THE EVOLUTION OF INTERDISCIPLINARY COLLECTIONS: MOVING FROM THEMATIC SPACES TO INTEGRATED LIBRARY COLLECTIONS

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Crossref DOI - https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.23366408

Abstract :

The nature of teaching, learning and research is changing rapidly. Many academic subjects that were once studied independently are now connected through interdisciplinary approaches. Research on climate change, artificial intelligence, public health, sustainable development, data science, education and social transformation often requires information from more than one discipline. This change has created a new responsibility for libraries: to develop collections that are not restricted to traditional subject boundaries.

Interdisciplinary collection development refers to the planned selection, acquisition, evaluation and maintenance of resources that support connections between different academic disciplines. Traditional collection development often follows departmental structures, subject profiles and discipline-specific acquisition patterns. Although this approach helps maintain depth in individual subjects, it can sometimes create collection silos and make it difficult to support emerging areas of interdisciplinary study. IFLA identifies collection development as a core library function and highlights the importance of changing acquisition practices, electronic resources, open access, collection evaluation and shared collection development.

This paper examines the need for interdisciplinary collection development in contemporary libraries. It discusses the role of user needs, curriculum changes, faculty collaboration, electronic resources, open access resources, collection assessment and resource sharing in building integrated collections. The paper argues that libraries should move from a subject-centred approach towards a relationship-based collection strategy in which resources from different disciplines are deliberately connected. Such an approach can make library collections more relevant to interdisciplinary teaching, research and knowledge discovery.

Keywords : Interdisciplinary Collection Development; Academic Libraries; Collection Management; Resource Sharing

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Introduction :

A library collection is not just a collection of books, magazines, and electronic

resources; It represents the information needs of the academic community and supports education, learning, and research. In academic libraries, repository development has traditionally been planned according to the needs of individual branches and departments; This approach helps to maintain depth and skill in a particular subject, but when the user is disciplined, it is limited to working rapidly beyond the boundaries of the internet.

Modern research is becoming more and more interdisciplinary; For example, research on artificial intelligence in education may require resources such as computer science, education, psychology, statistics, and ethics; Similarly, research on climate change can include ecology, economics, geography, agriculture, political science, and sociology; These examples illustrate why important research questions fall outside the boundaries of a single topic.

This changing research environment raises an important question: Can libraries create collections that adhere to the boundaries of traditional content only when users have to push those boundaries themselves?

The answer to this question requires a shift from a diverse content repository to an integrated and interdisciplinary repository; This does not mean that the depth of a particular subject should be changed just because the concept based holistic development is important; Instead, it involves identifying interdisciplinary linkages and intentionally selecting resources that support emerging areas, research areas, and interdisciplinary programs.

The development of electronic resources, open access publications, institutional repositories and digital databases has further enhanced the potential for the development of interdisciplinary repositories; Libraries can combine subscribed resources, including open access and shared resources, to meet broader research needs; Resource sharing networks and library institutions can help provide institutions with access to specialized resources that are not individually affordable.

The development of interdisciplinary repositories requires strong collaboration between librarians, faculty members, and researchers; Professors provide knowledge of curriculum and emerging research areas, while librarians provide expertise in information processing, collection assessment, and resource discovery; Their collaboration will help librarians identify storage gaps and respond more effectively to changing educational needs.

There is a need to go beyond traditional measures such as repository size and subjective use in repository valuation. Librarians should consider interdisciplinary use, faculty recommendations, research trends, interlibrary loan applications, and emerging academic programs when evaluating collections. Thus, the idea of "silos to synthesis" provides a useful framework for rethinking storage development.

The present article examines the importance of the development of interdisciplinary repositories in academic libraries. This article discusses the limitations of traditional content-

based approaches, the role of faculty collaboration, electronic and open access resources, resource allocation, and procurement evaluation.

Meaning of Interdisciplinary Repository Development :

Interdisciplinary repository development is the process of creating a library repository by identifying the connections between different academic disciplines and selecting resources that support those relationships.

Need for Interdisciplinary Repository :

The growing importance of interdisciplinary repositories can be explained by a number of developments.

Changes in research models :

Contemporary research solves complex problems that are not generally understood by any one field. Researchers combine theories, methods, and evidence from a variety of disciplines.

Changes in higher education :

Universities are increasingly offering multi-disciplinary programmes, interdisciplinary courses, skill-based programmes and research centres. This change needs to be reflected in library collections.

Development of Digital Resources :

Electronic books, magazines, databases, and open access resources allow libraries to provide access to the boundaries of the discipline. The development of electronic publishing and open access has replaced storage development methods.

Emerging Topics :

New fields such as data sciences, digital humanities, computational social sciences, biotechnology, sustainability studies, and artificial intelligence do not fit comfortably into the traditional category of subjects.

Changes in customer expectations :

Students and researchers are quick to get information from a number of sources that they may not think of in terms of the library's internal affairs department.

Limitations of Material Cello Collection Development :

disciplined storage development system can create a lot of limitations.

First, resources related to emerging research topics can be divided into different topic categories, so users may have to search multiple databases, classifications, or archives.

Second, the responsibility for editing can be shared among subject matter experts, with each voter feeling that the other department will take over them.

Third, limited budgets make it difficult to prioritize interdisciplinary resources. Libraries may spend more on established content areas, but emerging interdisciplinary areas have not.

