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THE ROLE OF HIGHER VOCATIONAL SCHOOL AND UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES IN THE EDUCATIONAL SYSTEM OF THE REPUBLIC OF NORTH MACEDONIA

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Abstract

The intensive changes in all spheres of social life in general, especially in higher education and its adaptation to the European system of Higher Education, bring serious challenges that all responsible institutions and entities face. Of course, a special role in this direction is played by university libraries that should greatly help in meeting the educational, informational, and cultural needs of the students, but also help in advancing new ways of learning such as lifelong learning, distance learning, and thus help, the student to always be in the spotlight. In that regard, this paper is focused on the capacities, organization, and functioning of university libraries in the Republic of North Macedonia, to obtain relevant data on how ready they are to respond to such modern requests, and how ready they are to take their rightful place within the University.

Keywords: *university, education, university library.*

Introduction

Libraries in Macedonia have had an important cultural and educational role in the development of the Macedonian people since the earliest times. The original librarianship in Macedonia developed in churches and monasteries, where books were written, and copied, and educational-scientific activities were carried out. The monastery libraries were the only sources of spreading enlightenment and culture in the XIX century.

The work of libraries is more closely regulated by the law on libraries, which regulates the work of the libraries, their operation, establishment, types of libraries, organization, coordination, professional titles, supervision, and other issues that are important for the operation of libraries in the Republic of Macedonia. According to their purpose, libraries are divided into National Library, Public Libraries, school libraries, higher vocational school and university libraries, and Specialized Libraries (Law on libraries "Official gazette of the Republic of Macedonia" no. 66/04, 89/08, 116/10, 511, 88/15, 152/15 and 39/16).

To develop the library activity, culture, science, and education and to meet the information needs of the library activity in the Republic of Macedonia, the state established a National Library. The activities of Public Libraries are intended to meet the general educational, cultural, and other needs of the citizens in the location in which they are founded. School libraries are intended to improve the educational process in schools and meet the educational needs of the students and teaching staff working in primary and secondary schools. Higher vocational school and university libraries are intended to support and promote the educational, research, and scientific work of students, professors, and researchers in the higher education institutions. The activities of Specialized Libraries are intended to meet the needs for professional and scientific research work in certain scientific or professional areas and are limited to a specific user group, depending on the target group of users. According to the law on libraries, the library is open to the public and through the use of library material spreads education and permanently satisfies the cultural and other needs of the general public, contributes to the promotion of professional and scientific research work, and the development of Education, Culture, Science and other activities (Law on libraries "Official gazette of the Republic of Macedonia" no. 66/04, 89/08, 116/10, 511, 88/15, 152/15 and 39/16).

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The first universities in Macedonia started functioning with the establishment of the Faculty of Philosophy in Skopje. The first National University in Macedonia was the one in Skopje in early 1920/21 (Geogrievski, 1989). After the first national university, other national universities began to open in most cities in Macedonia, and in 1927 the National University of Tetovo was founded. In 1928 and 1929 public universities were established in Kumanovo, Veles, and Berovo. In 1929 and 1930 public universities were opened in Debar and in Prilep in 1936 (Geogrievski, 1989). Their task was to organize and hold various lectures in several fields such as culture, education, health, and other spheres.

Today, in the modern conditions of social life, there are several universities in the territory of North Macedonia that have a long history and tradition and have significantly distinguished themselves through their quality of education, recognizable values, and heterogeneous offers. There can be no higher educational institution without a library because libraries house and store the library collection that students, teaching staff, and researchers need in the process of their educational and personal improvement.

It is good for libraries to function within the higher educational institution because in this way they will be more accessible to students and they can meet their educational, scientific, and informational needs.

University - concept and meaning

The term University denotes the highest institution of Higher Education, Science, and Research that grants academic degrees. The word university is an abbreviation of the Latin term "*Universitas magistrorum et scholarium*" which implies the Union of teachers with students. The purpose of the university is to transfer knowledge, learning, research, etc. Universities are composed of multiple faculties. University education is also called Higher Education. Unlike higher vocational schools and academies, universities are characterized by an interest in and opportunities for study in several fields, for example, philosophy, history, medicine, law, natural sciences, mathematics, etc. The term University (Latin) was first recorded in 1218, denoting a spiritual, intellectual, and educational community (Antonovska, 2004). The university essentially means higher education, an essential fusion of science, scientific research, education, and the transmission of knowledge and skills to the younger generations.

