

CONSERVATION OF LIBRARY SPACE IN PRESENT AGE

Dr Jyoti Misra

Abstract: *It is hard to deny the fact that almost all the libraries in world are facing the space problem for accommodating the physical collection of books, providing space for users' services, making provision for cyber library, storing electronic formats of information, storing torn books, electronic scrapes etc. within their limited space and budget. It is becoming very difficult for the librarians to maintain a hybrid library in such situation. These issues are discussed in the context of the Tagore library of Lucknow University, Uttar Pradesh. Tagore library is the central research library of the Lucknow University. It is passing through the transition phase and facing the challenges posed by ICT. Conservation of space is one of the biggest problems of the library in present time. It is suggested that by weeding out the collection and by establishing collaborative repositories in their regions, university libraries may be able to conserve more space in their libraries for future requirements.*

Keywords: Collaborative-repositories, Cybrary, E-books, INFLIBNET, Shodhganga, SOUL, Tagore Library, Weeding Policy.

1. Introduction:

In this new age of ICT, Libraries are involved in procuring, storing and disseminating information in digital formats. Libraries are purchasing e-books, online databases, e-journals, etc. and thus enriching their digital collection. It is aware that Libraries are also maintaining a huge collection of books/journals in physical format simultaneously. Libraries are passing through transition phase. Librarian has to maintain a library which is hybrid in nature. This new form of library is posing new challenges and issues before the library world. Conferences and discussions are organised at national and international level to tackle these issues. However, the real problem of library is ignored, i.e. space constraints. According to fifth law of library science, library is a growing organism. Library collection grows on with the passing years. Most of the libraries in world are facing the space problem for accommodating their physical collection of books and at the same time providing space for users' services, making provision for cyber library, storing electronic formats of information, etc. within their limited space and budget. It is becoming very difficult for the librarians to maintain balance between these two different situations, i.e. on one hand, he has to preserve the already existing collection in stacks which is growing with every purchase while on the other hand, he has to make room for digital collections/library for its survival in new age. Librarians are forced to maintain both kinds of collection in one single space. Besides, libraries are also facing the problems of accumulation of less used materials and electronic scrapes which occupy the larger space in the library.

The Tagore Library of Lucknow University is facing such problems. It is becoming very difficult for the library to accommodate growing physical collection of books in its stack and at the same time to find space for creating digital library.

2. Tagore Library of Lucknow University: A Brief Profile

Tagore Library is the central research library of the University of Lucknow. It is known as one of the oldest, well organized and richest libraries of India. The Tagore Library came into existence with the establishment of the Lucknow University late in the year 1920. The plan of the new building for the library was prepared by Mr. Griffin, a noted architect. Foundation stone of the new building (present building) was laid by the then Chancellor Sir Harry Haig in March 1937. The Chancellor – Governor Sir M. Hallet, opened the new library building (the present library building) on 2nd April, 1941. Later on, the present library building was extended and the extended portion was inaugurated during the Golden Jubilee Function of the University on 9th March 1972, by the then President of India Sri V.V. Giri.

2.1 Librarian:

The Tagore Library is Headed by the Honorary Librarian. There is no permanent librarian in the library though there is permanent post of the Librarian.

2.2 Collection of the Library:

The Tagore Library houses not only books, but also has a good collection of rare manuscripts, paintings, art objects, ancient coins, theses and research journals.

Items	Number
Books	5,53,864
Thesis	10,000
Bound Journals	50,000
Manuscripts	2,000
On-Line Electronic journals & data bases available through INFLIBNET, Gandhinagar	10,000+

2.3 Library Grant: The annual grant of the Tagore Library is Rs. 25 lakhs sanctioned by the State Govt. Besides annual grant, library also receives grants from UGC in plan period for purchase of books and journals.

2.4 Working Hours: The working hours of the Library are from 8:00 a.m. to 8:00 p.m. except during summer vacation. The Library remains closed on Sundays, National Holidays, Gazetted Holidays and other holidays declared by the University.

