CHAPTER – 3

QUALITY AWARENESS AND COMPETENCY SYSTEM IN ACADEMIC LIBRARIES

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References
3.0 Introduction

Globalization and liberalization have been instrumental in bringing quality awareness in every sector and it is being realized more and more in service sectors. The quality consciousness is being discussed and the aim is towards total quality management, popularly denoted as TQM. In order to continue and maintain quality there is also need for updating the skills and increase the competency and efficiency of the personnel. The modern enterprises are now becoming increasingly quality conscious and it is extending to several organizations and especially in the service sectors. Sometimes the service institutions display and exhibit their quality aspects for the benefit of their stakeholders. The educational institutions in engineering as a mandate from the regulatory authorities announce their institutional quality policy and some of them have sought the quality standardization even from organizations like International Organization for Standardization such as ISO-9000. Such quality tagging is sought by libraries, and in the west, libraries display the “Library Charter” as their service quality tag. This needs building appropriate capabilities of the library staff to maintain quality. The present study has an objective of quality awareness and competency building facets and this chapter discusses some of the institutional
provisions and issues and also available guidelines on this aspect of the research study.

In libraries quality is observed in terms of timely service, appropriate collection building, the user oriented services and use of networked information services. The adoption of information communication technologies in libraries in particular is concerned with effective and efficient services. It is found that the total quality management in libraries will bring awareness of quality among the library staff, if not, a programme to skill development and competency building has to be organized to bring the needed quality service in the libraries. The quality awareness or quality consciousness can be judged by the library users, administrators and management. There are a number of organizational channels in higher education where the quality of academic libraries can be enhanced. The Association of College and Research Libraries of the American Library Association for instance has stated that relationship with accreditation agencies and higher education organization should be maintained to bring quality and as such ACRL works with organizations and accreditation bodies to strengthen and sustain quality and significance of academic libraries.

3.1 Opportunities and Challenges

The recent explosion of electronic information environment has enabled the library users, like teachers, researchers, scientists and even the common citizens with wider access to information and has moved from physical space to virtual reality. The
new millennium therefore has opened up unprecedented opportunities for information professionals specifically with the convergence with IT. It is a challenge to academic libraries and librarians to create and work with these virtual services. For instance, the provision of reference service has moved from reference desk to virtual reference service, online chat, personal contacts, electronic mails, telephones including mobile. The future reference and inquiry service in academic library will be a new “Mobile Library” which has been denoted as “Anywhere library”: Primer for the mobile web by Courtney Greene and others.

More and more prospective employers look for the renewed career requirements from LIS professionals, like flexible work force with sufficient knowledge of technology in particular, the internet and www, who can take on different roles and responsibilities as and when required. It is happening everywhere and these changes and challenges will be perpetual and there is a need for some opportunities to assimilate the new and contemporary skills by the LIS professionals. In this context, the following changes are expected to be brought in LIS professionals in India. They will be helpful in creating suitable manpower to meet future challenges. At this point, it can be viewed that new opportunities are opening up for librarians in academic environment.

- Design of LIS curriculum to suit technology environment.
- Blend of traditional modern expertise and apply them effectively in the new situations by understanding the actual requirements and applying these skills.
- Content generation to suit the new fields of study with the help of IT.
• Play the role of information managers in order to access to the rich and hybrid information resources available in libraries.

It is assumed that the present and future information professionals will have skills with knowledge discovery and navigators of knowledge instead of information collectors. In the Indian situation the new generation of librarians will have to face these challenges and risks to remain in the information industry in all the service sectors particularly in the higher education which is bringing dynamic changes. The convergence effect has brought in interchangeability of personnel with diverse capabilities to adapt to working from one sector to the other and this will be the biggest challenge for Indian LIS professionals and that needs to update their competencies on a continuous basis.

3.2 Changing Environment of Academic Libraries

At the end of the 20th century, college and university libraries face enormous challenges and opportunities as stated above. As campuses move into the information age, the mission and role of the library is being redefined. While the amount of information, libraries need to acquire continues to increase, the resources available to do so are insufficient. Moreover, administrators need to assess the relationship between the library and the computer center, as both fights for limited resources.

The growing parallel universe of print-based publications and electronic/digital documents on the one hand, and that affecting the library finances on the other, can be handled confidently by adopting certain strategies, such as by
developing critical thinking skills, as well as promoting information literacy at large. In the near future, users should expect timely access to quality information. This information must be accurate, relevant, comprehensive, and engaging. This can be done successfully by incorporating end-user education and training components, in the academic libraries developing continuing professional education and training programs for the library and information professionals, as well as the end-users will have to develop learning attitude and network related competence to us by the information and communication technologies.

3.3 Impact of New Technologies

It is repeatedly mentioned throughout that the advances in computer and communication technologies have radically changed the library and information environment. Gone are the days of stand alone libraries, in which the library was judged less by the quality of its resources and services than by the number of documents it had. Hence the quality management is gradually becoming a part of the academic libraries and it is reflected in their services which change from in-house static individual service to network based, multi-dimensional services. This is attributed to the growth of educational and library networks in India.

Traditional libraries were dominated by print-publications and the access mechanisms were by and large manual. The paradigm shift from stand-alone libraries to library and information networks, available via internet, can provide end-users with a seamless connection to internet-based services. Moreover, we are surrounded
by automated, digital, and virtual libraries as well as by networks. Multimedia and the internet have further made the job of library and information professionals more challenging.

The development of new technology makes direct access to information easier for users, and, while information skills are required to collect and present that information, in the future, there is likely to be less of a role for information workers as intermediaries between users and information sources. In fact, there is a paradigm shift from a parent-child relationship between information provider and user to an "adult-adult" relationship. While new formats and mechanisms are being developed to cope with, this rapidly changing environment, the existing gap between the generation and use of information is further widening in the present situation. A major aim of user education is therefore to widen the use of a range of library resources, which will enable academics to improve their teaching and research, and students to learn more, and achieve better results in their work.