Universities are mainly funded by state sources, and sometimes by private ones. In North America, it is common for universities to be funded through foundations. The income of the foundations is most often generated through donations, inheritance, and other economic income.

The modern university system originates from the European medieval university, originally thought to have existed in Italy. The creation and development of the university is an act of philosophical meaning, the result of specific philosophical teachings on science and education (Antonovska, 2004).

Pedagogical systems created by the most famous philosophers in the past are the basis for the development of universities. In fact, the beginnings of the existence of universities are associated with pedagogical and philosophical action. People have always needed to write down what they think, feel, or have heard, not only for it to remain remembered but also to pass it on to future generations. As human culture increased, so did education.

The highest education is obtained in universities, which means that universities are institutions for the realization and transmission of educational and cultural developments (Antonovska, 2004).

The oldest and most famous universities in the world

Antiquity is the period when ideas, philosophical, and educational thoughts began to be born and in some areas continue to be used to this day. Homer, Socrates, Plato, Aristotle, et al. are only some of the personalities who left a deep mark on the creation of the first philosophical schools, academies, and universities in which creativity, art, oratory, rhetoric, biology, laws, state, justice, aesthetics, love,

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etc. were studied. The ancient schools of Socrates were known as intellectual communities, in which sermons were carried out, legal, and political teachings were taught and activities were carried out. In the time of Plato, there was a solemn assembly dedicated to the muses of knowledge, and is considered to be the first philosophical idea of the creation of the University. The word Academy comes from the place where it was founded, which was in the garden dedicated to the Athenian hero Akademos.

Similar ideas for the establishment of schools and academies were held by Aristotle, who founded his philosophical school in 325 BC. It is known that Aristotle was a great thinker and philosopher, and thanks to his knowledge and his scientific and research activity, the school grew into a real university. The number of students in the school was considerably large.

In the history of universities, a special place was occupied by the Byzantine civilization in Constantinople. The new ruler Constantine the Great, among the first institutions he founded in his town, was the founding of a university. At that time, there was great interest in science and education, and intellectual culture was widespread.

Constantine, and later St. Cyril – a Slavic educator, studied at the University of Constantinople. After he completed his studies, St. Cyril was named Librarian of the Church of St. Sophia, and he taught philosophy too.

St. Clement of Ohrid, the most prominent disciple of St. Cyril and Methodius founded his university in Ohrid, which is one of the oldest universities in Europe. In the famous Ohrid University or Ohrid Literary School, a large number of students became literate and trained. Their number is thought to be over 3,500 students trained for teaching, preaching, priesthood, and other activities.

The following are considered as one of the oldest and most famous universities in the world:

- The University of Bologna, Italy is considered as one of the oldest universities in the world. It was founded in 1088 by an organized Association of scholars and never ceased operations. It holds the title of the oldest university in the world with an enrollment of approximately 85,000 students.
- The University of Cambridge, England is also considered as one of the oldest and most distinguished universities in the world.
- The University of Oxford, the oldest university in England, where a large number of Nobel Prize winners have obtained their degrees.
- The University of Padua, Italy is considered as the second oldest university in Italy, but also the fifth oldest university in the world.
- University of Siena, Italy - one of the oldest universities in Italy.
- University of Florence, Italy founded in 1321. Initially, the topics taught at this university included civil and ecclesiastical law, literature, and medicine.
- The University of Paris was founded in 1150. It is one of the oldest universities in Europe, also known as the" Sorbonne".
- The University of Vienna is one of the ten most prestigious and oldest universities in the world. This university is known for its humanities studies.
- The University of Salamanca, Spain is the oldest university in Spain and is considered as the third oldest operating University in the world. This university was founded by King Alfonso in 1218.
- Al-Karaouine University, Morocco was initially founded as a mosque by Fatima-al Fihri in 857-859. and subsequently became one of the leading spiritual and educational Islamic centers.
- The University of Naples was founded by The Emperor of the Roman Empire Frederick on June 5, 1224. This university is the oldest state-supported institution of higher education and research in the world.

