



GATEWAYS TO KNOWLEDGE: THE DEVELOPMENT OF UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES IN INDIA SINCE THE MODERN PERIOD

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Abstract: Growth of University Libraries in India has a long and speculative journey since modern period. University Libraries has undergone a drastic change from being passive storehouse of books and other collections to being service agencies to look upon and cater to the requirements of the library users.

First legislative measures to set up recognized Universities started during the British period. After two unsuccessful attempts to start universities in Madras and Calcutta in 1834 and 1845 respectively, three affiliating universities were set up in Calcutta, Madras and Bombay in 1857. Although, these universities were established in 1857, but the libraries were established in Calcutta University in 1873 (gap of 16 years), Bombay University in 1874 (gap of 17 years), Madras University in 1907 (gap of 50 years) respectively. Later Raleigh commission (1902) and Sadler Commission (1917-1919) gave various recommendation to strengthen the universities libraries. After independence, India has witnessed huge growth in the number of Universities. From time to time, various commissions were set up for the betterment of the higher education in India such as Radhakrishnan Commission (1948-49), Kothari Commission (1964-66). The University Grants Commission, National Education Policy (1986) and review committees established from time to time recommended other significant measures. These developments brought changes in the role and functions of library by effecting various crucial elements such as changes in acquisition policies, budgeting, standard of libraries, buildings, library training, pay scales and the status of librarians. Computerization of libraries was a evolutionary change in library services. Recent intervention in this field is introduced by the means of New Education Policy, 2020. New Education Policy emphasize on improvement in the availability and accessibility of books by enhancing online accessibility of library books and further broad basing of digital libraries.

Key words: Library, Modern Period, Modern Library, University Libraries, Library advancements, University Grants Commission, National Education Policy 2020.



The history of the evolution of libraries especially the academic libraries is an essential chapter in the history of the intellectual development of the civilization. Libraries are known as the storehouse of the knowledge. These storehouses of knowledge helped us to track the interesting tale of the origin of libraries. Libraries came into existence long after the human beings developed the written script. Slowly, the written documents increased in number. Necessity of keeping these documents well preserved at a particular place gave birth to the concept of library. Journey of these libraries being accessible has been very long.

In Ancient India, for a long period of several centuries, the primary method of education had been Oral Teaching. *Gurukuls* or *Ashrams* were the centres of education. From basic education to have deeper knowledge about *Vedas*, *Shastras* and *Upnishads* was imparted through oral teaching. Epics, *Vedas*, *Shastras* are known to be the first written texts, but these survived for long period on the memory of learned men. There was absence of printed books for the purpose of education. A limited number of manuscripts written on *Bhurjapatra* (Birch Bark) or *Tadapatra* (Palm Leaves) used to be in the possession of the preceptor (Guru) of the *Gurukul*. The trend of voluminous libraries was not in vogue. Emergence of Buddhism was a watershed point in the history. Buddhism was in favour of promotion of liberal and universal education. Buddhism got the patronage of the existing rulers of that time. With this, the Buddhist *Ashrams* turned into *Vihars* each having the strength of thousands of pupils called *Bikhus*. Most prominent *Mahaviharas* were Nalanda, Vikramshila, Valabhi, Odantapuri, Somapuri, Mithila etc. These institutions had rich and voluminous libraries, which were easily accessible by the students and teachers. These centres remained fully active until 11th century A.D. During the invasion of Muslims, the attackers destroyed these centres. From 11th century, the Delhi Sultanate Period began. This was a retrogressive phase for institutions like universities and their libraries. Though these



institutions also had academic libraries, these were very small; ill equipped and ill managed which are incomparable with the University.¹

Though the British came to India towards the end of 15th century, for a long period, they focused towards the consolidation of power in India by taking control of vast territories of India. It was in the 18th century, when a large part of India came under their direct control, they looked towards making advancement in field of education in India. Establishment of colleges was precedent to foundation of universities. Only colleges with attached libraries were established up to the mid-19th century. Then in 1857, three universities were established in the presidency towns of Calcutta, Bombay and Madras. Surprisingly, in the beginning these universities were only examining bodies entrusted with the responsibility of awarding degrees. The colleges used to do the teaching work only. As universities were not entrusted with any teaching role, no libraries were attached with them. These universities got libraries in the first quarter of the 20th century. Since then, the modern day universities with attached libraries emerged in India. During British Period, government constituted various commissions to review the functioning of the university libraries.² Since then university libraries have seen tremendous growth and their form and functionalities changed over the period of time.