Fourth, traditional storage data cannot clearly disclose interdisciplinary demands. This resource can be useful for many categories of users, even if its use is only documented in one content category.

This point points to the need for a more flexible storage development model.

Key Aspects of Interdisciplinary Storage Development :

User-centric selection :

The needs of the users should be at the heart of storage development. Librarians should study transmission data, database usage, interlibrary loan applications, reference questions, course requirements, and faculty recommendations.

Curriculum Analysis :

Libraries should regularly review new curricula, revised curricula, interdisciplinary programs, and research activities. The development of the archive should respond to academic advances rather than simply following the profile of historical content.

Faculty Collaboration :

Faculty members can help librarians identify emerging research areas and important resources. Regular interaction between librarians and teaching departments can reveal information needs that are not visible through usage statistics alone.

Thematic Collection Building :

Instead of developing collections only by subject, libraries can create thematic collection profiles.

Electronic and Open Access Resources :

Digital resources provide significant opportunities for the development of interdisciplinary repositories. Libraries can manage financial difficulties by integrating customer databases with reliable open access resources.

IFLA noted that electronic publishing and open access have significantly changed the growth of the repository.

Distribution of resources :

No library can access every resource needed for interdisciplinary research; The team can expand the range of resources available to users, such as interlibrary loans, document distribution, and the development of shared archives.

The Librarian's Role :

The development of interdisciplinary repositories will change the professional role of librarians.

Librarians are no longer just pickers of books and magazines. This is how librarians work:

- Data Analyzer
- Research Partners
- Storage Technician:
- Material Connector
- Digital Resource Evaluator
- Determinants of Customer Needs

The librarian needs to understand the depth of individual matters and the relationship between them.

This requires continuous professional development in emerging research areas, digital resources, data analytics, and stock valuations.

Procurement Development Strategy for Interdisciplinary Resources :

The interdisciplinary linkages of storage development policy should be clearly identified. IFLA's guidance on repository development recommends documentation in areas such as content coverage, format, language, responsible library units, and interdisciplinary relationships.

Therefore, an effective strategy can include:

1. Identification of important interdisciplinary research topics.
2. Responsibility for the selection of interdisciplinary resources.
3. Methods of consultation with professors and researchers;
4. Criteria for selection of multidisciplinary databases.
5. Assessment of electronic and open access resources.
6. The process of assessing emerging problems.

7. Resource sharing system.
8. Periodic evaluation of interdisciplinary collections.

Academic priorities and research areas should regularly review the changing policies from time to time.

Storage Assessment :

Repository valuation is especially important when developing interdisciplinary collections.

Libraries can use:

- Transmission data
- Use of Electronic Resources
- Database Search Status
- Interlibrary Loan Application
- Faculty Recommendations
- Student feedback
- Curriculum Analysis
- Research on Publication Methodology
- Storage Overlap Study

IFLA identifies procurement, valuation and storage analysis as key areas of contemporary acquisition and storage development practice.

Evaluation should not be focused only on the number of resources owned. It should also be considered whether the collection successfully supports the relationship between subjects.

The Role of Technology :

- Technology is making interdisciplinary repository development more efficient.
- Library management systems, search services, usage analytics, and digital repositories can provide useful evidence for repository decisions.
- The relationship between metadata and content helps users find resources outside of their primary discipline.
- For example, users searching for "artificial intelligence in education" will find resources for learning computer science, education, psychology, ethics, and science.
- The overarching conference theme, "Silos to Synthesis" is particularly relevant. This technology will help librarians add resources that were previously separated by sections or database boundaries.

Evolution of the Interdisciplinary Repository in the Indian Context :

Indian academic libraries operate in a variety of economic, technical and institutional environments. Most universities and colleges have limited budgets and hence need to make careful decisions regarding resource selection.

The development of interdisciplinary repositories is particularly useful in this environment because libraries may include:

- Main Print Source
- Ebook
- E-General.
- Institutional Repository
- Open Educational Resources
- Open Access Journal
- Government Announcement
- Revision Database
- Resources of the Federation
- Interlibrary Loan Service

The emphasis should be on access to relevant knowledge rather than taking ownership of every resource.

This approach helps provide comprehensive information support in smaller academic libraries without having to manage too large a collection in each branch.

Challenge :

The development of interdisciplinary repositories presents many challenges.

- Budgetary deficit
- The Complexity of Selection
- Lack of usage data
- Coordination of faculty
- Emerging Topics
- Double or folding operation
- Diagnosis difficulty

Conclusion :

The traditional thematic model of repository development is crucial for maintaining the depth and quality of academic library collections; However, it is no longer enough to respond to the changing nature of research and education.

For interdisciplinary research, librarians must look beyond departmental boundaries and understand how different areas of knowledge interact. The momentum from content silos

to integrated collections makes library resources more relevant to emerging research, multi-disciplinary learning, and changing user expectations.

Interdisciplinary repository development doesn't mean dropping content; Instead, it means incorporating content expertise through a comprehensive collection strategy. Librarians, faculty members, researchers, and library systems need to work together to identify emerging topics, assess collection gaps, and develop resources.

Therefore, future library collections should not be viewed as a separate set of content frames. It should be understood as a connected knowledge environment where resources from different disciplines come together to solve the questions and problems that users are trying to understand.

In this sense, the move from "silos" to synthesis is not only a change in the collection development process, but also a change in the way we understand the role of libraries in supporting education, research, and knowledge generation.

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