A STUDY OF UNIVERSITY LIBRARY SYSTEM IN WEST BENGAL

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ABSTRACT

A university is rightly described as a community where scholars and teachers are the head, students are the body and library its heart. If the community is to perform its functions properly and efficiently its heart must then be strong and efficient in its functioning. Collection Development means planning for a systematic and organized erection of general collection. There are two forms for collection development in academic libraries, centralized and decentralized systems. In centralized system the full responsibility of library is of the Central Library and on the other hand in decentralized system the responsibilities of library systems are divided into the departmental academic Libraries.

KEYWORDS: University Library System, West Bengal, teachers, Development, academic libraries, Central Library.

INTRODUCTION

In India the importance of library in university education has been often emphasized by educationists, librarians, scholars, education commissions and committees. To quote from the Report of the Radhakrishnan Commission on University Education (1950): "The library is the heart of all the University's work, directly so, as regards its research work, and indirectly 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?'' President Truman's Commission on Higher Education says, "The library is second only to the instructional staff in its importance for high quality instruction and research. Both for humanistic and scientific studies a first class library is essential in a university".

Similarly the Kothari Commission on Education in its Report submitted in 1966 further emphasized the importance of libraries in higher education. To quote "No university, college or department should be set up without taking into account its library needs in terms of staff, books, journals, space, etc. Nothing could be more damaging to a growing department than to neglect its library or to give it a low priority. On the contrary, the library should be an important centre of attraction on the college or university campus". (Mangla, 1992)

Functions:

The basic function of a library is educative. It is not merely store-house of reading material collected for preservation, but it also functions as a dynamic instrument of education, to feed the intellect of the student, encourage the researches of the faculty and invite all who enter its house to partake fully of its intellectual and cultural contents. The Kothari Commission on Education (1966) has laid stress on the proper development of university library system in the country and has recommended that the library should

- provide resources necessary for research in fields of special interest to the university;

- aid the university teacher in keeping abreast of development in his field;

 - provide library facilities and services necessary for the success of all formal programmes of Instruction;

- open the doors to the wide world of books that lie beyond the borders of one's own field of specialization; and

- to bring books, students and scholars together under conditions which encourage reading of pleasure, self-discovery, personal growth and the sharpening of intellectual curiosity. (Srivastava & Verma, 1980)

UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES IN WEST BENGAL

Burdwan University Library (BUL)

Picture of BU Central Library

The University: The University of Burdwan (also Burdwan University or B.U.) is a public university located in Bardhaman, West Bengal, India. It was established by the West Bengal government as a teaching and affiliating university on 15 June 1960 with six graduate departments and thirty undergraduate colleges spread over five districts that come under the jurisdiction of the university. The jurisdiction covers the districts of Burdwan, Birbhum, Bankura, and Hooghly (except Srirampur). The main campus of the university is of 398 acres (approx). The university offers 30 graduate programmes. There are 178 affiliated colleges (including degree colleges, B.Ed. colleges and private professional institutes). (Wikipedia)

The Library

The Central Library is housed in a two-storied building in the Golapbag campus. Being in the middle of the campus it is easily accessible from all departments of the university. It has a carpet area of about 12,000 sq ft. The library opens from 7-30 am to 6 pm except Saturdays and Sundays when it remains open from 10 am to 5 pm. There are 19 departmental libraries in the Golapbag campus attached to the respective departments.The library provides consultation facilities to outside scholars, teachers of the affiliated colleges and students of other universities as well as ex-students of our university on the basis of the Library Rules.

Membership: The university library offers membership to the teachers, scholars, students, officers, non-teaching staff and retired persons of our University, academic staff of affiliated colleges, ex-students of ours and other Universities, and other academicians. Individual membership can be obtained by presenting proper identification in case of ex-students of other universities, other academicians and teachers from affiliated colleges on payment (Rs.100=00 for ex-students, Rs.2000=00 for other categories). They will be entitled to get library services according to the Rules of the Library.

Periodical Section: 300 Indian & foreign journals are subscribed by the University

Online E-Journals & CD ROM Searching: Under the INFLIBNET project of the UGC access to online E-Journals through UGC Infonet Programme as well as offline CD ROM searching of abstract databases are provided to the users. At present E-Journals of the following publishers are available under the UGC-Infonet.

Reference Section: This section has a rich collection of encyclopaedias, dictionaries, handbooks, year books, atlases, directories etc. Readers can consult these books to meet their queries. It has also a display board where new arrivals are displayed regularly.