Government of India constituted various committees and commissions to review the university library system and suggesting measures to bring reforms in them for making them more efficient, advanced and enriched sources of knowledge. The scenarios of the university libraries and significant developments in modern period are given in the chronological order in detail in the following pages.

¹Munshi, M. (1998). *History of Libraries in India from Earliest Period to 1707 A.D.* Varanasi: Ganga Kaveri Publishing House. pp. 2-5.

²Datta, N. (1985). *Academic Status for University and College Librarians in India.* Delhi: Indian Bibliographies Bureau Co-publisher Balaji Enterprises. pp.35-38



Research Methodology:In this paper, an attempt has been made to put together the developments during growth of the University Libraries in India in the modern period. This paper is based on the secondary data. Various books, articles and websites have been used to get the data. All significant advances in this study area are mentioned in sequential way.

HISTORY OF UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES IN MODERN PERIOD IN INDIA

Prior to 18th century, the British paid no attention towards the education in India, as they were focused towards expansion of ruling power slowly and gradually from being a trading company. Therefore, they decided not to first disturb the social set-up and interfere with the prevalent systems of education, religious matters and day-to-day life of the common masses. The Maulavis and the Pandits being literate class, continued to wield influence in society as they were able to serve as Company's agents in the day-to-day administration of the country. Gradually as a result of consolidation of the Company's rule, demand for more learned men was realized by the British who could interpret the customs and laws of the country. To meet this continuous supply of people who could act as agents in the service of the Company, Warren Hastings, the then Governor General of India established the Calcutta Madrassa in 1781. In 1784 Sir William Jones founded the Asiatic Society at Calcutta. Mr. Jonathan Duncan, the then British Agent founded the Benaras Sanskrit College in 1792. Later, Fort William College was established by Lord Wellesley in 1800. This college had a good library with 4675 volumes. Hence, slowly a movement began for making English the medium of instruction in India. Hindu College was founded in Calcutta in 1817 for giving English education to Indian boys as the government realized this would solve manpower problem at clerical levels. The Establishment of Hindu College in its initial years made a very significant impact on the social life of the country. It must be mentioned that library collection of this college was far better than other contemporary institutions. In 1835, the first Librarian of the Hindu College Library was appointed. In 1836, the eminent educationist Mr. Trevelyan said that the edge of the Hindu College students over others is due to the well-equipped library of the College. A Sanskrit College with attached library was established in

1824 at Calcutta by Lord Amherst.³ Along with these establishments many important developments took place such as, in 1811 Viceroy Lord Minto proposed that a “library be attached to each of Colleges under the charge of a native with a small establishment of servants for the care of manuscripts.”⁴ This was the first statement on record made by a Viceroy about the desirability of having libraries in academic institutions. Augmenting Lord Minto's efforts, in 1839 Lord Auckland specified “In order to make the greatest use of the advantages of the colleges, I would attentively watch the degree to which the students profit by their access to the considerable libraries which are now attached to many of our institutions. Important deficiencies in these libraries should be promptly supplied.”⁵

These developments set pace for establishment of colleges libraries. The Hunter Commission reviewed the growth of college libraries and reported that the Government College, Lahore had 1,400 books, SPG College situated in Trichinapally had 1120 book and the Presidency College of Madras had 3,289 books. The Hunter Commission also observed, "As regards the extent to which libraries are used, the information obtained seems to show that among the students of some colleges, a perceptible taste for general reading has sprung up. Yet, the Bombay, the Bengal and North Western Provinces reports agree in saying that the general reading of students is confined to a very narrow range, being almost entirely limited to books which have some bearing on the subjects of examination; though an exception to a limited extent is made in Bombay in the case of the Elphinstone College."⁶

