CHAPTER - 8

COMPARATIVE ASSESSMENT
8 Comparative Assessment

In the previous five chapters planning, allocation and utilisation of space relating to the KUL, BUL, MUL, IIScL and UAS libraries were considered and the data were analysed in depth.

Here an attempt has been made to compare planning, allocation and utilisation of space aspects in the libraries under study. More emphasis has been given to the striking differences and uniformities of these libraries.

8.1 Planning Of The Library Buildings

Location: Location of a library building plays a very vital role in enhancing the functional efficiency of the building. The location should be central and easily accessible for all corners of the university campus. In this context it is found that the BUL, KUL, and UASL buildings are centrally located on their respective campuses. Whereas MUL and IIScL buildings are not located in a geographically central place. However, all the five library buildings under study are easily accessible from all the corners of their respective campuses.

8.2 Space Allocation For Different Areas: Certain amount of space is very essential for performing any function effectively and efficiently. And, in the context of libraries the space allocation depends on the nature of library functions and services.
(a) This study has indicated that major portion of space has been allocated for stacking and reading purposes. The allocation of space is as follows:

<table>
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<tr>
<th></th>
<th>KUL</th>
<th>BUL</th>
<th>MUL</th>
<th>UASL</th>
<th>IIScL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Stacking</td>
<td>47%</td>
<td>25%</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>19%</td>
<td>31%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>20%</td>
<td>32%</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>23%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

As is evident, without adhering to any norm while planning space for different functions, space has been allocated. In addition, none of the libraries under study fulfill the standards of ISI.

(b) Space allocation for library staff is conspicuously absent in all the library plans. These plans just indicate space for University Librarian and Deputy Librarian. Other staff members who are in larger number and are placed in different functional units and occupy fairly good space do not find any place in the plans.

(c) Another important facility which needs due consideration in an university library building planning is research cubicles. The provision of research cubicles is seen only in two library buildings viz Mysore University Library and University of Agricultural Sciences Library building plans.

(d) The present trend is towards the acquisition of the non-book materials like microforms, sound recordings etc. These non-book material forms warrant different environment for their placement and use within the
library. Provision of suitable space for their storage and use is a requirement of an university library as per ISI. However, only in BUL and MUL building plans, provision of space has been made for such materials, the remaining three library plans have not taken care of this aspect.

(e) In a university library a lounge is not a luxury but a necessity, because large number of researchers and other serious readers spend long hours studying within the library premises and they do need periodical relaxation. And ISI recommends for such rooms. The present study has highlighted that only MUL and IIScL plans provide space for lounge and other libraries do not have.

(f) Extension work is yet another important function of an university library, wherein it provides space furniture and equipment to organise lectures, seminars, book exhibitions etc. According to ISI specifications space for such activities is a requirement in an university library. From this point of view the study has shown that no provision has been made for such activities in university library building plans under consideration except for MUL and IIScL.

(g) Another important observation during this study is regarding the orientation of the library buildings. All the five libraries under study are East-west oriented in general. However the stack rooms in KUL are facing East-south and MUL facing South-north with which the Stack rooms and Documentation-cum-Reference sections get direct sunlight on the racks and tables.
(h) Adequate number of windows and doors are planned in all the five libraries under consideration.

(i) It was learnt during the course of this study that the university librarian who is one of the members of the planning team was given due place only during the early stages of planning. And after the approval of the building plans by the UGC when the actual construction started he was not consulted at all.

8.3 Miscellaneous Aspects Of Planning

Spatial Relationship Of The Different Sections
(a) Generally a university library has different functional units such as acquisition, technical, circulation, etc. And these sections need to be located in such a way that the staff members and the users of the library have smoother and easy movement from one section to another without disturbing the other users. Excepting UASL and KUL building plans, other library plans under study have shown that the relationships of different sections are functional and the movement of individuals would be easy. However, it is noted that the individuals have to traverse long distance to reach from one section to another in case of KUL, UASL and BUL buildings.

(b) Further, all the five university library buildings have succeeded in separating the administrative unit from the reading areas, which is one of the essential features of modern university library planning.
(c) The provision of inner open yard in MUL and IIScL indicates, that planners have provided enough scope for expansion of these buildings and also given scope for maximum utilisation of natural light and ventilation.

(d) However, considerable space wastage is seen in the form of courtyards, staircases (1326 sq.ft.) and corridors (969 sq.ft.) in case of BUL plan and in the form of lobbies (1194 sq.ft.) and 'light wells' in case of KUL plan.

In addition to the above some of the other notable observations of the building plans under study are as follows:

(a) The MUL plan provides space for the Department of Library and Information Science, which is not a requirement according to ISI.

(b) The BUL plan has provision for a canteen wing within the premises of the library.

(c) The placement of public toilets, lifts and staircases at the centre of the entrance hall is an un-warranted feature of UASL plan.

(d) All the university library building plans considered in this study are a single phased construction plans. The only exception is the KUL plan which is a three phased one. So far (i.e. till the end of 1991) only the first phase of this has been completed.
8.4 Utilisation Of Space In Different Library Buildings

Another important aspect of the study is utilisation of available space for specific purposes for which they were meant. Following are some of the significant observations in this regard.

(a) In the case of BUL, the constructed building differs from original plan (i.e. first floor of the stack wing has become mezzanine floor) which is not a healthy feature.

(b) The space allocated for specific purposes in the original plans has not been utilised for the same in case of BUL, KUL and UASL buildings. Further, the changes made in space utilisation are found to be arbitrary.

(c) Although no space has been earmarked for library staff members (other, than the University Librarian and Deputy Librarian) considerable space has been utilised by them (i.e. on an average KUL-100 sq.ft., BUL-200 sq.ft., MUL-120 sq.ft., UASL-40 sq.ft., and IIScL-180 sq.ft.). Further in such instances of utilisation of space, the libraries have not followed the ISI standards.

(d) No university library has followed the ISI standards of space utilisation for rack arrangement completely.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Libraries</th>
<th>Available space</th>
<th>Utilised space</th>
<th>(figures in percent)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Reading</td>
<td>Stacking</td>
<td>Reading</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>BUL</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>KUL</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>47</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
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<td>MUL</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>21</td>
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<tr>
<td>IIScL</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>31</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
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<td>50</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(e) Similarly, the seating arrangement too is not in accordance with ISI, except in the Text Book and in Documentation-cum-Reference sections of MUL.

(f) In general, there is no optimum level of utilisation of available space in any of the libraries. In particular, considerable reading space has been wasted in UASL building (about 8386 sq.ft.) due to lack of furniture and, a fairly large space has been kept idle in the entrance hall (4500 sq.ft.) and canteen wing (5553 sq.ft.) of the BUL building and the first floor lounge (1385 sq.ft.) of MUL building.

(g) Although MUL and UASL provide for research cubicles, it is found that only in MUL the provision has been put to proper use, the UASL cubicles are yet to be made use of.
(h) The height and the 'Box type' of ceiling provided in the stack rooms in KUL building has resulted in suffocating the environment. Added to this, provision of poor lighting and ventilation has very much restricted the use of this area.

(i) The public toilets have been properly maintained and used in IIScL, UASL and MUL. But the maintenance of public toilets in KUL and BUL is very poor and as such these are not conducive for use.