In the print-based environment we speak of library instruction, bibliographic instruction, and user education programs. Initiation of users, lectures to library users, library tours, pamphlets and brochures, audio-visual aids and, in a few cases, user education programs were the main tools and techniques for enabling patrons to make good use of the library. These tools and techniques must now be supplemented. End-user training should now be the focus of user education.

All these are being attributed to one paradigm change in access — from stand alone situation to network access and as already mentioned it is part of the growth of
library and information networks in India since the early 1990s. Hence a brief overview of such networks may not be out of place and context. In fact, there were very few information networks in India before some eventful and significant happenings. The expanded satellite communication facilities spearheaded by the Indian Space Research Organisation (ISRO) and the then Government of India enterprise, Computer Maintenance Corporation are chiefly responsible for the growth of networks in India. The ISRO successfully launched several communication satellites first to link television networks in India and this opened opportunity for telephonic networking and the INDONET project of CMC made it possible first by linking five metropolitan cities in India.

The explosion in the amount of literature that is available, increases among the number of users and their different needs, and the application of electronic media are forcing libraries to construct and participate in networks. Magnetic tapes, floppy disks, and CD-ROMs provide enough data storage capacity. But the retrieval through telecommunication networks and access to international databases are available for searching for information on various subjects. With the advent of networks, remote transmission of texts and graphics, video clips and animated clips are possible. Some factors that are responsible for the development of library and information networks in India are:

1. The report of the working group of the planning commission on modernization of library services and informatics for the seventh five year plan, 1985-90.

3. The report on national policy on university libraries prepared by the Association of Indian Universities (1987).

4. The UGC report on information systems for science and technology under the Department of Science and Industrial Research (DSIR). Government of India has been vigorously promoting an integrated approach to library automation and networking.

The networks in general are communication, information and service networks. The communication networks link all other networks such as INDONET and I-Net. The information networks are NICNET and ERNET. Library networks link library and information services and are divided into two categories—metropolitan network and countrywide network. Some of the networks in the above categories are briefly profiled below with relation to information delivery for libraries and information centres.

3.4 National Networks

1. NICNET (www.nic.in)

Title: National Information Center Network

Sponsor: Planning Commission, Government of India
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Membership: Four national and regional nodes, 32 state and union territory nodes; seventy cities and towns. Services: bulk file transfer; teleconferencing; full text and bibliographic retrieval services

Application: ICMRNIC center; MEDLARS in India; Chemical abstracts database

2. ERNET

Title: Educational and Research Network

Sponsor: Dept of Electronics, Govt. of India; UNESCO UNDP

Members: Eight institutions (5 IITs, IISc., National Centre for Software Technology – Bombay, CCI wing of Dept of Electronics)

Services: Communication services such as e-mail, file transfer, remote log on, database access, bulletin board etc.

I. Library Networks – National Level

1. INFLIBNET (www.inflibnet.ac.in):

Title: Information and Library Network

Sponsor: UGC (1991)

Connectivity: computer communication network of universities and R and D; libraries and bibliographic information centers throughout the country

Members: 200+ universities; 400 college libraries; 200 R and D libraries

Services: Catalog service; Database services; Document supply service; e-mail; BBS: audio and video conferencing, etc.
2. DELNET (delnet.nic.in/)

Title: Developing Library Network

Sponsor: NISSAT and NIC (1988)

Objective: To promote resource sharing; develop a network of libraries; collect, store, disseminate information

Members: 165 institutions, 600 libraries, 15 states in India, 5 from outside India

Services: resource sharing; free software; ICE online facility; books database; thesis database; Indian specialists; database

II. Metropolitan Library Networks

1. CALIBNET:

Title: Calcutta Libraries Network

Sponsor: NISSAT – Govt of India

Applications: Cataloging; serials control; acquisitions; circulation

Services: CAS; SDI; union catalog; partial database; editing and retrieval of records; global information; search; full-text document delivery; library automation;

CALIBNET INFO services

2. BONET

Title: Bombay Library Network

Sponsor: NISSAT and NCST (1994)

Objective: To promote cooperation among libraries in Bombay
Services: online catalog; online document delivery; IRS; interlibrary loan; dissemination of information.

3. MALIBNET

Title: Madras Library Network

Sponsor: INSDOC & NISSAT (1993)

Members: 15 libraries

Activity: Two important databases, a directory database of current serials in Madras and a contents database covering articles published in 300 journals available in Madras libraries.

III. Other Networks

1. SIRNET:

Title: Scientific and Industrial Research Network

Sponsor: CSIR (Commissioned Agency- NCST, Bombay)

Members: 40 labs and R and D Institutions

Applications: scientific communication; leather technology; natural products; food Technology; medicinal plants

2. VIDYANET:

Title: VIDYANET (Dedicated Communication Computer Net)

Sponsor: Tata Institute of Fundamental Research, Mumbai
Objectives: To provide rapid means of communications by linking computers at various institutions in India to similar networks outside the country; to stimulate corporate research, the day-to-day exchange of research information and the execution of joint projects and publications.

Services: File transfer facility; sharing of computer resources and access to remote applications, databases, libraries, etc.

3.5 Application of TQM in Academic Libraries

The quality awareness and required competency creation among the library personnel can be viewed from the discussion on Total Quality Management (TQM) in academic libraries in particular. The subject of TQM in academic libraries was a subject of detailed discussion in an international conference on TQM in academic libraries organized by Association of Research Libraries, USA as early as in 1994. Many scholarly articles were presented and deliberations and discussion were held on this subject which the authors/contributors to this conference highlighted as the importance of quality in academic libraries and its implementation. The application of TQM in libraries since then is one of the issues discussed at some length and the need for quality in academic libraries is felt due to changing perceptions of users with the impact of IT on library services and the new forms of collection.

