Chapter-2

Growth and Development of Special Libraries in India
CHAPTER 2

GROWTH AND DEVELOPMENT OF SPECIAL LIBRARIES IN INDIA

The history of special libraries in India is interrelated with the growth of research institutions, which stimulated the setting up of such libraries in the country. Scientific and industrial research was greatly neglected by the British. It was only after the First World War, with the formation of learned societies and establishment of research institutions, that research activities received an impetus. Since independence in 1947, there has been a steady expansion of research activities due to the formation of scientific laboratories, installations, and organizations. In addition, there has been rapid industrialization. To meet the demand for improved library facilities, special libraries were set up.

Due to the efforts of Sir William Jones, a scholar and a judge of the Supreme Court, the Asiatic Society at Bengal was established in 1784. The society, "during the first century of its existence provided a house for meetings, a library, and a collection of ancient coins and medals as well as archaeological, technological and geological Collections. The journal of the Royal Asiatic Society of Bengal (started in 1832) was the first periodical in India for dissemination of the results of the scientific work in the country." This journal played an important role in the advancement of science in India. The
library attached to the society was established in 1784 and is considered "the first library in modern India." A medical college was established in Calcutta in 1835. It provided training in physics, chemistry, botany, anatomy, and clinical subjects. The Museum of the Asiatic Society was set up in 1841 and the Indian Museum in 1856. These merged to form a new organization in 1916, the Zoological Survey of India.

The first engineering college was established in Roorkee in 1847, under the name of Sir Thomson College. Later on it was converted into an engineering university. Since 1818 the government had been employing geologists for the purpose of performing survey work. It was only in 1851 that the Geological Survey of India could be set up. The Meteorological Department of the Government of India came into being in 1875. Prior to it, meteorological observations and stations had been set up in Madras (1796), Calcutta (1824), and Bombay (1841).

The Survey of India was formed in 1878 and the Botanical Survey of India was founded in Calcutta in 1889.

The government established the Haffikine Institute in Bombay in 1899. Initially, it was meant to serve as a plague research laboratory, but later it developed into a leading center of research on preventive medicine.

According to T S Rajgopalan, and S I Islam, there were thirty-five scientific libraries by the end of the nineteenth century. The resources developed very slowly. The literature published in western countries, especially in England.
formed the major portion of the total collection. Due to lack of funds, the collections were inadequate.

The Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore, was founded by the Tatas in 1909 and is considered the first school of advanced research. It has played a pioneering role in advancing science in India. In 1913 the Indian Science Congress Association came into being. It is a leading organization of Indian scientists. The Indian Research Fund Association was formed in 1922 and has enjoyed a long and impressive history.

The Imperial Institute of Animal Husbandry and Dairying was established in Bangalore in 1923. In 1936 it was expanded and renamed the Imperial Dairy Institute. Subsequently, in 1955, the National Dairy Research Institute (NDRI) came into being at Karnal. The institute at Bangalore was converted into a regional station. In addition, there is a regional station at Kalyani. The NDRI was conferred deemed university status by the UGC in 1969. It is fully supported by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research and functions as one of the National Institutes under its aegis.

The Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) was established in 1929 along with several associated committees for research.

The Indian Statistical Institute, Calcutta, came into being in 1932. This has been a landmark in advanced research. The Indian Industrial Research bureau was formed in 1934.
On January 3, 1935, the National Institute of Sciences of India was formed. In 1970 its name was changed to Indian National Science Academy (INSA). It is a coordinating body similar to the Royal Society of London. It is a premier scientific organization in India.

The Second World War provided a great impetus to the development of research activities. In 1942- the Council of Scientific and Industrial research (CSIR) was formed. This was a turning point in the history of scientific research in India. Today the CSIR has a network of 43 national laboratories/institutes, 138 field stations/extension centers and industrial research associations spread all over the country to carry out research and development (R&D) in various areas and disciplines. All these institutions have very good special libraries attached to them. CSIR established the Indian National Scientific Documentation Center (INSDOC) in 1952. INSDOC is a modern documentation center, well equipped and well qualified staff. It is a good example of a national documentation center in the field of science and technology, providing a vide range of documentation services. The Atomic Energy Commission was setup in 1948. It is indeed a landmark. This was followed by the establishment of leading R&D organizations in the field of atomic research, such as Bhabha Atomic Research Centre, Trombay. Reactor Research Centre, Kalpakkam, and variable Energy cyclotron Centre, Calcutta, among others.

