

Research on University Library Finance in India

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Abstract

Education and libraries play a significant role in bringing about qualitative improvements in human resources. Finance plays a vital role in growth and development of libraries. This article presents statistical data about finances of university libraries of seven states taken from Ph.D theses of library & information science scholars.

1. INTRODUCTION

Human resources constitute the ultimate basis for generating wealth for nations. The development of human resources is indeed both a means as well as an end in itself; and therefore, almost all exercises pertaining to socio-economic policy formulation, and the planning and implementation strategies thereof, focus essentially on attaining the goal of human resource development'. It is the development of human resources of a nation, not its capital or its material resources, that ultimately determine the character and pace of economic and social development which, in effect, influence the quality of life of people.

The national policy on education rightly states that higher education provides people with an opportunity to reflect on critical social, economic, cultural, moral and spiritual issues facing the humanity. It contributes to national development through dissemination of

specialised knowledge and skills. It is, therefore, a crucial factor for survival².

Library is regarded as the heart of any education system. It is difficult to conceive how higher education system can achieve its goal of human resource development in a library. It is here that students and teachers come in contact with scholars of the past and present and drink deep the knowledge and wisdom of the society to develop their intellectual horizon. Thus, higher education and libraries are inextricably linked and help society by providing the necessary manpower in different fields, open new frontiers of knowledge by research, leading to all-round national development.

As education, research and development, information and knowledge have economic value, as they have significant bearing on productivity, universities spend on research and development for this purpose.

2. EXPENDITURE ON R&D

The expenditure on R&D as a percentage of GNP for the whole world in 1990 was 2.55 per cent. For the developed countries, this percentage has gone up from 2.22 per cent in 1980 to 2.62 per cent in 1985 and further to 2.9 per cent in 1990, whereas in the case of

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developing countries the percentage of these three years were 0.52 per cent, 0.54 per cent and 0.64 per cent, respectively. In other words, the developed countries, by understanding the importance of research and development in national development, spent four times more of their GNP than their counterparts in developing world, on R&D. And in terms of actual money, it is much more. Deployment of resources for higher education, research and libraries are essentially treated as investment, the fruits of which are reaped both by the individuals and the society for longer periods. Therefore, the task of making provisions for them is assumed mostly by governments.

Finance plays a vital role in growth and development of university libraries. Consequently, various commissions and committees on higher education and libraries have considered this factor from time to time and have suggested means for making provision for university libraries. Man, seminars and conferences have also given attention to this factor of university library.

In view of such a significant role of higher education and libraries in bringing about qualitative improvements in human resources, the aspects of costs and finance of the system become an interesting area of investigative research. Some of the scholars have taken up this topic of finance of university libraries for Ph.D. theses in India.

3. FINANCING OF SOME UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES IN INDIA

3.1 Delhi

The Maulana Azad Library: A Major Library of the World (1877-1988) by Ishrat Ali Qureshi⁷ is a case study of the library. It also compares the library with two other central university libraries, viz., Delhi University Library and Benaras Hindu University Library. This doctoral dissertation also touches upon the finances of university library. Its findings are:

- (a) The percentage of the library budget to the total budget of the Aligarh Muslim University has shown no significant variation over a long

period. It was 3.02 per cent in 1961-62 and 3.3 per cent in 1986-87, which is almost half of the norms recommended by the University Education Commission. However, the book budget has been showing growth every year and sometimes had big strides. The rate of growth varied, e.g., in the five year plan of 1966-67—1970-71, the rate of growth was 304 per cent.

- (b) The expenditure on books and periodicals per student in 1951-52 was only Rs. 10.63 but after 35 years the expenditure on books and periodicals per student was Rs. 298.02.
- (c) Even with so much accelerated grant, the annual intake of books does not exhibit the corresponding increase. Number of books acquired in 1951-52 by the university was 5622, whereas in 1983-84 it acquired 20,534 books.
- (d) The increase in terms of money was 30 times, whereas the corresponding increase in acquisition was less than 4 times.
- (e) The expenditure per student on books and periodicals in 1983-84 in the three universities i.e. Aligarh Muslim University, Benaras Hindu University and Delhi University was Rs. 285.94, Rs. 204.51 and Rs. 44.08, respectively.

