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India's University Libraries: Financial Issues and Funds Raising Strategies

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At present, the university libraries in India are passing through a very crucial phase. They are in the process of change and transformation. Over the last two decades they have witnessed a number of significant changes affecting their structure and services to a great extent. Presently, academic libraries in India are facing number of problems like space manpower standardization, professional development of the staff, challenge of information and communication technology, and above all, the most serious one being the huge financial crisis. Present paper discusses the possible ways to generate financial resources by the academic libraries and possible solutions to over come the problem of finance.

0 INTRODUCTION

After India got freedom, the role of higher education and the importance of the academic libraries in the growth and development of higher education has been duly recognized. The Government of India took several steps to support the development of college and university libraries. In fact, the college and university libraries are playing a dynamic role in helping their parent institutions in achieving their goals related to teaching, research, extension and publication through selection, acquisition, organization and systematically dissemination of information and knowledge resources. Realizing the imperativeness of libraries, the Government of India has taken several decisions to improve upon the existing condition of the college and university libraries through the recommendations of various committees/commissions appointed by the Government from time to time. In this direction one of the landmarks was the foundation of University Grants Commission in 1953 which was made a statutory body in 1956 by an Act of Parliament which in general takes care of the overall development of higher education in the country and has also ensured the proper development of college and university libraries through its assistance both financial and technical.

1 SOURCES OF COLLEGE/UNIVERSITY LIBRARY FINANCE

Finance is essential for running any institution properly. This is equally

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h are the service institutions, and have the responsibility
ir users efficiently and effectively. Carl White opined
self of a formidable menace to normal development, the
to join with the University Grants Commission in
ng on a footing which increases dependence on regular
aces dependence on non-recurring grants.¹ The sources
and university libraries are:

out of university budget

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reprography, indexing and abstracting services etc.

2 FINANCIAL ESTIMATION

There are three methods of estimating amount of finance required for providing satisfactory library service. They are:

21 PER CAPITA METHOD

In this method a minimum amount per head is fixed. The Ranganathan Committee recommended that a university should provide Rs 15 per student and Rs 200 per teacher per annum for acquiring reading materials for the Library. Kothari Commission recommended Rs 25 for each student and Rs 300 per teacher per annum.

22 PROPORTIONAL METHOD

According to Kothari Commission 6.5% of the educational budget is to be earmarked for libraries. Other scholars opinion that it should range somewhere 6 to 10%. K N Raj Committee (1980-81) appointed by Karnataka University even went on recommending 20% of the total budget of the University for the University Library. Despite the provisions as stated above the college/university libraries were never provided the funds to render their services and they have been facing lot of financial constraints due to this in the past two decades.

23 ECONOMIC NECESSITY

- (1) There is a substantial hike in the cost of publications. For example Bhatt² conducted a survey that revealed that the average increase in the cost of a book during 1989 to 1993 was 190.50% in contrast to 77.80% increase/in book

budget at IIT Delhi Library. The trend of rising cost in case of periodicals is comparatively much more higher than the books and the budget allocation for periodicals is almost similar to the books as far as the increase in budget is concerned.

- (2) Devaluation of rupee and hike in the foreign exchange rates. For example on 1st July 1991 the rupee was devaluated to 9-10% and on 3rd July 1991 it was once again devaluated to another 12% and by first week of July 1991 the percentage of devaluation of rupee was observed 30%³. Though such a steep devaluation of rupee than after has not been observed but the trend continues in this regard.
- (3) Steep hike exchange rates of foreign currencies is the factor influenced by the financial status of the libraries. For example, in January 1989 the conversion rate of US dollar was Rs 13.70 which swelled to Rs 32.70 in January 1993 and by 3rd week of December 2002 it was risen to Rs 48.55. This comes about 400% hike.

24 INFORMATION EXPLOSION

On the other side, the demands of the users keep on increasing due to increase in information and knowledge. The information explosion is taking place so fast that the doubling rate of knowledge has reduced to 4 to 5 years in Sciences. Kamath⁴ says that "about three million documents are published in science and technology every year." Likewise, the *Ulrich's International Periodicals Directory* 20th edition listed 63000 periodicals/serials published all over the world which by the time of its 37th edition 5 in 1999 swelled to 1,60,000 serials published throughout the world. This is being further accelerated with the availability of CD-ROM and Online databases. The above-mentioned factors have necessitated the generation of financial resources by the libraries their self to sustain the services and fulfill the information requirements of the readers.

