



The Role Of College Libraries In Institutional Branding: A Study Of Arts And Commerce Colleges In Mumbai

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Abstract: The research focuses on role of college libraries of arts and commerce colleges in fostering the institutional branding. Now a days libraries are no longer repositories of mere books but they also contribute to achieve the objectives of colleges like academic excellence, student engagement and establishing community connections. In-depth interview were conducted of 15 college librarians to identify the functions of library in showcasing academic quality excellence, enhancing student experiences through, career guidance and mental health initiatives, creating community ties through various co-curricular and cultural events reflecting institutional values such as inclusive, sustainability, and innovation. The findings shows that libraries are the powerful branding assets, which helps the student in choosing the institution for their career through modern infrastructure, technology, and marketing efforts. Despite being a powerful branding assets libraries are facing challenges like budget constraints and staffing limitations. Recommendations include enhancing digital capabilities, leveraging alumni networks, and utilizing virtual tours and marketing strategies to maximize impact. The study emphasize that the college libraries are not the only academic support to the institution but also act as backbone for boosting a institutional identity and reputation in today's competitive higher education landscape.

Index Terms - College libraries, institutional branding, student engagement, academic excellence, community partnerships, library marketing

I INTRODUCTION

The colleges nowadays strive to be unique and be appealing to students, as well as teachers and the community. Just like a person, a college has a brand that reflects its character or indicates what the school might be interested in and what it offers to all parties. Although a lot of focus may be given to things such as smart classes, excellent professors, or cool buildings, college libraries do maintain a bit of a quiet role in ensuring that a college stands out.

Libraries do not remain quiet rooms with books any more. They are vibrant places, where learners study, socialize and they get inspired. This is evident more in arts and commerce colleges where libraries assist art students to be creative and business students to be ready to take on their careers. Libraries have just an opportunity to excel and unique challenges to get over in a busy city like Mumbai that has the best education institutions and rich culture. This paper examines the role that libraries in arts and commerce colleges in Mumbai play in the development of their college and how they are acquiring this in a positive manner, what are the challenges that they are facing and how they can make their colleges even more attractive to the students and the community.

II LITERATURE REVIEW

The college does more than just giving service of issue or return of books, it works hard to make a college distinctive. According to Weiner (2018) Library makes students feel at home by providing many other services like giving good welcoming atmosphere, provision of modern technology and at the same time demonstrating art exhibits. Libraries are becoming happening place for students to spend time in the community, hosting such events as art exhibits or job fairs (Brewerton & Woolley, 2016). This is a key to arts and commerce colleges, where the students are seeking either creative space or job skills. Libraries provide third spaces that students find congenial rather than feeling alienated and thus makes the college welcoming (Ramsey & Aagard, 2018).

Libraries also provide remote access for digital resources or virtual tours which helps a library to attract students who are fond of technology and demonstrate that the college is contemporary (Cox & Brewster, 2020). Business students receive access to business databases, and arts students get creative tools (digital art labs, etc.) (Patel, 2023; Winters, 2020). However, the issue is that not all librarians understand how to promote their libraries in the best way (Westbrook & Chandler, 2020). Libraries must also monitor things like the turnout of events to demonstrate their worth (Anderson et al., 2023).

The reports by most authors refer to libraries, which include arts and commerce colleges in cities like Mumbai. The paper examines how such libraries can leverage their strengths in a way that will allow them to differentiate their colleges.

III RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research is a mixed-methods research which uses both qualitative and quantitative methodology to discuss the role of the libraries in the colleges of Mumbai in the development of the institutional identity. The design of the study used semi-structured interviews with 15 librarians. The major limitation of the study is that it has encompassed only 15 colleges of Mumbai and does not give input of the students, faculty or the external community.

IV DATA INTERPRETATION AND FINDINGS

4.1 Libraries as Symbols of Academic Excellence and Institutional Quality

Table 1: Library Resources by College Type

Resources and Tools	Number of Libraries	Percentage
Special Resources (Collection print and digital)	15	100%
Exhibition Spaces	5	33%
Professional Tools software/hardware(e.g., Bloomberg, Reuters, Language Lab Terminals)	6	40%

100% libraries have a special collection, including rare manuscripts and other multimedia materials, thus ensuring good academic support. 33% of libraries create places in which student and faculty artwork can be displayed, thus focusing on creative interaction. 40 percent of the libraries provide professional tools such as Bloomberg and Lab terminals to prepare students to develop careers.

