SUMMARY, CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

Chapter 7

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The study attempted to map the existing status of resources and services in the four university libraries in Kerala. The focus of the study was to examine the research support potential of university libraries. The investigation was mainly based on two premises, the response of the actual users and the information from actual supporters supplemented by personal visit and verification. The study was carried out to examine the role of university libraries in research in Kerala because it is an important area where few studies were made. Librarians recognise the value of knowledge as a resource in supporting almost all human activities in one way or other. They not only collect process and organise knowledge in libraries but also take active part in the process of knowledge creation through research in academic and other settings. Their role is ever increasing in the knowledge society.

This chapter gives the findings, conclusions, recommendations for the improvement of library and information services in university libraries in Kerala and suggestions for further research.

7.1 Findings of the Study

The major findings of the study on the four university libraries in Kerala have been described below:

1. The university libraries in Kerala are hybrid type of libraries in terms of physical formats of resources having dominance of print resources. The
major share of electronic resources comes from UGC Infonet e-journal consortium.

2. The availability of Journals in university libraries in Kerala is just adequate to meet the information needs of research scholars. University library wise difference is significant. Low-level satisfaction for journals is found in MGU library and high-level satisfaction is found in CUSAT library. University libraries in Kerala subscribe to an average 270 journal titles.

3. Research discipline wise difference is significant in the case of journal collection. Social science research scholars are more satisfied with journal collection than science research scholars.

4. The research support of university libraries in Kerala is average with regard to the provision of Theses collection. Research discipline wise difference is not significant in the case of Theses.

5. The university libraries in Kerala do not have adequate Research Reports collection. University library wise difference is significant. Low-level satisfaction for research reports is perceived against MGU library. Research discipline wise difference is not significant.

6. The Patents collection is limited in University libraries in Kerala except in CUSAT library. Science research scholars and social science research scholars are significantly differ in their satisfaction on the patent collection. Science research scholars are more dissatisfied than social science.
7. The research support through the provision of Abstracting periodicals in university libraries in Kerala is average. It is applicable to both science and social science disciplines. University library wise difference is significant. Abstracting journal services is adequate in UK library.

8. University libraries in Kerala have inadequate Index collection for information search by scholars. There is no significant difference among universities. Discipline wise difference is significant. Science scholars are more dissatisfied than social science research scholars.

9. All university libraries possess a good collection of Reference books that supports the research scholars. University wise difference is significant. High-level satisfaction is found in UK library, the largest university library in terms of book collection. Research discipline wise difference is also significant. Social science scholars are more satisfied than science scholars.

10. The university libraries in Kerala possess a good collection of Subject books that facilitate research work. There is no significant difference among universities. Research discipline wise difference is significant. Social science scholars are more satisfied than science scholars.

11. The university libraries in Kerala provide extensive access to E-journals. University wise difference is significant. The satisfaction level of E-journals is highest in UK library and lowest in UC library. Research discipline wise difference is not significant. Scholars from both disciplines are satisfied with E-journal collection.
12. The accessibility of Bibliographic databases in university libraries in Kerala is just adequate to meet the information needs of research scholars. University library wise difference is significant. Low-level satisfaction is reported against MGU library. Research discipline wise difference is also significant. Social science scholars are more dissatisfied than science scholars.

13. The CD-ROM collections in university libraries are average to meet the information requirements of research scholars. University wise difference is significant. The level of dissatisfaction is high in UK, UC and CUSAT libraries. Research discipline wise difference is not significant. Both science and social science scholars are dissatisfied with CD-ROM collection.

14. The book collection is up-to-date in university libraries in Kerala. University wise difference is significant. High-level and low level satisfaction is marked against CUSAT library and MGU library respectively. Research discipline wise difference is also significant. Social science scholars are more satisfied than Science scholars.

15. Personalised services are not prominent among university libraries in Kerala. Only half of the university libraries (MGU and CUSAT) offer SDI service and that too is not upto the standard. University library wise difference is significant. CUSAT library’s SDI service is perceived better than that of MGU library.
16. Of four university libraries studied, only two libraries in Kerala (MGU and CUSAT) offer CAS. University wise difference is significant. The MGU library provides it more effectively than CUSAT.

17. All the university libraries offer facilities for Internet search to the Research scholars with varying speed of 256 Kbps to 2Mbps. The opinion of research scholars on Internet search service vary from university to university. High-level satisfaction is found in CUSAT.

18. All the university libraries offer E-journal search and retrieval facilities. University wise difference on E-journal search facility is significant. High-level satisfaction is found in CUSAT and MGU library and low-level satisfaction is shown against UC library.

19. University libraries in Kerala subscribe to less number of bibliographic databases for information search. Bibliographic database search and retrieval service vary from university to university. High-level satisfaction is found at CUSAT library and low-level at UC library.

20. CD-ROM networking facility is offered by all university libraries in Kerala except by UK library. The level of satisfaction on CD-ROM search facility is varying from university to university. High-level dissatisfaction is found in UK library. Compared to UC library, dissatisfaction level is less in CUSAT and MGU library.
21. University libraries in Kerala extensively use Internet and Web for new addition alert service. University wise difference for new addition alert service is found significant. High-level satisfaction is found in CUSAT library and low level in MGU and UK libraries.