The Defence Science Organization was established in 1949. The year 1950 is quite-significant because many-important organizations were set up.
including the National Chemical Laboratory, Pune; National Physical Laboratory, New Delhi; National Metallurgical Laboratory, Jamshedpur, Central Fuel Research Institute, Jadavpur; and Central Food Technological Research Institute, Mysore.

The Indian Research Fund Association was formed in 1922. It was renamed Indian Council of Medical Research in 1950. Other leading organizations established in the 1950s included the Central Drug Research Institute, Lucknow (1951); Central Electro-Chemical Research Institute, Karaikudi (1953); Central Leather Research Institute, Madras (1953); Central Building Research Institute, Roorkee (1953); and Central Salt Research Institute, Jaipur (1954).

The Indian Association for Special Libraries and Information Centres (IASLIC) was established in 1955 along the lines of Aslib of the United Kingdom. Since 1955 it has played an important role in the development of special libraries.

Formation of the Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR) in 1969 is a landmark in the field of social sciences. The ICSSR set up the Social Science Documentation Centre in 1970, which was renamed in 1986 the National Social Science Documentation-Centre (NASSDOC). The NASSDOC has played an active role in carrying out documentation activities in the field of social sciences.
With the assistance of UNESCO, the National Information System in Science and Technology (NISSAT) was launched in September 1977. NISSAT has given a push to special libraries, through establishment of sectoral information centers and the regional information centers.

As illustrated by the examples above, special libraries are primarily a twentieth-century phenomenon in India. Although a handful existed in the nineteenth century. The majority of these libraries came into being only during the last five decades or so. They are largely concentrated in major towns like Bangalore, Calcutta, Delhi, Hyderabad, Mumbai, and Madras. On the whole, special libraries have succeeded in building a better image than academic and public libraries. They have shown initiative and done better than other types of libraries. They have been forerunners in computer application in Indian libraries. India has succeeded in developing some excellent libraries in different fields of specialization which are comparable with libraries in the developed countries.

2.1 PRESENT STATUS

2.1.1 Humanities

India has a large number of libraries in the field of the humanities, forming a rich source of information for research scholars. Very often in recent years due to lack of funds, these are not in a position to build up adequate collections to meet the needs of their users. For the same reason, they have
also been slow in the matter of computerization. A brief description about the leading libraries are as follows.

- Asiatic Society Calcutta
- The Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute Library, Pune
- The Central Institute of English and Foreign Languages, Library Hyderabad
- The Central Institute of Indian Languages (CIIL) Mysore
- The Dar-ul-Uloom Deoband Library, Deoband
- The Indira Gandhi National Centre for Arts (IGNCA), New Delhi
- The Khuda Bakhss Oriental Public Library, Patna
- The National Archives of India (NAI), New Delhi
- The National Library, Calcutta
- The Rampur Raza Library, Rampur
- The Sahitya Academy, New Delhi
- The Thanjavur Maharaja Serfoji saraswati Mahal Library

2.1.2 Indology

Indology is a vast subject, which covers all about India covering its languages, literature, history, philosophy, religion, customs, and fine arts. By and large Indology libraries are in bad shape due lack of funds and proper management. Some are fighting to survive.
Bibliographic control for manuscripts, which is considered the backbone of research in Indology, is rather inadequate. Manuscript collections in the humanities are scattered in different places all over the country. They are found in academic, special, and public libraries; Jain Bhandaras; maths (monasteries); temples; gurudwaras; mosques, madrassas, and so on. It is estimated that there are over three million manuscripts. To strengthen bibliographical services, there is an urgent need to bring out a comprehensive directory of indological collections found scattered all over the country and also abroad. At present there is no national policy.

The situation requires the setting up of the Indian Council of Humanities Research (ICHUR) along the lines of the Indian Council of Social Science Research (ICSSR).