Higher vocational school and university libraries - terminology and meaning

According to the law on libraries of the Republic of North Macedonia, based on their purpose, libraries are divided into (Law on libraries "Official gazette of the Republic of Macedonia" no. 66/04, 89/08, 116/10, 511, 88/15, 152/15 and 39/16).

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- National Library;
- Public libraries;
- School libraries;
- Higher vocational school and university libraries and
- Specialized Libraries

Higher vocational school and university libraries are libraries whose activity is intended to support and promote the educational, research, and scientific work of students, teachers, professors, and researchers in the higher educational institutions.

Given the fact that both higher vocational school and university libraries have the task of providing services to researchers, teachers, professors, and students, hereinafter, we will use the term University Libraries for all of them. Modern university libraries are facing the challenge of advancing new ways of learning as successfully as possible. It specifically refers to lifelong learning and distance learning as part of the overall education system of a country and beyond. Modern organized university libraries should have a wide range of services as a foundation for a successful learning process. Nowadays, learning forms a significant segment of national programs around the world, and university libraries should be well prepared to capture desirable positions within the University, the wider community, and in the lives of each individual. In this regard, their transformation is necessary in order to successfully upgrade their traditional services with modern Information Technology Services.

This certainly entails their flexibility, interdisciplinarity, creativity, and adaptation to higher education reforms and harmonization with the European higher education system in accordance with the Bologna processes.

Universities and university libraries in the Republic of North Macedonia

The Law on Higher Education in the Republic of North Macedonia regulates the autonomy of the University and academic freedom, the conditions and procedures for the establishment and abolition of higher education institutions, the system for providing and assessing the quality of Higher Education, and the foundations for the organization, management, development, and financing of higher education activities (Law on Higher education "Official gazette of the Republic of Macedonia" n. 35/2008, 103/2008, 26/2009, 83/2009, 99/2009, 115/2010, 17/2011, 51/2011, 123/2012, 15/2013, 24/2013, 41/2014, 116/2014, 130/2014, 10/2015, 20/2015, 98/2015, 145/2015, 154/2015, 30/2016 и 127/16).

According to the Ministry of Education, presently, there are several accredited state universities in the Republic of North Macedonia, namely;

1. University "Saints Cyril and Methodius" - Skopje which is the first State University in the Republic of Macedonia, formed on 24.04.1949 and abbreviated as UKIM. UKIM is the oldest and largest university in the Macedonian language, based in the capital of Macedonia - Skopje. Today, the University "Saints Cyril and Methodius" represents a community of 24 faculties, and 9 scientific institutes of which 5 are constituent and 4 cooperate with the University.

The academic library of the University "St. Cyril and Methodius" is the National and University Library "St. Kliment of Ohrid" in Skopje, which is also the National Library of Macedonia. The National Library "St. Kliment of Ohrid" Skopje was one of the first institutions that were formed by a decision of the anti-fascist assembly of the People's Liberation of Macedonia (ASNOM) 78 years ago, on 23 November 1944. This library is named after St. Kliment Ohridski - the most outstanding student of St.Cyril and Methodius and the founder of librarianship in Macedonia. The National Library is the home library for all libraries in Macedonia. In addition to the main function as a National Library, the National and University Library is also a scientific and university library for the University "Saints Cyril and Methodius" from Skopje. The University Library, "St.Kliment Ohridski" Skopje was first founded as a National Library and was housed in the premises of the Central Library of the Faculty of Philosophy in Skopje in 1920 which was the first university library in Macedonia. The national and university library is responsible for the development of the only National Library Information System that connects all types of libraries in Macedonia. The National Library has a rich collection numbering

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3 million copies and collections of books, manuscripts, periodicals, maps, recordings, scores, artworks, postcards, etc.

The national library is one of the leading sources of materials in research activities and is one of the leaders in the digitalization of the literary treasure that Macedonia possesses.

Among other activities, the national library performs the completion and processing of library material, information and bibliographic activity, preservation, protection, and conservation of library material, educational activities, and international cooperation.

The library has received numerous important social awards and recognitions for its contribution to the scientific, cultural, and educational function. The most important ones are the order "Merit for the People" with Silver Rays in 1972, the award "October 11th", which is the highest social recognition for extraordinary achievements in the field of Science in 1975, "Charter of Culture" in 1984, the award "St.Kliment Ohridski" twice – once in 1984 and for the second time in 1994, etc.