A brief review of some papers on TQM is made below to bring forth the importance of the concept, the need for the organizational role and involvement in quality management.
Verma has identified six impact factors on quality management levels in special libraries and has listed nine key activities. The important ones relevant to the present study are,

a) Commitment by the Management /Leadership
b) Education and Training
c) Quality manuals

He has further elucidated that quality management level is based on several key factors or criteria and one of them is “to know the quality awareness level among library and information science professional heads of special LIS professionals. The paper brings in relation between quality awareness and quality management level in special libraries.

Livingstone discusses on TQM in LICs and states that “in India several bodies as UGC with NAAC appraisals and INFLIBNET, AICTE etc., are insisting on quality programs and eligibilities which are still in initial stage to reap any benefits”. Hence, it is important that to conform to these needs and demands such bodies it is important that the academic libraries should insist on quality awareness and should organize programs to enhance the capabilities of the staff in the new information environment.

Siraj Nissa Begum has stressed the need for total quality as a requirement of UGCs/NAAC which conducts audits and inspections on the quality of service provided by educational institutions, including library service.
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On the use of TQM in academic libraries, Arya stresses that “information explosion places a new information technology and knowledge resources before users. The library staff has to stress how to combat this situation and a new community of information professionals will be necessary with a variety of new skills and knowledge. TQM helps to gain new skills and knowledge through continuous education and training” which empower the staff with additional capabilities to handle the changing information environment.

Dabas has made a study on conceptual framework and agenda for application of TQM in academic libraries. He enlists fourteen points to measure, monitor and improve the quality of all organizations including libraries, and of the relevant point in this context is the “education and training of the staff, which will help them to be responsive and learn new ways and techniques of doing things.” This leads to capacity building exercise. The paper also stresses on the “organizational learning” which is discussed later in this chapter. The organizational learning is emphasized as “learning at the system rather than at individual level. TQM is not simply a means of quantifying quality; it is a means of expanding organizational thinking and learning capabilities.”

The above discussions lead to identify that quality awareness in academic libraries is an important issue and the need for the education and training of the library staff towards the capacity building should become an essential measure in academic libraries. In this context an attempt is made to identify the organizational responsibilities in higher education which can ensure quality through some
mandatory and statutory provisions. It takes stock of such provisions and tries to find out the gaps in such organizational systems and suggests to bridge these gaps appropriately. As parallel to the Internal Quality Assessment Cell (IQAC), as created after the NAAC inspection, the Hutchinson Community College, Hutchinson, Kansas, has also practice of creating Academic Quality Improvement Program (AQIP). So there are identical issues that an organizational set up is created for the quality assessment in the context of academic libraries.

3.5.1 Skills and Competency Development

At the university libraries, the need to adapt to a changing environment is well understood by librarians and staff. For the past several years, the library staffs have engaged in the strategic planning processes, as plans have been updated and changed. The vision, mission, and goals of the organization have been reviewed. Quality improvement efforts, including increased emphasis on customer services, have been implemented. However, despite these efforts, there is not a clear understanding or agreement among many library managers and staff about the expectations for employees to adapt to change.

One aspect of the learning organization that is clear to the librarians and staff is the need for all staff to take a more active interest in learning and in improving the organization. The staff needs to be engaged in the organization if the organization was to improve. Staff could no longer sit back and wait for others to tell them what to do. They had to become a more active part of the working of the organization.
The changing expectations for staff and the need to think beyond task-related skills to more systems related thinking led managers to understand that they needed to think in terms of hiring different kinds of employees: employees who are flexible and change-oriented. To help managers understand what types of staff were needed and to help the staff understand the changing expectations, the libraries embarked on a process to identify core competencies for all staff. Through the use of competencies, the libraries would have a common language and a shared understanding of expectations for employees and supervisors and would be able to respond to changes in the environment by supporting new capabilities of staff and departments.

Another facet of the quality awareness or quality management is to build necessary skills among the library staff at all levels. The application of IT is demanding continuous skill development and capacity building of personnel and it is becoming quite essential particularly in service sector as the customer satisfaction is the prime motto of service organizations. It is more so in the context of academic libraries, which are required to meet the challenges of higher education. The students and teaching faculty in academic institutions are turning more and more IT savvy and academic computing is becoming part of learning process. The libraries in the west have evolved a new concept of information commons to facilitate integrated and collaborative learning which is emerging as part of academic library infrastructure. The paper by Asundi has made a proposal in this regard as to how to create this facility in the Indian academic library environment. Hence the academic library staff
including its head should be conversant with the contemporary developments in LIS profession worldwide. This will complement the quality consciousness among the staff and a commitment towards better services. This is more so in the electronic environment as the knowledge of e-resources, in the context of collection building, organization of electronic resources and provision of facilities, for their use is vast and far and wide. The incoming of e-books in large number and many of them available free on the net, demand knowledge of their relevance, process of downloading including copyright issues, and their varying text formats. For instance, the e-books are available in as many as 25 different text formats, from WORD to PDF and the knowledge of compatible software is essential. In Indian context, another issue associated with e-books is the script and the essential knowledge is to find an appropriate device or a e-book reader to facilitate with different languages. The Kindle, an e-book reader introduced by Amazon.com has facility for the Roman script. Recently in India an e-book reader, Wink was introduced which facilitates for 15 Indian languages. This only one of the multidimensional skills and knowledge required to facilitate use of ITES by the academic libraries.

