

An Assessment of Archives and Record Assortment in Selected University Libraries of Bangladesh: a Study

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Abstract

It was intended to analyze and assess the current state of archives and records management in some selected university libraries of Bangladesh as well as to evaluate present status of implementation of IR in these selected libraries. To draw inferences and make recommendations, a survey was conducted in selected public and private university libraries of Bangladesh. The universities were selected for this study on the basis of their position within 10th in the 2020 UniRank list published in Bangladesh. The primary data were collected through questionnaire, interview and observation methods and secondary data were derived from literature search. The findings of the study show that 50% public university library use digital repository as archives whereas 90% private university libraries preserve the archives digitally as well as manually. The study also reveals that maximum (90%) private university libraries use archival repository though the number of repositories are increasing slowly. On the other hand, 50% public university libraries use the repository but the number of manual collection of these university library are much higher than others libraries. The study also clearly indicates that public libraries are ahead of private university libraries in preserving the number of manual collection. The findings of the study show that fifty percent public university libraries use digital repository as archives whereas near almost all private university libraries preserve the archives digitally along with manual system. The study revealed that the difference between manual collection of public and private university libraries was significant ($p=0.0384$), on contrast, the difference between public and private university library

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collection regarding IR collection is not significant ($p=0.9937$). The study clearly indicates that public libraries are ahead of private university libraries in preserving the number of manual collection whereas private university is ahead of public university in the implementation of IR system and its collections.

Keywords: *Archives and records, Preservation, Institutional repository, University libraries, Bangladesh.*

Introduction :

The major function of archives and record centre are to maintain and defend record for potential use, and access to these records is frequently preventive. Usually, libraries' major functions are mounting collection in meet the needs of users and permit right of entry to this information for free to a defined number of users or entire public. Libraries hold the information that is contemporary and applicable to make sure that users are assessed with new and current information trends for effective decision making. Despite the differences in scope and function between archives, record centers and libraries, there is no doubt that their roles intersect or overlap (Dube, 2020). It is against this background that this paper wants to find out if libraries can work as an archive and record centers. The impact of digital environment is more visible in information intuitions internationally as the libraries currently are not handled as the storehouse of books but measured as a entryway of knowledge property, and the centre of creation and recreation of academic activities (Trayambakrao, 2012). Many institutional records produced by faculty members and research students of the particular institutions are in operational nature and the majority of the records includes journal and articles, theses and dissertations, and clinical reports on multidisciplinary research area (Hasinul-Elahi, 2018). Some of these academic institutions give the access to their research documents and learning materials initially to the Indian scholars in other institutions as well as to external scholars in institutions across the globe (Kumar, 2009). This study adopted a comparative study on Archives Management in university libraries of Bangladesh.

Objective of the study :

The general purpose of the study was to assess the university archival and records management system of Bangladesh. The specific objectives were to investigate:

- the availability of digital and manual records in academic libraries of Bangladesh;
- Comparison between public and public university libraries regarding records management

Scope and research methodology :

The data had been collected from the selected university libraries. The conceptual and textual information related to the present study were gathered from both primary and secondary sources of information. **UniRank** is a leading international higher education directory and search engine featuring review and ranking of over 13,800 officially

recognized universities and colleges in 200 countries. The universities of Bangladesh were selected for this present study on the basis of their position within 10th as published in the 2020 **UniRank** list. A total of 10 public university libraries and 10 private university libraries as shown in table - I and table II respectively below. To give the detailed analysis of the study the websites of these university repositories were used as a vital source of information for conducting this research.

Data analysis and research findings :

At present there are forty nine public, hundred-seven private, and three international universities in Bangladesh (UGC, 2021). Among them, ten public and nine private and one international university libraries have been selected on the basis of their position within 10th in the 2020 **UniRank** list published in Bangladesh for this study. The researcher visited most of the selected libraries and distributed questionnaire among librarians/Repository Administrators to collect data regarding their existing manual or repository collection in the university libraries.

To give the present state of archival condition university libraries were observed physically as well as through the websites of these libraries. The study found that among ten public libraries, 3 university libraries use DSpace, 1 university library use SLiMS, 1 university library use customize software, customize software is under developed in 1 library and rest 4 university libraries don't use any digital or repository software for the preservation of archival materials. Among 10 private and international university libraries, 7 university libraries use DSpace software, 3 libraries use customize software whereas the only one international university library made customize software for institutional repository (table I).