- Adyar Sanskrit Library, Madras
- Akhil Bharatiya Sanskrit Parishad Library, Lucknow
- Asiatic Society Library, Bombay
- Asiatic Society Library, Calcutta
- Bhandarkar Oriental Research Institute, Pune
- Bharatiya Vidya Bhawan Library, Bombay
- Bihar Research Society Library, Patna
- Central Institute of Indian Languages Library, New Delhi
- Central Sanskrit Vidya Peeth, Allahabad, Turupathi, Delhi
2.1.3 Social Sciences

It was only after the Second World War that the Government of India realized the importance of research in the social sciences. Since 1947 steady expansion has taken place in the field of research activities. There are estimated to be six hundred Social science libraries in India. An average social science library has a collection of twenty-five thousand to thirty thousand volumes and subscribes to around two hundred current journals. These are attached to universities, government departments, and research institutions and are mainly concentrated in New Delhi.

A list of leading social science libraries are as follows.

- The A. N. Sinha Institute of Social Sciences (1958)
- The Gokhle Institute of Politics and Economics Library, Pune
• The Indian Council of World Affairs Library (1943)

• The Indian Institute of Mass Communication Library, New Delhi (1965)

• The Indian Institute of Public Administration, New Delhi (1954)

• The Institute of Economic Growth Library

• The National Council of Applied Economic Research, New Delhi (1956)

• The National Institute of Public Finance and Policy Library, New Delhi

• The Nehru Memorial Museum and Library, New Delhi

• The Parliament Library, New Delhi, 1921

• The Ratan Tata Library (RTL) is a part of the Delhi University Library System.

• The Sardar Patel Institute of Economics and Social Research Library, Ahmedabad (1969)

• The Tata Institute of Social Sciences Library, Mumbai, (1936)

2.1.4 Science

A few scientific libraries was established in the nineteenth century. The Second World War gave impetus to pushing R&D activities in the country. As a consequence, in 1942 the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research (CSIR) was formed. It has proved to be a turning point. The CSIR set up a chain of national laboratories, field stations/extension centers/regional
centers. Other organizations that have played an important role include the Defence Research and Development organization (DRDO), the Indian Space Research Organization (ISRO), the Atomic Energy Commission, the Electronics Commission, the Anthropological Survey of India, the Botanical Survey of India, the Geological Survey of India, and the Zoological Survey of India. It may be noted that these are government supported organizations. Non government agencies have not given much attention to scientific research. The number of science and technology libraries is estimated to be one thousand, with an average library having thirty to forty thousand volumes, adding about five hundred volumes per year, receiving three hundred to five hundred current periodicals, and having staff strength of ten to fifteen, serving fifty to five hundred specialist users.

A list of some of the leading scientific libraries are as follows.

- The Anthropological Survey of India Library, Calcutta, (1946)
- The Bhabha Atomic Research Centre, Library and Information Services, Trombay, (1954)
- The Botanical Survey of India Library, Calcutta, (1911)
- The Bureau of Indian Standards, New Delhi, (1947)
- The Forest Research Institute and College Library, Dehradun (1906)
- The Geological Survey of India Library, Calcutta, (1856)
- The Indian Institute of Science Library, Bangalore, (1911)
2.1.5 Agriculture

Agriculture was given by the Government, when the Department of Agriculture was opened in April, 1873. The Britishers, in the beginning, opened veterinary institutions for taking care of their military farms and animals e.g. College of Veterinary Science, Hissar (1882), and IVRI, Izatnagar (1889), and Mukteswar (1893). Later on Imperial Agricultural Research
Institute (IARI) (1905) at Pusa, Bihar, five Government agricultural colleges (1906) at Coimbatore, Kanpur, Lyallpur, Akola and Sabhaur; and agricultural Institute (1910) at Naini were opened. Up to 1947 there were only 25 agricultural colleges and 2 research institutes, namely IARI and IVRI.  

Today there are 61 ICAR Institutes (4 deemed universities, 42 institutes, 4 national bureaus, 10 project directorates, 1 National Research Centre in Agriculture for Women) and 28 state agricultural universities and 172 agricultural colleges. This shows the tremendous progress that has taken place during the last fifty years or so.

Agricultural research in India is well organized, having necessary infrastructure and well equipped with labs, libraries, manpower, etc. It also has the largest scientific manpower. It is estimated that the country today has over 60,000 scientists under various government and non-government organizations engaged in active research, excluding technical, administrative and supporting personnel. The scientific manpower-management staff, scientists and teachers engaged in research, education & extension work in agricultural sector have been estimated to be about 31,000. All 28 SAUs (State Agricultural Universities) comprising 172 agricultural colleges and 4 deemed universities under ICAR annually enroll about 16,500 students at various level courses under human resource development programmes.