At the university, there are faculties in the sphere of natural, medical, social, technical, and biotechnical sciences, and art, namely;

- Faculty of Information Sciences and Computer Engineering; at this faculty, there is an electronic library available as a desktop and mobile application that enables the use of online books, pictures, videos, and other educational content. (https://www.finki.ukim.mk/ 22.03.2024).
- Faculty of Architecture; at the Faculty of Architecture in Skopje, there is a digital library that offers the possibility of online searching of books, master's and doctoral theses, etc., by keywords, title, author, or publisher. (http://www.arh.ukim.edu.mk/ 22.03.2024).
- Faculty of Civil Engineering; the library of the Faculty of Civil Engineering was formed with the establishment of the Technical Faculty in 1949 and has been operating independently since 1975 as a separate working unit. (http://gf.ukim.edu.mk/ 22.03.2024).
- Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Information Technologies (FEIT); the library of the Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Information Technologies functions as a separate working unit and is shared by FEIT and the Faculty of Mechanical Engineering. This library has existed since the establishment of the faculties and has seen constant growth in its work. The library's collection is composed of professional literature in the field of Electrical and mechanical engineering and related fields. (https://feit.ukim.edu.mk/biblioteka/ 22.03.2024).
- Faculty of Mechanical Engineering; the Library of the Faculty of Electrical Engineering and Information Technologies functions as a separate working unit and is shared by FEIT and the Faculty of Mechanical Engineering. (https://feit.ukim.edu.mk/biblioteka/ 22.03.2024).
- Faculty of Technology and Metallurgy; the library of the Faculty of Technology and Metallurgy has the task of supplying students, teachers, researchers, and administrative staff with scientific, pedagogical, and technical information necessary for their academic and administrative activities. (http://www.tmf.ukim.edu.mk/ 22.03.2024).
- Faculty of Natural Sciences and Mathematics; a library exists at the Faculty of Natural Sciences and Mathematics. (http://im-pmf.weebly.com/ 22.03.2024).
- Faculty of Economics; there is a library at the Faculty of Economics Skopje; (https://eccf.ukim.edu.mk/ 22.03.2024).
- Faculty of Law "Justinian First"; a library exists at the Faculty of Law Skopje, alongside with a digital library which allows all users of the library to be able to search the collection of materials that the library possesses, with the opportunity to reserve the books; (https://pf.ukim.edu.mk/biblioteka/ 22.03.2024).
- Faculty of Philosophy; there is a library at the Faculty of Philosophy in Skopje; (http://fzf.ukim.edu.mk/ 22.03.2024).
- Faculty of Philology "Blaze Koneski"; the library exists at the Faculty of Philology in Skopje; (https://flf.ukim.mk 22.03.2024).
- Faculty of Pedagogy "St. Kliment Ohridski"; a library of the Faculty of Pedagogy Skopje; (https://indibib.feit.ukim.edu.mk/ 22.03.2024).

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- Faculty of Medicine; there is a library at the Faculty of Medicine in Skopje which is a Central Medical Library founded in 1947; (http://cmb.edu.mk/ 22.03.2024).
- Faculty of Pharmacy; there is a library at the Faculty of Pharmacy in Skopje; (http://cmb.edu.mk/ 22.03.2024).
- Dental school; there is a digital library at the Faculty of Dentistry in Skopje where you can search for master's and doctoral theses, books in the professional field, professional papers, textbooks, and teaching aids. (https://stomfak.ukim.edu.mk/ 22.03.2024).
- Faculty of Physical Culture; the library of the Faculty of Physical Culture has a library collection of 5,000 books, magazines, newsletters, monographs, and other teaching aids. Within the library at the Faculty of Physical Education there is an opportunity to connect with renowned world libraries; (https://ffosz.ukim.edu.mk/ 22.03.2024).
- Faculty of Agricultural Sciences and Food; the library of the Faculty of Agricultural Sciences and Food has a collection of over 120.000 periodicals and 28.000 books and monographs by domestic and foreign authors; (http://www.fznh.ukim.edu.mk 22.03.2024).
- Faculty of Forestry; the library of the Faculty of Forestry started working independently on 01.10.1975; (https://sf.ukim.edu.mk/ 22.03.2024).
- Faculty of Veterinary Medicine; the library collection of the Faculty of Veterinary Medicine has about 3,000 copies of domestic and foreign literature; (https://fvm.ukim.edu.mk/ 22.03.2024).
- Faculty of Dramatic Arts; Digital Library of the Faculty of Dramatic Arts; (http://indibib.feit.ukim.edu.mk/book_category/fakultet-za-dramski-umetnosti/ 22.03.2024).
- Faculty of Fine Arts; Digital Library of the Faculty of Fine Arts formed in 1984. (http://www.flu.ukim.edu.mk/ 22.03.2024).
- Faculty of Music Art; a library of the Faculty of Music Art established in 1966; (http://www.fmu.ukim.edu.mk/ 22.03.2024).
- The faculty of design and technologies of furniture and interior, has a digital library. (https://indibib.feit.ukim.edu.mk/ 22.03.2024).