3 ACADEMIC LIBRARIES: HOW TO GENERATE THE FINANCIAL RESOURCES

31 CONVINCING THE AUTHORITIES

Impress upon authorizes to allocate more funds to the library in view of the steep hike in cost of publications, devaluation of money, conversion rates of foreign currencies etc by furnishing tabulated data fully supported with documentary evidences. Further, the data pertaining to the decreasing acquisition capacity and increased demands of the readers in the light of information explosion as well as the availability of non-print material also be provided.

32 HIKE IN THE LIBRARY FEE

The fee structure is vogue in universities and colleges are to old. Therefore, existing fee for library development needs to be revised. The authorities including

the librarian should try to convince the students' leaders for the acceptance of increase in the fee structure for library development. Likewise, methods such as per capita etc. needs to be revised and the library share as per students and teachers be revised keeping in view the changed scenario.

33 MARKETING OF LIBRARY SERVICES AND PRODUCTS

Marketing of library services and products may prove to be an area through which libraries can generate financial resources. But to do this there are certain pre-requisites such as:

331 Marketing Plan

Marketing plan is nothing but a marketing process in the light of the set goals. Under marketing plan following aspects need to be studied very carefully:

3311 Market and Situation Analysis.

This provides detailed account of data on current and potential users and their needs wants and demands, users behaviour patterns, library products and services, completion, and communication strategy followed.

3312 Mission Analysis

The mission statement should present the purpose, objectives and goals of the organization clearly.

3313 Resource Analysis

Library should analyze its strengths and weaknesses because the success of the mission largely depends on this aspect.

3314 Marketing Strategy

It should focus on the broad marketing approach to be used towards meeting the objectives of the marketing.

3315 Monitoring and Evaluation

An appropriate mechanism for feedback and control of programme helps in knowing whether the objectives are being met.

332 Marketing Mix

Marketing Mix means the strategies involved in the marketing task which include' four P's *i.e.*, Product, Place, Price, and Promotion. Libraries have to be very careful in deciding the product to be launched, the place where to sale, at what cost to be sold and how can the sale and product be promoted.

333 Marketing Research

In the successful operation of marketing of information services and products, the marketing research has a vital role to play. It involves:

- Assess market information needs
- Measure the market place
- Store, retrieve and display the data
- Describe and analyse market information
- Evaluate the research and assess its usefulness.

334 Market Segmentation

In the customer-driven marketing, segmentation occupies a key role in the overall marketing success. Segmentation is basically a process of identification of universe of users (market) and partitioning them into various groups based on the characteristics of information needs and information seeking behaviour. Market segmentation process is done based on several factors such as Demographic segmentation, Socio-economic segmentation, Geographic segmentation etc.

4 LIBRARIES-INDUSTRIES INTERACTION

Libraries with their vast information resources can certainly attract industries which always look for information for the purpose of their research and development activities. Industry does not mind to pay for it provided that information is worth for them. However, pre-requisites of libraries-industries interaction are:

- Libraries should conduct research that responds to industry's information needs. Thus, libraries should obtain information about industry's existing potential and future technological demands in relation to library and information services.
- Having data available of readers broad/specific information needs, the libraries should match it with their own library resources to determine the level upto which their information and documentary needs can be met.
- Identify and contact appropriate industrial clients with potential interest in innovative technologies and services.
- Consult and deliberate choice, selection and application of suitable and sustainable technologies.
- The libraries should create users profiles by using appropriate bibliographical data and update the same regularly.
- Organise workshops for the promotion of interaction between the libraries and industries for information exchange and services. Such programmes are an appropriate forum to inform scientists on the benefits of library services especially CAS and SDI.

In addition to the above-mentioned efforts, one should also consider the following:

- Libraries should develop adequate personal relationship with existing targeted

industries and use all channels of communication including mailing of brochure to make the user-group aware of library resources, services, updates and new additions to facilitate them.