3.2 Gujarat

A Ph.D. thesis by KS Shukla⁸ also contains a chapter on University Library Finance in Gujarat. According to this thesis, the average expenditure per plan of each of the six university libraries in Gujarat is Rs.13,62,975 from 1951-56 to 1989-90 (seven Five Year plans) and the percentage of every plan to total plan period expenditure ranges from 0.62 to 33.54. The average growth rate over starting plan reveals that it is erratic and varies from university to university. The highest is 40 times of SP University Library and the lowest 6 times of Surashtra and Bhavnagar University Libraries.

Total percentage of expenditure on university libraries in Gujarat to their university's total expenditure falls for the entire plan period is 5.55 which is found 1 per cent less than Dr. Ranganathan's recommendations of minimum of 6.5 per cent. Gujarat university libraries spent 45.44 per cent on staff salaries. Reading material, i.e., periodicals and books are getting

almost the same percentage i.e., 24.27 per cent for periodicals and 23.8 per cent on books. However, the percentage varies from university to university.

3.3 Kerala

Another Ph.D. dissertation titled *Resource Allocation in University Libraries*, by G Devarajan⁴ examines the state of financing in university libraries in Kerala from 1st plan period to 7th plan period. Findings of the study are:

- (a) External sources contribute the major portion of university revenue in Kerala. Grants from the state government constitutes the major portion of income of the universities. The income from internal sources is nevertheless on the increase from year to year. However, there was uneven growth rate of income among the universities.
- (b) The funds allocated from university budget and grants received from the UGC constituted the major sources of income of the university libraries in Kerala. No endowments were available but gifts in the form of books were received by the university libraries.
- (c) There was a wide variation in respect of revenue of the university libraries during the plan periods. An year-wise comparison of university allocation and UGC grants to libraries in Kerala showed that the university allocation to libraries had shown a steady increase over the plan periods whereas the UGC grants had been of a varying nature.
- (d) There was a high degree of positive correlation between the total university revenue and total library revenue in the university libraries in Kerala during the plan periods. The correlation coefficient was +0.999 in the Kerala University Library, +0.997 in the Calicut University library and +0.984 in the Cochin University Library.
- (e) The growth rate of expenditure during the plan periods was 28 times, 9 times and 40 times in the Universities of Kerala, Calicut and Cochin University of Science and Technology, respectively.
- (f) A plan-wise expenditure pattern showed that the rate of increase was not uniform from plan to plan in the universities. The trend in expenditure on recurring items confirmed the fact that the expenditure in libraries was

primarily recurring. The growth rate of recurring expenditure from plan to plan was more or less uniform. The growth rate from the 1st Plan to 7th Plan was 246 times, 13 times and 39 times in the Kerala, Calicut and Cochin University Libraries (from 4th to 7th Plan), respectively.

- (g) All the three university libraries under study had spent only a negligible percentage on binding.
- (h) The ratio of expenditure on salaries, books and periodicals and other items varied from library to library. It was 5:2:1 in the Kerala University Library, and 19:9:1 and 1:2:2 in the Calicut and Cochin University Libraries, respectively.
- (i) The percentage of university library expenditure in relation to university expenditure in Kerala varied from 0.35 per cent to 5.66 per cent during the plan periods. The study revealed that the yearwise estimate of university library expenditure in relation to university expenditure varied from 0.28 per cent to 7.41 per cent.
- (j) The average per capita expenditure in the Kerala, Calicut and Cochin University Libraries was Rs. 11.38, 8.61 and 91.05, respectively. The state average of per capita expenditure in the university libraries was only 13.58. By applying the norm suggested by Dr SR Ranganathan (Rs 100 per student) the Kerala, Calicut and Cochin University Libraries fall short by Rs. 3193.1 lakh, Rs. 1528.98 lakh, and Rs. 18.8 lakh, respectively.

Users' opinion was also sought by the author. Results revealed that:

- (a) The physical facilities and equipment were not available at the desired level in Kerala University Libraries.
- (b) The different types of reading materials which were very essential to users for study, teaching and research programmes were not available in adequate number. This had stood in the way of the university libraries in fulfilling the requirements of users effectively for supporting the objectives of the university.
- (c) The manpower of the university libraries in Kerala was competent and adequate in number to provide services to the user community.