Thesis Collection: In this section the theses of Ph.D/D.Sc/D.Lit. degrees and M,Phil dissertations awarded by the university are kept for reference use by researchers and others. Report Section: Census reports, World Development Reports, Govt. Publications, Reports on Education, Reprints of research papers published by the scholars and teachers of our university, NET, SLET, GATE preparatory documents are available.

Archival Cell: The present acquisitions by the unit are 2500 nos. of very old and valuable Sanskrit Manuscripts and 8000 nos. of old and rare books received from the Burdwan Raj Family Library.

Library Automations: Computerized library activities and networking of the central library has been undertaken under INFLIBNET Programme of the UGC. The Central Library has started automation of the library activities using SOUL Package, a user's friendly software developed by the INFLIBNET Centre. The library has its own local network connecting different sections of the library to the SOUL server. Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC) service of the library provides databases of books, list of journals, theses. The OPAC service is extended to all the departments in the campus through LAN. (University of Burdwan)

Digital Library: Central Library is a centre directed towards rendering the knowledge based information service to every reader of any discipline of the academic community. It has started its prototype Digital Library using DSpace software in 2007 for initial testing but overall plan of the library has been jeopardized due to shortage of funds and staff because it needs a huge amount of fund and dedicated staff for its successful implementation.

Calcutta University Library (CUL)

Picture of CU Central Library

The University: The University of Calcutta (informally known as Calcutta University or CU) is a public state university located in Kolkata (formerly Calcutta), West Bengal, India established on 24 January 1857. By foundation date, it is the first institution in South Asia to be established as a multidisciplinary and secular Western style university. Within India it is recognized as a Five Star University and a Centre with Potential for Excellence by the University Grants Commission and the National Assessment and Accreditation Council. Within all state universities all over India, this university had the highest number students who cleared the doctoral entrance eligibility exam in the sciences conducted by Government of India's National Eligibility Test to

become eligible to pursue research with full scholarship awarded by the Government of India. It is a state-government administered urban-based affiliating and Research University. It has its central campus in College Street (called Ashutosh Shiksha Prangan). Its other campuses are in Rajabazar (called Rashbehari Shiksha Prangan), Ballygunge (called Taraknath Palit Shiksha Prangan), Alipore (called Sahid Khudiram Siksha Prangan), Hazra and South Sinthi. (Wikipedia) The Library : Although the University of Calcutta was formally launched in 1857, it had no permanent building of its own, at least in the early years. It might be recalled that the University was initially authorized only to hold examinations and award degrees. In those rudimentary stages of its growth, library, museum and other common facilities did not receive as much attention as they deserved. It was only after the University got a permanent home of its own in 1872 that attempts were initiated for the setting up of a library. Its nucleus was formed out of a small gift of Rs. 5000 by Joykrishna Mukherjee, the public spirited Zamindar of Uttarpara. While donating the money in 1869 he expressed the hope that a small library could be set up by the University. At about the same time Esan Chandra Ghose donated a small collection of books to the University. These efforts marked a small but auspicious beginning.

In 1874-75, an addition of Rs. 3,500 was made to the Library Fund, the total amount of which at that time exceeded Rs. 9,000. The Syndicate considered that a commencement should be made of the building up of a library stock with this sum, the problem of accommodation of the Library having been solved by the completion of the Senate House. A committee comprising Mr. Tawney, Mr. Heeley, Captain Jarret and Mr. Sutcliffe, was formed which reported that the sum was so small that it was impossible to attempt to build a library stock which in any sense could be termed complete. They were, therefore, of opinion that the Calcutta University Library collections should exist as supplementary to other existing libraries in Calcutta especially the newly founded Indian Museum Library. At that time there was no library containing a suitable collection of books except the Indian Museum Library. As technical libraries of Law and Medicine already existed in Calcutta and English literature, Mental Philosophy and many other subjects were represented in several collections of books available to all or most of those who were likely to have recourse to a University Library.

Membership: The library offers membership to the teachers, scholars, students, officers, non-teaching staff of university. Outsiders can use this library with special permission.

Collections: The University library, at present, has a collection of more than 12 lakh books. Besides books, the seven campuses of the University together possess more than 2 lakh volumes of bound Journals, M.Phil. and Ph.D. dissertations, proceedings of conferences, reports, maps, standards, patents, newspapers, manuscripts, microfilms, CD-ROMs. The departmental libraries serve the academic disciplines bearing their names. The University provides access to nearly 4,000 electronic journals to its users in all the campuses under the UGC-INFONET programme. The Central Library serves the entire university community.

