CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

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1.1 STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

In any society, education plays an important role for allround development of people. In this context academic institutions play a major role to impart education. An academic institution give the opportunity for the development of a student’s potential. It consists of a number of sub-systems to support and serve its academic programs effectively and efficiently. One such sub-system is the academic library, which is the heart of all academic activities and all other sub-systems revolve round. Realising the importance of academic libraries, the Education Commission of India (1964-66) laid emphasis on the importance and need of academic libraries and had stated that “no new university, college or department should be set up without taking into account its library needs in terms of staff, books, journals, space etc. Nothing could be more damaging to a growing department than to neglect its library or to give it a low priority. On the contrary, the library should be an important centre of attraction in the college or university campus”.

But so vital an aspect carries no meaning to the academic institutions of Orissa. Most of the academic libraries exist only by name, with little importance in academic set up. Even the libraries having a good collection, enough financial aid from U.G.C. or state government, are not able to provide good library services to their users. Such libraries are just treated as a store-house of documents with some provision of issue and return of the documents only, hence are unable to be a centre of attraction for the users in colleges or universities. Analysing this poor state of affairs of academic libraries of Orissa, one can see that the academic library is not being given due importance and moreover the authorities are giving less importance on human resources of libraries than collection and finance. Among the trinity of library i.e. human resource, library collection and finance, human resource or manpower is the most important factor, without
which utilisation of other two factors is not possible. Therefore, maximum
importance should be given on proper utilisation of human resources for
effective organisation and fruitful services and this is possible only when
proper planning of human resources is made. But the academic libraries of
Orissa fail by and large in proper planning of human resources. None of the
aspects of human resource planning i.e. selection, recruitment, deployment,
personal growth and development, efficiency and performance appraisal etc.
are given proper weightage.

In other words, since the academic library lacks a staffing pattern,
the number of library personnel are inadequate in number. The selection and
recruitment policies are also not systematic in these libraries as a result the
non professional staff outnumber the professional staff. All this hampers
qualitative services of academic libraries. Further in academic libraries the
library personnel are not given due importance by the authorities, thus there
are limited scope for librarians and other library personnel to participate in
the planning and decision making process of the libraries. Since
academicians draw plans, take decisions and frame rules and regulations of
the academic libraries, the library staff feel ignore and a gap of rapport
continues to remain as much between the library personnel and the
administrators on the one hand and the personnel and the users on the other
hand which hampers the library services and defeats the very purpose. The
motivation provided to staff by academic libraries are also inadequate to
enhance work efficiency. It leads to frustration and indisposition towards
work among library staff. The provision of continuing education and other
in-service training programmes, orientation course, refresher course etc. are
also limited in academic libraries which creates impediments for library
personnel to acquire new skill and knowledge, particularly in the area of
latest development in the field of library and information science. Above all
there are no scope in academic libraries to evaluate the performance standard
of the library personnel. All these weaknesses and deficiencies in human
resource planning have adversely affected the organisation, the administration of the library staff and the library services in the state. Further the library personnel of academic libraries lack professional skill and knowledge in latest information technology such as computer technology, library networking, Internet, digital libraries, expert systems etc. and their practical uses in academic libraries. Therefore, briefly it can be said that owing to improper human resource planning, the academic libraries of Orissa can not withstand with the passage of time which will hamper the educational process of Orissa to a great extent.

1.2 NEED FOR THE STUDY

Education is a potential instrument for social, political, economic and spiritual reform. Educational institutions are meant to develop the individuals to their maximum potentiality through education in a socially desirable direction. Therefore, educational institutions are primarily set up to impart education to students. But imparting education by teachers to students in the class room does not come to an end. Effective teaching and learning bring harmony to institutional education where library plays its important role. Teachers, students, staff and also communities seek information regarding their educational and vocational guidance, where library wholeheartedly serves to get acquainted with the sources of knowledge, thus broadens the horizon of knowledge. It also serves to disseminate knowledge for enrichment and transformation. Hence in an academic set up, academic library acts as the nerve centre of all scholarly activities. Therefore, for allround development of educational system and also for the development of a nation, academic libraries should be given high priority and attention, so that they can be able to meet their users need satisfactorily.

Further, the efficiency of academic library largely depends on the academic and professional competency of its human resources, their working
efficiency, environment and the facilities provided to them for their personal growth and development. Besides document and financial support, the most important element of academic library is its human resources. Without proper use of this resources, other resources can not be harnessed properly.

But looking into the existing situation of academic libraries of Orissa, it is seen that human resource is the most neglected area of academic libraries. Owing to this, the academic library organisations and services are hampered to a great extent. It means the library materials are very badly organised, library services are unsatisfactory and moreover the libraries are failing to satisfy the needs of users. Therefore, the needs of the present study are:

(i) to ensure that qualified, efficient and adequate human resources are available in academic libraries in accordance with the requirements

(ii) to ensure fair method of selection and recruitment of library human resources

(iii) to facilitate better understanding among the library employees

(iv) to provide necessary motivators, good working environment, opportunity for self-development to the library staff

(v) to ensure maximum utilisation of library materials and provide quick, and effective library services through proper utilisation of human resources.