There are several avenues and programmes that are available to college library staff to enhance their skills. The Orientation and Refresher Courses conducted by Academic Staff Colleges established in the universities in Karnataka are one of the several avenues available to LIS professionals in the state. The Administrative Training Institute, Mysore in April 2007 conducted programmes to Government college librarians. In addition to this, state and national associations have been
organizing conferences to upgrade the skills and competency building exercises. One such recent National Conference was held in Tumkur, on Academic Libraries in 2020 – A Vision. The issues like nomenclature change, convergence with IT and other related sub-themes were part of the conference. One of the most enterprising training programme was organized at Gulbarga University, Gulbarga. It is good to note that the Directorate of Collegiate Education in Karnataka has taken a right step in this direction by arranging training and skill development programmes for the college librarians in collaboration with Gulbarga University Library, Gulbarga. Details of the programme with course content are discussed separately in this chapter. In this context, the following types of skills and knowledge are identified for the academic library staff and need to be acquired as and when changes occur and the situation demands. In this context, overview competencies for LIS professionals are identified and described in brief.

Many research studies have discussed about the competencies that must be demonstrated by all library staff, regardless of staff group or line. Some of the important competencies are:

- Analytical skills/problem solving/decision making,
- Communication skills,
- Creativity/innovation,
- Expertise and technical knowledge,
- Flexibility/adaptability,
• Interpersonal/group skills,

• Leadership,

• Organizational understanding and global thinking,

• Ownership/accountability/dependability,

• Planning and organizational skills,

• Resource management,

• Service attitude /user satisfaction.

Each of the twelve core competencies includes a short definition and a number of actions or key behaviors. These core competencies must be applied to all library staff. Although some aspects or actions of each of the competencies may not apply to every staff person.

Many similarities can be found between the list of core competencies and the staffing characteristics identified as necessary by Woodworth and Lester:

• Strong user orientation

• Expertise in analysis of user needs

• Understanding of and ability to conduct research orientation to information processes and products (not library services in the traditional sense)

• A broad knowledge of information resources (that are not format or institution specific)

• Competency in the design and implementation of information products and systems, including databases and user profiles
Self-identification as an information linking agent and as an information manager

Group management and team-building abilities.

Additionally, the core competencies listed above have similarities to the educational competencies. Woodworth and Westermann identified as necessary for librarians in the research library of the future. “Competencies that included not only knowledge, comprehension and application but also analysis, and evaluation.”

The areas that Woodworth and Westermann identified include:

- Total information environment and the interconnections within it
- Information-seeking and usage behavior of individuals
- Political and decision-making processes
- Development of a long-range strategic planning mentality, with planning seen as a process, not a product
- Interpersonal and small group dynamics
- Organizational psychology and behavior
- Marketing
- Economics of information
- Team effectiveness
- Community analysis
- Evaluation methodologies
- Statistical analysis
3.5.2 The types of competencies, in general, recognized are:

a) Personal competencies

The personal competencies are some areas of soft skills which are becoming very essential and they build a corporate and professional mindset among the professionals and it is the essence of quality service. They include communication skill, human relations, leadership quality, team building and knowledge of organizational objectives and quality policy of the institution.

b) Professional or technical competencies

The application of IT in every activity and operation functioning today. The professional knowledge associated with IT knowledge is becoming a bare necessity. The academic computing is growing in leaps and bounds and the library users becoming more and more IT savvy, though not intensive knowledge of provision and maintenance of IT facilities is becoming indispensable among the service personnel.

These are set up of skills, which will help to discharge professional responsibilities with quality. Competencies are generally defined around knowledge skills and attitudes/perception. It is assumed that they are of the critical sectors. With tremendous opportunities of LIS work forces there is the expanding information market in the corporate world where new information and knowledge role hold obvious opportunities.
3.5.3 Competencies for LIS professionals

In specific in the present scenario of technology influence and the changing organizational and functional environment of academic libraries, the desirable competencies for LIS professional are also identified here, and some related issues are presented in this context.

There are moves to change the professional nomenclature from librarian to knowledge manager and so on. The profession is under transformation due to the impacted changes and it is happening since last two to three decades. But strong influence of IT and its convergence with LIS has transformed into an almost distinct subject of practice. These changes in the context have brought the renewal of organizational approaches and the roles and functions of professionals constantly require to be upgraded with their professional knowledge and to acquire new skills. This is happening in all types of organizations and libraries.

The change should be in relation to the professional knowledge and competencies that are accrued with changing professional profile in terms of its components, the collection, the tools and techniques handled and the innovative services offered adopting the technological advances. For example, simple change from manual system to automated library system requires several skills and competencies to work in the new environment. One of them at the implementation stages of automation is education and training to handle post-automation systems. As the work in this area progresses with the adoption of advances in library automation, like application of barcodes or RFID definitely demands renewal of knowledge and
skills. To build competencies in this present situation is therefore a never ending process.

The demand for new nomenclature both for professional designation and organizational set up was on demand in the recently held *National Conference of Academic Libraries -2020: A Vision*. In consonance with the changing information scenario and the emergence of information or knowledge society, the role of information is increasingly considered as an economic resource, a marketable commodity and as social wealth. Hence, the process of communication of information in right manner, to the right person at right time, has very important role to play in the process of its communication. This demands appropriate and essential education and training of professional towards acquisition of new competency and the technological developments essential for the provision of library and information operation and services.

In relation to the above two aspects the kinds of competencies and skills required for library professionals should be as follows.

**a) Personal competencies**

1. Corporate mindset
2. Communication skills
3. Logical and analytical skill
4. Presentation skill
5. Negotiation
6. Human resource management

b) Professional and/or technical

1. Computer literacy
2. Internet literacy
3. Networking knowledge
4. Information search and retrieval competency
5. Developments in ITES
6. Operational knowledge of equipment and tools in use.

