

NEPAL NATIONAL LIBRARY

COUNTRY REPORT

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(Nepal)

I. The Year 2005: General Overview

The concept of library and information centre has been increasing among the students and general public. Schools and colleges are also establishing their own libraries. New public libraries are also being opened in the initiation of local people and somewhere with the assistance of some NGOs. Rural Education and Development Nepal (READ) and Room to Read both INGOs have been working in the field of education and library by establishing or by providing assistance to the established community and school libraries.

Nowadays the process of converting the manual card catalogue into electronic form is being done. For this purpose the UNESCO software WINISIS is used in most of the libraries. Nepal National Library (NNL) and Kaiser Library are two big libraries which run under government. Recently NNL and Kaiser Library have put the bibliographical details of their collections into computer and they have their own websites. The websites provide OPAC facility.

II. Library Administration/ Organization

The public libraries have to register in the district administration office. The number of such public libraries are growing since the concept of library is growing day by day. Recently one public library has been established in the heart of Kathmandu, the capital city of Nepal under the name Kathmandu Valley Public Library. Individuals from different fields including library professionals have been involved in the promotion of the library. The library has been able to attract more users.

It is difficult to find out the exact number of academic libraries in Nepal because not all the schools and colleges possess their own library. Most of the private high schools have their own library, but only limited government schools have their own till now. The private and government owned colleges have their own libraries having collection to serve the students and teachers of the respective colleges. Tribhuvan University Central Library (TUCL) has the largest collection.

There is no library council in Nepal. However regarding association, there are two professional associations. Nepal Library Association is one which was established in 1976 with the view to develop library field in Nepal. The association provides short term training course on library. The association in cooperation with TUCL had organized a workshop on Empowering Library Associations in Asia and as a result of this workshop Regional Federation of South Asian Library Associations (REFSALA) has been established in September 2005 in Kathmandu. Another professional association is Tribhuvan University Library Science Student's Alumni Association (TULSSAA) which was established in 1999. It also works for the betterment of library and the professionals. It has been publishing library journal and has been providing short term training course.

III. Collection Profile

The collection of most of the libraries does not exceed 50,000. However some libraries have a good collection of national as well as international publications. Tribhuvan University Central Library has the largest collection of books and journals. It has about 2.7 million collection. Nepal National Library has more than 84,000 collection of books and journals in different languages like English, Nepali, Hindi, Sanskrit etc. In Nepal, there is no national database as such however each library has its own database containing bibliographic information of their holdings. NNL and Kaiser Library have put almost all their collections in the computer. Some governmental and other libraries have also been using computer in libraries.

Madan Puraskar Library, a private owned library, has a unique collection of books written in Nepali language only. It has about 30,000 volumes of books and journals in its holding.

National Archives, a government institution, has a collection of rare and ancient manuscripts. Such materials have been microfilmed and kept safely for future generation. Similarly Asa Safu Archives, a privately run library, has a good collection of palm leaves which have now been digitized.

There is no national bibliography as such in Nepal. However, Tribhuvan University Central Library has been publishing it covering their own collection. There is no depository law so that it has been very difficult to publish comprehensive national bibliography.

Nepal National Library has been publishing Nepal National Union Catalogue since 1997 and the third volume was published in June 2005. The publication covers the catalogue of different libraries. For the first time, the catalogue has included collection from outside Kathmandu valley.

IV. Services

The libraries in Nepal have been providing library services to their users. Some libraries have borrowing facility while others do not have. Most of the academic libraries check out their books to the students and teachers. Apart from this, some public libraries also have such kind of facility of issuing books to their members. NNL provides only reference library services to the users. Besides, it also provides referral service like helps in locating books within Kathmandu valley. NNL also provides interlibrary loan services. It has been providing this service at national and international level.

V. Copyright/ Intellectual Property Rights

Nepal National Library had been working as the Office of the Registrar of Copyright in Nepal. However after the implementation of new Copyright Act,2003, a separate

Copyright office has been set up under the Ministry of Culture, Tourism and Civil Aviation.

VI. Professionalization / Training / Continuing Professional Education

Library science education is comparatively new in Nepal compared to other countries. Formal bachelor degree was started in 1995. Prior to this, any interested person to pursue his study in library science had to go to foreign countries. However many short training programmes were conducted during that time also. Now, Tribhuvan University has started Master level course in library and information science. Every year it produces 15 to 20 post graduates.

VII. Infrastructure

As the habit of using library among the general public and students is of recent phenomenon, the condition of infrastructure is not satisfactory. Most of the buildings which have been housing library are not built for library purpose. Therefore the buildings are not suitable for holding library collection. Even the library materials inside the library are kept without caring for sunlight and dust particles. NNL also does not have its own building, it has been sharing some part of old palatial building with other government departments.

VIII. Conclusion

Altogether four high level education commissions were formed. All the Commissions reported the need of better library services in the country. The pace of this service is quite slow till now. The tenth five year development plans will be over by 2007 June. There are no provisions of development of library services in the country in any development plans.

This year on the happy occasion of NNL's 50th anniversary the library professionals are planning to submit a library policy to be approved by the government.