Within the University "Saints Cyril and Methodius" there are constituent scientific institutes: Economic Institute Skopje, Institute for Sociological and Political Legal Research - Skopje, Institute for Earthquake Engineering and Engineering Seismology, Agricultural Institute, and Institute of Animal Husbandry. Within the University "Saints Cyril and Methodius," there are other associate members e.i. public scientific institutions, such as the Institute of Macedonian Literature, Institute of Macedonian Language "Krste Misirkov", Institute of National History, and Institute of Folklore "Marko Cepenkov". Other institutions of higher education which are also part of UKIM are the Orthodox Theological Faculty, St.Kliment Ohridski " which was founded in Skopje in 1977, (https://pbf.edu.mk/ 22.03.2024), and the Military Academy "Mihailo Apostolski" which was established by the law on Military Academy, which regulates that the Academy operates following the law on higher education and the law on scientific research in the Republic of Macedonia. (https://ma.edu.mk/ 22.03.2024).

Some of the universities in Macedonia, on their official websites on the Internet, offer access to electronic libraries that provide access to several databases for research, books, and journals from different fields. In cooperation with several faculties, the idea was to make a digital library where students can search for various books and learning materials and find or publish professional papers, search online collections of libraries, etc. At the University "Saints Cyril and Methodius" – Skopje there is a digital library in which almost all faculties of this university are members.

Some of them are included in the COBISS system which means cooperative online bibliographic system and services. The platform is an organizational model of linking libraries into a National Library-Information System with mutual cataloging, mutual bibliographic-catalog database, etc. With the help of this platform, every user can search online libraries in a very fast, simple, and easy way, can reserve a book, can extend the loan period through a mobile application, and many other opportunities and benefits.

Some of the faculties that are included in the COBISS system of the University "St. Cyril and Methodius" are the Faculty of Philology, "Blaze Koneski", Faculty of Economics – Skopje, Faculty of

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Medicine - Skopje, and Central Medical Library. ((https://plus.cobiss.net/cobiss/mk/mk/libraries/ 22.03.2024).

2. University" St. Kliment Ohridski" - Bitola, known by the acronym UKLO is the second State University in the Republic of Macedonia and the most important institution in the field of higher education in the region of Southwest Macedonia.

This university was established on 25.04.1979 in Bitola. On 08.12.1994, a decision was made to name the University after the great Ohrid educator St.Kliment.

Today, this university is an autonomous, higher educational, and scientific research institution, aiming to be internationally open and in the function of the environment. (https://uklo.edu.mk/ 22.03.2024).

The National and University Library of Bitola "St. Kliment Ohridski" was founded on 25.03.1945 with the decision of the City National Board and was named "the City National Library" in Bitola. Since its inception, the library has undergone several changes regarding its title. Since 2004, its name has been National Institution - National and University Library "St.Kliment Ohridski " Bitola. Today, the library, "St. Kliment Ohridski " - Bitola is a modern, cultural institution, with a rich book collection of about 600,000 books and magazines. (https://nuub.mk/ 22.03.2024).