3.5.4 Implementing core competencies

Once competencies are developed, they can be used for recruiting and interviewing and for staff development and performance evaluation for staff at all levels. Recruitment is an obvious first step, and perhaps the least threatening for library staff currently in positions in libraries.

For university libraries, the majority of open positions occur in office or service positions. Applicants for these positions and for managerial or professional positions apply to the campus and are screened at that time. Some positions may have many applicants, and human resources staff makes screening decisions regarding which applications to forward to the libraries. For this reason, the core competencies group must try to involve human resources staff from the very beginning of the process to ensure that the competencies developed would be addressable at the screening stage.
Although human resources application is rather generic, as it covers many positions on campus, anyone applying for a position in the libraries receives a one page supplemental application with questions specific to library experience. Answers to these questions may help human resources staff screen applicants who meet the core competencies developed for library staff.

Applications for faculty positions in the libraries are handled through the dean of libraries office. Application screening takes place through a search committee of library faculty and staff working with position, description and guidelines for ranking applicants. Candidates for faculty positions are asked questions during the interview process that relate directly to the core competencies.

Interview questions can help determine applicants' competencies; the skills, knowledge, and behaviors that make the applicant an acceptable candidate for a position. It is necessary to review the kinds of questions, asked in interviews to be certain that we are addressing both the need to recruit people who can do a task well and who can work effectively within the organization in a time of change.

3.5.5 Training

Along with the need to review interview, comes the issue of training interviewers. Everyone involved with the interview process needs to be trained in interviewing skills, especially as they relate to the new competencies required for new library staff. Training for interviewing for competencies can be incorporated into the training of supervisors, which is part of an active staff development program.
Staff development is very important to using core competencies. Shaughnessy discusses the importance of staff development programs in his article on developing competencies in research libraries. Staff at all levels must agree that some education or training is necessary to adapt to the changing future and to achieve the core competencies. Training in competency development should be an ongoing activity in libraries committed to becoming learning organizations.

3.5.6 Organizational Systems and their Role

The role of organizational systems, both mandatory and statutory in the higher education sector, is very important to bring in quality awareness and the efforts and support in competency development of human resources on a continued basis. They are required to renew their approaches to the changing times. As found in some of the statutory provision still the old and traditional procedures and practices are followed which need to revise their mode of gathering necessary data which is required to assess the present and future situations.

The organizational system's infrastructure in quality awareness in higher education in general, the academic libraries in particular, which have the role to play are;

1. Local Enquiry Committees (LICs)
2. The Directorate of Collegiate Education, Government of Karnataka
3. University Grants Commission (UGC)
4. National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC)
There may be other organizations which have a role in this context, for instance the professional associations and learned societies and institutions. But they can only be recommendatory or advisory bodies, whereas the above are statutory and mandatory systems. Hence their involvement is considered here. At the beginning a mention is made about the role of the Association of College and Research Libraries of the American Library Association in the formulation of standards for academic libraries. Through the provision of accreditation system by American Library Association these standards and guidelines are enforced and adopted by the schools as well by the libraries in higher education. But there is no system of accreditation as yet prevailing by our library schools and the involvement of professional associations in enforcing standards is not a mandate in India. However there are autonomous bodies created by UGC and the Government administration in higher education which have evolved some guidelines as part of assessment and accreditation process. Therefore those organizational systems which are directly and indirectly involved in this process are only taken into consideration. The study has a point to make in this context that many of these procedures and guidelines need to be reviewed and revised with changes happening all around in the higher education and so also in the context of academic libraries. For the first time such a discussion is made here and in this context it would be one of specific contributions of this research work. The Local Inquiry Committees (LICs) under the affiliating university systems, for example, has adopted a very superficial mode of assessment of the libraries under their review of
infrastructure facilities for academic and learning systems. It is therefore that the procedural aspects in this context have to be modified in the present scenario of technological impact on library services in colleges and universities. The following sections present the system of quality awareness mechanisms or operations conducted by the above organizations. The roles and functions of these organizations are presented to substantiate in the context of assessment of quality.

3.5.7 Role of Local Inquiry Committee (LIC)

Local Enquiry Committee is constituted by the university authority to inquire about the quality, facilities, services rendered by the concerned colleges. It helps the colleges keep to pace with the technological as well as emerging trends in the respective subjects and to verify the physical as well as technological infrastructure of the concerned colleges. The Karnataka State Law University, Hubli’s (KSLU) preamble states “Local Inquiry Committee is sent to examine all the aspects of the proposal of an institution or society for starting a proposed college or extension/continuation of affiliation to a college.”

The questions asked by the Committee with respect to the library are;

- Name of the librarian
- Qualification of the librarian
- No of books
- Total cost of the same
- No. of journals
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- Square feet of the library
- Seating capacity
- Increase in the last three years,
- Rules for its management system of cataloguing.
- Number of books issued during the year
- Departmental facilities for their use

- The hours when the college library functions and
- The departmental libraries, functioning.

The KSLU in comparison with the above on the inquiry of facilities is better and it uses a three pronged approach as follows.

Part 1. Library: About books and journals. Number of seats and budget provision for 3 to 5 years.

Part 2. Additional guidelines on core collection, and number of textbooks

Part 3. Verification of accession register to find out number of books purchased and journals and periodicals during the last five years.

Part 4: Proforma - I of facilities for fresh affiliation and item of collection of information about “adequacy of facilities in terms of” library.

Part 5: Proforma -II of facilities for renewal/extension of affiliation and item of collection of information about “adequacy of facilities in terms of” library.
Part 6: Proforma – III of facilities for permanent/continuance of permanent affiliation and item of information under “adequacy of facilities in terms of” library and also a separate table seeking additional details about the library.

