

# The 'State-of-the-Art' of Information Management in the Bangladesh Open University Library

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<http://www-icdl.open.ac.uk/icdl/database/asia/banglade/openuniv/inst/index.htm>

## 1. Prelude

Bangladesh Open University (BOU) came into existence with a view to transform the country's vast human resources into an educated and trained workforce by extending to them a wide range of academic programmes, both formal and non-formal in the field of Science and Technology, Education, Social Sciences, Agriculture, Business etc. by an Act of the Parliament in 1992. Subsequently, it brought within its fold the Bangladesh Institute of Distance Education (BIDE) - a single-based programme - maintain a uniform standard and to avoid duplication of efforts.

Situated in picturesque site in Gazipur, 30 Km north of Dhaka city, the BOU's main campus accommodates office of the VC, Administration and School buildings, Library and Documentation Division, Printing Publishing Distribution/Production division, distribution store and a modern Media centre. Construction of the organizational structures is fast approaching completion with financial assistance provided by the Asian Development Band (ADB) and the Government of Bangladesh.

The BOU Library is an independent three storied library building. Its floor space is 1568 sqm or 16,870 sft. Library facilities are available at the Regional Resource Centres (RRCs) and the main campus at Gazipur. The RRC libraries provide facilities for listening and viewing of audio-video cassettes and reading and reference books for the students of BOU. The Central Library at Gazipur main campus is equipped with a large collection of books and CD-Roms on a wide variety of subjects including those on Distance Education. It provides reference and reading materials for teachers, research students and members of staff.

## 2. Library Personnel

The BOU is passing through its project period which can be called transition. But its aim is to run the Library by well trained staff. Its existing staffing pattern is quite-reasonable. They are :

Librarian	1
Deputy Librarian	1
Assistant Librarian	1
Documentation Officer	1
Cataloguer	1
Library Assistant	1
Word Processing Operator	2
Binder	1
MLSS	2

### 3. The 'State-of-the-Art' of Learning of Resources: Selection and Acquisition

Though it is not a conventional academic library, yet it is meant to serve a wide range of users. To meet increasing demand, it has a reasonable collections (15411 vols of books and 228 titles of periodicals). Besides, it has

- i. Government publications, gazetteers, pamphlets, posters, etc.
- ii. Reports, proceedings, seminar and workshop-papers, graphic designs, survey, reports, etc.;
- iii. CD-Roms;
- iv. Audio-Video materials;
- v. Globes, maps, charts, etc.,

#### **Selection & Acquisition procedure :**

The library has its own book selection policy. Generally members of the different Schools and Divisions participate in book selection. After having library budget, every school and division is informed through a circular letter, so that they submit their required selected book lists in time. Keeping library's interest and subjects area in mind, concerned faculty and staff members accord final selection to books. Generally selection is made on the basic of two things;

- i. Consulting publishers' catalogues;
- ii. Spot selection from book sellers' stock

#### **Conventionally the following rules are followed :**

- \* Selected book list comes to the library with a recommendation from Dean/Head of the respective Schools/Divisions.
- \* Final selection is done and approved by the Library Committee, where the Vice-Chancellor is the Chairman and Librarian is the member-secretary of the committee. Other members of the committee are taken as per BOU Act .
- \* Finally, selection and procurement is done considering budget allocation and availability of funds.

#### **Order of books :**

Conventional practices are as follow:

- i. To follow government rules, tender/quotation is invited through newspapers. Reputed books sellers and importers participate in the open tenders.
- ii. Considering all the merits and other facilities, Tender Committee accepts the lowest bidders on the basis of comparative statement (CS) of prices of items offered by the bidders/tenderers.
- iii. Finally work order is given to the selected firm(s) on approval of the competent authority under certain terms and conditions.

## 4. Processing

### **Classification :**

For classifying books, Dewey Decimal Classification (DDC) is being followed. But in DDC, classification number for 'Education' is narrower specially for Distance Education. To make accurate and comprehensive classification in this field only, we have been thinking to follow the classification systems devised by the British Open University, Milton Keynes, U.K.