Within this university, there are the faculties in which the following libraries exist and function (Stefanovska, 2011):

- Technical Faculty – Bitola; the library at the Technical Faculty – Bitola was established in 1968; (Stefanovska, 2011).
- Faculty of Economics – Prilep; the library at the Faculty of Economics – Prilep which was established immediately after the establishment of the higher vocational school of Economics and accounting in 1960; (Stefanovska, 2011).
- Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality – Ohrid; The library at the Faculty of Tourism and Hospitality – Ohrid was established in 1977; (Stefanovska, 2011).
- Faculty of Pedagogy – Bitola; the library at the Faculty of Pedagogy - Bitola formed with the establishment of the higher education institution in 1964; (Stefanovska, 2011).
- Faculty of Information and Communication Technologies, (https://fikt.uklo.edu.mk/ 22.03.2024).
- Faculty of Biotechnical Sciences – Bitola; the library at the Faculty of Biotechnical Sciences-Bitola which was established in 1960; (Stefanovska, 2011).
- High Medical School – Bitola; Library of the High Medical School – Bitola; (Stefanovska, 2011).
- Faculty of Security – Skopje; the library at the Faculty of Security - Skopje was established immediately after the establishment of the police academy in Skopje in 2003; (Stefanovska, 2011).
- Veterinary Faculty – Bitola; library at the veterinary faculty - Bitola; (Stefanovska, 2011).
- Faculty of Law – Kicevo; the library of the Faculty of Law – Kicevo established in 2010; (Stefanovska, 2011).
- Technical and technological faculty - Veles (Stefanovska, 2011).

At the University "St. Kliment Ohridski" – Bitola, there are several scientific units that are working within the University and that have their libraries; Library at the Institute of Tobacco - Prilep; Library at the Hydrobiological Institute - Ohrid; Library of the Institute of old Slavic culture - Prilep (Stefanovska, 2011).

The most prominent units of the University "St. Kliment Ohridski" - Bitola, which are included in the COBISS platform are the Scientific Institute of Tobacco - Prilep and the National Institution "National and University Library St. Kliment Ohridski" – Bitola.

3. University "Goce Delchev" - Stip was established by the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia on 27.03. 2007 with the following faculties; (https://www.ugd.edu.mk/ 22.03.2024).

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- Faculty of Law,
- Faculty of Economics,
- Faculty of Agriculture,
- Faculty of Informatics,
- Faculty of Pedagogy,
- Faculty of Natural and Technical Sciences,
- Faculty of Music Arts,
- Faculty of Medical Sciences,
- Faculty of Philology,
- Faculty of Tourism and Business Logistics,
- Faculty of Mining, Geology, and Polytechnic.

In addition to the faculties, there are also departments, institutes, laboratories, centers, and other internal units such as the University Cultural Center, University Sports Center, Public Relations Center, lifelong learning center, Electronic Learning Center, Quality Assurance Center, inter-university cooperation center, IT center, career office, etc. The University "Goce Delchev" from Stip is located in several Macedonian cities: Stip, Strumica, Kocani, Radovis, Probistip, Vinica, Sveti Nikole, Gevgelija, Kavadarci, Prilep, Skopje and Berovo.

The University Library "Goce Delchev" from Stip gathers in one place the editions of all faculties and associated institutes that function within the University "Goce Delchev". The university library provides access for students to all books, textbooks, professional aids, manuals, etc., and their number is more than 110.000 books from various fields, namely social, natural, and technical sciences, as well as mathematics, geodesy, physics, chemistry, biology, botany, geology, paleontology and has a large number of dictionaries, master's and doctoral theses. The University Library "Goce Delchev" provides its users with an electronic e-library service. Recently, a simple application which provides electronic access to the library catalogue has been in use thus facilitating the process of education (https://www.nuubgdst.mk, 22.03.2024). The National and university library "Goce Delchev" from Stip is included in the COBISS network with all departments, including the adult's department, children's department, academic department, and Bibliobus (mobile library).

4. The University of Tetovo was established on 17.12.1994 with the following faculties; (https://unite.edu.mk/ 22.03.2024).

- Faculty of Natural Sciences and Mathematics,
- Faculty of Humanistic Studies and Arts,
- Faculty of Economics,
- Faculty of Law,
- Faculty of Philosophy,
- Faculty of Business Administration,
- Faculty of Medical Sciences at the University of Tetovo.

The State University of Tetovo is included in the COBISS platform.