This information is collected at length, however considering the technological developments related to the libraries in general, and academic libraries in particular, the LIC proforma items need to add these facilities, such whether the library is automated, use of IT in library services, acquisition of electronic resources and so on. This should be sought at least when the renewal or extension of affiliation be made mandatory for the permanent affiliation requirements. The quality and performance aspects and the training of library staff about attending CEP should be part of it. However, the NAAC and other assessment and accreditation bodies have been insisting on this aspect. So the inquiry might include questions on quality and competency building measures taken by the colleges in the last five years.

The statutes with regard to constituting LICs and the details about total infrastructure facilities to be sought in general, in most of the universities in Karnataka in particular, have to be revised taking into consideration the impact of ITES in higher education. This is to be followed in the case of libraries too in conformity with the IT advances and their applications have to be inquired by the LICs.
3.6 Role of Department of Collegiate Education

Established in the year 1960, the Department of Collegiate Education has brought degree level education within the reach of the common man. The primary aim of the department has been overall development of students. The department has undertaken the responsibility of providing higher education to the poor, backward and weaker sections of the society, education being the path to improving intellect and ensuring the progress of mankind.

The department, through its six regional offices, administers 350 govt. degree colleges and 297 private aided colleges, spread over 8 universities in the state. The Department has six regional offices in Bangalore, Mysore, Mangalore, Shimoga, Dharwad and Gulbarga, each headed by joint director.

It is noteworthy that the Department is also following NAAC process of accreditation and issuing guideline to colleges in this regard. Further the Department of Collegiate Education is committed to continuous quality and benchmarking. TQM Cell is established at the head office to coordinate with various units of District Level Task Force to conduct programmes and monitor quality initiatives. So the quality consciousness is part of the Department and it enforce the same on the colleges and facilities.

The taskforce on TQM has recommended the establishment of e-library in higher education sector. To promote learning skills it has also recommended the use of library by the socially and physically disadvantaged learners.
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The Department has taken a number of initiatives on quality and competency building and it is a welcome approach.

The other part of the Department initiative examined is of the definition on the "Powers and Duties of Librarians" which needs some assertive action by the department to enforce, monitor and evaluate its programmes and initiatives. But on this account it is very superficial. It has stated them as per clause 4(b) (2) of the right to Information Act 2005 the powers, duties and responsibilities of librarians and other professional library staff as below which needs to be more specific regarding the application of IT and other modern technological developments. Since the Department is concerned about the NAAC and TQM issues the directions to Librarians and library staff as officers of the Department should be more specific and should be altered with contemporary developments in higher education and in consonance with the directions of the apex bodies like the University Grants Commission and the respective affiliating Universities in the state.

3.6.1 Librarian

1. To issue books to the teaching non-teaching staff and students and collect it back.

2. Maintain necessary records/ register in the library etc.,

3. To arrange for annual stock verification of library books and to send annual stock verification report to the concerned officer etc.
3.6.2 Library Assistant

1. To assist the librarian in discharging the duties of the library
2. To discharge the work of the librarian, when he is on leave.
3. To discharge the duties assigned by the principal/librarian

Training programmes of DCE for College Librarians

An account of two training programmes organized by the DCE in recent years for the college librarians is given here. One of them was in 2006-07 at Administrative Training Institute, Mysore which was of a short duration. The training programme organized during 2009-10 with the cooperation of Gulbarga University, Gulbarga by its university library needs a mention and the complete details of the programmes are given here. Probably for the first time such an IT based programme for college librarians was ever conducted in the country and on the part of the Department and the university it is a very commendable effort and it should be continued with an interval of defined time frame.

3.6.3 Gist of the Programme

Advances in Information and Communication Technology (ICT) have changed the entire gamut of information industry affecting on all aspects of learning, teaching, research and extension activities. This has dramatically witnessed changes in the world of library and information centers, which has not only changed the way information is generated, organized, stored and distributed, but more importantly have become indispensable tools for academic and research activities. The library
professionals working in institutions of higher learning need to keep pace with time to meet the expectations of the users by upgrading their skills particularly ICT skills to provide e-learning resources and services, full text online journals and ICT facilities in the libraries. This definitely would help librarians of colleges and universities to stay in step with the rapid changes occurring in the world of academic libraries and information universe. This evolving context can afford a moment of opportunity if libraries and librarians can respond to changes in proactive and visionary ways.

In this changing world of libraries and considering the need to equip the librarians with essential skills to manage e-resources and ICTs, the Karnataka State College Librarians Association, Bangalore has taken initiative to organize training programs for college librarians in Karnataka and requested the Department of Collegiate Education, Government of Karnataka to provide opportunities to upgrade skills of librarians. The Department of Collegiate Education has taken decision to train the librarians working in government degree colleges and private aided colleges in Karnataka through Gulbarga University Library, being the leaders in the field of ICT and e-services.

Gulbarga University is emerging as one of the leading centers of academic excellence. Gulbarga University Library, a knowledge center for accessibility has been making sincere efforts to assure an environment for intellectual inquiry, providing user focused services by adopting the developments in ICT to meet the knowledge management needs of the academics. Local Area Network (LAN) for
automating library housekeeping operations and activities of library using LibSys, CD-ROM databases, UGC INFONET Consortia, Internet and e-learning, document delivery, SC/ST Book Bank, User instruction, communication skills, career planning, training and research repository are a few unique facilities provided by the library. To keep pace with time to meet the expectations of the users, Virtual Learning Resource Centre and Digital Library (VLRC and DL) supported by UGC, New Delhi and Infosys Foundation, Bangalore has been established with the state-of-the-art computer facilities, 130 workstations, three mainframe DELL servers and CD NAS server to provide excellent access to Internet, CD-ROM databases and e-learning packages under networked environ.