Table 2: Physical Infrastructure as Branding Tool

Feature	Number of Libraries	Percentage
Major renovations in the past 5 years	13	87%
Unique spaces reflecting college focus	11	73%
Use of college colors and logos in design	9	60%

87 percent of libraries have been extensively renovated focusing on modernizing the facilities to produce attractive environments. 73% have unique areas based on what their college specializes in. 60% of libraries use college colors and logos in their design that adds to the institutional identity and pride.

Table 3: Library Support for Academic Work/Faculty-Library Collaboration Impact

Activity	Number of Libraries	Percentage
Supporting faculty research with special resources	14	93%
Hosting academic events like conferences	10	67%
Keeping digital collections of faculty/student work	12	80%

93% of libraries provide specialized research support to the faculty so as to improve their academic work. 80% libraries preserve a digital repository of faculty/student work, and 67% libraries host academic events such as conferences, featuring achievements made by the institution.

4.2 Student Experience Enhancement and Engagement Strategies

Table 4: Student Support strategies:

Support Type	Number of Libraries	Percentage
Mental Health Support: wellness spaces/stress-relief programming	8	53%
Study Skills (workshops/training) & Tutoring	11	73%
Career Counseling	9	100%

53% libraries have wellness spaces or reliever stress programs, which take into account the mental health concerns. 73 % provide study skills workshops and tutoring whereas 100% of libraries provide career counseling and professional development. In a way libraries are offering more than just study materials.

Table 5: Events That Match College Focus

Event Type	Details
Cultural Events	Average of 8 per semester
Exhibitions	100% of colleges
Creative Workshops	2 colleges (13%)
Partnerships with Mumbai Galleries/NGO/Institutes	2 colleges (13%)
Professional Development Events	3 (20%)
Career Fairs & Networking	4 (26%)
Entrepreneurship Workshops	0
Guest Lectures by Professionals	1 (7%)

Libraries host events that align with what the college specializes in like creative events, career and business-related activities. Exhibitions are held in all libraries (100%) with an average of 8 cultural events per semester; there are others with creative workshops (13%) and collaborations to the Mumbai galleries/NGOs. 20% offer professional development, 26 % career fair/networking, 7% have guest lectures and none have entrepreneurship workshops.

Table 6: Technology Upgrades

Technology Upgrade	Number of Libraries	Percentage
Significant Tech Upgrades	14	93%
Digital Creation Tools or Software	12	80%
Full Digital Resource Access	15	100%

93 % libraries has done considerable upgrading in the last three years of technology, which has upgraded learning environments. 80% of them offer sophisticated digital-making tools or programs, and 100% offer a full access to digital resources. One can say that Libraries are modernizing with new tech to help students create and learn.

Table 7: Student Feedback

Feedback Type	Number of Libraries	Percentage
Positive Feedback on Improvements	13	87%
Increased Student Engagement	10	67%
Library Quality Influenced College Choice	9	60%

87% libraries received positive student feedback on improvements to spaces and services, reflecting high satisfaction. 67% reported increased student engagement and retention, while 60% noted library quality influenced students' college choice decisions.

4.3 Community Engagement and External Relationship Building

Table 8: Public Events

Event Type	Number of Libraries	Percentage
Regular Public Events for senior citizens	8	53%
Public Exhibitions	3	15%
Financial/Digital Literacy Workshops	5	33%
External membership (Students/senior citizens/researchers etc)	7	47%

53% hosted regular public events open to Mumbai community. 15% organized public art exhibitions or cultural programs. 33% libraries offered community financial /digital literacy workshops. 47% provide external membership to students/senior citizens/researchers) for their research and other personal work. Libraries are opening their doors to the Mumbai community with events that show what the college is all about.