- (d) The user community in the university libraries in Kerala was not adequately aware of the existing services provided by the libraries.
- (e) Also the existing services were not suitably organised for fulfilling the actual requirements of users. This was due to lack of proper user education and user studies.

3.4 Madhya Pradesh

The first such attempt was by Late Dr Tejomurthy⁷. His Ph.D. thesis titled *University Library Finances in Madhya Pradesh* gives pictures of overall growth of expenditure of university libraries in Madhya Pradesh from 1st plan period to 1980. The author prepared growth rate indices of each university. He concluded that the expenditure is rising. He, however, noted that the proportion of library expenditure to total expenditure has gone down to 5 per cent from 25 per cent during the plan period, whereas the total enrolment in post-graduate departments has increased ten times from an average of 300 students per university to about 3000 students per university.

His findings are as under:

- (a) Other things being equal, more senior university libraries, like Sagar University Library have spent higher percentage of their total amount on recurring items, and junior university libraries, like Bhopal University Library have spent lower percentage of their funds on recurring items.
- (b) More senior university libraries have spent lower percentage of their funds on non-recurring items, and less senior university libraries have spent higher percentage of their funds on non-recurring items.
- (c) About 40-60 per cent of the total library expenditure in different university libraries is being spent on the purchase of books, periodicals and other kindred materials.
- (d) Staff salaries and wages form about 5 to 35 per cent of the total expenditure.
- (e) Backward university libraries like Awadesh Pratap Singh University, Rewa spend higher percentage of their expenditure on miscellaneous items.

3.5 Punjab

University Library Finance: A Case Study of Punjab by Saroj Bala⁸ has been a recent Ph.D. thesis on the topic. It has compared the finances of three universities of Punjab, i.e., Punjab University, Chandigarh; Punjabi University, Patiala; and Guru Nanak Dev University, Amritsar. She states that over the four decades (1952-53 to 1991-92), the university revenue registered a growth rate of 4.33 per cent per annum and the expenditure 4.64 per cent per annum.

Almost two-thirds (64.37 per cent) of the annual average finance has been originated from external sources.

Between the external and internal raising revenues, the external revenue registered a marked positive growth of 9.86 per cent per annum during 1952-53 to 1991-92 and the internal revenue a negative growth of 1.22 per cent per annum.

Academic expenditure registered a 4.93 per cent per annum growth for the three universities taken together, it was 4.02 per cent per annum in the case of academic support component.

Of the three constituents of scale formation—teaching and research, library and improvement of education, the maximum per annum growth rate is of teaching and research (8.78 per cent) followed by expenditure on library (5.75 per cent) and improvement of education (2.95 per cent). Administration related expenditure registered a higher growth rate of 5.50 per cent per annum and the miscellaneous expenditure grew at relatively low rate of 3.34 per cent per annum.

A temporal association of each of the sub-constituents of expenditure with the overall university expenditure reveals that a one per cent change in university expenditure induces a proportional change in each of its constituents but for the two exceptions: (i) expenditure on examination and (ii) expenditure on improvement of education. In the former case, there is no association and in the latter case it is less than unit elastic. The behaviour of different components of expenditure of three

universities, over their life span, is similar to overall behaviour of Punjab.

Weight of library expense in the academic budget has, on an average annual basis, been at the state level (Punjab) was 7.01 per cent during 1952-53 to 1991-92. Across the three universities, the average share was maximum in Guru Nanak Dev University (14.06 per cent) and minimum in Punjab University (5.38 per cent).

The log-linear relation yields elasticity coefficient of more than unity, 1.410, i.e., a one per cent increase in library budget. However, a linear relation yields a marginal co-efficient of less than unit value (0.03), i.e., a one rupee increase in academic budget induces an increase of 3 paise in library budget.