The responsibility shouldered on Gulbarga University Library to organize six training programs for the college librarians in Karnataka each of five days duration in batches between November 2009 and January 2010 has been conducted in Virtual Learning Resource Centre and Digital Library (Supported by Infosys Foundation, Bangalore), Gulbarga University Library, Gulbarga - 585 106, Karnataka, India. The program was residential and sessions were held between 9 am and 6.30 pm on all five days of the program.

3.6.4 Objectives of the Programme

The objective of the program was to impart ICT training to the librarians working in government degree colleges and private aided colleges in Karnataka and more specifically aims to,
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- To impart ICT skills in handling information technology in creation, preservation and dissemination of information
- To provide an overview of library automation and retrospective conversion
- To provide on site training in using internet, e-mail and discussion forums
- To explore the optimization of e-learning, teaching and courseware’s to support user needs.
- To highlight the initiatives of INFLIBNET and e-resources under UGC INFONET consortia
- To appraise means of accessing web based e-information resources under different national consortia.
- To provide access to open source e-journals, e-databases, institutional repositories and databanks and
- To develop innovative services, best practices, communication skills and image building activities.

3.6.5 Course Content

The topics covered in the training program with a blend of technical presentations by experienced library professionals and IT experts invited across the country; online demos, discussions and interactive sessions followed by practical exercises and case studies were given to the participants. Hands-on-training and on job solutions were on top priority and in the training program emphasis was more on practical aspect than mere theory.
Although the ICT training was provided to majority of college librarians working in Government degree colleges and private aided colleges in Karnataka, but majority of the participants felt that the training program was very effective but at the same time, they demanded for better ICT infrastructure in their respective colleges to really implement and use ICT for providing effective services to the users and improve the automation activities of the library. In this context, it was resolved based on the feedback of participants of all the batches to have ICT infrastructure i.e. Computers Systems – 10 nos, internet connectivity and library software which was positively endorsed by the collegiate of education. It is quite evident that ICT is a core of library activities and services without which no library can possibly survive.
in the light of the five laws of librarianship and demands regular training to keep pace with time and render efficient services to the users.

The outcome of this programme first of its kind organized probably anywhere in India has been highly beneficial. The feedback received from the participants, numbering 350 has been rated as “excellent, extremely useful, and a very high satisfaction on the topics included and the hands on experience given during the period of training.” The lectures were delivered by the resource persons with high quality and excellent academic and research profile with vast practical experience.

a) University Grants Commission

The UGC is one of the apex regulatory bodies of higher education in India, while offering grants to colleges and university libraries for building infrastructural facilities and collection development, it has stressed that they should become teaching cum study centres where students, teachers and scholars may acquire knowledge related to their academic pursuits. In the 1980s several developments in LIS sector were envisaged with the New Education Policy of 1986 and the drafting of a National Policy of Libraries and Information Systems and Services, to make it suitable for the new environment. It was already mentioned that the Government of India had set up a committee in this direction headed by Prof. D.P. Chattopadhyaya. The draft document had framed a National Policy on Library and Information System (NAPLIS) during the late 1980s which is a very good foundation for preparing a new policy which will encompass the futuristic viewpoints for the library sector as a
whole. It has to spell out all relevant issues, challenges, threats and opportunities which are envisioned for the new millennium. So the UGC has taken up all these concurrent developments and had framed to bring in modernization in academic libraries. This resulted in the thought of networking of university and college libraries in the country and that lead to the establishment of INFLIBNET.

The efforts of UGC have been quite substantive since the late 1950s when it constituted a Review Committee on University and College Libraries under the Chairmanship of Dr. Ranganathan. The UGC is of the strong view that the colleges and university libraries as centres of learning and scholarship and one of the main action that has been taken in this regards is appointment of professionally and academically well qualified librarians and also considering the librarians on par with teaching fraternity in status and salaries. This is one of the progressive steps undertaken by it which brings in professionally well qualified personnel to man the academic libraries, in particular college and university libraries. All the qualitative measures used in the context of teaching staff are extended to librarians in colleges including participation in all education, training and extension programmes and CEP. Recently UGC has also revised its policy on granting Research Projects. The minor research projects here-to-before awarded to only teaching faculties are now extended to library professionals too.

In India, the UGC has provided generous funds for purchase of reference books and text books as well as building grants and sponsored the College Humanities and Social Science Programme (COHSSIP) and College Science
Improvement Programme (COSIP). As a result, the class room teaching is now supplemented by library usage, through purchase of books on the latest teaching methods providing exhaustive knowledge of the subject to the students.

The establishment of INFLIBNET Centre, Ahmedabad, NCSI at Indian Institute of Science, Bangalore and Information Centre for Social Sciences and Humanities at SNDT Women’s University are some of the phased programmes instituted by it to academically strengthen the teaching, research and dissemination of knowledge. These are channelised through the libraries in colleges and universities.

One of the qualitative measures in the personnel planning for academic libraries is the UGC-NET examination started by UGC which is one of the quality conscious moves of this apex body. The UGC-INFONET was created for providing access to scholarly scientific literature which has facilitated the university and college teachers to access to e-resources at ease. In this context it can be stated that, the academic libraries are given a separate identity and position in the higher education sector. So it is important that to look into the characteristics of academic libraries in general, and the college libraries in particular.

b) National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC)

The National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) is an autonomous organization established by the UGC in 1994. The prime agenda of NAAC is to assess and accredit institutions of higher learning with an objective of helping them to work continuously to improve the quality of education. In short
NAAC vision is stated in short as "for quality and excellence in higher education." To achieve this it has formulated seven basic criteria among which related to library and information services can be viewed from the following two:

- Infrastructure and learning resources
- Student support and progression.

