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# **Social Consciousness of Business School Libraries: An overview of Library extension activities at Rajagiri Centre for Business Studies, Kerala, India**

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## **Abstract:**

Educational institutions are the place where the significance of social consciousness and activeness can be made evident to society. Institutional libraries have an indisputable role to do this wellness. The paper tries to highlight and focus on some successful design and implementation of various services for the extension at the Rajagiri Centre for Business Studies Libraries. The study examines the challenges and opportunities of a library within the capacity of a B-school institution. In addition, the study also discusses the role of academic libraries and librarians in using their resources for the betterment of society. The aim of the study is to put light on the practical aspect with the case study of how to correlate the involvement of the library staff and its resources for the socially relevant academic extension programmes. The main focus of the paper is to enrich the role of socially responsible librarianship within the ability of a business school Library.

**Keywords: Social Consciousness, Business School Libraries, Library Extension Programmes, Academic Business School Librarianship**

## **Introduction:**

Library movement has a significant role in the growth of Information science field in India. Post-independence, Universalization of education systems has led to the growth in the population of literate and educated citizens in India. For the same, facilitating educated people with sufficient documentary and knowledge resources, government and other agencies have established different types of libraries. The society information centres and village knowledge centres are the current additions to this effort that would transform India into an information society, where information and knowledge resources are considered as prime and significant factors for development. Here, Academic libraries like University, College, School libraries have a very important role among students, faculty and Researchers etc. (Prashar, 2007). Global Economy and the development of information and communication technologies together with economic and technological factors which stimulated those changes to allow discussing the formation of a new society. The change of society is analyzed in several dimensions, according to environments (i.e. technological, economic, social, and cultural) and turns in information's infrastructure. Along with a changing society, social institutions face the changing needs of their creators. The library is not an exception.

Enhanced requirements indicate to reconsider the present roles of a library in the social system as well as the adoption of new functions. The survival of the Business schools and its libraries both in the medium and long term depends on its economic feasibility, commitment to environmental sustainability and socially responsible performance ( **Laura Juchnevic,2014**)

### **Importance of Management/Business School Education:**

Management Education is aiming to bring out competent and authoritative manpower, required for the development of trade and business which lead to the economic and industrial growth of the country. The core objective of Management education is to develop a system useful for entrepreneurs, industry and Society. The basic aim and purpose are to develop professionals, entrepreneurs and socially responsible leaders and managers. Globalization, liberalization and privatization have a monumental influence on the business environment and education everywhere including India. This field is witnessing exponential growth in terms of the number of institutes imparting Business/management education which is usually termed as Business Schools (B-Schools). It gained importance in a very short period and is acting as an emerging discipline. Management education in India gained demand with the opening of the economy in 1991. (**Prashar, 2007**)

### **Management\Business Education in Kerala-Background:**

The state of Kerala is famous across the globe for its remarkable achievements in education and in delivering social services. Kerala's literacy rate of 100 per cent has already become a 'catchphrase' inside and outside India. Consecutive governments contributed to these developments giving priorities to all levels of education. Kerala's performance in the area of education is widely recognized and has been intensely researched. It is one state in India which attained a high level of, if not total, literacy and near-universal elementary education. Kerala has conquered all the Millennium Progress Goals set for education ahead of time. Universal literacy, near-universal school enrolment and low dropout rate are some of the features of the State's learning system. (**Tatiana Belousova 2018**)

Kerala, the most literate state in India, has been flourishing in Business Management education with more than eighty plus Business schools in the state. The realization of global competitiveness has become an inevitable factor for the survival and growth of business schools. In the context of global competitiveness, it is essential to ensure that the B-schools in Kerala does not lose its importance in the international arena and needs future global managers with qualities and competencies in an international perspective. Business Schools are the educational institutions that mould and cultivate Management professionals to face the challenges of the competitive corporate world. The realization of global competitiveness has become an inevitable factor for the survival and growth of business schools. In the context of global competitiveness, it is essential to ensure that the B-schools in Kerala does not lose its importance in the international arena and needs future global managers with qualities and competencies in an international perspective (**M.H Salim, Malika Sankar 2016**) The growing demand for management graduates in the private and public sector has led to a number of institutions offering quality management education in Kerala. These Management /B schools have created a rich legacy by grooming students to be world-class managers of the future. The management institutes profiled have highly experienced and dedicated faculty, coupled with state of the art facilities and cutting edge infrastructure that enables them to offer students deeper learning experience. Their industry-academia connect and campus incubation

centres have also evolved with time. There are around 80 plus B-School Libraries in Kerala working under Government and Self-financing setup. Each of them uses different methods to manage their skills and competency for Providing Business Information as well as General Services. To examine the key skills and competency in management and to develop a core competency framework among the business school librarians is one of the basic concerns which we are looking forward to being sorted out. (**Times of India, Premier B Schools of Kerala 2016**)