2.5 Sections of the Library: There are following sections in the Tagore library:

1.	Acquisition section
2.	English & Modern European Language Processing section
3.	Hindi and Sanskrit Processing section
4.	Urdu and Oriental Processing section
5.	Circulation section
6.	Periodical section
7.	Reference section
8.	Reading Hall
9.	Manuscripts section
10.	Arts Gallery
11.	Bindery

12.	Office
13.	Air – Conditioning & Electrical section
14.	Photostat section
15.	Computer Browsing room
16.	Data Entry room
17.	News Papers and magazines section
18.	Air Conditioned Auditorium with 100 seating capacity

2.6 Services offered: The Tagore Library has been providing following services to its users:

1.	Book Borrowing facility
2.	Reading facility
3.	Reference service
4.	Research facility
5.	Free consultation services to visitors of the library
6.	Online e-journals browsing and e-mail facility
7.	Photostat facility @ 0.75 paisa per copy

3. Impact of ICT on Tagore Library:

As ICT had started showing its impact in libraries during 90s, Tagore library was also not untouched with the impact of ICT. As a result, two computers, (model 486), one modem, one dot matrix printer and one telephone line was acquired in the library in the year 1995. Library started to provide email services to its research-scholars and faculty members by connecting to SIRNET, new Delhi through dial up services. At that time, Tagore library was the only library in Uttar Pradesh to provide email services to its users.

3.1 Transition phase of the Tagore library

In the year 1997, Tagore Library received non-refundable fund of Rs.Fifty lakhs from the Inflibnet to develop infrastructural facilities for automation work. Library purchased server, computers and network switch and developed LAN within the library to provide Internet services to its users. It developed computer browsing room in existing space by readjusting other services. Inlibnet played a key role in establishing infrastructural facilities for computer based services in the library. Since then, library has been continuously involved in acquiring new computers, hardware/ software for providing more efficient internet services to its users. Addition of new ICT based services in library is requiring more space.

3.2. Access to Digital Library Consortium of UGC Infonet

Since 2004, Inlibnet has been providing access to scholarly electronic journals and databases to Lucknow University through U.G.C. – Infonet Digital Library consortium. More than ten thousands full text electronic journals & databases of reputed publishers are available to research community of the Lucknow University through Inlibnet.

3.3. Membership of Network and National Programme:

Tagore Library had acquired the institutional membership of DEINET, new Delhi in the year 2008. Since then, services of DELNET is being provided to library users. Tagore Library has also become the member of Shodh-Ganga programme of the Inflibnet recently.

3.4. Library Management Software

Library has also acquired 'SOUL' library management software developed by the Inflibnet recently. Database of collection is being generated.

4. Challenges posed by ICT

Though application of ICT in library has facilitated development of computer based services but at the same time it is posing challenges and problems before the library which are as follows:

- Hybrid nature of library- Librarian has to acquire books & journals in printed form as well as he has to purchase E-books, academic databases and E-journals as per demand of research community. He has to accommodate both kinds of information products in limited space and budget.
- Library has created workstation for digitisation work and computer-room for online database searching by readjusting space which were meant for teachers and research-scholars. There is also pressure to create cyber-library within limited space.
- Physical collection of books and journals is growing every year with every purchase and space is shrinking. Space is required for storing torn books/mutilated books, etc. until they are repaired and restored at their places. Space constraint is the biggest problem.
- Due to the problem of technical obsolescence, obsolete computer machines and other peripherals have to be replaced with new ones from time to time. Electronic scrapes is thus being accumulated. Space is also required to store this kind of scrapes till their disposal.

5. Need for Conservation of Space:

With the advent of e-publishing and digitisation of information, the libraries are realising that there was hardly any need to acquire and process documents in print media. But the reality is not so. The print publishing has continued to flourish till today. Most of the Indian journals are not available online. Steve Connor says "of the 22000 peer reviewed journals across the globe, only 10000 are available in digital form. This is an indicator that the libraries have to continue with acquisition and processing of their print holdings." [1] Besides, accumulation of books, electronic scrapes and other unused materials in library occupies a larger space while at the same time library faces the problems of accommodating increasing growth of physical collection and creating room for newer ICT based services introduced in the library. The biggest challenge before the library is to conserve the space for future growth. The lack of storage in academic libraries has been increasingly attracting international interest. Therefore a solution has to be worked out which is suitable to both the librarians and the users.

6. Solutions for Conservation of Space in University Library:

The most possible solutions which can be adopted by the library to meet the challenges of space constraint are: weeding out the collection, and creating collaborative repositories for less used collection.