Therefore, the need of the study is to identify and suggest steps for human resource planning so that this resources will be properly and fully utilised, by which academic libraries of Orissa will be able to meet their users demand satisfactorily even with the changing situations.
1.3 AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

In this study, efforts are being made to analyse and evaluate the existing human resource planning of academic libraries of Orissa, keeping the following objectives in view:

i) To define human resource planning with reference to its nature and scope.

ii) To find out the importance and need of proper human resource planning in academic libraries for their effective management.

iii) To find out the existing human resource planning process of academic libraries of Orissa.

iv) To identify the principal elements of human resource planning process.

v) To point out the lacuna that lies in every area of existing human resource planning.

vi) To find out the negative effects of improper human resource planning on library organisation and services.

vii) To explain methods and techniques that have been developed for application to the different elements of human resource planning.

viii) To point out the urgent need of proper human resource planning in every academic libraries especially with the changing academic library environment due to information explosion, technological development and change in user's outlook and demand.

ix) To provide clue for solution of these problems, along with suggestion of a model staffing pattern for different categories of academic libraries of Orissa, indicating its value and importance in the years to come.
1.4 FORMULATION OF HYPOTHESIS

Based on the objectives of study and review of related literatures, the following hypotheses were formulated.

$H_1$ The qualification prescribed for professional librarians of academic libraries of Orissa inconsistent in nature.

$H_2$ The selection and recruitment policy of academic libraries are not systematic.

$H_3$ There is no standard staffing pattern followed in academic libraries of Orissa.

$H_4$ The number of professional staff in academic libraries are inconsistent and inadequate in relation to the user strength.

$H_5$ There is no uniformity in prescribing qualification for the professional library staff of academic libraries of Orissa.

$H_6$ A sizeable number of non-professional persons are still in existence as professional library staff in academic libraries of Orissa.

$H_7$ There is no uniformity in prescribing pay-scale for professional library staff of academic libraries of Orissa.

$H_8$ There is little provision of promotion for library personnel in academic libraries. Their positions are almost static in nature.

$H_9$ Provision of continuing education and other in-service training programmes for library staff are inadequate.
H_{10} The authorities of academic libraries pay very little attention towards library personnel, as a result scope of librarians in decision making and framing rules and regulations of academic libraries is very limited.

H_{11} The motivation provided to library staff are not satisfactory to enhance their work efficiency.

H_{12} A disparity exist among the faculty and library staff of academic institutions of Orissa.

H_{13} There is no provision for performance evaluation of library staff in academic libraries of Orissa.

H_{14} The organisation, management and services of academic libraries are not satisfactory.

H_{15} The skill and knowledge of library personnel on information technology and its practical application in academic libraries are not satisfactory.

1.5 SCOPE AND LIMITATION

The scope of the study is exclusively limited to the academic libraries i.e. libraries attached to academic institutions of Orissa. It includes the University Libraries, Post-Graduate College Libraries and Degree College Libraries only. The present study excludes the Junior College (+2) Libraries and School Libraries of Orissa. Further, among university libraries, the study includes only the library of Sambalpur University, Utkal University and Berhampur University. The study is also restricted to human resources of academic libraries, their planning process and effect on library organisations and services.

Thus, the scope and limitation of the proposed study can be summarised as follows.

i) The study is confined to only academic libraries of Orissa state.
ii) The study includes the libraries of Sambalpur, Utkal and Berhampur Universities and the libraries of their affiliated Post-Graduate and Degree colleges till the year 1994.

iii) The study is restricted to human resources of academic libraries and their planning process only.

1.6 METHODOLOGY FOLLOWED

In the present study, questionnaire method was used for survey and collection of data. For this purpose a pre-ordained structured questionnaire was prepared to collect data from different academic libraries of Orissa, covered under the scope of the study. The questionnaire was prepared taking into consideration the objectives of the study. The questions were framed in such a manner that it can be answered in no time and in short answers. After framing the questionnaires, these were mailed to different academic libraries selected for the study, which are geographically scattered throughout the state. The investigator also visited many academic libraries personally to fill up the questionnaire and also to get first hand knowledge of the existing human resources, its planning process and the effect of human resource planning on library services.

Besides this, personal interview was also made with some librarians, library science experts, library authorities to assess the problems relating to human resource planning of academic libraries of Orissa.

In order to make the resulting analysis statistically sound and meaningful, statistical methods like percentage, mean, $x^2$ (chi-square) test were applied.

Reference