The Indian Agricultural Research Institute (IARI) Library has the largest collection in the field of agriculture and is the apex library in the field of agriculture.
India is participating in AGRIS and CARIS as an input center. The Agriculture Research Information Centre of ICAR feeds data to AGRIS and CARIS databases. ICAR, in collaboration with the International Services for National Agricultural Research (ISNAR), The Hague, is developing a computer network to link more than twenty-five thousand scientists and managers for improving management of information for the National Agricultural Research System (NARS).

### 2.1.6 Health Science

There are more than 744 health science libraries in existence that cover such diverse areas as allopathy, homeopathy, unani, ayurveda, yoga, and naturopathy. These libraries provide various information services to over ten to fifteen million health workers of different categories spread over fourteen thousand institutions, in both modern as well as indigenous system of health care.

Steps have been taken to develop the Health Literature Library and Information Service (HELLIS) Network. Under the NISSAT plan, two sectoral information centers in health sciences related fields have been developed. These are NICDAP (National Information Centre for Drugs and Pharmaceutical) at CDRI, Lucknow, and NICFOS (National Information Centre for Food Science and Technology) at CFTRI, Mysore. CFTRI feeds data to Food Science and Technology Abstracts (FSTA).
There are three leading libraries in the field of health sciences, located in New Delhi. These are the National Library of Medicine, the All India Institute of Medical Sciences Library and the National Documentation Centre of National Institute of Health and Family Welfare.

The National Medical Library is the apex library in the field of health sciences. It serves national focal point of the HELLIS Network (a regional network of the Health Literature Library and Information Service in South-East Asia).

The Library of the All India Institute of Medical Sciences has a rich collection of literature in the field of biomedical and health sciences. It is well equipped with photocopiers, microfilm/microfiche reader-printer, audiovisual aids, e-mail, computers, CD-ROM drives, and CD-Networking. The library also possesses CD-Net System, which allows searching of desired information with speed and efficiency. It has the capacity to run more than one CD-ROM disk simultaneously in the multi user environment. The library also has automated its housekeeping activities (such as acquisition of books, serial control, etc.) using the LibSys software package. The library has a strong database search facility. Some of the databases available in the library include MEDLINE, POPLINE, CANCER, PSYCHIATRY, LISA, World Atlas, Encyclopedia of Library and Information Science, and so forth. These databases are being used extensively by the users for retrieving information.

The National Documentation Centre of National Institute of Health and Family Welfare was established in 1977. It is a national focal point for the primary health care network in India. It also acts as the national focal point for the
Population Information Network (POPIN). It provides CAS, SOI, reprographic, and micrographic services. It has created a bibliographic database using CDS/ISIS. The library activities have been computerized. The library has built up an excellent collection.

2.2 NATIONAL SUBJECT LIBRARIES

There are a number of national subject libraries in India that have grown out of departmental libraries. Sponsored and maintained by the government of India or councils set up by it, to serve the specific subject needs. The National Science Library, New Delhi, is a part of the National Institute of Science Communication and Information Resources (NISCAIR). It was modeled on the National Science Library of the United Kingdom before its merger into the British Library. The National Medical Library (NML), New Delhi, grew out of the departmental library of Ministry of Health and Family Welfare. The Indian Agricultural Research Institute Library is a library of the Indian Council of Agricultural Research. The National Medical Library, New Delhi, and the Indian Agricultural Research Institute Library, New Delhi, are modeled on the National Medical Library and National Agricultural Library in the United States. Indian national subject libraries are considered national due to their nature of collection and kinds of services; however, they do not perform other essential functions that are expected from national libraries.
2.2.1 The National Science Library

The Indian National Scientific Documentation Centre (INSDOC) was established in 1952. During the first phase, INSDOC did not build up a library of its own; instead, the Library of National Physical Laboratory (NPL) served as a base for the operation of its services. During the second phase in 1964, the National Science Library was conceived as an integral part of INSDOC. It was meant to serve as a cooperative acquisition facility for building up a balanced collection relevant to the requirements of the country. It would survey the holdings of scientific institutions and supplement the lacunae in their collection by itself acquiring them. As far as possible duplication would be avoided. It would also make a special effort to collect books by Indian authors and books and periodicals in Indian languages. In addition to scientific periodicals including cover-to-cover translated periodicals, the National Science Library will also acquire other scientific publications like reference works, research reports, conference proceedings, theses, state-of-art publications, certain costly publications, etc.14