6.1. Weeding out the collection

Collection development is the process of adding new materials to the library to benefit the university community.[2] Weeding is the removal of materials from the library collection that are no longer needed or viable and is a standard practice in managing a library's collection. Weeding is important in keeping a collection vibrant, relevant, and useable. It assists in preventing stacks from becoming overcrowded. It makes remaining materials more visible and accessible.

Library is required to set forth criteria for weeding purpose in its collection development policy. Faculty members who are also subject specialist may be asked to review the collection for weeding purposes. Each subject specialist shall review, evaluate and weed his/her collection areas on a regular basis, using the following guidelines:

- Frequency of use. Circulation and other statistics may be examined. Items that are not in demand may be eligible for weeding.
- Curriculum needs in the subject specialist's area(s).
- Currency of information contained in an item. The importance of this factor will vary with the discipline.
- Existence of multiple copies of the same title and edition, especially of low use items. These may be weeded. However, the recognized importance of a work, edition, and author may encourage a decision for retaining.
- Superseded works, especially ones with little historical importance, may be weeded.
- Physical condition of an item or set. Materials that are badly deteriorated or missing key parts may be withdrawn at the discretion of the subject specialist. As a general guideline, items that will be discarded should not be rare or difficult to obtain from other libraries. Therefore, as alternatives to discarding, the subject specialist may opt to have material transferred to off-site storage or sent to the Preservation Department for treatment or facsimile reproduction. Rare materials may be transferred to the Dept. of Special Collections in accordance with that department's acceptance criteria or damaged items may be replaced if they are available for purchase as new or used items in good condition.
- Materials available in other formats in the library or online may be weeded, especially when they are low use and not rare.
- Items with regional or special interest to our collections and users should not be weeded unless they are held in multiple copies. Each Library subject specialist is also responsible for delivering weeded material to the Library technical service staff for appropriate attention, including the modification of cataloguing records, transference of items, or needed preservation treatment.
- Materials which are withdrawn from the collection may be sold, donated, distributed, recycled, or discarded, at the Library's sole discretion.[3] Less used materials may also be sent to regional repository if exists.

6.2. Creating Repository for withdrawal materials:

After weeding the collection, it is needed to store the less used collection to some place from where they may be retrieved easily whenever required by the library in future. For this purpose, repositories are required. The concept of repositories was first introduced by Eliot way back in 1902. He was of the opinion that rapid access to well organised repository is probably quicker than retrieving un-catalogued material from the deeper recesses of individual library collection.[4] IFLA also conducted a survey on repository plan and models. It was a part of the provision of basic data to the elements of UAP (Universal Availability of Publications Programme) which states that “the repository is to ensure that books and other material acquired by the libraries in a country continue to be available for use even though local libraries may no longer be able to retain them...repositories are needed simply because libraries run out of space and because even when this condition does not apply, some have continuing policy of withdrawal.”[5]

It is an accepted fact that most of the libraries are facing the space problem to house their collections. Academic libraries, especially university libraries are facing this problem more as they have to procure books on diverse subjects and their serial holdings is also very large. Tagore Library is also facing the same problem. Library stacks are overstuffed. Extension of building is very expensive and budget is limited. All this have made the repository an attractive option for storing less used materials.

6.3. Collaborative Repositories

The institutions with common objective regarding their less used collection can join hands to form a collaborative repository. The university libraries of a region may collaborate and preserve their less used collection under a single roof. It forms a collaborative repository. In a successful collaborative repository the participating libraries should not only share the space and the cost involved but also should share the approach to the collection in terms of growth, shape, management and access. Collaborative repositories offer a shared space in which collection deposited by different libraries are maintained under a common regime: they are included in a common inventory control system, subjected to common standards for bar codes and labelling and shelved in standardized units. Their circulation is managed by a single organization.[6]

Collaborative repositories could also be very economical ventures. As O’Connor suggests an average of 373 volumes per square meter as opposed to the conventional library, which is around 145 volumes per square meter.[7] The universities libraries of a particular geographical area may come forward to start a collaborative repository.

6.4. Benefits of establishing a Collaborative Repository

- The problem of space constraints in the libraries will be solved.
- The life of the less used collection will be lengthened under controlled environmental conditions in the repository.
- The new collection can be accommodated easily.
- The libraries can make room for IT based services.
- The collection in the library will be easier to maintain.
- Users will have access to the valuable collection of other universities libraries through the repository.