22. Document delivery service is not available in half of the university libraries in Kerala (UK library and UC library). The opinions of research scholars on document delivery services vary from university to university. The performance of MGU library is much better than that of CUSAT. Document delivery service is provided in association with the INFLIBNET and DELNET.

23. Inter library loan service offered by the university libraries are not up to the level. University library wise difference is significant. High-level dissatisfaction is seen at UK library. However, MGU library’s performance is noticeable.

24. All university libraries offer reprographic services at a satisfactory level to the research scholars. University wise difference is significant. Scholars from MGU are more satisfied compared to that of other universities.

25. Half of the universities (UK and CUSAT) offered bibliographic compilation service at a reasonable level. University library wise difference is significant. High level satisfaction is found in CUSAT library and low level in MGU library.
26. Lending service of university libraries is satisfactory. University library wise difference is significant. High-level satisfaction is shown towards MGU library and low-level towards UC library.

27. Research scholars are satisfied with the reservation facilities offered by the university libraries. University wise difference in reservation facility is significant. Scholars from UK and CUSAT are more satisfied than scholars from UC and MGU.

28. The arrangement of books on shelves by the university libraries is found helpful by scholars for searching and selecting documents. University wise difference is significant. High-level satisfaction is found in CUSAT and UC.

29. The Cataloguing system followed by the university libraries is easy to locate documents. Online Public Access Catalogues provided by the university libraries are very useful to scholars for speedy search of holdings. University level difference is significant. High-level satisfaction is found in CUSAT library and low-level in UC library. Only one university library (CUSAT library) offers Web enabled OPAC.

30. The opinions of research scholars on sufficient number of library tickets vary from university to university. The number of Borrowers Tickets issued to research scholars in university libraries in Kerala is insufficient except in UK library.
31. University libraries in Kerala are not providing user education programmes to research scholars. Scholars from all universities demand user education programmes to understand the services and resources better.

32. Majority of the university libraries in Kerala does not invite or incorporate the suggestions of research scholars for documents selection process.

33. The availability of computers, printers and scanners for the use of scholars is just adequate. The level of dissatisfaction is different from university to university.

34. The existing reading area in university libraries in Kerala is inadequate for study and reference. No university offers cubicles for research scholars.

35. Research scholars are satisfied with the present working time of their university libraries. Of four libraries studied, three libraries keep open 12 hours a day on normal working days.

36. University library buildings are not attractive and inviting. University library wise difference is less significant.

37. The scholars found the library environment not favorable for reading and learning.

38. University libraries in Kerala are provided with poor lighting and ventilation.
39. University libraries in Kerala have qualified staff for delivering information services to research scholars.

40. University library professionals are characterized with average customer friendliness.

41. The majority of the research scholars used the libraries five days a week and three hours a day. The scholars mainly used the libraries for accessing electronic resources. Majority of them used other libraries in the state especially the special libraries. The scholars frequently visited the library websites for accessing and updating information for research.

7.2 Tenability of Hypotheses

The first hypothesis stated that ‘Science research scholars and social science research scholars are similar in their satisfaction on primary sources available in university libraries in Kerala’.

The hypothesis is tested on four primary sources; journals, theses, research reports and patents. Of the four primary sources examined, science research scholars and social science research scholars differ in their satisfaction with two primary resource (journals and patents) and they are similar in their satisfaction with the other two primary sources (thesis and research reports). Therefore, the hypothesis-I is accepted in the case of theses and research reports and rejected in the case of journals and patents. Hence the first hypothesis ‘Science research scholars and social science research scholars are similar in their satisfaction of primary sources available in university libraries
in Kerala' is partially substantiated. The findings numbers 3 to 6 have confirmed the tenability of hypotheses.

The second hypothesis stated that 'Research scholars of science and social science differ in their satisfaction on the adequacy of electronic sources' The hypothesis was tested on three electronic resources: E-journals, Bibliographic databases and CD-ROMs. Of the three primary sources examined, hypothesis II is proved only in the case of bibliographic databases. In the case of E-journals and CD-ROM, the hypothesis is rejected. Hence, the hypothesis II is not fully substantiated. The findings numbers 11 to 13 confirmed the tenability of hypothesis.

The third hypothesis stated that 'The level of satisfaction of research scholars on personalised services provided by the university libraries in Kerala differs from university to university'. The hypothesis was tested on two personalised services (SDI and CAS). It was proved that there is significant difference in the level of satisfaction of research scholars on personalised services. Hence, the hypothesis 3 is fully substantiated. The hypothesis has been proved by the findings numbers 15 and 16.

The fourth hypothesis stated that 'The effectiveness of Internet based services varies from university to university'. The hypothesis was tested on four Internet based services: Internet search, Bibliographic database, E-journal access and CD-ROM search. On the four services, p-value is less than significant level hence the hypothesis is fully substantiated. Findings number 17 to 20 has proved the hypothesis.
7.3 Conclusion

The investigation for understanding the role of university libraries in research in Kerala revealed that the organisation of resources and services in university libraries is not fully oriented towards supporting the process of research. Though the individual performance of libraries in some areas reflects the research mission of the university, they are not directed to the ultimate function of supporting research in the parent organisation by supplying high quality material through advanced forms of information services.

