IJNRD.ORG   ISSN : 2456-4184

INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF NOVEL RESEARCH
AND DEVELOPMENT (IJNRD) | IJNRD.ORG

IJNRD   An International Open Access, Peer-reviewed, Refereed Journal

PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEM IN MAHARASHTRA

Mr. Amol P. Mehendale

Librarian

K.K.W. Arts, science and Commerce College, Pimpalgaon Baswant, Dist: Nashik

E-mail: mehendaleamol@yahoo.co.in

ABSTRACT-Indian public library system has history of more than a century. But the public library system in India flourished after Independence especially after the enactment and implementation of Public Library Legislation. Government of Maharashtra State has passed the Library Legislation. Since then there is constant and systematic growth of public library system. Since the implementation of Maharashtra Public Library Legislation, some amendments have been done. Still there is need of strong and constant financial support from the Government for the public libraries.

Index Terms-Public Library System, National Library of India, Maharashtra Public Libraries Act, Raja Rammohun Roy Library Foundation

_____

INTRODUCTION:

Libraries have always been playing an important role in the development of the society. Libraries not only give access to the knowledge but also help to preserve the records of cultural, social and economic development of the society. Socrates said that "The only good is knowledge and the only evil is ignorance (e-pgpathshala)". Public libraries help in providing free access of knowledge to masses and thereby removing ignorance. Amongst the different types of libraries public library is most close to the society as it gives access to knowledge without any constraint. It provides services to its readers on the basis of equality of access for all, regardless of age, race, sex, religion, nationality, language or social status free of cost (Patil, 2013). Public libraries as an institution evolved since ancient period. There were libraries like Nalanda, Takshshila, Library of Alexandria, Athens, Constantinople etc. Initially these libraries were open for only scholars and elite peoples of the society. Gradually they start providing access to common people. Public library plays an important role in the dissemination of information and source for lifelong learning. The public libraries help in providing informal education. Therefore we found a wide network of public libraries across the world. There is wide network of public libraries in India also. There are state libraries, district libraries, divisional libraries, libraries located at taluka and villages. Most of the states in India have passed Library Legislation. It helps to ensure the constant and sustainable development of public libraries.

PUBLIC LIBRARY:

There are different types of libraries- public libraries, academic libraries, research libraries and institutional libraries. Each library can be differentiated from each other on the basis of its users, library collection, services etc.

IFL/UNESCO (Philip, 2001) define "A public library is an organization established, supported and funded by the community, either through local, regional or national government or through some other form of community organization. It provides access to knowledge, information and works of the imagination through a range of resources and services and is equally available to all members of the community regardless of race, nationality, age, gender, religion, lan- guage, disability, economic and employment status and educational attainment".

IMPORTANCE OF PUBLIC LIBRARY:

Public libraries play an important role in providing free, unlimited and unconditional access to the knowledge and thereby contributing in the socio, economic and cultural growth of the country. The public library, the local gateway to knowledge, provides a basic condition for lifelong learning, independent decision- making and cultural development of the individual and social groups. It underpins healthy knowledge societies through providing access to and enabling the creation and

sharing of knowledge of all sorts, including scientific and local knowledge without commercial, technological or legal barriers (IFLA and UNESCO, 2022). Public libraries help in catering needs of an individuals and society regarding formal as well as informal education, information, leisure and recreation. Public library also provides opportunities for personal development. It nurture creativity and imagination by providing access to rich and varied store of knowledge. It also helps economic development of an individual or group. Public library gives its services all the age groups. Children can be motivated and inspired to read and grow. The professional can use knowledge to attain their professional goals. The old age people may make use of their leisure time and can overcome the filling of loneliness. The public library has an important role as a public space and meeting place. This is particularly important in communities where there are few places for people to meet. Use of the library for research, education, and leisure interests, brings people into informal contact, providing a positive social experience. Library facilities should be designed and built to foster social and cultural activities which support community interests (De Gruyter Saur). Public library helps in the preservation of the knowledge by holding both the recently published books and rare books and manuscripts. It also helps transferring this heritage to the posterity.

PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEM IN INDIA:
Pre-Independence Developments:

Development of public library system owes to the various efforts made in pre-independence period. Lord Curson transformed the Calcutta Public Library into Imperial Library in 1906 (Badhusha & Nagarajan, 2012). His Highness Sayaji Rao Gaekwad III, Maharaja of Baroda, was a great visionary, who pioneered the development of Public Library System in India as early as 1910. As a part of his carefully devised programme of mass education, he planned to create a network of free public libraries, which would keep literacy alive, and enable men and women in rural areas to have access to source of knowledge (Public Library Scenario in India). With the help of Mr. M. A. Borden, an American Librarian, he established carefully developed library system in Baroda State. This was the first public library system in the country. Before independence many public libraries were established. Most of these libraries were started by the voluntary organisations. But these libraries could not continue to serve the public and close down due to lack of continuous financial support.

Post- Independence Developments:

The public library system in India has a rich history that dates back to ancient times. However, the development of public libraries in the real sense began after independence. After Independence Indian Government tried to create a development of strong and well established network of public libraries in the country.

National Library:

After Independence of India, the National Library came into being in place of Imperial Library by the "Imperial Library (Change of Name) Act" in 1948. It was accorded a special status of an Institution of National Importance in the Article 62 in the 7th Schedule of the Constitution of India and was opened to Public on 1st February 1953 (National Library of India). The National library is the biggest library in India in terms of volume of reading materials.

