# Chapter 45
# Assessment and Evaluation of Academic Libraries in China

**Qiong Tang**
*Sun Yat-sen University, China*

**Yin Xie**
*Sun Yat-sen University, China*

**Rina Su**
*Sun Yat-sen University, China*

## ABSTRACT

*The purpose of this chapter is to present a systematic and comprehensive review of the assessment and evaluation efforts of academic libraries in China. Generally, it is believed that theoretical research on academic library assessment and evaluation spurs corresponding practice. Holistic activities related to this include the integration of undergraduate teaching level evaluation and the promulgation of the System of Indicators of Academic Library Evaluation. These activities propel pertinent work in a general way, yet to some extent they lack operability. Specific standards and practice of assessment and evaluation of collections, service quality, and digital libraries, as well as the collection of assessment statistics, indicate that academic library evaluation focuses on the association/consortium, standardization, and the user. Problems in academic library assessment and evaluation in China at this stage include the absence of a standard evaluation system, an unrealistic assessor/evaluator structure, and an inappropriate preponderance of input indicators over output.*

## INTRODUCTION

Assessment and evaluation of academic libraries is defined as a "measurement that takes academic libraries as well as each individual academic library and its activities as objects, collecting materials and data comprehensively and systematically for specific goals, thus further describing, analyzing, and judging the status quo of academic libraries in order to clarify goals and see improvement" (State Education Commission, 1991). Therefore, assessment and evaluation of the academic library guides academic

libraries, promoting their development, improving quality of service, and more. Since the mid-1980s, accompanied by the undergraduate teaching level evaluation, assessment and evaluation of academic libraries has gradually become a focus, in both the research and practice spheres of library.

In 1985, the decision to reform the Chinese education system was issued by the central committee of the Communist Party of China (CPC). This decision propelled the assessment of Chinese higher education. With its influence, assessment activities in academic libraries in China were soon launched. In 1986, academic library assessment was first carried out in Shandong Province (Li, 1993). In 1987, the State Education Commission (SEC) released the *Regulations of University and College Library Service* as the fundamental document, including pertinent criteria for academic libraries in universities and colleges (Qu, 1989). Following this release, assessment and evaluation of academic libraries in China witnessed a rapid advancement in a wide range of geographical areas, including Ningxia Province, Qinghai Province, Liaoning Province, Zhejiang Province, Shanxi Province, Fujian Province, Gansu Province, and several other regions. These areas developed projects and evaluation indices for academic library assessment in succession, grounding their work in a combination of the *Regulations of University and College Library Service* and their own environmental demands. Meanwhile, Guangdong Province, Beijing, and Shanghai formulated regional assessment policies. By 1989, 11 provinces, including autonomous regions and municipalities, had carried out academic library assessment and evaluation. In March 1989, the first national seminar on academic library assessment and evaluation was held in Xi'an by the College and University Library & Information Work Steering Committee (CULIWSC). Three documents were proposed and adopted in the seminar: *Summary of the National Seminar on Academic Libraries, Advice on the Institution of Academic Library Assessment and Evaluation (Draft Version),* and *A System of Indicators Outline of Academic Library Assessment and Evaluation (Draft Version)*. This seminar in Xi'an brought about a new phase in academic library assessment and evaluation, which is characterized by good organization and leadership (Zhang, 1990). Though library assessment theories and practice were immature in the mid- and late-1980s due to the lack of thorough indexing systems and qualitative indicators, it still established a solid foundation for further research and work.

In 1991, the SEC officially issued three documents titled *Advice on the Assessment and Evaluation of the Academic Library, the System of Indicators of Academic Library Assessment and Evaluation,* and *Explanations of the System of Indicators*. These three documents regulate academic library assessment and evaluation with regards to organization and leadership, assessment principles, content design, system of indicators, operating methods, and other aspects. Under this instruction, academic libraries in Jiangxi Province, Jilin Province, Heilongjiang Province, Guangxi Province, Anhui Province, Hubei Province, Hunan Province, Shanxi Province, and Tianjin Province were assessed and evaluated. By 1993, more than 20 academic libraries had undergone the assessment process. In addition to comprehensive assessment, some academic libraries also conducted specific assessment, such as assessment of basic conditions, reader services, collection development, or automation level. Among all kinds of specific assessment, assessment of automation level was the most common and influential from 1995 to 2000 (Wang, 2009).

In the 21st century, assessment and evaluation of academic libraries entered a new era, and in February 2002, the Ministry of Education (MOE) of the People's Republic of China issued the *Regulations of University and College Library Service (Revised)*. The following year, the *System of Indicators of Academic Library Evaluation (Exposure Draft)*, in addition to specific assessment approaches, was published by CULIWSC. In 2006, MOE released the *System of Indicators of Academic Library Evaluation (Draft Version)*. Meanwhile, rating standards for academic libraries were added to the undergraduate teaching level evaluation framework. With these developments, domestic academic library assessment

18 more pages are available in the full version of this document, which may be purchased using the "Add to Cart" button on the publisher's webpage:
www.igi-global.com/chapter/assessment-and-evaluation-of-academic-libraries-in-china/191550

# Related Content

Public Libraries and the Right to the [Smart] City
John Blewitt (2018). *Library Science and Administration: Concepts, Methodologies, Tools, and Applications (pp. 1720-1735).*
www.irma-international.org/chapter/public-libraries-and-the-right-to-the-smart-city/191588

Incrementally Building Community and User Engagement in the UC San Diego Library
Kymberly Goodson (2018). *Library Science and Administration: Concepts, Methodologies, Tools, and Applications (pp. 834-856).*
www.irma-international.org/chapter/incrementally-building-community-and-user-engagement-in-the-uc-san-diego-library/191543

The Use of Electronic Library Resources in Nigerian Universities: A Review of the Literature
Shaibu Adona Sadiku, Abdulwahab Olarenwaju Issaand Mohammed Kpakiko Mohammed (2019). *International Journal of Library and Information Services (pp. 40-50).*
www.irma-international.org/article/the-use-of-electronic-library-resources-in-nigerian-universities/228177

Information Equity and Cultural Sharing: The Service for Migrant Workers in Hangzhou Public Library
Shuqing Chu, Shumin Tu, Nuo Wangand Weiran Zhang (2020). *International Journal of Library and Information Services (pp. 10-24).*
www.irma-international.org/article/information-equity-and-cultural-sharing/240795

Selection Process for Free Open Source Software
David William Schuster (2017). *Library Technology Funding, Planning, and Deployment (pp. 55-71).*
www.irma-international.org/chapter/selection-process-for-free-open-source-software/172314