The relative weights of salaries, books, periodicals, binding and miscellaneous in the university library budget of Punjab is 39.11 per cent, 12.82 per cent, 31.33 per cent, 1.09 per cent and 15.65 per cent, respectively. Interestingly, the expenditure allocated to the constituents of library budget do not differ among the three university libraries in respect of two sub-categories, namely, salaries ($F = 0.45$) and books ($F = 0.61$) where F -values yielded by ANOVA test are statistically not significant.

Although university library funds have, even expressed in terms of constant prices (1980-81 = 100), grown at the rate of around 5 per cent per annum, in each of the three universities, the growth in the number of volumes added to the collection has been nominal.

Besides these three Ph.D. dissertations, many Ph.D. candidates, who have investigated growth and development of various university libraries, have also touched upon this topic.

There is also a chapter on Financial Management in Development and Growth of University Libraries and Their Services in Punjab—a thesis for Ph.D. degree by Trishanjit Kaur. Her findings are that library budgets over the years have also increased along with university budgets. However, there was no corresponding growth in the library outlay in the universities of Punjab. And in real terms, after deflation, the growth of expenditure was

only two times in Punjab University, five times in Punjabi University, two times in the Punjab Agricultural University and three times in Guru Nanak Dev University.

3.6. Rajasthan

There is a chapter on Financial Management in SP Sood's¹⁰ Ph.D. thesis on University Libraries in Rajasthan: Their Development and Management. This study reveals that out of the seven university libraries whose data on finance were available, none was getting the percentage of amount as recommended by various committees/commissions, i.e., 6.5 to 10 per cent during 1986-87 to 1990-91; the range was between 0.9 per cent to 6.29 per cent. The lowest 0.9 per cent was allotted by Rajasthan University to its library in 1986-87 and the highest 6.29 per cent was by Kota Open University in 1988-89. The lowest expenditure (25.52 per cent) was that of Kota Open University and the highest is of Rajasthan University, i.e., 61.5 per cent.

3.7 Uttar Pradesh

Dr. Sonal Singh⁴ in her doctorate dissertation titled 'The Development of University Libraries in Uttar Pradesh after Independence' has also given a chapter on University Library Finance. There were twenty universities in Uttar Pradesh at that time, out of which she has provided information for 12 universities. She has studied the amount allocated to libraries by their universities out of the university budgets for the years 1947, 1957, 1967, 1977 and 1987. During 1983-84, out of nine university libraries, six were receiving less than 6 per cent of university budget. The lowest was 2.04 per cent of Garhwal University. The highest was 5.99 per cent received by the University of Gorakhpur. Interestingly three of the universities, i.e., Meerut University, University of Allahabad and University of Lucknow, provided 9.8 per cent, 13.34 per cent and 22.8 per cent respectively of their budget for libraries.

She concludes that old university libraries like Agra, Allahabad, Lucknow and Meerut were generally allocated higher amounts as compared to the newer ones like Bundelkhand, Avadh and Garhwal.

The University Grants Commission provided mainly three types of grants, viz., recurring, non-recurring and ad hoc. The recurring grants were mainly for the purchase of books and periodicals. She found that there was persistent and steep increase in the recurring grant to the university libraries of Uttar Pradesh with some exceptions here and there. The bigger libraries like Agra, Allahabad, Meerut and Lucknow received increasingly more money as compared to the newer and smaller ones like Bundelkhand and Avadh. Some of these universities also received ad hoc grants and non-recurring grants for specific purposes such as construction of library building and/or its extension, purchase of furniture and equipment, modernisation of libraries, etc.

She was of the view that the grants were not sufficient and some of the reasons for these were that libraries were mostly under honorary librarian during initial stages of their establishment who had hardly any vision of requirements of these libraries. The highest is of Rajasthan Universities, 61.5 per cent. She also laments that though the visiting teams of the University Grants Commission do visit the universities and assess their needs, yet the absence of the library expert from the quinquennial visiting committees certainly mars its utility for libraries.

4. FINANCES OF AGRICULTURAL LIBRARIES

RG Prasher⁴ in his study titled *Managing University Libraries* has given a full chapter on library finances. His findings are as follows:

- (a) The percentage of expenditure on agricultural university libraries is much below what has been accepted by the Indian Council of Agricultural Research. Except for one university library, Bidhan Chandra Krishi Vishwavidyalaya which spends 4.6 per cent, the percentage of expenditure varied from 3.78 per cent to as low as 0.2 per cent.
- (b) Budget of almost every agricultural university library showed an increase during the successive years, but this increase had not been in proportion to the increase in the university budget itself. It was less.

