"Library is a growing organism". This is the fifth law of library science by Dr. S. R. Ranganathan, which implies concerted work and research in collaboration with planners and architects in the area of planning the library space and buildings in the age of Information Technology. The need for undertaking a research study on the aspect of Space Planning in University libraries of Maharashtra made itself manifest to me. My convictions about the need for well planned space planning in the age of information technology were reinforced by the fact that in the year 1996-97 the Internet was launched in India which changed whole scenario of dissemination of information.

Information explosion today is a world wide phenomenon. Acquisition of documents and issuing them in all formats is a wild dream for any library. National priorities in the 21st century are shifting fast. Government budgets and allocations are increasing for Defense, Communications, Agriculture, Irrigation, Health, Housing etc. but decreasing on education and the library front. Resource crunch and inelastic budgets have become a bane to the libraries. In the present scenario of reduced resources, increased cost of information, resource sharing and networking of libraries have become the necessity of the day. No library, however big, cannot contain all information. Till the advent of Information Technology, most libraries remained like islands except for some minimal co-operation in inter-library loans.

Information Technology is a modern buzz word. It has provided facilities for free flow of information. The world has become a global village. Information Super Highways, Information Super Markets are created through networks like Internet. This has facilitated for resource sharing among the libraries though they are separated by miles of distance. The concept of virtual libraries, OPAC, Hypertext and Teleconferences for the purpose of resource sharing and information exchange has become common.

The number of University libraries in India has increased considerably. It was quite difficult to visit them all. In order to overcome this problem, this study was confined to the University libraries in Maharashtra.
Questionnaire method was adopted for the collection of data of the total libraries. Being a survey work, the research involved personal visits to the libraries by the researcher. Some libraries were visited more than once to enable the investigator to collect the required data to verify the same. Out of twenty seven libraries, five have very limited area assigned to library purpose, within the university building area. Two university libraries did not respond to the questionnaire inspite of pertinent requests by the researcher. Hence, twenty libraries were surveyed. The librarians were cooperative, but they did not respond to the whole questionnaire because i) they did not have all the modern facilities ii) neither they have future planning iii) most of the buildings are old. Lastly, they don't have proper funds to plan a separate building in near future. Most of the libraries have replied to the Baseline Data of the Library Space Planning and some parts. In the absence of complete data and the layout plans, the evaluation of the library buildings was difficult. Few layout plans and photographs are obtained and redrawn. The researcher has drawn a conclusion for the future space planning. The questionnaire itself will be useful for the design and planning of the future libraries, not only in the state of Maharashtra, but in whole India.

This thesis has touched upon several issues that clearly require further consideration. I hope it will provide a nucleus and stimulus for further studies.

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