Archives and record Management in University Libraries of Bangladesh :

Institutional repositories are widely developed and maintained in different areas of research around the world. In developing countries like Bangladesh, it has been seen as an unprecedented opportunity to provide equality access to essential research information and to raising awareness of national research (Islam and Akter, 2013). A total 17 public and private university libraries are using Institutional Repository software in Bangladesh at this moment (Islam, 2019). Present scenario of IR in public and private university libraries of Bangladesh presented below.

Public University Library :

Public university libraries are playing important role in preserving and distributing the archival resources for their faculty, researchers and students. Table-I shows that 10 Public university libraries are using the IR software for digital preservation of the archival resources and demonstrated the used repository software name and the URL link of the repository.

Table I. Selected public university Archival Repository and URL

SL	University Name	Used IRS	URL
	Bangabandhu Sheikh Mujib Medical University (BSMMU) Library	SLiMS	(LAN)
	Bangladesh University of Engineering and Technology (BUET) Library	DSpace	http://lib.buet.ac.bd:8080/xmlui/
	Jahangirnagar University (JU) Library	Under developing	https://www.library.juniv.edu/resources/#
	Khulna University (KU) Library	N/A	N/A
	National University (NU) Library	N/A	N/A
	Shahjalal University of Science and Technology (SUST) Library	N/A	N/A
	Sher-E-Bangla Agricultural University (SAU) Library	Customize	http://www.saulibrary.edu.bd/daatj/public/index.php
	University of Chittagong (CU) Library	N/A	N/A
	University of Dhaka (DU) Central Library	DSpace	http://repository.library.du.ac.bd/xmlui
	University of Rajshahi (RU) Central Library	DSpace	http://repository.ubn.ru.nl/

Figure 1 : The number of repository collection in public university libraries of Bangladesh.

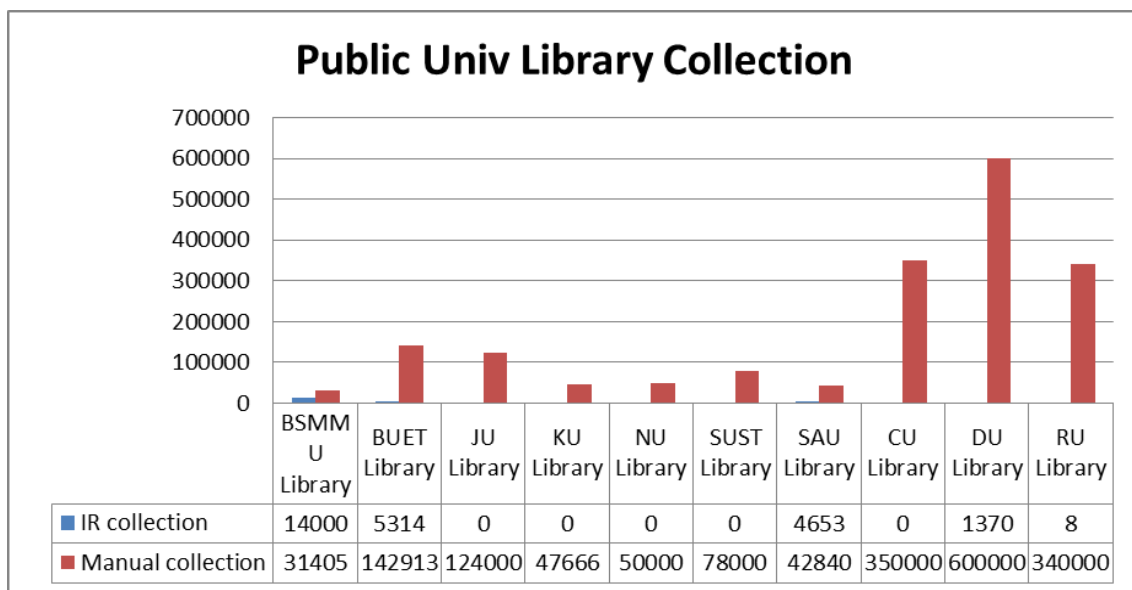


Figure 1: IR and Manual Collections in Public University (collected on 18/08/2021)

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It is worth mentioning that the use of Digital Library Software (DLS) as Institutional Repository (IR) in university libraries all over the world as well as in Bangladesh are increasing day by day. But at this moment figure 1 above represents the present collection of IR items in university libraries of Bangladesh.

Private University Library :

There are one hundred seven private universities and 3 international universities are available in Bangladesh. Among them 6 private and 1 International University selected in the study on the basis of UniRank 2020 (Table II).