Table 9: Partnerships with Local Groups

Partnership Type	No. of Libraries	Percentage
Mumbai Art Galleries & Museums	2	13%
Cultural Organizations/NGO	3	20%
Professional Institutes	6	40%
Partnerships with College	1	7%

13% libraries maintained active partnerships with Mumbai art galleries and museums. 20% collaborated with cultural organizations/NGO for programming. 40% have partnerships with other professional institutes and 7% have collaborations with other colleges for resources and services

Table 10: Social Media Presence

Social Media Activity	Number of Libraries	Percentage
Active Instagram/Facebook/telegram Accounts	11	73%
LinkedIn for Networking & Alumni	8	53%
Increased Student Inquiries	6	40%

73% have active Instagram accounts showcasing events and resources. 53% used LinkedIn for professional networking and alumni engagement. 40% reported measurable increases in prospective student inquiries through social media. Libraries use social media to share their events and resources, which helps attract new students

4.4 Reflection of Institutional Values and Cultural Identity

Table 11: Inclusivity and Diversity

Initiative	Number of Libraries	Percentage
Multilingual Collections	10	67%
Accessible Spaces for Disabilities	8	53%
Cultural Diversity Programs	12	80%

67% libraries have multilingual collections reflecting Mumbai's linguistic diversity. 53% created accessible spaces for students with disabilities and 80% organise cultural diversity programs

Table 12: Sustainability and Social Responsibility: Environmental consciousness as institutional branding:

Sustainability Practice	Number of Libraries	Percentage
Energy-Efficient Lighting/Equipment (Solar panels, LED bulbs, motion sensor lighting)	12	80%
Recycling & Waste Reduction Programs (use of separate bins for paper, plastic & e-waste)	5	33%
Promote Digital Resources over Print	13	87%

80% libraries implemented energy-efficient lighting and equipment. 33% established recycling and waste reduction programs and 87% promote digital resources over print. Libraries are going green to show colleges care about the environment.

Table 13: Alignment with College Values

Value Alignment	Number of Libraries	Percentage
Strong Alignment with College Values	14	93%
Use of Mission Statement in Programming	14	93%
Reflect Institutional Character	15	100%

93% reported strong alignment between library services and stated institutional values and actively incorporated institutional mission statements into programming decisions. All librarians identified specific ways their library reflected institutional character. Libraries make sure their work matches the college's goals.

4.5 Marketing and Communication Enhancement

Table 14: Campus Tours

Tour Feature	Number of Libraries	Percentage
Stop on Campus Tours	15	100%
Highlighted Specific Features	12	80%

100% served as standard stops on prospective student campus tours. 80% reported specific features frequently highlighted during recruitment visits.

Table 15: Marketing Materials

Marketing Activity	Number of Libraries	Percentage
Branded Newsletters	11	73%
Virtual Tour Content	9	60%
Social Media for Institutional admission & recruitment/ library events	8	53%

73% created branded newsletters distributed to prospective students and parents. 60% developed virtual tour content highlighting library features. 53% produced social media content directly supporting institutional recruitment and admission campaigns

Table 16: Alumni Engagement

Alumni Activity	Number of Libraries	Percentage
Special Alumni Collections/Archives	10	67%
Alumni Networking Events	7	47%
Continuing Education Resources	6	40%
External Membership	10	67%

67% maintained special alumni collections or archives and offered external membership. 47% hosted alumni networking events. 40% offered continuing education resources for graduates

4.6 Challenges and Implementation Constraints

Table 17: Challenges

Challenges	Number of Libraries	Percentage
Budget and Resource Limitations	11	73%
Staffing and Expertise Gaps	10	67%
Infrastructure and Space Constraints	8	53%
Institutional Recognition and Support	7	47%
Technology and Digital Divide	6	40%
Assessment and Measurement Difficulties	9	60%

V CONCLUSION

This study shows that college libraries in Mumbai's arts and commerce colleges are way more than just places to study—they're key to making their schools stand out. Through smart space designs, cool services, community events, and new technology, libraries show off their college's values and help students succeed. They're like the heart of the campus, supporting everything from creativity to career prep while connecting with the local community. Despite challenges like tight budgets and a lack of marketing skills, libraries can still make a big impact with the right strategies and support from their colleges. As competition for students grows, libraries that embrace their role as brand ambassadors and student support hubs will be crucial for their colleges' success. Looking ahead, more research could dive into what students and communities think about libraries or explore how these strategies work in other places, but one thing's clear: libraries are a big deal for building a college's reputation and helping students thrive.

Model Based on Findings:

Enhancing College Libraries: Strategies and Initiatives



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