Library Hours: Workings hours of the central library are 9.30 a.m. to 8 p.m. on all working days except Saturdays & Sundays. It remains open from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Saturdays & Sundays. Services: Reference service, bibliographic service, documentation service, internet service, e-mail service, UGC-NET and Career guidance service, reprographic service, lending service, reading room service, access to back issues of journals, OPAC (Online Public Access Catalogue) service and inter-library loan service are offered by the library.

Library Automations: Computerisation and networking of the University Library has been undertaken under the INFLIBNET programme of the UGC. The University Library has started automation of the library activities using SOUL, versatile and user-friendly software from INFLIBNET Centre. The library has its own local Network connected with a server with terminals inside the library. Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC) of the library has databases of books, journals, theses, CD-ROMS and microfilms. The University Library has posted an on-line catalogue in the University Website consisting of records of books, Ph.D. theses, medical dissertations, BNCC Collection, Peace Studies Collection and others. Now users from across the globe can get information on the collection of the University Library. In this context it might be not be out of place here to mention that our University has now become one of the few select institutions in India whose collections can be known through the Internet. The immense popularity of the University Library is testified by its steady growth in the number of users. At present on an average one thousand users use the Central Library facilities. In order to promote awareness about the Library among various stakeholders, it organises exhibitions on various subjects on a regular basis. (University of Calcutta) Digital Library: Manjula Devi Digital Library established in the year 2007 to provide digital resources to the academic community of the university.

Jadavpur Unversity Library (JUL)

Picture of JU Central Library

The University: Jadavpur University or JU is a public state university located in Kolkata, West Bengal. It has two campuses: the main campus at Jadavpur and the new campus at Salt Lake, approximately 12.6 kilometres (7.8 mi) and 8.8 kilometres (5.5 mi) from the city centre respectively. A third campus is due to open at the site of the erstwhile National Instruments (CSIR India), opposite the main campus along the Raja S.C. Mullick Road. (Wikipedia) The Library: Jadavpur University Library was started along with the establishment of the University in 1955 in order to cater the academic and research needs of the faculty, research scholars, students, officers and non-teaching staff. Since then, the University Library has gone from strength to strength to live up to the expectations of its immediate clientele. It is one of the best-equipped libraries in the country. The University is proud of its library system, which comprises the Central Library, Salt Lake Campus Library, 37 Departmental Libraries under the Faculty of Arts, Science, Engineering and Technology, and also the Libraries attached with the Schools and Centres for studies.

Membership: The membership of the University Library is open to the teachers, students, research scholars, officers, non-teaching employees, ex-employees and ex-students of the University; and even to the teachers of schools, colleges, universities and govt. employees outside the University. The reading facilities of Central Library are provided to outside scholars engaged in serious reading and research.

Collections: The Central Library has over 6,14,846 volumes of books on record (including the Salt lake Campus Library and those loaned to Departmental Libraries), 80,000 bound volumes of journals, 13000 theses and dissertations, and 37,000 items of non-book materials such as reports pamphlets, maps and micro-forms. The library subscribes to about 1159 print and 1448 online journals. The University also has access to around 3000 online journals more through INFLIBNET and INDEST Consortia. In total, the University Library has access to around 11000 Journals. The library subscribes to 30 databases which include Scopus, Econlit etc. and also about 10000+ E-books.

Gift Collections: A considerable part of the Library's acquisitions consists of gifts from individuals and institutions, the largest book donation having been from Sri Uday Kumar Das, Kumar S.C. Nandy of Cossimbazar, the British Council, USIS, Asia Foundation, the late A.K. Chanda, Sri M. N. Mitra, Sudhindranath Datta and others. The gift collections contain a good stock of old materials valuable for research in the humanities and social sciences.

Services: Issue-Return of books, access to current issues and back volumes of journals, reference and information services, access to databases, abstracting and indexing journals, access to rare books, Inter-Library loan, photocopying service, current awareness service, display of new arrivals, document delivery services to academic community of India. Listing of the reference websites for different disciplines, providing current awareness service of books and current journals & providing "JU Digital Library beyond Campus" service to faculty members and officers are provided by the Centre for Digital Library and Documentation. Services points are also increased in the Annex Building viz., ground floor for serials, first floor for CDLD/Learning Resource

Centre, second floor for Bengali, science & technology journals, third floor is getting ready for theses and digital archives.