The book collection in university libraries in Kerala is not up-to-date in science subject fields. The submission of research scholars is not incorporated in the procedure for selection of documents. The availability of primary sources that are essential for research scholars found to be very less in number in all university libraries in Kerala. The secondary sources both in print and electronic forms are inadequate in the libraries. The UGC Infonet E-journal consortium based online journal access is the most remarkable service found in the libraries. No university library subscribes to any full text database. The major factor that affects the building up of an adequate collection is low library budget. The university libraries are not investing much on personalised services that connect the world of resources with the world of users.

Information services offered by the university libraries are at a minimum level. There are limited facilities for accessing electronic resources and web-based services in university libraries. It is evident from the less number of computer systems and accessories devoted to the purpose. Only one university
library offers web based OPAC. The university libraries are not providing user education programmes for imparting the skills to users for searching, selecting retrieving and using relevant documents by themselves.

The university libraries are lacking sufficient reading area to accommodate more users at a time. They are backward in matters of proper lighting and ventilation. Moreover, they are not structurally attractive.

Coming to the human resource, the university libraries lack sufficient number of professionals for planning and organizing information services. Though the existing staff is competent, they are not customer friendly.

Though the principle function of all universities is research and innovation in various fields of knowledge, the university libraries are not working accordingly. The satisfaction level of existing services and facilities may be positive in some cases, but there is absence of creative librarianship in the university libraries.

7.4 Implications, Suggestions and Recommendations

The study attempted to survey the four university libraries in Kerala to understand their strength and weakness in supporting the research function of universities. However, the findings of the survey can be generalised. The findings suggest that university libraries in Kerala have not organised their services and resources in a research-oriented line. In the light of the observations and findings of the study, the investigator would like to put forward the following recommendations that would help the libraries support research and leaning carried out in universities in an effective way.
1. Provide comfortable physical environment by adding more reading space and separate seating facility for supporting undisturbed study and learning.

2. The collection of reading materials must reflect the current development in all subject fields.

3. Formulate sound collection development policy for online information sources and acquire such sources for accessing more literature by the scholars. Changes can be made in the collection development policies at time to time.

4. Achieve bibliographical control of all types of materials and provide web enabled catalogues for anytime anywhere retrieval of holdings.

5. Prepare article database of current and back issues of journals for speedy search for literature.

6. Provide user ID enabled service for remote access of full-text and bibliographic databases.

7. Provide more computer workstations and network ports and outlets for portable computers.

8. Introduce computer-assisted instructional packages, handouts and quick guides for enhancing the users’ skill for effective searching and retrieval. Conduct workshops and orientation programmes for research scholars when new services and resources are incorporated.
9. Implement reference service on different platforms to provide remote assistance to research scholars. Libraries can accomplish this through telephone, reference, Internet chat, and e-mail.

10. Enhance the facilities of interlibrary loan and introduce document delivery services.

11. The library may be kept open for long hours in the night to facilitate continuous reading and learning.

12. There is need for introducing web based information services to keep research scholars up-to-date with latest knowledge in their area.

13. There is need for improving the facilities for Internet access in university libraries. The application of technologies like Wi-Fi can be introduced in the library building for enabling wireless connectivity to the web and web based services.

14. Initiatives for building institutional repositories can be encouraged so that the knowledge created in a University can be preserved and made accessible to users.

15. Digitization programmes may be initiated for the convenient use of documents.

16. Creation of digital libraries, a library in which a significant proportion of the resources are available in machine-readable format shall be encouraged.
17. Implementation of self-issue and return mechanisms shall be implemented for helping scholars save time.

18. Formulate policies to preserve digital materials. Libraries shall create digital archives, a system designed for locating, storing, and providing access to digital materials.

19. Implement Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) technology to control the movements of documents effectively and save the time of staff who can focus their time on the varied needs of patrons.


21. Document delivery methods can be extended to international level so that the scholars can save their money and time.

22. Conduct user surveys among the users at regular intervals to find out various aspects of library use and to evaluate the quality of library services.

23. A state level consortium of special libraries and university libraries can be achieved so that the research scholars are able to use the documents of different libraries.

The role of university libraries in research is so relevant in the modern era. The arrival of information sources in various formats and new features of delivering information are adding new roles and responsibilities for the university libraries. Libraries have always been in the forefront for adapting
change. It is really a growing organism. The university libraries in Kerala must be able to bring this philosophy to their environment despite constrains of financial, technical and personnel limitations. University libraries have an important role in the knowledge society.

7.5 Suggestions for Further Research

Investigator feels that further studies can be conducted on individual university libraries in the State for drawing more information that is specific on a system. The role of public and special libraries in research can also be examined as many scholars pointed out that they used the services of other libraries for obtaining literature relevant for their study. Comparative studies of university libraries in the country and those libraries abroad can be made to understand the status of our libraries in the age of globalization.