In span of 5 years, library of Foreman Christian College, Lahore (established in 1889) had huge collection of 13,000 books. This college library had services of a regular librarian namely H.M. Grawold. The library and reading room of the College had “become an integral part of student’s education. Besides financial resources, donation of books, magazines and periodicals from the United States made it far easier for the College to build up and maintain a library than was possible for other private or aided institutions... The reading room was opened all the twenty-four hours of the day and the students were encouraged to go in at all

³ Mookerjee, S.K. (1969). *Development of Libraries and Library Sciences*. Calcutta: The World Press Private Limited. pp. 20-26.

⁴ Prasher, R.G. (2002). *Op.cit.* p. 13.

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ Datta, N. (1985). *Academic Status for University and College Librarians in India*. Delhi: Indian Bibliographies Bureau Co-publisher Balaji Enterprises. pp. 36-37.



hours. Being a residential campus, this facility proved a great asset to the students. It helped promote the habit of self-study and stimulated general reading outside the prescribed text books.”⁷

Growth of University Libraries: For uncertain reasons, the ‘Court of Directors of the East India Company’ did not accept the proposals to start universities at Madras and Calcutta in 1834 and 1845 respectively. But later they had to give the approval due to; (a) the expeditious spread of liberal education among Indians; and (b) the requirements of an increased European and Anglo-Indian population.⁸“The memorable dispatch of Sir Charles Wood, President of the Board of Control, dated 19th July, 1854, which laid the foundations on which the educational system in British India subsequently developed. It was called the Magna Carta of English education in India. One of its clauses encouraged founding of the universities in the Presidency towns. To the surprise of all, the Government of India approved the outline of this committee on December 12, 1856. Sir John Colville introduced the bill to establish universities in India and it was passed as Act II of 1857. The Governor-General of India, Lord Dalhousie, lost no time in giving his consent to the bill on January 24, 1857.”⁹As a result, three affiliating universities were established at Calcutta, Madras and Bombay in 1857 on the model of the London University which itself was an examining body then. As per their preamble, “these three universities were established for the purpose of ascertaining, by means of examinations, the persons who had acquired proficiency in different branches of literature, science and arts, and of rewarding them by academic degrees as evidence of their respective attainments and marks of honour.”¹⁰According to JogeshMisra, “The three universities established in the middle of the nineteenth century were not really for advancement of learning and research, either by intention or by performance. Apart from there being no reference to research among the above-mentioned objectives of the University Act, in actual practice the three universities restricted their activity merely to holding examinations and awarding degrees as hallmarks of fitness for recruitment to the Civil Service of the country. The teaching work was done by colleges. These did not form an integral part of the

⁷ *ibid.*p. 37.

⁸ Prasher, R.G. (2002). *Op.cit.* p. 14.

⁹ Sharma, R.N. (1986). *Indian Academic Libraries and S.R. Ranganathan: A Critical Study*. New Delhi: Sterling Publishers Private Limited. p. 26.

¹⁰ Prasher, R.G. (2002). *Op.cit.*p. 14.



universities. The colleges did not feel the need to have libraries with books other than textbooks and near textbooks. The universities themselves did not find any need for a library as there was provision for neither education nor research under their direct auspices.”¹¹ Now a days, it is hard to imagine a university without a library attached to it.

