CHAPTER - 1

INTRODUCTION
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1.1 Higher Education And University Libraries In India

Education has been an important force in bringing about social changes in the world. Leaders of various social movements at different points of time recognised the importance of education. Modern world has great faith in education as a solution to many evils that it has been confronting with. Particularly the third world countries are increasingly depending upon educational development in their respective countries.

As far as India is concerned three stages can be marked regarding the educational development (a) Educational system prior to 1857 (b) Post 1857 educational system and (c) Post 1947 educational system.

The first stage was marked by traditional system wherein religion played a very important role. The second stage is marked by the establishment of Western-oriented higher education system. The same year 1857 witnessed the birth of three Universities at Calcutta, Madras and Bombay. Slowly religion gave way to the secular themes in the courses taught and their contents. Liberalism of Europe which advocated liberty of an individual and social equality, increasingly held its sway over the educational system of this period.

Unfortunately these universities were merely functioning as teaching and examination centres. University libraries did not receive much attention during this period except as a support to the examination system. Later the number of universities in the country increased and particularly after 1920's
these universities widened their academic base and assumed research functions along with teaching. This necessitated the establishment of libraries which could play an active role in the university education. After independence the Central and State governments democratised and socialised the higher education system. With the establishment of the UGC in 1956, a new era in the library development began. UGC allocated huge funds for the well establishment of libraries, particularly the university library buildings. Thus, a good library system became an integral part of the Indian universities after 1956.

1.2 University Library Buildings In India

The university libraries were established first for the use of the teachers and research workers rather than for the use of students. Later, library services were extended to PG students, UG students and the registered graduates of the respective universities.

In the beginning the university libraries had to manage with buildings erected long before thought was turned on distinctive requirements of university library functions. But today, with such understanding widely prevailing and with the liberal financial assistance by the UGC new independent library buildings have been erected to realise the functions of the university by providing a wide variety of services.

Obviously, the university library architecture is comparatively of very recent origin in India. After independence a number of university library buildings were constructed. These constructed library buildings
were not only planned on functional basis but provided suitable space for users, staff and books.

However, it is a general presumption that the planners could not look far into the future, in terms of space requirements; result is space got saturated early and expansions became necessary much before the anticipated time target.

In fact the basic philosophy of librarianship has changed tremendously after the 1960's. The twin phenomena of Knowledge explosion and Document explosion have baffled not only Indian librarians and management people but also the planners of highly advanced countries. In order to meet the challenge of growth in knowledge in various disciplines and the resultant explosion in document growth which posed constant threat to the available space of university libraries. A number of new ideas were adopted by librarians and architects in planning and designing of new library buildings. A variety of new shapes and sizes have appeared on the architectural scene, which are considered to meet the challenge of growth i.e., the concept of modular planning emerged as an important factor in the field of library architecture.

1.3 Planning Of University Library Buildings

The planning of university library buildings is related to the availability of finance and suitable space on the one hand and on the other side academic awareness on the part of the university authorities on the role of university library need to play.
The post II World war period has witnessed tremendous development in the field of libraries as a result of above mentioned two important phenomena. Both these phenomena are causing great problem for the modern librarians and administrators as to how to accommodate the influx of materials, users and new services in the library without much physical expansion of the university library buildings. Proper planning becomes imperative because of the vast sums of money involved. If we do not have a properly planned functional library building the very purpose of acquiring large number of useful, highly valuable publications and appointing highly qualified and trained library professionals to provide suitable services will be defeated.

As mentioned earlier, knowledge is continuously increasing at a very fast rate in all its branches, bringing every minute new publications in varied forms like- books, journals, micro-forms...etc., and it is estimated that there are more than one lakh publications per year in the journal form itself. An university which stresses on teaching, research and all-round development of university trained products, has to rely on a wide variety of information resources and information packages.

This flood of documents in their varied forms have to be selected, acquired, processed and stacked in a systematic order to meet present as well as future needs of the readers.

Plan based development of libraries is the gift of modern times. Hence, the Librarian's abstract ideas
regarding the library building get converted into concrete plans. Such a plan helps to avoid possible shortcomings at the initial stage itself. Even a layman in the field like Mahatma Gandhi, cautioned librarians and library managers about the growth of library buildings in the following - "plan the building of the library in such a way that it can be enlarged as the library expands without marring its symmetry. The later additions should not appear as extraneous accretions to the original building"¹. Therefore, maximum emphasis on proper planning should be given at the initial stages only.

The university library is a common utility service centre for faculty members, researchers, students and other supporting administrative staff along with industrialists, businessmen and others of the locality. Further, the university library buildings are a warehouse for books, a workshop for readers and business home for the staff². Each function must be well served, or else the structure is deemed as a failure. A library building is, therefore, a clear, specific and direct expression of the functions of a library. "Form ever follows function. This is the law.... the shape, form, outward expression, design or whatever we may choose of

1. Gandhi, M.K.,
2. Khanna, J.K.,
   'Fundamentals of library organisation' p. 268.
the....building should in the very nature of things follow the function of the building".  