The district wise list of Management\Business school institutes run by the government and private management in Kerala during 2018-2019 is shown in Table 1 (*data retrieved from Kerala Technological University (KTU) website, <https://ktu.edu.in/>*)

**Table 1: Management/B School Institution Governing type list**

Sl no	Institution Type	Total
1	Government	4
2	Government Aided	1
3	University-managed Govt	1
4	Private-Unaided	82
<b>Total</b>		<b>88</b>

### **Role of Business School Libraries:**

The business School libraries express a purpose not just to collect, but also to organize, preserve, and make knowledge accessible to all in an easy way. The Academic Libraries like Business school libraries play an important role in higher education's core missions of research and development. These Libraries support learning, teaching, research and other educational functions appropriate to their parent institutions. Academic and research libraries have been early adopters of digital technologies and have provided leadership and training to their users. Yesterday's academic libraries were defined primarily by their collections. Today's libraries are characterized according to their collections, content, services, and expertise in extension activities. Librarians will be skilled professionals who understand and work comfortably, integrally, and much more collaboratively within a wide range of disciplines and among the mass of newly developed and developing interdisciplinary areas (**Tim wales (2014)**).

21<sup>st</sup> century is generally described as an age of information revolution, information explosion, information overload, information technology etc. The use and application of technology are changing the shape and practices followed in libraries and information centres. Libraries and information centres' are not only equipped with materials in traditional formats but also in acquiring materials in electronic formats offering users avast selection and choice of getting fast information. The library is also known as the academic heart of the institute. Business School libraries also play a pivotal role like other libraries and have to face the same challenges. Institutes imparting higher education involve learning, teaching and research. The students, faculty and teachers are involved and for them, the library is a pivotal node and would like to extract more advantages from the library's collection. ICT has benefited the libraries and helps in automating libraries, developing networking of libraries, development of IR, use of internet and intranet for

information collection and dissemination, generation of digital information resources in the form of e-books and e-journals, creation of digital libraries etc. The Business School libraries are treated as academic as they serve the academicians and students but the nature of education makes it a special library in which collection is in a particular Business/Management stream. The collection comprises of textbooks, reference books, periodicals, case studies, project reports, multimedia, CDs, GATT publications and other reports etc. The Business/Management personnel's are the major beneficiaries of the collection hence the libraries attached to the management institutes are academic as well as special. This type of nature requires more skills from the part of librarians to perform the task well for fulfilling the needs of users. The business education is proliferating and growing along with the expectations of the users. Business school libraries are also changing their practices and using ICT to fulfil the demands of the users (C,Theakston 2017). The importance of libraries in Business and management sector is increasing as these libraries are acting as information centres and creating library networks to share the resources. Business and management education is using more ICT applications and laptops are allowed in the classrooms. preference to an online course is gearing appeal in the Business/management sector. The use of the internet for gathering information is increasing through various sites and libraries. Modern technology is making an impact on the management of information society. An application of ICT is a boon to libraries but a need to find how to make use it better. The change is inevitable in the field of management science due to information explosion, limited or shrinking budgets, rising prices of documents etc. and an accurate solution to this is the use of ICT. The Business School institutes are initiating online demonstrations and use of websites in the classrooms. There is also a wide use of laptops due to the use of Wi-Fi technology for the interactive learning sessions during the lectures. The course contents, case studies, presentations and CDs are made available on the intranet of the institute and hence libraries are facing different issues like e-collection, e-resource utility, online connectivity from the libraries and hence library professionals need to adapt skills necessary to manage the libraries in this technological era (Prasad,2011). Though Business School libraries are considered as academic libraries they differ in few aspects and are also considered as special libraries due to their collection and services to specialized users are sometimes different.

### **Definition of Key Terms:**

Social consciousness is the knowledge that the wellbeing of each member of the society you live in has an impact on the wellbeing of all members of society. It's the realization that living in a community which cares about (and for) other people are worth sacrificing for (Lee Ballentine, 2014). In the social production of their life, men enter into definite relations that are indispensable and independent of their will; these relations of production correspond to a definite stage of development of their material forces of production. The sum total of these relations of production constitutes the economic structure of society the real foundation, on which arises a legal and political superstructure and to which correspond definite forms of social consciousness. The mode of production of material life determines the social, political and intellectual life process in general. It is not the consciousness of men that determines their being, but, on the contrary, their social being that determines their consciousness (Marx, Karl, 1859).