The National Science Library has built up a collection with emphasis as just mentioned. The acquisition policy is based on the concept of resource sharing within the scientific and technical libraries in the country. The library has more than 136,000 bound volumes of books and periodicals. Currently, it receives more than thirty-five hundred serial titles both in hard copy and electronic form. The library has a rich collection of Russian S&T documents.15
The different activities of the National Science Library have been computerized. In-house operations (such as circulation control, cataloguing, and serial control) have been computerized on the basis of their own developed software CATMAN. For other purposes, various software packages are being used. These include CDS/ISIS, version 2.3; dBase III and dBase IV; LibSys, and CATMAN. The following services/products are being produced by the National Science Library. 16

- Recent additions to the Library: This is being brought out using CDS/ISIS version 2.3 (software developed by UNESCO for libraries)
- National Science Library catalog online
- Contents Abstracts and Photocopies Service (CAPS): Under this service, one can get on a yearly subscription the contents of forty journals selected by one from five thousand core Indian and foreign periodicals.
- Express CAPS: Documentation services, including document copy supply service, are being provided based on five hundred foreign periodicals on CD-ROM.
- Central Acquisition of Periodicals (CAP): The National Science Library assists CSIR laboratories in the acquisition of foreign scientific and technical periodicals under the CAP project.
- Standing order abstracts service
- Chemical abstracts keyword index service (CAKIS)
International Serials Data System (ISDS); The ISDS center has been in operation since 1986 at INSDOC. It assigns International Standard Serial Number (ISSN) to Indian serials.

2.2.2 The National Medical Library

A departmental library was established in 1926 under the director-general of Indian Medical Services. In 1961 this library was named Central Medical Library, and it was designated the National Medical Library (NML) on April 7, 1966. The functions of NML are:

- The procurement of the costly and infrequently available publications and manuscripts to supplement the library collections of various biomedical institutions of India
- To prepare and maintain up-to-date union catalogs of medical libraries in the country
- To develop documentation services in the medical disciplines
- To prepare bibliographies in anticipation of or on demand
- To introduce computer application toward the information work and services of the NML.
- To function as a focal point for collecting, processing and supplying of biomedical information generated within and outside the country

The NML serves as a national library. It has a fairly large collection of books and periodicals and serves all categories of users in the field of health.
sciences. It uses LibSys for the cataloguing and acquisition of books, serial control and information storage and retrieval. It uses CDS/ISIS for indexing services.

The NML serves as a national focal point of the HELLIS Network. As a coordinator of the network, it has supplied microcomputers, CD-ROM drives, MEDLINE databases, and so forth to its various regional and resource libraries in the country.

It brings out the following bibliographical services:

- Library Bulletin (bimonthly)
- Selective Dissemination of Information (fortnightly, 1982-)
- Index to Indian Medical Periodicals (quarterly, 1959-)
- Highlights from Current Health Literature (monthly)
- Chetna (quarterly, 1982-)
- ADISDOC
- Union Catalogue of Medical Periodicals in India
- Directory of Medical Libraries in India

The NML also provides a literature search service using MEDLINE and POPLINE databases on CD-ROM.
2.2.3 Indian Agricultural Research Institute Library

The Indian Agricultural Research Institute Library (IARI) is a focal point for collecting, organizing and disseminating of agro-biological information generated within the country and abroad. It may be regarded as a national library in the field of agriculture, though it is not designated as such. It is one of the largest and finest agro-biological-libraries in Southeast Asia, having about 3.5 lakh volumes, and receives 4,800 current periodicals. It is a depository of the Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO), International Development Research Center (IDRC), and Asian Vegetable Research and Development (Taiwan) (AVRDC), among others, as well as a depository for CGIAR Institute's publications. The library has created an Indian agriculture database, the Bibliography of Indian Agriculture, created in 1944 in card form, and it has 161,500 references. 17

The IARI library has the following facilities:

- Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC).
- A database in machine-readable form of forty thousand records consisting of books, special research bulletins, theses, and so on.
- CD-ROM databases from AGRIS (FAO); AGRICOLA; CAB CDS; CAB Spectrum CDs; and Derwent Biotechnology Abstracts.
- E-mail and Internet capabilities and is a member of DELNET.
References


2. Ibid., P. 21.


11. Ibid., 24


15. Ibid., 31-34.