The above two specify to provide quality library and information services to the students and faculty to support learning, through the acquisition of relevant information resources keeping in view the changes and developments influenced by Information and Communication Technologies. One such move initiated in most academic libraries is to provide access to electronic resources comprising e-journals, electronic theses and dissertations, e-books and facilitating access to internet and www within the premises of the library which is now populated as academic computing. In order to continue and promote the quality consciousness among the personnel, and "to make quality assurance an integral part of functioning of institutions, the NAA is promoting the establishment of Internal Quality Assurance Cell (IQAC) in all accredited institutions, and it is a pre-requisite for re-accreditation. Such a mandate is given to the institutions and the libraries in the respective accredited institutions and they have to fall in line with this provision.

Among the four organizations considered in this study, the NAAC has been caring for the quality of higher education. The Library and Information Services have received a positive impact. In the process of accreditation, the NAAC gives primary
importance to library services and has considered it as one of the core infrastructure and central facilities on par with computer and internet facilities. The former Director V.S. Prasad has stated in his forward about the importance of library thus; “Though it is institutional accreditation that NAAC does, the assessment of a library, a vital sub-unit, is a key step that integrates itself with the overall evaluation. Library is the fulcrum of support for the entire range of academic activities on an educational campus. In today’s high-tech learning environment, the library as a learning resource is taking up increasingly more academic space and time in the life of a learner.” These lines speak volumes about the importance given to the library in NAAC assessment and it expects very high quality services from it. In this context the NAAC has evolved a set of guidelines on quality indicators, to help academic libraries to be always in their best form. The NAAC has published cases of best practices in Library and Information Services. To continue to educate the library and information professionals, NAAC supported to organize a national conference on best practices in library and information services in 2007. The case studies presented at this conference have been published in the form of books to put on the best practices for wider circulation and to be emulated by the LIS professionals nationwide.

The gist of the guidelines and the case studies on best practices in library and information services in universities/autonomous colleges and in affiliated/constituent colleges is given are below:
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A. Management of Library and Information Services

- Number of days the library is kept open
- Working hours
- Library advisory committee
- Manpower development
- Infrastructure of the library
- ICT infrastructure and know-how
- Overall policy of the institution on library
- Budget.

B. Collection and Services to Users

- Collection
- Services
- Additional provisions
  - Ratio of library books to number of students enrolled
  - No. of login’s into the e-library services/e-documents delivered per month
  - Network of academic libraries under the university’s jurisdiction.
  - Membership of library networks–INFLIBNET, UGC INFONET and others.

C. Extent of the Use of Services

- Average number of books issued/returned per day
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- Number of reference queries average per month
- Number of services delivered per user per month
- Average number of users who visited/documents consulted per month

D. Compiling the information on number of log-ins into e-library Services
de-documents delivered per month.

E. BEST PRACTICES
1. Library brochure/diaries/information packs
2. Central reference library for the use of constituent and affiliated colleges
3. Feedback from stakeholders through scientifically designed and analysed
   questionnaire at least twice a year
4. Compiling and displaying of student/teacher attendance statistics (graphically)
   on the notice board of the library as well as in the departments
5. Communication of current awareness to different user groups
6. Information literacy programme
7. Creation of digital repositories
8. Displaying new arrivals of books/journals and circulating a list of different
   departments that use the library
9. Suggestion box and timely response (to suggestions)
10. Development of website for the library including all services and information
11. Establishing linkages with other libraries and avail service (free or fee-based)
12. Initiatives for research projects turn key projects from the library


14. Developing linkage with the functional units of the universities

15. Conducting exhibitions/demonstrations/lectures on current issues

16. Building a network of college libraries under the aegis of the university.

Among the four organizations the work of the NAAC seems to be highly objective in many respects. However, it can be stated that it is established with that prime objective and purpose of bringing quality and excellence in higher education through its leaning objective supported by the sub-units like the libraries.

3.7 Conclusion

In this chapter, a discussion is made on the supporting measures on quality awareness, especially through extension education and training of LIS professionals. The four organizations selected here are only as examples as they play a key role in the quality of higher education with provision of supporting and necessary infrastructure. It may be noted that the providence of quality seeking by some of these organizations is not in consonance with the statutory requirements. There is need for revising and reviewing the quality assessment pattern of libraries in higher education. The Directorate of Collegiate Education in the state has now taken up a right step by organising training programmes for college librarians with the help of Gulbarga University, Gulbarga. But still there are certain issues which are to be
addressed by the Directorate, such as clear definition of duties and responsibilities of college librarians in particular. The UGC with some of its academic responsibilities shifted to its autonomous bodies like INFLIBNET and NAAC yet its role as an apex regulatory body remains to oversee the developments worldwide and implement them in Indian academic institutions to achieve excellence. There are indications that another national apex body is being contemplated by the Government of India and the two knowledge commissions, the National Knowledge Commission and the Karnataka Jnana Ayoga are vested with the responsibility of improving our libraries. These developments should take note of the need for the quality library services in our academic institutions and the personnel working the academic libraries are made competitive to serve the present and future community of academicians, students and researchers in higher education.

During the recent period quite a large number of libraries and information centers are forming networks. The advent of computer networking as an accepted part of the library and information infrastructure has had a very significant impact on the way in which library and information systems are perceived. India is thus on the threshold to a new era of computer communication networks both for general purposes and for library and information purposes. In Karnataka, a strong step is undertaken to like all the university and college libraries, through UNILINK project and the deliberations and suggestions made in this section should be considered by the authorities of the project to implement some of the thoughts expressed here. The college libraries in particular are to be brought into a purview of an integrated
information system, with individual university library in the region to serve as nodal point and the quality and competency building exercises can be carried in a very cost effective manner.
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