5. The University of Information Sciences and Technologies "St. Paul the Apostle" - Ohrid or abbreviated UIST was registered in the Central Register of the Republic of Macedonia in July 2009. This university is a State University, legally established by the Assembly of the Republic of Macedonia in 2008. The university library is not included in the COBISS platform. Under its authority are the faculties of; Communication networks and security, Faculty of Computer Science and Engineering, Faculty of Information Systems, visualization, digital, multi-media, and animation techniques, Faculty of information theories and analysis, Faculty of machine intelligence and robotics (https://uist.edu.mk/ 22.03.2024).

6. The university "Mother Teresa" - Skopje was established on 26.12.2015, by the law on establishing the Faculty of Mother Teresa in Skopje, with the faculties of; Civil engineering and architecture, Faculty of Information Sciences, Faculty of Technical Sciences, Faculty of Social Affairs,

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Faculty of Technological Sciences, Faculty of Humanities, Economic School and Law School (https://unt.edu.mk/mk/ 22.03.2024).

Among the other state universities that are included in the COBISS network is the university library of the university "Mother Teresa" from Skopje.

According to the Ministry of Education, private accredited higher education establishments are: (https://mon.gov.mk/ 22.03.2024).

- First private university - European University of the Republic of Macedonia,
- First private Fon University, Skopje;
- Private higher education institution New York University Skopje,
- University American College Skopje,
- MIT University Skopje,
- International Slavic Institute Sveti Nikole,
- International University Europa prima Skopje,
- University of Tourism and Management Skopje,
- Private independent higher vocational school, business Academy Smilevski-BAS " Skopje,
- International University of Struga,
- Southeast European University, Tetovo-independent private-public non-profit higher education institution that realizes public interest,
- International Balkan University Skopje,
- Higher vocational school, Accademia Italiana " Skopje,
- Higher professional institution for Business Studies Euro College Kumanovo,
- International Vision University Gostivar,
- Higher Professional School of Journalism and Public Relations Skopje,
- Institute of Social Sciences, Euro Balkans " Skopje,
- Institute of Social Sciences and Humanities Skopje,
- Independent higher vocational school-Breinster next Skopje,
- Higher vocational school Fashion Design Institute Tetovo.

In the South East European University, there is the "Max van der Stoel" library which serves the scientific research and educational goals of the University. Users of this university library have access to the library's collection, network databases, electronic resources, computers with internet access, and reading rooms that are tailored to the requirements and needs of the students. The University Library "Max van der Stoel" is also open to the community and is the winner of the "Library of the Year" award given by the Library Association of Macedonia for 2021 (https://www.seeu.edu.mk/mk/22.03.2024).

Other higher vocational school and university library that is included in COBISS is the University "American College" - Skopje.

Most of the private universities in Macedonia have a university library, and some of them have an online learning platform for students (https://msu.edu.mk/fakulteti/fi/literatura/ 22.03.2024) databases of electronic editions, etc.(https://utms.edu.mk/biblioteka /22.03.2024

Conclusion

The fact that libraries exist in all universities and all faculties within the universities speaks of the importance that the university libraries have on the educational process. Libraries fully assist science, education, research, personal and professional development of the individual, but also lifelong learning. Macedonia as a country where literacy and science began and developed, continues to spread science and education today. On the territory of Macedonia, there are even too many universities that offer opportunities for study in almost all areas of social life. Following the world trends, the university

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libraries in the Republic of North Macedonia actively help and improve the educational process. There are university libraries in all universities in the state.

There must be a library in every university because it is impossible to imagine modern learning, development, scientific research, etc. without a university library. From the conducted research we conclude that the higher vocational school and university libraries in Macedonia are not fully included in the COBISS network. At the universities in the Republic of Macedonia, it is necessary to constantly work on modernizing the libraries in terms of modernizing the library premises, the library equipment, and investing in the staff working at the higher vocational school and university libraries, to be competent, to provide them with opportunities to attend training and courses for library work. All this will enable them to more easily respond to the requests of the users of the library i.e. the students and the teaching staff. Also, in the Republic of North Macedonia, an initiative should be made for unification, or establishing a community, or association of all higher vocational school and university libraries following the example in Serbia. Through mutual cooperation and the sharing of experience, this initiative will significantly facilitate the work of the libraries and will provide easier access to libraries, better quality education, and develop librarianship. This association of higher vocational school and university libraries will initiate scientific conferences and scientific papers in the field of library science, especially in these higher educational institutions. This is turn will increase the publishing activities through which the information and the knowledge of the wider social community will be improved.

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