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Role and Responsibilities of Library as a Learning Resource Centre in Higher Educational Institutions

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Abstract:

The Higher Education Institutions in India is one of the biggest education sectors where, changing need of stakeholder need to be addressed according to available resources at present. In current scenario the role played by library is not limited to storage and retrieval of information. But, dissemination of information at right time to the right hand. In the history of civilization, access to knowledge is ensured by pictures, scripts, paintings, monuments, varied heritage, and print-non-print media. After certain period of time, storage house and library came into exist and then knowledge is circulating generation to generation. History also reveals that knowledge is only source of development taken placed and it is continued in present, therefore, same will be happen in future too. The present paper focuses on the library as a learning resources centre has a vital role to be played for survival and inclusive development of entire human being in the world.

Keywords: Higher Education, Learning Resources, NAAC, GER, RAF, NEP.

“The present status of Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) in India is, we have 103 institute of national importance viz. IIM, IIT, AIIMS, etc; the central universities 47, state public funded universities 367, state self-financed universities 282, deemed to be universities 123 and autonomous colleges 374 along with 43,000 colleges and equally vast number of distance education centres” (Bhagwati 3).

“India is the second largest education system in the world, with 1.34 billion of population of which 27 crore are taking education”. (Bhagwati 3) “At present our Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) is 25.2% it is one of the lowest in the world as compare to UK (84%),

Japan (55%), China (28%), Russia (76%), Malasia (40%), and world average of (32%)” (Kawday 9).

Things to be remembered for deliver and implement HEIs systems for stakeholders; those are namely, sufficient infrastructure, qualified teachers and Library with all learning resources at a glance.

Suggestions based on Revised Accreditation Framework (RAF) by National Education Policy are; (Kawday 11).

- a. Faculty Empowerment Strategies should be implemented in every HEIs.
- b. IQAC should not work for name sake and it should have a significant importance in bringing the quality of education in HEIs, for that full-time dedicated cell should be made who can take care of day to day basis working of the institution throughout the year, as quality in itself is a elaborated as a continuous process.
- c. Curriculum developed (adopted by the university/ institution) should have relevance needs. So that the same can be utilized for the welfare and wellbeing of the society.

“The history of mankind reveals that right from the very beginning of the civilization, human being has perpetuated the basic knowledge through education. Knowledge is the main capital and it is at the core of all developmental efforts in advancing economic and social well-being in an emerging nation like India. Education is an important medium of development and at the dawn of 21st century; education has become vital and critical input in the process of development of every country” (Basu 56).

It is apparent that the 21st century is called as a Knowledge Century and transaction of information in the form of knowledge has been transferred from one to another, which has been impacted by science and technology that has revolutionized small pieces of information conversion into knowledge. Earlier, medium of data and information storage was used to be human minds with certain limitations. Therefore, storage for information sources created and those are considered to be store houses in past.

HEIs role is to, design of pedagogy, evaluate process of teaching and learning and ensure quality driven services given by institutions. The stakeholder of HEIs is finally evaluate throughout this process and at same time utilization of information sources and system provided by library have responsibilities to create awareness amongst them as regards to access to available knowledge.

The process of procurement of learning resources and their dissemination to its

stakeholder depends upon strategies laid down by libraries. Knowledge acquired from library should have properly utilized by stakeholders. Therefore, libraries should make periodical intervals with their users it will be happen, when changing demands of users will be fulfilled at anytime and anywhere. Technology has impacted each and every aspects of human life and it is good provider, processor and disseminator of information, but at same time it cannot analyze and interpret information. The library has an opportunity to deal with technology enabled services and provide required knowledge to stakeholders.

The libraries have been enriched with well-known learning resources considering of books, journals, magazines, manuscripts, biographies, CDs, old volumes and e-resources to serve its users. Studies based on learning resources and the institutions undergone through NAAC process twice and thrice are having fully computerized processes implemented by each one of them at their end. Access to available resources should be seamless to all its users, however collaborative efforts should be made to achieve optimum utilization of learning resources.

Prof. P.B. Sharma, President, Association of Indian Universities during his presidential address at Bhopal (December 12-13, 2017) rightly said, “The focus here was on integration of education with value, capabilities with virtues of humanity and simplicity to sense the society and Mother Nature with utmost devotion and unconditional commitment”.

“As per the UGC Annual Report 2015-16, the numbers have increased to 40 times in the case of the Universities, 100 times in the case of colleges and the students enrolment has gone upto 165 times in the formal system of higher education in comparisons to the figure at the time of independence” (Sharma 12).

The present status of libraries has an idea to create learning environment which will excel the research attitude amongst the stakeholders to find out concrete solutions with regards to difficulties come across in human life. Stakeholders of HEIs should be considered as strength of the nation, they should get resources from libraries and make themselves enthusiastic, innovative and creative with ability of potential to resolve problem around all of us.