- (c) The increase in budget for each successive year had also not been keeping pace with the rising costs of reading material.
- (d) Expenditure on the staff at Punjab Agriculture University, Indian Agricultural Institute, Govind Ballabh Pant University of Agriculture and Technology, Haryana Agricultural University, during 1975-76 was respectively 35.36 per cent, 26.31 per cent, 19.56 per cent and 22.60 per cent of their total budgets. As also in that year, the libraries of University of Agricultural Sciences, Punjabrao Krishi Vidyapeeth, and Bidhari Chandra Krishi Vishwavidyalaya spent 20.21 per cent, 27.93 per cent, 16.14 per cent and 14.16 per cent of their respective budgets on the staff salary.
5. Out of the total number of 20 agricultural university libraries, 15 (75 per cent) spent over 50 per cent of their budget on the reading material, while four (20 per cent) spent over 40 to 50 per cent and only one spent 30 to 40 per cent on it.
6. The Punjab Agriculture Library in each successive year procured less number of books and periodicals in agrobiological sciences since 1971-72. The rising cost of books and periodicals in the world market, the falling value of rupee, and almost static funds, were responsible for this low procurement and for leaving out some of important publications.

5. IIT LIBRARIES

Mrs SP Singh in her Ph.D. study titled *Indian Institute of Technology Libraries in India: An Evaluative Study of their Growth, Development and Services*, among other things has studied financial growth of all the five IITs in India. Her findings revealed that from 1961-62 to 1991-92, share of allocation out of budget of their respective institutes varied. Allocation in IIT libraries at Delhi, Kanpur and Kharagpur varied between 1.31 per cent and 4.22 per cent, 1.55 per cent and 4.92 per cent, 0.87 per cent and 4.42 per cent respectively, whereas at Madras and Bombay, it varied between 1.30 per cent, 1.91 per cent, 1.00 per cent and 2.86 per cent, respectively.

The per capita expenditure during the First Plan varied between Rs. 11 in 1950-51 and Rs. 9 in 1955-56 which further rose to about Rs. 15 in 1959-60 and Rs. 19 in 1962-63.

6. UGC AND UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES

Pattern and development of university libraries by V Venkata Ramana⁹ also contains chapters on UGC and University Libraries: Financial Pattern of University Libraries and Cost Effects on Libraries. It has studied finances of eleven university libraries in Andhra Pradesh for five year period, i.e, from 1985-86 to 1989-90.

The findings revealed that non-plan recurring expenditure on university library services for the state government funded universities was less than 3 per cent, while it was 13.19 per cent on the university services out of the total university expenditure in case of the University of Hyderabad supported by UGC funds. Further, the state government was not providing funds uniformly or based on any formula. The funds were inadequate both for maintenance and development. The growth in the student enrolment has no relation to its funds. To illustrate, Osmania and Andhra Universities were serving equal population and had identical number of faculties and departments but Osmania University Library's expenditure was half the expenditure of Andhra University Library so was the case with Kakatiya and Sri Krishnadevaraya University Libraries.

The UGC has been giving much importance to all the university library services, but there is a decrease in allocations year after year for the library services maintenance—while the student enrolment showed steady increase, except in case of the Andhra University which did not face any decrease in the expenditure. On the other hand, the study indicated that the maintenance grant allocation to the Central University of Hyderabad showed steady increase year after year and did not suffer any cuts in the five year span.

The ever increasing journal prices and the escalation of foreign exchange conversion rates had seriously effected the budgets and curtailed the renewal of journals. Library staff salaries were the most unavoidable item of expenditure given due importance by the universities at the cost of other essential libraries services.

7. CONCLUSIONS

Thus, so far out of 25 states in India, some data about finances of university libraries of 7 states is available. There are not only gaps in information but the forms and format of collected data, period coverage, etc. also varied. Some have taken only a five-year period while some have collected information for quite a long period. There is a need to study this very important topic at all India level to draw meaningful conclusions.

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