Although, these universities were established in 1857, but the libraries were established in Calcutta University in 1873 (gap of 16 years), Bombay University in 1874 (gap of 17 years), Madras University in 1907 (gap of 50 years) respectively. This could have taken more time if donations were not offered by some philanthropists. For instance, “the establishment of the Bombay University Library in 1874 is attributed to the philanthropy of PremchandRoychand, who donated 2 lakhsRupees in that year for the library building. Similarly, the Calcutta University Library owes its origin to the philanthropy of Joy KissanMookerjee who offered to donate 5,000Rupees for purchasing books in 1869, but it was not before 1873 that a library was started there. The same was the case with the Madras University Library. William Griffith in his will had bequeathed to the University a legacy of 25,619 Rupeeswhich was utilized for the establishment of its Library in 1907.”¹²

(1) Indian Universities Commission (Raleigh Commission), 1902: With the establishment of Universities of Punjab and Allahabad in 1882 and 1887 respectively, the total number of universities in India rose to 5 before the beginning of 20th century. Unfortunately, these Universities also neglected the libraries in the first place. The Report of the Indian Universities Commission of 1902 was very critical about this situation. It remarked “Of the present university libraries there is not much to be said. The library at Madras appears to be entirely neglected. Bombay has a good collection of oriental and other books; but the library is used by graduates and hardly at all by students. Calcutta has a library and money has been granted for the purpose of making it supplementary to other libraries in Calcutta. It is opened to fellows and to persons permitted by the Syndicate to use it for the purpose of literary search. The Allahabad University has no library. Lahore has not a very large University Library.”¹³

¹¹ Misra, J. (1979). *Op.cit.* p. 48.

¹² Prasher, R.G. (2002).*Op.cit.* p. 15.

¹³ Prasher, R.G. (2002). *Op.cit.* p. 16.

The Commission recommended, “Good reference libraries should be provided in connection to with universities and colleges in order that students may have an opportunity of forming the habit of independent and intelligent reading.”¹⁴ The commission further stated that ‘We attach great importance to the formation of good reference libraries in connection with both universities and colleges. It recommended that reference services must be made an integral part of all libraries in colleges and universities, and that one of the pre-requisite conditions for the grant of university affiliation to a college be the accessibility of students to the library of the institution.’¹⁵

It must be mentioned that all of its recommendations were approved and included in the Universities Act of 1904. Following these recommendations, Punjab University, Lahore gave much needed emphasis on development of its library by inviting an American professional librarian, Asa Don Dickenson to reorganize, catalogue and administer the university library and to commence a course of training in modern library methods. Unfortunately, the provisions of the Universities Act of 1904 were not followed wholeheartedly by all the existing universities.¹⁶

(2) Calcutta University Commission (Sadler Commission), 1917-19: The Calcutta University Commission, 1917-19 also examined the position of university libraries and reported that the university libraries were very inadequate to meet the needs of the students, and more acutely for teachers. The Commission recommended: “To maintain a library on the amplest possible scale and to make it as useful as it may be to all teachers and serious students must be the most important function of the University ... The University should have the services of a librarian who should have the salary and status of a professor and should be ex-officio member of the Academic Council.” The Commission highlighted the inconsiderate attitude of the universities towards libraries. However, Montague-Chelmsford Reforms (1919) introduced many measures to give practical shape to the recommendations of the Sadler Commission like establishment of teaching and

¹⁴ Datta, N. (1985). *Op.cit.* pp. 38-39.

¹⁵ Sharma, R.N. (1986). *Op. cit.* p. 32.

¹⁶ Prasher, R.G. (2002). *Op.cit.* p. 17.



research departments. With the introduction of these new functions attitude towards libraries changed as a matter of necessity.

(3) University Libraries During 1919-1947: During the period of 1919-1930, 8 new universities were established. All of them had libraries attached to them. The administrative set-up of these university libraries was based upon the model of the western university libraries. The years between 1939 and 1947 had no significant development in field of university libraries. Only 2 universities namely Utkal in 1943 and Saugar in 1946 were established during this period of 8 years.¹⁷

DEVELOPMENT OF UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES IN INDIA AFTER INDEPENDENCE

On the eve of Independence, India had 20 Universities. This number rose to 33 during 1956-77. In 1995-1996, the number of universities in India was 207, which included 36 deemed to be universities and 10 institutions of national importance.¹⁸ Universities having central and departmental libraries became a common feature of the higher education system. The quantitative growth in the numbers of universities also indicate growth in the number of university libraries. The matter of concern has been the qualitative growth of these universities. For reviewing the same, from time to time Government of India constituted various commissions and committees. These committees not only highlighted the shortcomings and problems being faced by the university libraries but also suggested measures to overcome them. Government has approved these suggestions from time to time and has made efforts for implementing them in proper manner. Conditions of university libraries in past decades can be understood by having a look at the significant developments of this period. Significant developments in this regard are mentioned in detail in the following pages.