Automations: The Central Library has been taking the appropriate steps to computerize the library's house-keeping operations. The work related to retrospective conversion of library collections is in progress. The retrospective conversion is the conversion of the library catalogue from manual to machine readable form according to policies and standards prescribed by the UGC-INFLIBNET. LibSys-7 is being used by the library for automating the library activity and services.

Centre for Digital Library & Documentation: Under the potential for excellence programme of UGC, Centre for Digital Library has been established in November 2003 in the first floor of the new annex building of the Central Library. The digital Library has a learning Resource Centre (LRC) and a reading room. The Digital Library Management Software Dspace, developed by MIT, USA and Hewlett Packard has been installed. It is open source software and has been customized to suit our requirements. Dspace accepts all forms of digital materials including text, images, video and audio files. The Institutional Repository is being built in the digital library faculty and department wise.

Publications: Publications entitled 'Know your Library', 'Journals and Databases' and 'JU Library: A brief profile' contain the information about the rules of the library and other guides to users etc. are made available to all users. These serve as guidelines for user orientation programme. The detailed information is available in the website**.**

Kalyani University Library (KUL)

Picture of KU Central Library

The University: It was established in 1960 with a campus area of over 378 acres in Kalyani town. It is well connected by road and railway, with a railway station very close to the University. The University is situated in a locality surrounded by a rural setting within a rural backdrop and it caters mostly to the students of rural and backward areas. Yet, its distance from Kolkata is only 45 km. This locational advantage of the University makes it particularly suitable for the 'Cafeteria Approach' to higher education. The University ensures on the one hand, the development of excellence, and on the other, contribution of higher education through dispersion of knowledge to rural areas in an open and flexible system. The University is also considering the possibility of upgrading some of its affiliated colleges with academic autonomy and postgraduate teaching. The University has completed four decades of commendable service to the development of higher education keeping in view the importance of the outlying rural economy and the needs and aspirations of the youth in the region. The University is presently offering twenty three post graduate programmes under four faculties, namely, Science, Arts & Commerce, Education, Engineering Technology & Management.

The Library

The University Library system was initiated in the year 1961 after the establishment of University of Kalyani in the year 1960. The present library building was inaugurated in the year 1979. Now the Central Library is a three storied building. The library was established in order to meet the academic and research need of the Teachers, Research Scholars, the Students and the other staff members. In a lively University campus, the Central Library serves as the hive of academic activities for students, scholars, staffs and faculty members in pursuit of excellence in their respective area of studies. Central Library provides books, journals as well as current information on various topics to fulfill the needs of the University Community.

Membership: Teachers, research scholars, students, officers and staff are the member of this library. Anyone can use the library with the prior permission.

Collections: The total number of holding of this library have now gone up to 1,52,462 as on 31.03.2012.There are about 6536 back volumes of journal and no. of print journal 110, theses 2142, CD/DVDs 170 and rare collection (Rabindranath Tagore's letter to Parul Devi in original) 51. The University also has access to 10,000 (approx.) online journals through UGC Infonet. Library Hours: Library is kept open for users in all working days (Monday to Friday) from 10.30 a.m. to 5.30 p.m.

Services: Issue-Return of books, access to current issues and back volumes of journals, reference and information services, access to databases, abstracting and indexing journals, photocopying service, current awareness service, display of new arrivals, internet facilities, online access to selected journals through UGC-INFONET, Database Search through INFLIBNET, Career guidance service and user education programme.

Automations: The idea of automation of central library of the University of Kalyani was first initiated under the auspices of INFLIBNET Programme. The central library procured CDS/ISIS software package developed by UNESCO and later central library purchased SOUL software developed by INFLIBNET for automating the library activity and services. Presently 4 modules of SOUL are working. Acquisition & Serial Control modules are yet to be started. (University of Kalyani, Central Library, 2011)

Digital Library: Central Library developed a prototype Digital Library. It is being accessed through terminals located in CIRM. Collections of Digital Library are syllabus of UG & PG courses of kalyani University, examination question paper of the university, E-theses & dissertation, e-articles, students projects & miscellaneous. (University of Kalyani)

CONCLUSION

From the above study, it may be concluded that, the universities in West Bengal have been playing pivotal role for the higher education and research activities in the state from the pre-independence & post-independence era. University libraries in West Bengal have large number of resources and offering various library services as well as libraries have some future plan to meet the ever growing requirements of the large number of library users.

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