Library can help to nurture human values, create enlighten and passionate workforce which will have positive impact on development of nation. The creative minds and enriched faculties should motivate to stakeholders of our education system for optimum utilization of learning resources. To create in awareness amongst the members of faculties with regards to available learning resources at their end can be possible by organizing of orientation programme and it will be definitely help for further development of library as a learning

resource center.

The active participation of students of HEIs in collaboration with industry oriented project will excel research activity amongst them which has impacted by science and technology development at rapid stage. By creating research environment, library will help lifetime to stakeholders to overcome barriers during their learning and support to effective growth of human values:

In this era of information overload and knowledge explosion, updating individuals' knowledge of a subject is a big task. With the rate of development and creation of knowledge has increasing tremendously in 21st century, it is quite beyond the capacity of human mind to acquire the whole. Even then, the teachers need to update and create knowledge continuously to cater to the increasing need to his students. Logically teacher should be more knowledgeable and wise than his student's; therefore, he must be in search of newer ways and means of acquiring knowledge and wisdom. Hence the need for them to gear themselves up in pursuit of knowledge and excellence (Sadaphal 10).

As an integral part of campus, the academic library will be profoundly affected by changes in the academy itself. Thus, it is important that the library while implementing and managing internal change continues to look outward at university as a whole (CETUS, 1977:3) (Sirje and Silvi 2004).

Robinson notes: "Though research has produced deeper understanding of the processes, productive educational change appears to proceed on an unsteady course, veering between over-control and chaos and no simple template or checklist can hope to predict and resolve the complex interactive processes involved in this type of change process" (Robinson, 2001: 16) (Sirje and Silvi 2004).

HEI's spread across the country has its own geographical opportunities and certain limitations. Stakeholders are from vernacular medium taking education in HEIs they should get extra attention. There are some cities which have all physical facilities and research environment at their end to be served to their stakeholders are less in number. Therefore, policies laid down by the Government as regards to the Higher Education and its quality enhancement should be given equal opportunities to all institutions and stakeholders. In

country like India, there is continuous flow of enrollment for Higher Education and during this process library and information services have to strengthen as regards to international standards prevalent in Higher education system.

There are some libraries have been categorized as per their collection, services, staff qualification, resource, infrastructure and in specialized services offered namely IIT, IIM, IISc and other national importance institutions. Therefore, stakeholders are having an opportunity to use available learning resources according to their needs. Acquisition system, classification system, and cataloguing processes of library are become computerized and retrieval of information have been change according to need of its users, therefore the services provide by libraries have positive impact on stakeholders.

The funds received by libraries from Government authority is helping to enrich their collection and infrastructure. The development of library is depends upon services offered by them and their collection. National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) assess and evaluate each and every HEIs periodically, and guidelines issued by NAAC authority, help to build separate library with all possible infrastructure for stakeholders.

According to Ministry of Human Resource Development:

The essence of Human Resource Development is education, which plays a significant and remedial role in balancing the socio-economic fabric of the Country. Since citizens of India are its most valuable resource, our billion-strong nation needs the nurture and care in the form of basic education to achieve a better quality of life. This warrants an all-round development of our citizens, which can be achieved by building strong foundations in education. In pursuance of this mission, the Ministry of Human Resource Development (MHRD) was created on September 26, 1985, through the 174th amendment to the Government of India (Allocation of Business) Rules, 1961 (MHRD).

According to National Policy on Education:

The National Policy on Education was framed in 1986 and modified in 1992. Since then several changes have taken place that calls for a revision of the Policy. The Government of India would like to bring out a National Education Policy to meet the changing dynamics of the population's requirement with regards to quality education, innovation and research, aiming to make India a knowledge superpower by equipping its students

with the necessary skills and knowledge and to eliminate the shortage of manpower in science, technology, academics and industry” (MHRD).

The NAAC:

The National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) is an autonomous body established by the University Grants Commission (UGC) of India to assess and accredit institutions of higher education in the country. It is an outcome of the recommendations of the National Policy in Education (1986) which laid special emphasis on upholding the quality of higher education in India. To address the issues of quality, the National Policy on Education (1986) and the Plan of Action (POA-1992) advocated the establishment of an independent national accreditation body. Consequently, the NAAC was established in 1994 with its headquarters at Bangalore (NAAC).

According to NAAC guidelines:

College libraries need to have facilities that promote effective and interactive access and use of information resources for all users. In the area of physical facilities, the libraries need to offer safe, comfortable, well-lighted, clean space, with adequate and appropriate seating arrangements to ensure effective use of the library's resources including digital resources. Also, college libraries are required to consider study space needs, while allocating the seating space, with special attention being paid to reserve collections and the hostel environment of the institution. The libraries need to prepare well-framed rules and guidelines with regard to hours of access, circulation policies, and other regulations to offer better services to the users (NAAC).

For the development of libraries and its maintenance of collection NAAC focuses on following points:

- Management of library and information services
- Collection and services provided to the users
- Extent of the use of services
- Best practices for college libraries

Revised Assessment and Accreditation (A&A) Framework

The Revised Assessment and Accreditation Framework are launched in July 2017. It represents an explicit paradigm shift making it ICT enabled, objective, transparent, scalable and robust.