(1) The University Education Commission (1948-1949): University Education Commission was appointed by the Government of India in 1948 to look into the problems of the university libraries. The University Education Commission consisted

¹⁷ Prasher, R.G. (2002). *Op.cit.* p. 17-18.

¹⁸ *Ibid.* p. 27.

of 10 members including the chairman. This commission was chaired by Dr. S. Radhakrishnan and it included eminent educationists from England, America, and India. Sadly, no librarian or library educator was included in it. This Commission is also known as the Radhakrishnan Commission. The terms of reference of this commission targeted at surveying of the conditions of higher education, study of the academic libraries and making suggestions and recommendations to improve the overall system and especially the libraries. This fact indicates towards the seriousness of the Government of free India towards bringing reforms and priority and importance given to the higher education and academic libraries. During its study of academic libraries, the commission found that “libraries were hopelessly inadequate to serve the curricular needs of a modern university. They were ill-housed, ill-stocked, and ill staffed and were totally lacking in standard literary and scientific journals Service was in the hands of personnel that had hardly any notion of the objectives of university education. The annual appropriation for book purchase seldom exceeded the ten thousand mark.”

The Commission also found that “a few universities had good libraries but was distressed to find out that in most colleges and universities the library facilities were indeed very poor.” Further, it highlighted that the annual grants for these libraries were not enough.

RECOMMEDATIONS OF RADHAKRISHNAN COMMISSION

- (1) Atleast 6.25% of the total budget of each academic institution should be set aside for libraries only. This measure will certainly improve the condition of these libraries.
- (2) If institutions were not willing to give 6.25% of their budget to libraries, they should give 40 rupees per student enrolled in the institutions.
- (3) More attention should be given towards improvement of the reference services in university libraries.
- (4) Bibliographical services and Documentation services must be further developed in order to promote research among faculty and students for making libraries proper functional centres for research activities.

- (5) University libraries must remain open for 12 hours a day for the 7 days of the week and throughout the vacation.
- (6) Undergraduate students should be given some type of bibliographic education for better use of the library and its material.
- (7) University libraries must have well-qualified staff, including the director, in order to provide excellent service. The director's minimum qualification must be a Ph.D. in library science and he must be given the rank and salary of a university professor. This Commission recognized the importance of university libraries and said:

“...teaching is a co-operative enterprise. Teachers must have the necessary tools for teaching purposes in the shape of libraries and laboratories as also the right type of students. The library is the heart of all the university's work; directly so, as regards its educational work, which derives its life from research work. Scientific research needs a library as well as its laboratories, while for humanistic research the library is both library and laboratory in one. Training in higher branches of learning and research is mainly a question of learning how to use the tools and if the library tools are not there, how can the student learn to use them? Both for humanistic and scientific studies, a first class library is essential to a university.”

No doubt, the recommendations of Radhakrishnan Commission were based on the sincere needs of modern library services in universities libraries for the promotion of research and creative learning. Academic librarians were very disappointed as the recommendations of University Education Commission were only partially implemented. In case a few university libraries did try to vigorously implement some of the recommendations of this Commission their efforts proved not very successful.¹⁹

- (2) **Role of University Grants Commission:** Following the model of the University Grants Committee of Great Britain, on December 28, 1953 University Grants Commission was established in India as an apex body to look after the educational interests of the country and to oversee the development and financing of all academic institutions, including their libraries. The recommendation for establishing an