More recently, social consciousness is linked to the collective self-awareness and experience of collectively shared social identity (Schlitz M.M., Vieten C., Miller E.M. 2010). From this viewpoint, social consciousness denotes conscious awareness of being part of an interrelated community of others. The “we feeling” or the “sense of us” may be experienced in

members of various cultures and social groups. By the experience of collectively shared social identity, individuals may experience social unity. Social consciousness may also stimulate working towards a common goal.

A business school is a University/College level institution that confers degrees in business administration or management. According to Kaplan business schools are "Educational institutions that specialize in teaching courses and programs related to business and or management". Such a school can also be known as school of management, school of business administration, or colloquially B-school or Biz school.

### **Business School Librarianship:**

The speciality of business School librarianship has a long and distinguished history within the field of librarianship. **Sheehy (1996)** provides an excellent summary of the history of the business collection in the United States. As she states, "The growth of business collection in libraries is directly related to the development of business in the United States" (p.1). Before the beginning of the twentieth century, business information was sparse and libraries began to form collections that supported their local businesses. As the complexity of business grew, so did business library collections and services. Concomitantly, the role of the business librarian changed and the literature of business librarianship blossomed (**Tim Wales, 2014**).

While there are many articles that provide bibliographies of business books and materials, for example, **Hooper (2005)** and Outstanding Business Reference Sources, and others that provide excellent summaries of the literature of business librarianship, such as **Ward (2001)**, or provide indexing to their own journal, such as **Lesky (2006)**, no articles could be found that actually provide a study of the articles of business librarianship themselves. Such analyses have been done in other fields within librarianship, for example, in library instruction (**Crawford & Kubiske, 2007**), academic librarianship (**Crawford, 1999**), or even librarianship as a whole (**Koufogiannakis, Slater, and Crumley, 2004**). Thus, the literature of business librarianship seems ripe for examination.

### **The social consciousness of Business School Libraries:**

As a social animal, we have relations with our family members, relatives, neighbours' and colleagues'. We make all efforts to improve the relations and do our best to prove the usefulness of relations with them. Similarly, an institution keeps relations with its customers, suppliers, investors, and the general public. It also proves it's utility as well as improves its competency. It is necessary for any organization especially academic libraries which run under a social organization. A library which is a social institution also keeps relations with its users to whom it provides services and other libraries whose resources are used by it.

Different social programmes and extension services are the ways to reach maximum people. Whereas Public Relation is an attempt to interact with the people by informing about the resources and services of the library as well its importance to them. According to Krishan Kumar, "An extension service aims at converting non-readers into readers. It creates and stimulates the desire for good reading. This is done by bringing books and readers together. This results in exploitation and promotion of collections." The library should have a lecture hall, an exhibition lobby, conference rooms and other amenities. to organize workshops, lectures, debates, exhibitions, music concerts and other social and cultural programmes. The librarian and other

library staff should be able to establish good public relations in the community so that maximum community members may participate in such programmes actively; The coordination and cooperation among the staff members is also an important element for the successful execution of extension services.

Being socially responsible statutes that academic librarians treat all in a humane manner. We also need to assure that the environment is both effective and equitable, in both services and resources. Academic librarians play an intrinsic role in meeting the mission of the society to create a safe and equitable educational environment and to educate socially responsible citizens. We can provide a secure location for students, staff and faculty to learn, grow and thrive. We can promote justice and educational equity to all users (**Pandey, S K Sharma**).

### **Rajagiri Centre for Business Studies (RCBS) - Background:**

Rajagiri Centre for Business Studies has under its umbrella Rajagiri School of Management of Rajagiri College of Social Sciences (Autonomous) offering MBA and MHRM programmes, Rajagiri Business School offering the PGDM programme and Rajagiri International Institute for Education and Research offering International Exchange MBA Programme. The Master's programme in Personnel Management and Industrial Relations, MA (PM & IR) which RCSS began to offer in 1984 was revamped to Master of Human Resource Management (MHRM). RCSS began to offer a Master of Business Administration (MBA) programme in 1995. The MBA and MHRM programmes offered by the School of Management (RSOM) was shifted to the Valley Campus at Kakkanad in 2001. Rajagiri Business School was established in 2008 to offer a Post Graduate Diploma in Management (PGDM) programme. Rajagiri International Institute for Education and Research (RIIER) established in 1998, offers transnational partnership programmes. In 2009, all the management programmes offered by Rajagiri in the Valley Campus were brought under the umbrella of Rajagiri Centre for Business Studies. ([www.rcbs.rajagiri.edu](http://www.rcbs.rajagiri.edu))