The successful library building is one which clearly and directly expresses and provides for the functions that are performed within it. Therefore a library building should be able to meet the following functions primarily:

a) Effective technical operations of the library;
b) Efficient and rapid production of information and materials on demand;
c) Provision of quiet, comfortable and attractive areas for study;
d) Provision of individual and collective studies for the users doing intensive research work;
e) Provision to facilitate the contact of the users with the contents of the library and
f) Storage and preservation of reading materials and accessibility of the reading materials to users without loss of time.  

These activities should comprehend the present and future needs.

3. Sullivan, L.H.,  

4. Kuala, P.N.,  
Library buildings: Planning and design, Delhi, Vikas, 1971, p. 55.
However, to set up detailed building requirements, which will apply uniformly to all university libraries is not an easy task, difficulties obviously arise in any attempt. The so-called 'adequate and functional' library building for one institution will not necessarily serve effectively the purposes of another library. There cannot be uniform structure for university library buildings which will suit to all universities.

The planning and design of university library buildings should be guided by some well established norms or principles. General set of principles formulated by Wheeler and Githens during 1940's and being quoted repeatedly even in recent studies on university library buildings by Metcalf, Srivastava and Verma, Isaac and Kaula....etc. hold good even now. These principles are:

5. Wheeler and Githens, A.M.,
Generally accepted principles of library planning: Thirty three points in American public library buildings, N.Y. Scriber, 1941.

6. Metcalf, Keynes D.,

7. Srivastava, S.N. and Verma, S.C.,

8. Isaac, K.A.,
1. Every library building should be planned especially for the kind of work to be done and the community to be served.

2. The internal structure should be planned before the exterior is planned.

3. Many errors may be prevented by the appointment of a competent, trained Librarian right from the initial stages of planning.

4. Both Librarian and Architect should visit other library buildings of the same kind and profit from their observations.

5. The library building should be an independent building and designed to attract readers by an inviting exterior and convenient access.

In addition, the UGC (India) Committee headed by Dr. S.R. Ranganathan has recommended some of the functional principles of university and college library buildings. They are:

1. The library building should be central to all academic departments.

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2. The stack room should be so placed so as to run generally from East to West, the primary reason being avoidance of direct sunlight on to the racks through the windows;

3. Each floor of the library building should be at one single level to facilitate the movement of book trolleys from one part to another, the thresholds should not be provided anywhere inside the building. All external doors should be provided either with thresholds or some other device so as to make them Rodent and dust proof and water tight;

4. The movement of book trolleys from one tier to another where there are three or more tiers in the stack room should be through electric lifts provided within the stack room;

5. There should be a covered passage on one side of each room except the stack room so that persons passing from one room to another in the library do not disturb the readers in the reading room and staff room. If the covered passage is exposed to the outside building, it should be properly enclosed with a view to ensuring safety of books, and;

6. Entrance of the library building and exit from it should be only through gangways on either side of the counter enclosure in the central region. etc.
Further, Henry Faulkner-Brown has enunciated ten principles for a new library building which are quite famous as ten commandments of library building Planning viz., Flexibility, Compactness, Accessibility, Extendibility, Variety, Organisation, Comfortability, Constant, Security and Economy.

Generally, planning of a library building begins from the entrance and proceeds to lending, reference, periodicals and other sections. General policy with regards to the location of various sections of the library should be based on the criteria of accessibility, utility and efficiency in relation to the overall structure of the library.

Indian Standards Institution: IS:1553-1976 prescribes certain requirements in its clauses 6.1 and 6.3 towards the number of rooms required and their sizes in university library buildings. Corresponding to it, it prescribes the number of reading seats to be provided in the university libraries. The number of administrative and professional staff needed and space for their working are given in detail. Further, this standard has been revised and published in UGC News letter. In


In addition, Gelfand suggests rough estimates of floor space required for a university library, its collection, staff, users and miscellaneous space.

There are a number of guidelines and norms prescribed by ISI and UGC for planning of a university library building (Incidentally Dr. S.R. Ranganathan was the Chairman of the Expert Committees for both the agencies). Excepting for minor differences the guidelines or norms of these institutions go together. Therefore, whenever a university plans to build a library building, the natural choice before it is either ISI standards or the UGC norms. But, unfortunately as reported by Rajwant Singh these norms have not been given due considerations by the university authorities while planning new library buildings.

Further, it is pertinent to mention here that there is another effective method of studying the functional efficiency of library building which is called Library Space Utilisation Methodology (LSUM) developed by Richard B. Hall. However, this methodology is not followed in this study due to the practical problems. The conditions prevailing in the university libraries in

12. Gelfand, M.A.
   University libraries for developing countries, Delhi, Universal, 1974, p. 127-128.
13. Rajwant Singh,
Karnataka are not favourable for LSUM application, for, the library system which LSUM demands is not established in the university libraries of Karnataka.

In view of the above, the Investigator has adopted the ISI standards in analysing the space allocation and space utilisation in the university library buildings in Karnataka.