¹⁹ Sharma, R.N. (1986). *Op.cit.* pp. 78-81.

autonomous body for development of higher education was given in report of University Education Commission of 1948-49. This recommendation was accepted and as a result, UGC was established in 1953. However, it was not a statutory body until 1956. This development was a watershed point in the history of Indian academic libraries. Since its birth UGC has given sincere attention towards the development of facilities of academic libraries. Development of academic libraries gained pace during the term of late Dr. C.D. Deshmukh, first Chairman of the UGC. He was an excellent administrator, a diligent scholar and lover of books. He had the vision to sense the crucial role of library services in the field of higher education.

(3) The Library Committee: UGC appointed a Library Committee in 1957 under the chairmanship of the eminent librarian Dr. S.R. Ranganathan to examine the condition of academic libraries. This committee had three members namely K.S. Hingwe, Professor S. Bashiruddin, S. Parthasarathy, B.S. Kesavan. This was the first time when Government of India constituted a committee of professional librarians to seek advice regarding matters related with academic libraries such as standard of libraries, buildings, library training, pay scales and the status of librarians. For the time being, the UGC gave a huge grant of upto 1 lakh rupees each to colleges and universities for making improvements in library buildings, collection development and other library needs. The Committee reported the various aspects where the academic libraries were lagging behind such as poor services, facilities and budget etc.

(4) Work Flow Seminar, 1959: After completing the survey, the Library Committee invited all academic librarians to a seminar conducted on the topic of 'Work Flow in University and College Libraries' at Delhi from 4 to 7 March, 1959. The Library Committee discussed the findings of its survey during this seminar and two achievements were the result of this discussion. Firstly, the deliberations gave the Library Committee to put in concrete recommendations to be adopted by various universities, with the authoritative recommendation of the University Grants Commission; secondly, the University Grants Commission itself decided that recommendations will be accepted by it as a norm of working and that they will accept

schemes for reorganization put up in accordance with the norms. Dr. Deshmukh, Chairman of the UGC, in his inaugural address at this seminar said:

“It is my belief that during the last five years of the existence of the UGC, we have extended assistance to libraries for buildings and furniture as well as for the purchase of books and lately for the engagement of part of the staff on a scale which is relatively speaking larger than would be found in many other countries particularly the United Kingdom. [He further added] we have operated in this way because we realize that in the first place there were many colleges which even if as they were told have not been able to get together anything that could be regarded as an adequate library. Obviously, we all know that these ideal standards are not attained in many places in India both in colleges and in universities. But we in the Commission believe that the grants that we have made in the course of the last few years have enabled these institutions of higher learning to make a good beginning both with buildings as well as with equipping them with a stock of books.”

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Dr. S.R. Ranganathan, Chairman of the Library Committee and the Director of this Seminar, applauded the efforts of UGC, and said, “The University Grants Commission is fully convinced of the new and intimate role of the libraries in the university and college life in our renaissance India. They have a policy to give liberal grants for all library purposes, reading materials, buildings and library staff. The Commission did not take long to realise that the proper way to develop our library service along helpful lines is to entrust the planning of the whole affair to the library profession itself. This functional sharing of their responsibility has been a commendable and welcome step.”

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE WORK FLOW SEMINAR LIBRARY COMMITTEE, 1959

- (1) Provision of special initial library grant for a new university or new department in an existing university.
- (2) Both UGC and State Governments should come forward and help university and college libraries in the development of the initial collections of books and back volumes of popular periodicals.
- (3) The Committee recommended that an open access system should be introduced in every academic library.
- (4) To promote co-operation among libraries by the inter-library loan, a Union Catalogue of books and Union List of Serials must be prepared.
- (5) Provision of recruitment and training for fulfilling the requirement of an adequate number of reference librarians to function as library hosts.
- (6) Status and the salary of the library staff should be equivalent to the teaching and research staff.
- (7) Instead of librarians teaching part time in library schools there should be appointment of full-time teaching faculty.
- (8) Practice of appointing a person as an honorary librarian without any prescribed professional qualifications should be abolished.