### **Major Outreach activities were taken up by the College and the Involvement was of the Library:**

**RAJAGIRI TRANSCEND** (To Reach out and Nurture Social Commitments and Enable Newer Dimensions), the social arm of Rajagiri Centre for Business Studies (RCBS), is an initiative conceived and managed by the Management student fraternity of the institute. TRANSCEND - the very name rings a bell. It is synonymous with love, concern, care, and tenderness, with a human touch. This is a project that reaches out to the homeless and needy. Over the years, the activities of Rajagiri Transcend have become more organized and consolidated.

We go beyond our limits to serve the people who are underprivileged. We, as a team, have a mission to accomplish; not only financial assistance and physical presence but also to share our happiness with them. Our vision is to develop humility in our heart and to lead by example, showing the world the privileges of God-given blessings and sharing these with the underprivileged to give them a sense that they are not alone. It acts as the implementing partner in CSR activities of various corporate. The library helps in giving its resources like old newspapers and magazines for mobilizing fund for the Transcend activities. The Library also helps to give training assistance for setting up of libraries in the communities, the library providing all the necessary information and resources for this venture. Some examples are: (SHJUP School Library

Renovation Project, St.Marys School, Alangad, Pappukutty Memorial Library, Kedamangalam, Pandit Karuppan Library, Cheranelloor etc.)

### **VANAVASAM -Social Sensitization Rural Camp Survey & Social Audit:**

The college conducts Seven-day Rural Sensitization camp for every batch for the beginners of the new academic year. It gives every student an opportunity, to know the wider social environment through a totally rural setting. Deprived of the comforts and conveniences of daily living, the students come in contact with a section of society that lives in deprivation and needs. A tight schedule of activities takes them through the experience of planning, coordinating and controlling even as they learn to manage with resource constraints. The camp combines rigorous work schedules with evenings of entertainment and laughter. Trekking expeditions add to the excitement and activity at camp. The main attraction of the event is A camp like Vanavasam it is a three-day programme aimed at unveiling the self in the silence of the woods. Based on the MBTI personality test, students learn about themselves through introspection and peer group observation. Conducted in faraway forest destinations, the programme includes trekking expeditions and meditation sessions.

The Library staff works as coordinators and help them in providing questionnaire for the health and socio-economic survey for the rural area, in addition to that the library staff also takes part and serve as members in the survey team.

### **Rajagiri National Business Quiz (RNBQ) and Involvement of Library**

The Acclaimed Rajagiri National Business Quiz is ready to challenge the smartest minds in the country. RNBQ was started in 2011 as a pioneer business school event in Kerala. The last 8 years have paved the way for a bigger and better event that has already broken records in registrations. Only the best of the best have won this event, and the quality of this quiz ensures that the library team associates with its programs like, arranging questions for preliminary quiz events before the finale and donating valuable books to the event as a special to the participants and also help them as media coordination for the documentation and publicity.

### **INFLORE –The National Level Management Fest and Involvement of Library**

The RCBS Management Fest Infloré organized by the Rajagirians brings together students from all over the country. The two-day fest includes a variety of events, both management as well as non-management, where the participants battle it out to prove their mettle through wit and intellect. The library helps to provide the books for its various events as a donation and also arranged sponsorship through its dealers. The library itself acts as an event centre for its various programs like a treasure hunt, quiz etc.

### **Need-Based Documentation Service:**

Documentation Centre of the Library serves as the source for current information on all branches of knowledge by proper classification and filing of relevant material available in newspapers and magazines. The Library has Initiated the documentation work with the help of students and has done several relevant socially related topics like Environmental problems like

flood, waste management and health-related works like Chikungunya, Mental health and its illness, and educational topics like Self-financing education, Autonomous status, deemed status etc.