- The administrative authorities will be relieved from the pressure for extension of library buildings.

7. Collaborative Repositories of the world

Some of the leading collaborative repositories of the world are as follows:

1. CRL Centre for research libraries, Chicago is a leading repository. It was founded in 1949 as a regional repository by 10 Midwestern Universities and now has 150 member colleges and universities. Its holdings consist of low use primary source materials for research.
2. The Five College Repository of Ohio was founded in 1995 with funding from the Andrew W. Melton Foundation. The participating five colleges are Hampshire College, Amherst College, Mount Holyoke College, Smith College and University of Massachusetts. This collaborative repository offers substantial cost savings through the elimination of duplication of copies stored in the repository and it guarantees ready access to original paper copies of research materials.
3. CAVAL the Cooperative Action by Victorian Academic Libraries was started in Australia in the year 1970. It is a cooperatively funded inter-institutional repository. The CAVAL Archival and Research Materials (CARM) centre preserves last copies of valuable but low usage archival and research material. Its mission is to enhance the effectiveness of the educational and research activities of its member institutions.
4. CASS or the Collaborative Academic Store for Scotland was established in 2004 as a joint initiative between the Scottish Confederation of University and Research Libraries (SCURL) and the National Library of Scotland (NLS) to Store the less used materials which is of continuing value to researchers.
5. The National Repository Library of Finland was founded in 1989 as a repository to be shared by the libraries of Finland. It receives and stores published materials from other libraries and makes them available for use to the country's academic, public and special libraries. It participates in co-operative cataloguing for the development of union catalogue. It is funded by the Government of Finland.

8. Collaborative Repository Plan for University Libraries in India

Scarcity of space is a universal problem faced by the libraries all over world. In India, university libraries are no exception. The rate of acquisitions has outgrown the space available. The limited budgets do not allow for library extensions. In such a situation in India, if each state establishes collaborative repository, the burden on the librarians will lessen and only active collection can be maintained in the libraries.

8.1 Working of Collaborative Repository

- All the university libraries of each state will collaborate to form a state level repository library where their valuable and less used collection is preserved in a separate building and provided access to the users whenever necessary.
- Such a repository will have a governing body for policy matter and administration matters. This body will maintain the interstate repository transactions and frame guidelines according to the changing needs of the user communities from time to time.

- The less used collection from the state repository can be accessed by the user of any participating library and in turn, if any library wants to use the books from repository library of other state, it can directly do so.
- Hence, there will be a network among the state repository libraries. This network is monitored by governing body which frames set of guidelines for their operations.
- Initially the network may be started in few states where the number of old libraries with huge collection is more and the transactions may be limited to the universities of that state. The strengths and weaknesses of the network should be identified and the guidelines and policies must be framed accordingly.
- Further, the network may be operated on zonal basis like North, South, West, East and Central. India being a very diverse country, the needs of each state will be varied. Hence the needs should be identified first in libraries of each zone before establishment of repository.
- The governing body must first plan in detail for establishment of the repository regarding the role of each participating library, the financing body, the administrative staff maintenance, etc. which are agreeable to all the participating libraries. A network can be successful only when the members are involved with equal zeal to achieve a common goal.[8]

9. Conclusion:

Accommodating the growing collection is a big challenge faced by the librarians across the world. There is no denying the fact that only the collection goes on increasing but there is no corresponding extension of building and other infrastructure due to limited budgets. This results in problem for accommodating the new additions in the library. The introduction of ICT in libraries has made it necessary to create room for digital services in the limited space and budget of the library. Librarians are under pressure to maintain hybrid library. In this scenario, space constraint is an obvious problem of university libraries. Weeding of collection and creating collaborative repositories for storing the less used collection are proposed as possible solution. Librarian can conserve the space in its library by adopting weeding policy and storing weeded materials in collaborative repositories. Collaborative repositories are established to conserve and transmit authentic documents of historical or scientific value for the generation to come. Librarians should start thinking beyond their institutions and it is time that they should agree that the strength of library is not the quantity of its collection but in promoting the relationship between libraries, between library and users and to strengthen the network to quicken the flow of knowledge.

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