Only a few academic institutions implemented these recommendations in letter and spirit. However, most of the academic institutions did not put them into practice as these recommendations were not binding on them because education being a state subject in the Indian Constitution, no state government could be compelled to implement the recommendations of this Committee. Moreover, Funds were not adequately provided by the state governments for the implementation of those recommendations.²⁰

- (5) **The Kothari Commission, 1964-1966:** Decades of 1950s and 1960s saw a phenomenal rise in the number of new colleges and universities. However, it could be sensed that

²⁰ Sharma, R.N. (1986). *Op.cit.* pp. 81-86.

growth was more quantitative than qualitative. Therefore, in 1964 Government of India appointed an Education Commission under the chairmanship of Dr. D.S. Kothari. Commission had education experts from England, United States, Russia, France, and Japan. The Commission is also known as the Kothari Commission. This commission was to look into the conditions of higher education in the country and make appropriate suggestions, if any, to improve the system. The commission submitted its report on June 29, 1966 after minutely looking into the conditions of the academic libraries of India. Commission stated that in spite of the rapid growth in numbers, the condition of these libraries not much satisfactory. The Commission was shocked to observe that the recommendations of the Radhakrishnan Commission had not been fully implemented as only 4 universities in India had spent 5 per cent or more of their budget on acquisitions against the suggestion of 6.25% of the total budget to be spent on libraries. It revealed that university libraries in India were not functioning properly to fulfill the needs of higher education. The Commission laid emphasis on the importance of and need for libraries in all academic institutions. It recommended that all colleges and universities must maintain well-balanced and well-equipped library as per the needs of the readers.

RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE KOTHARI COMMISSION

- (1) A long-time plan for library development should be prepared for each academic institution after taking into consideration dynamic aspects such as introduction of new subjects, anticipated increase in enrolment, and research needs etc.
- (2) Libraries should provide necessary services and facilities required for research purposes and for formal teaching.
- (3) Each year university should spend about 25 rupees per student registered and 300 rupees per teacher or from 6.5% to 10% of the total budget on development of the university library.

Despite the fact that commission highlighted the poor financial condition as a hindrance in the way of proper functioning of the university libraries. It was criticized by academic librarians for its retrogressive suggestions regarding the finances.

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- (6) **Sidhanta Committee, 1965:** Meanwhile, the Sidhanta Committee had submitted its report to the UGC on ‘the standards of University Education’ in 1965. This committee also acknowledged the significance of libraries in higher education and recommended “encouragement should be given to students to go to library, select books and read for themselves. One method of doing this would be to insist upon more written assignments and tutorials during the course of the year.”²¹
- (7) **Role of International Agencies:** Many international agencies extended support to India for the development of the university libraries. Such as India Wheat Loan Educational Exchange Programme, 1951; Rockefeller Foundation Grants from 1954 for subsequent 13 years; Ford foundation Grants during 1951-69; time to time grants from Commonwealth Foundation, UNESCO etc. Most significant grant was by USA through India Wheat Loan Educational Exchange Program. Under this program a loan of 190 million U.S. Dollars was provided to India for the purchase of wheat from America on the condition that a sum of 5 million dollars of the interest accruing from the loan should be utilized in the field of higher education by way of purchasing American books, journals and scientific equipment’s etc. and on the exchange of educationists and academicians between USA and India.²²
- (8) **Review Committee on UGC, 1977:** This committee was conscious about library practices and expressed that students should be trained in making proper use of a library so that they can explore full potential of a library. It also emphasised on the improvement of library facilities.
- (9) **Review Committee on UGC, 1981:** The committee drew attention of universities towards making long term integrated plans for library development. The committee recommended more working hours and working days, better display of new reading materials for easy accessibility, making library a centre of community education, multiple copies of books which may be loaned to more students at the same time,

²¹ Sharma, R.N. (1986).*Op.cit.* pp. 88-91.