The shift is:

- From qualitative peer judgement to data based quantitative indicator evaluation with increased objectivity and transparency
- Towards extensive use of ICT confirming scalability and robustness
- In terms of simplification of the process drastic reduction in number of questions, size of the report, visit days, and so on
- In terms of boosting benchmarking as quality improvement tool. This has been attempted through comparison of NAAC indicators with other international QA frameworks
- Introducing Pre-qualifier for peer team visit, as 30% of system generated score
- Introducing System Generated Scores (SGS) with combination of online evaluation (about 70%) and peer judgement (about 30%)
- In introducing the element of third party validation of data
- In providing appropriate differences in the metrics, weightages and benchmarks to universities, autonomous colleges and affiliated/constituent colleges
- In revising several metrics to bring in enhanced participation of students and alumni in the assessment process. (NAAC)

IQAC – Internal Quality Assurance Cell must be established by each and every academic institution, which will assess, evaluate and enhance the quality of institution. The librarian should be considered as members of IQAC, he will be considered as intermediator and facilitator of students. Library should take feedback from stakeholders periodically and discuss the agenda for improvisation of overall library services, facilities and infrastructure. The major role play by IQAC is to prepare plan for next ten years, with regards to overall development of institution.

IQAC must consider following points:

- Institutionalization of quality enhancement initiative
- Active participation of faculties in quality sustenance
- Promoting holistic academic excellence and opportunity

- Realization of quality enhancement of goal of institution
- Create research environment for students
- Inculcate environment awareness and waste management
- Sensitization towards society overall development to students

Quality of higher education involving the indicator of availability of library with certain collections like, books, journals, e-resources, database etc and their proper utilization by its users. Academic institutions will attract stakeholders by giving the library facility with all types of learning resources. However, quality of an academic institution depends upon their optimum utilization.

The utilization of library resources should be ensured by:

- Proper allocation of funds
- Active library Advisory Committee members
- Student's representative as a member of library advisory committee
- Access to e-resources and digital library
- Periodically feedback mechanism and their analysis
- Cooperative library staff
- Periodically upgradation of information and communication technology
- Library services to outside users

Library staff has its own role in development and sustenance of library and utilization of existing learning resources by stakeholders. Qualified library staff and their skill based work allocation will help to grow further. Organization of library orientation programme and literacy programme will inculcate reading habit amongst the stakeholder. This type of programme should be organized periodically by trained library staff and they should get training from University and Government authority for upgradation of their knowledge to be strengthening of existing library services.

In the current scenario, libraries should re-conceptualize existing process to serve technology enabled learners at HEIs. Computerized acquisition system, cataloguing system, classification system and dissemination of information to users should be implemented. Librarians need to be learned, how to provide equal access to learning resources, how to deal with the peoples on their continuous changing demands. To become a central place of knowledge, libraries must have fulfilled user's demands.

New roles for librarians in the learning and teaching context are discussed by many

authors, and it consists of:

- General Introduction to the Role of the Library for University Education
- Partnering with discipline faculty and other specialists for delivery of information and instruction
- Designing instructional programs for information access
- Teaching students and faculty how to access information, whatever its format or location, and how to evaluate what they find
- Serving as consultants on information resources, issues, and problems
- Developing and implementing information policy
- Creating information access tools
- Selecting, organizing, and preserving information in all formats
- Serving as leaders and facilitators in introducing information technologies and ensuring their effective use (CETUS, 1997; Virkus, 2004b) (Sirje and Silvi 2004).

Changes in Higher Education are so profound that several observers refer to a paradigm shift.

Kathy Tiano has characterized the old and new paradigms of HE as follows:

Figure 1. Paradigms of HE (after Kathy Tiano, cited in Inglis et al, 2002: 22)

Old Paradigm for HE	New Paradigm for HE
Take what you can get	Courses on demand
Academic calendar	Year-round operations
University as a city	University as idea
Terminal degree	Lifelong learning
University as ivory tower	University as partner in society
Student = 18- to 25-year-old	Cradle to grave
Books are primary medium	Information on demand
Tenure	Market value
Single product	Information reuse/info exhaust
Student as a 'pain	Student as a customer
Delivery in classroom	Delivery anywhere
Multi-cultural	Global

Bricks and mortar	Bits and bytes
Single discipline	Multi-discipline
Institution-centric	Market-centric
Government funded	Market funded
Technology as an expense	Technology as differentiator

(Source: Sirje and Silvi)

In higher education institutions librarians and faculty must come together to create awareness amongst the learners as regards to knowledge economy which is the core value of inclusive growth and sustainable development of individuals' and it has positive impact on human life. Therefore, disseminated knowledge by libraries should be acquired by students for nation building.

“The need of the hour is to nurture interdisciplinary education, engage in cutting edge research, cultivate translational and solution research and foster creativity and innovations in abundance and take them to the level of commercially viable technologies and product of vital value to make India a world leader in quality education and research” (Sharma 13).

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