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## What could make your library world class

R. KRISHNAMOORTHY



***New age library: A library book drop kept in the campus.***

Indian institutions have to take giant strides to make libraries a sought-after knowledge centre for research, according to S. Raghavan, Senior Faculty of Electronics and Communications Engineering, National Institute of Technology – Tiruchi.

Only a handful of libraries in elite institutions qualify for the world class categorisation. Before according digital status or considering libraries as world class, there are quite a few factors to be kept in mind, says Dr. Raghavan, citing the observations he made during his recent stay at the California State University, Northridge (CSUN) as a visiting scholar.

They are: Book drop in boxes; Photocopying and printing facilities in every floor (self operation with smart cards); good number of high-tech computer terminals; automatic issue and full RFID (Radio Frequency Identification); a fool-proof unmanned exit gate; a dedicated floor for music library; individual and presentation rooms; typewriters; silent zones; and appealing furniture.

The user-friendly CSUN Library in spacious settings, for instance, contains 1.4 million volume collections with three million microforms. The library provides extensive electronic data bases, full text journals and books and services through its web presence. It also contains an automated storage and retrieval system which houses 700,000 volumes. Few of the databases are Lexis Nexis database, Thomson Gale database and Chicano database.

It's Music and Media wing holds a collection of printed music scores and books and sound recordings on CDs, audio cassettes and laptops. Besides books on music, over 9,100 music tapes and DVDs for faculty or classroom use are kept in this area. Three new state of the art microfilm and microfiche self-service, digital laser printers are available in the Microform room. Viewing carrels are available for individual study, and a group viewing room provides preview and discussion space. Students could also bring their own videotapes, DVDs, audio tapes, CDs or slides for viewing or listening. The library has access to over 28,000 full-text electronic journal, magazine or news paper titles.

Photocopying, Printing and scanning services are available on all the four floors of the library. Most visitors utilize a value added debit card. In addition coin operated machines are also available. Colour photo copying, facsimile services, drop-off photocopy services, and colour scanning including scanning with paper print, scanning to file, transparency page creation, and colour printing are available.

The library has three large rooms namely Presentation room that has a seating capacity of 200, built-in sound with microphone, a video projector and built in screen. There is also a conference room with conference tables and a built in screen. Quiet zones are available where in study rooms are built. Group study rooms with white boards are open to the users. Two manual typewriters for patron use are located in one floor. Pay phones and 'campus only' phones are at the disposal of the users.

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