### **Cataloguing :**

The BOU library has computerized cataloguing systems. Cataloguing is done on AACR2, Sears List of Subject Headings, Cutter Marks for proper call number of a book/resources. There is also provision of card catalogue. Generally catalogues are arranged alphabetically under divided catalogue system.

## 5. Maintaining the Resources within the Library

### **Open Access :**

Library has several open shelves/racks where general books and other resources are stored and arranged according to subject and Call No. Readers have open access. Thus the members/readers have right to take away book to the reading table for study/research or to circulation desk to get it issued for study at home as per rule. Books returned by readers are kept temporarily in special places and then kept at the rack according to Call No.

The charging system is yet to be computerized after introducing bar code system. To keep issue system active books are issued to the readers through Membership Card or Issue Register.

A set of approved library rules is strictly followed.

### **Like other conventional University and academic libraries, the BOU library has following sections and services:**

Reference, Confined Books, Journal/Periodicals, Binding, Photocopy and Reproduction, Automation and computer services, Current awareness services, etc.

It may be mentioned here that, library is giving special attention for quick and easy dissemination of information. To achieve this goal, library has computerized catalogue and CDS/ISIS computerized documentation systems/integrated set of information system. Through this catalogue, a reader can easily find his/her required information. All information can be searched as dictionary wise under author, subject, title and so on. So user or reader may have specific information through this catalogue. Moreover bar Code system will be introduced very soon and it can be easily found out which books are on loan and who borrowed it and when it will be returned etc.

Current awareness service : Through computerized catalogue a periodical bulletin is prepared on current available/procured books, journals etc. with bibliographical information and is distributed to the schools and departments of BOU for ready reference and guidance.

## **6. Electronic Library**

### **A. Audio-Video :**

The BOU has a large number Audio & Video programmes produced by its Media Department and all are telecasted or broadcasted through TV and Radio for out students and Tutors of various formal courses. Besides, a large number of informal programmes are also tele or broadcasted for the mass people. These programme-tapes can be reused by our reader from Audio-Video section. More-over, Other important related programmes of foreign organization can be procured for research and quality programme production.

Other Audio-Video materials and modern sophisticated equipment such as 16 mm Films, Film Strips, Slides, Overhead projector, Epidiascope, map copier, photocopier, etc. have been procured for reference use.

There are other non-book materials such as maps, atlases, charts, globes, models, learning sets, visual aids etc. and can be used on request and production purpose.

### **B. Computer Network :**

In future BOU library will be fully computerized. LAN and WAN network services to other libraries have already been linked up. Through these systems we can easily get information on line web-site of Journals, periodicals etc. Besides, CD-ROM, multimedia, teleconferencing, e-mail, fax., LCD panel etc. modern technology can be introduced through computer multimedia network system and can meet the demand of reader/clientele of BOU's campus, regional centres, local centres, tutors and students in all over Bangladesh.

## **7. Outreach Activities: A Future Plan of Action**

### **I. Library Network Services**

Soon BOU library will have internet connections with other reputed libraries in home and abroad. Both LAN and WAN connections are being arranged by the BOU. By this time LAN connection has been made with 12 (twelve) Regional Resource Centres (RRCs). Through this network e-mail services both in home and abroad have been introduced. Readers, members, tutors and students who have computer and e-mail connections, have opportunity to avail such services from the library. They may receive any information available in the library.

Through WAN connections library would collect or search information from other libraries in home and abroad and various sources available in web-site such as journals, periodicals etc.

### **II. CD-ROM Services**

Library has CD-ROM drive and through this huge number of information can be searched from various CD.

- i. A manual of the operation of network will be prepared for wider and proper services of the library network. This will help to operate library and to render services of the library.
- ii. To facilitate library network services and readers services, for the interest of the BOU, a memorandum of understanding would be prepared, this will be contractual understanding between the libraries using the network facilities.
- iii. Besides, Audio-Video conferencing services and telephone services can be introduced through multi-media system and that would be modern electronic services of BOU library.

Before conclude the topic, it can be assured that under the able leadership and guidance of the Hon'ble Vice-Chancellor, Prof. Dr. M Aminul Islam, who is also an eminent educationist-scholar-scientist, the BOU library will be fully automatised and computerized with all kinds of sophisticated modern electronic equipment soon. And it will be a unique library in Bangladesh.