610729. It shows that as price increases, expenditure on journals by Goa University is also increasing.

It shows that in 2004 expenditure spend by Goa University Library was 2909105 which increases to 6519834 in the year 2014 So there is a vast increase in the expenditure of the library, that is there is an increase of around 3610729. So if we calculate the total expenditure of ten years, used in subscribing journals with total expenditure used in 2004 we find that average subscription cost increases to 124% from the year 2004 to 2014. Hence we can say that though there is serial crisis, Goa University library has not cancelled their Subscription and has continued to subscribe the journals.

CONCLUSION

There has been a vast increase in the journal subscription prices which has affected many academic libraries to such extent that libraries are cancelling journal subscription because they don't have enough money to spend on these costly journals. Libraries must use some techniques to solve these problems. Library must provide facilities like Open access and Inter Library Loan Facility. And the most useful method that most libraries use is to become member of Consortia Group where member institution shares their resources with each other mostly scholarly Journals due to their highly increasing price each year.

This study was conducted to know whether like other libraries Goa University Library is also affected by serials crisis or not, whether Goa University Library is cancelling their journal subscription or not. From the data collected it was found that Serials subscription in Goa University Library from 2004 to 2014 went on increasing, there is continuous increase in the average subscription cost of library. For ten years period from 2004 to 2014 Library spends expenditure from their budget to subscribe these costly journals required by their users. It was found that Goa University Library is a member of consortia group of UGC Infonet digital Library Consortia which helps Goa University Library to serve their users with required scholarly journals.

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