²² Prasher, R.G. (2002).*Op.cit.* pp. 25-26.

organisation of book clubs, exhibition, separate rooms for periodicals, reference books and research work etc.²³

(10) National Education Policy, 1986: The Government of India introduced the National Education Policy in 1986 to bring the reforms in every aspect of education at all levels such as from primary school education to university level. Being aware of the importance of academic libraries, due consideration was given to the libraries of all educational institutions. This policy emphasized on improving the library facilities in the existing higher education system as well as it suggested to take appropriate steps for removal of hindrances in the way of further modernization of the libraries. Policy highlighted the many shortcomings of the existing system such as poor library, inadequate information system, absence of computational facilities etc. It stated that recent developments in the field of educational technology have a great potential for enriching the service experience of the library users. Following the policy goals Government of India gave special grant to 9 central universities and also to selected state universities for strengthening the library facilities by focusing on computerization and networking efforts.²⁴

(11) National Review Committee, 1996: During the 8th five-year plan a National Review Committee was constituted by the UGC to monitor and evaluate financial assistance being provided to the universities, deemed universities and college libraries. The committee reported that most of the serious attention towards allocation of the required funds is missing, as funds were not granted on regular basis. Inadequate funds were hindrance in the co-ordination among the higher education institutions for pooled services. On the basis of the report of this committee, the Government of India constituted working group on libraries and informatics on academic library system to recommend the policy framework and programmes for overcoming these problems during 9th five year plan.²⁵

²³ Gupta, O.P. (1992). *Development of University Libraries in India after Independence*. New Delhi: Concept Publishing Company. pp. 41-42.

²⁴ Gupta, O.P. (1998). *Library and Information Services in University and College Libraries in India*. New Delhi: Reliance Publishing House. p. 75.

²⁵ *ibid*.pp. 77-81.

(12) National Education Policy, 2020: In January 2015, a committee under former Cabinet Secretary T.S.R. Subramanian initiated the consultation process for the formulation of the new education policy. After detailed deliberations, the policy document was prepared and presented to the Union Cabinet for approval. Hence, Government of India introduced new National Education Policy on 29 July, 2020. Like the National Education Policy of 1986, this policy has also given due attention towards the betterment of the academic libraries. This policy emphasized that improvement in the availability and accessibility of books is essential to inculcate reading habit within our educational institutions. This Policy states that university libraries will be strengthened and modernized. Steps will be taken to enhance online accessibility of library books and further broad basing of digital libraries. For ensuring vibrant libraries in universities, it will be imperative to make available adequate library staff and devise appropriate career pathways for them.²⁶

According to the consolidated list of universities published by UGC on 25 January, 2023 the number of universities in India has increased to 1074, which include 56 central universities, 460 state universities, 128 deemed to be universities, 430 state private universities.²⁷ Universities having central and departmental libraries became a common feature of the higher education system. The quantitative growth in the numbers of universities also indicate growth in the number of university libraries. The matter of concern has been the qualitative growth of these universities. Government of India took the matter of education very seriously and particularly recognized that university libraries play an important role in increasing the intellectual calibre of the human resource of the country by providing them with opportunity to explore the literary advancements.

CONCLUSION

²⁶ National Education Policy 2020. Retrieved on April 14, 2024 at 7:06 p.m., from www.education.gov.in:https://www.education.gov.in/sites/upload_files/mhrd/files/nep_update/National_Education_Policy_2020_en.pdf

²⁷ Retrieved on April 18, 2024, from University Grants Commission: <https://www.ugc.gov.in/oldpdf/consolidated%20list%20of%20all%20universities.pdf> at 11:23 p.m.



The present paper traced the history of the libraries in India, especially the growth of University Libraries during modern period. It unveiled the status of the university libraries of modern period covering the developments during both pre and post-independent India based on secondary data. An overview of the important suggestions given by various committees and commissions set up by the Government of India for reforming and strengthening the university libraries have also been discussed in a chronological way till date.

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