### **Kerala Flood 2018 and Involvement of Library staff for the Relief work:**

Kerala is in a deep crisis due to the unprecedented rain that has resulted in floods and landslides. The damage is immeasurable and we know that a lot of common people have lost their homes, property, livestock and lively hood. Rajagiri College of Social Sciences, Kalamassery campus itself has worked as a relief camp during the affected days and have done relief works with our help and is still continuing the service. As the involvement of library staff as relief camps are they actively participated as a voluntary basis and also took charge in some camps for providing necessary items to the camp. Mr.Aravind has acted as camp in charge of one of the relief camps in Kottayam, Mr. Francis A.J Librarian, RCSS Kalamassery, served as a volunteer in both Rajagiri College and Kerala University of Fisheries and Ocean Studies (KUFOS), Panangad at Kumbalam panchayath and Mr. Vijesh P.V, Librarian, RBS Kakkanad, served as volunteer at Alangad Panchayath and Mr.Biju Devasia, Deputy Librarian, RBS served in their capacity during the difficult times of the flood. [Panchayath: “A gram panchayat or village panchayat is the only grassroots-level of panchayati raj formalised local self-governance system in India at the village or small-town level, and has a sarpanch as its elected head. Source: [Wikipedia](#) “]

### **PUNARDHEYA (Rebuild) –Donate a Book Campaign :**

As part of the Punardheya (Rebuild) project, we have developed a new library and we were able to collect 1500 books for SHJUP School, Eloor, Udyogamandal and from our various well-wishers like publishers, dealers, staff and students of our institution, various public school libraries etc. Definitely, our contribution would be a valuable asset for the students of the S.H.J.UP school, Eloor. We have collected and distributed the books like dictionaries, encyclopedias, biographies, fiction, non-fiction, science, maths, puzzles and quiz books. The main purpose of this project is to restore a good library with necessary books to students which will pave way for their intellectual nourishment and confidence building.

### **Rajagiri International Book Exhibition cum fair:**

“Book Fairs create an exciting atmosphere to inspire a lifelong love of reading” we all are living in a very and highly profound society. In that society, the librarians can perform and act as a leading role in moulding the knowledgeable society. So as a social commitment to the society, we have realized and planned a mega book exhibition cum fair for both academics and the learning society. We are looking forward to associating Infopark (An IT park of Kerala) employees, local educational institutions and the general public for this endeavour.

### **Community Aid Programme:**

Our Library provides an invaluable service to the community and offers a wide range of resources to the general public and those who are eager to know about the information. We are committed to delivering more info oriented assistance to the needy and a free public library is vital in assisting people to find information in their available choicest the feedback from the community also assures us that our services provide an inclusive, responsive and accessible library that meets the needs and demands of our users. Some examples are Kuttampuzha panchayath-Ernakulam

District, Attappady Tribal colony-Palakkad District, CPPR library, Hospital libraries, Binanni Zinc –Eloor etc.

## **Book Donation to Various Institutions**

As a part of the Library extension services, RCBS Libraries have initiated a book donation drive. Management-related textbooks from the book bank and other gifted books, which are excess in our stock are donated to management Institutes /Departments/ Undergraduate departments which distribute the books to the lesser privileged students and the library reference as well. Some of the Recipients of these Initiatives are St.Thomas College, Thrissur, Naipunya Institute of Management and Technology, Angamaly, Rajagiri Viswajyothi College, Vengoor, S.H.J.U.P school, Eloor, Udyogamandal etc. Till now we have donated 3000 plus books through this initiative.

## **Conclusion**

21<sup>st</sup> century is generally described as an era of the information revolution, information explosion, information overload and information technology. The information has become big business and the business of libraries, more than ever, will be staying in business. To succeed in the new information market, which stresses competition and consumer convenience, academic business school\management libraries must develop successful marketing plans that aggressively reach out to their customers as well as the general public through the socially relevant extension programs. Academic business librarians that assist community start-ups and business ventures are potentially contributing to the economic growth and vitality of their regions and nations. In this context Business School librarians must equip with the latest technologies and information's while doing with the business information. These business school librarianship fulfil its competency and skills for the business information development to the business academic community as well as the general public. Only then the true sense of socially responsible business school librarianship will be accomplished. Information and education can be powerful tools for creating more socially responsible citizens. In most of the cases, public librarian or public library should be a catalyst for all the Library outreach Programmes, but business school\management Librarians can also contribute something to the society in a fruitful manner. Academic librarians have many resources and services which will assist them in this process. If the business school\management Librarians do the Outreach services to the society in a meaningful manner, then the libraries serve as a resource for the entire community without distinction as a class, creed, gender, or sexual orientation. Moreover, we can use our materials and services to make a significant contribution to the people of our communities by promoting literacy and intellectual wellbeing among the communities. Then the Libraries will become true community centres and people's universities. So Academic business school\management Librarians can also act as harbingers and torchbearers of the knowledgeable society and share a major role in the social change.

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