- The senior members of the professional staff should visit the identified targeted industries/companies to discuss and identify their pin-pointedly and exhaustive information needs and have a dialogue with them to see how our library can meet them. They may also contact or fix some lectures 'which can be given at the Chambers of Commerce meetings; institute of managements meetings, meetings of the business clubs and should convince them that the concerned library can adequately, effectively and efficiently meet their information requirements.

5 SERVICES TO BE OFFERED TO THE INDUSTRIES AND BUSINESS HOUSES

(i) Consultancy Service

Industries may require following types of information

- Capital procurement and mobilization
- Technological training/experience
- Management training for managers
- Knowledge of existing policies, practices and regulations of the governments
- Marketing
- Foreign trade

(ii) Access to Information

(iii) Information and Documentation Services

(iv) Access to the Network facilities

(v) All routine library services.

6 CONSORTIA-BASED SUBSCRIPTION OF PERIODICALS

Shared subscription or Consortia-based subscription of periodical means a strategic planning through which number of institutions having more or less the same information needs and requirements for fostering the library and information services to their readers agree to participate in a collective and collaborative efforts to subscribe electronic information resources for their mutual benefits. Under this participation, the publishers producing e-journals do have to play equally an important role. Through consortia-based subscription of e-journals it has been estimated that if the IITs operate the subscription through consortia, each participant IIT library is likely to get the benefit of Rs 145.6 crores. Because it has been estimated that full text resources and databases proposed for subscription under various categories in the consortia would have costed Rs 164 crores as per the

price list while through the consortia, the total cost comes to Rs.18.40 crores. IITs' libraries are proposing the following e-journals for the consortia based journals:

61 FULL-TEXT RESOURCES

- IEEE/IEE Electronic Library Online (IEL)
- Elsevier's ScienceDirect
- Academic's Ideal Library
- Springer Verlag's: Link
- Applied Science and Technology Plus
- ABI/INFORM
- ACM Digital Library

62 ONLINE-DATABASES

- Compendex Plus
- INSPEC
- SciFinder Scholar
- MathSearch
- Web of Science
- J-GATE
- JCCC

7 ALUMNI SUPPORT

Library should contact its old students working in high position requesting them to financially assist for developing library resources and services for the younger generation. Such efforts may certainly help libraries to get considerable financial support.

8 CALLING INDUSTRIAL HOUSES TO DONATE FUNDS TO LIBRARIES

University libraries should make a call to the industrial houses to come forward and donate funds whole-heartedly. Libraries should develop specific plans and visit industrial houses and demonstrate their capabilities in the field of information storage, processing and dissemination. They should also convince them that the development of industrial projects need adequate information feedback which is possible only when the libraries are developed properly either in their own institution or outside the institution. If library officers convince them properly there are chances that they would certainly help academic libraries financially and the same may be utilised to strengthen library collection and services.

91 BUY ONLY THAT MATERIAL, WHICH IS BOUND TO BE USED, RATHER HAS A PLACE ON SHELF UNUSED

It is general observation that quite a large number of documents purchased by

the libraries are found unused on the shelves. This may be because of improper display of their availability in the library or purchased without assessing the information needs of the library users. Hence, there is an urgent need for re-evaluating the policy and process of acquisition of documents in libraries. If such an attempt is made to check on the purchase of documents by the academic libraries, there are chances that the books which are kept on the shelves unused, may not be found in large number and the library would save lot of amount spent on such like unused material.

92 CONCLUSION

Though it is a fact that the libraries of the higher education and learning institutions are passing through financial crunch and have to find out the ways and means to generate financial resources in order to sustain the services to the users. Yet the generation of financial resources is a big challenge especially in a country like India where the value of information is still not fully recognized by the people. Also the users of information and knowledge are rather reluctant to pay for it. Therefore, there is a big need to make the efforts in creating the awareness among the people for the value of information in the progress of their life as well as the development of society as a whole. Unless such awareness is created we would not be in the position to price our library information services and products to the level that make the library self-sustainable.

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