Table II. Private University Library Repository and URL

S.N	University Name	Repository	URL
	Kazi Fazlur Rahman Library (AUST)	N/A	-
	American International University (AIU)	N/A	-
	Asian University for Women (AUW)	AUWSpace	http://www.auw.edu.bd/library/Repository.php
	BRAC University	DSpace	http://dspace.bracu.ac.bd/oai/request
	Daffodil International University (DIU)	DSpace	http://dspace.daffodilvarsity.edu.bd:8080/
	East West University (EWU)	DSpace	http://dspace.diu.ac.bd/oai/request
	International Islamic University Chittagong (IIUC)	DSpace	https://dspace.iiuc.ac.bd/xmlui/
	Independent University, Bangladesh (IUB)	DSpace	http://dir.iub.edu.bd/
	NSU Library	Customized	-
	UIU Library	DSpace	http://dspace.uiu.ac.bd/

Table III. IR and Manual Collections in Private University Libraries

SL	Name of the university library	IR collection	Manual collection
1.	AUST (Kazi Fazlur Rahman Library)	0	27326
2.	AIU Library	0	43318
3.	Asian University for Women (AUW) Library	0	27000
4.	BRAC University (Ayesha Abed Library)	12357	37519
5.	Daffodil International University (DIU) Library	5623	24000
6.	East West University (EWU) Library	2540	33012
7.	International Islamic University Chittagong (IIUC) Central Library	1996	87250
8.	Independent University, Bangladesh (IUB) Library	385	32000
9.	North South University (NSU) Library	500	49500
10	United International University (UIU) Library	2095	98658
Total		25496	459583

(Data collected on 18/08/2021)

Table IV. Comparison between public and private university library collection

University library	Public university library	Private university library	P value (p)
Manual collection	1,103,784	459583	0.0384
IR Collection	25345	25496	0.9937
Ownership of IR software	5	8	-

The table IV showed that the difference between the number of manual collection of public and private university libraries was significant ($p=0.0384$), on the other hand the difference between public and private university library collection regarding IR collection is not significant ($p=0.9937$).

Discussion :

This section presents the findings as per the research questions. The questions were based under themes of the archives management in university libraries of Bangladesh such a archives in library, public access in archives, availability of archivists, archives building, financial capacity, record storage, record types, physical condition of records, preservation

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tools, container availability, retention policy, access permission & restriction, preservation methods, lab and air condition facility, humidity facility, vacuum cleaners facility, security tools, digital/automation software, equipment facility, interest in automation, websites of library or archives, collaboration with universities, status of skill personnel, institutional support, guidelines, agreement on policy, agreement on reformatting procedures, status of physical facility, periodic care and maintenance activity, users' feeling towards archival facility, agreement on making online resources, effort towards automation of archival resources, users satisfaction level, opinion on strength of collection etc.

The storage of archival materials is an important and challenging issue in an archival institution. The table stated that most of archival institutions use the filing cabinet and cupboards. Some use current file, database, acid free file folders or boxes.

There are different types of archival resources available in an archival institution. The table exposes that there are various kind of records like journal, periodicals, manuals, monographs, hand book, palm leaves, parchment, property deeds, thesis, marriage registers etc are preserved in university archives of Bangladesh.

Physical Records are records that one can touch. They take up physical space, such as records or paper or media like CDs. Records management involves managing records throughout their life cycle (Record Point, 2021). Physical records management is managing assets that user can touch throughout the life cycle that should be kept in right process. The table shows the physical condition of records where 71.4 percent told that their records are in good condition, 10.2 percent told that mutilated, 12.2 percent told brittle and 6.1 percent stated warm infested.

Conclusion :

As contribution towards the digital nation-building process, many library professionals in Bangladesh are working to bring their libraries up to global standards. This study was conducted among 98 Academic Librarians/Repository Administrators and 147 academic scholars, archives and repository Users of 10 public and 10 private university libraries of Bangladesh preferred on the basis of their position within 10th in the 2020 UniRank. It is found that 50% public university use digital repository as archives whereas 90% private university libraries preserve the archives digitally as well as manually. The number of manual collection in selected public library is 1,103,784 including 25345 institutional repository collections whereas the manual collections in selected private university libraries are 462064 and repository collection are the number of 23685 that demonstrates that public libraries are ahead of private university libraries in preserving the manual collection on the other hand private university libraries are ahead of public university libraries in preserving the online institutional repository collection (Hussain & Barooah, 2021).

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