THE DELIVERY OF BOOKS AND NEWSPAPERS (PUBLIC LIBRARIES) ACT, 1954:

The delivery of Books (Public Libraries) Act, 1954 which is amended by the Delivery of Books (Public Libraries) Amendment Act, 1956 ensures The National Library and Three other libraries to receive a copy of every publication published anywhere in the country. The library is a permanent depository of all reading and printed materials produced in India, or written by any foreigner, wherever published and in whatever language (National Library of India).

RAJA RAMMOHUN ROY LIBRARY FOUNDATION (RRLF):

RRRLF is a central autonomous organization established and fully financed by the Ministry of Culture, Government of India. RRRLF is registered under the West Bengal Societies Registration Act, 1961. This foundation was established in May 1972. It is the nodal agency of the Government of India to support public library services and systems and promote public library movement in the country. The RRLF has 22 membes nominated by the Government of India from amongst eminent educationists, librarians, administrators and senior officials. The minister of Department of Culture, Government of India or his nominee is the Chairman of RRRLF. This foundation works with the State Government and Union Territories to promote reading habit among the masses and to spread the services of public library in every corner of the country. It has following objectives (Public Library Scenario in India):

- to promote library movement in the country
- to enunciate a national library policy and to help build up a national library system
- to provide financial and technical assistance to libraries
- to provide financial assistance to organisations, regional or national engaged in the promotion of library development
- to publish appropriate literature and to act as a clearing house of ideas and information on library development in India and abroad
- to promote research in problems of library development
- to advise the government on all matters pertaining to the library development in the country

COMMITTEES ON FOR THE LIBRARIES:

The Sinha Committee (1957) appointed by the Government of India and Working Group on Libraries-1965 recommended following structure of public library system in India (e-pgpathshala):

- The National Library
- The State Central Library at the apex of the state libraries
- District Library
- Divisional Library
- Block/ Taluka Library
- Village Library

PUBLIC LIBRARY ACT OR LEGISLATION:

Public Library Act or Legislation refers to the law or regulation that governs the growth and operation of the public libraries in a state or union territory. This act ensures the sustainable and inclusive development of public libraries, Funding and Resource Allocation Professional Standards and Governance of the public libraries. In India 19 states have passed the Public Library Legislation so far. Tamilnadu was the first state of India to pass this act.

MAHARASHTRA PUBLIC LIBRARIES ACT:

The Public Libraries Act was passed in 1967 in the Maharashtra State. But it was implemented in 1971. In 1939, the Government of Bombay appointed a Committee, under the Chairmanship of Shri Fyzee, to look into Library Legislation. The committee submitted its report in 1940, but it could not be implemented till 1971 (Library Legislation in Indian States: their salient features).

The main features of this Act are given below :

1. Constitution of State Library Council by the Government. Minister for Education shall be the Ex-officio President of the Council. The Council will advise the State Government "on all matters connected with the administration of this Act."
2. Constitution of a separate Department of Libraries, and the appointment of a professional as its Director.
3. Establishment of State Central Library arid a Divisional Library for each Division.
4. Constitution of a District Library Committee for every District.- The. Chairman of the Education Committee of the Zilla Parishad functioning in the district, as the Ex-officio President of the Committee. In case of the Committee of the Greater Bombay, the Chairman of the Education Committee of the Municipal Corporation, shall be the Ex-officio President of the Committee.
5. Establishment of Maharashtra State Library Service and to treat all members of such service as Government servants.
6. There is no library cess. The Government shall contribute to the library fund every year (Public Library Scenario in India),

PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEM IN MAHARASHTRA:

The Government of Marshtra drafted the Public Libraries bill and get it passed in the Legislation Assembly on 17th November 1967. The Asiatic Society handed over the Central Library to be run as a full-fledged State Central Library, by the Government of Maharashtra. Under the Act, there is a full fledged Directorate of Public Libraries to manage the system. As on 31st March 2014, there are 1 State Central Library, 6 divisional Libraries, 1 reference library (i.e. Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar Memorial Reference Library) and 34 district libraries run by the Government besides 11859 Aided Libraries.

STATUS OF PUBLIC LIBRARIES IN MAHARASHTRA:

The public libraries in Maharashtra are governed and managed by the Directorate of Libraries. According to Maharashtra Public Libraries Rules 1970, Directorate of Libraries pays Grant-in-aid to the Government Recognised public libraries. The public libraries in Maharashtra are categories into four categories i.e. A, B, C and D according to their book stock, periodicals, users etc. While recognizing these libraries, the library is required to be registered under the Public Trust Act, 1950 or Society's Registration Act, 1860. These libraries receive grants ranging from Rs. 30,000 to 720000 per annum as per the category in which the library is classified. Apart from this these libraries can receive Equipment Furniture Grants, Incentive grants and Building grants (Grant-in-aid to Public Libraries).

CONCLUSION:

The public libraries in India play a crucial role in promoting literacy, education, and cultural enrichment in the society. These libraries provide wide range of information resources and help in the economic, social, intellectual and cultural growth of the society. Therefore the public library system should be widen and strengthen so as to reach to each and every individuals of the country. The Public Libraries Act should be amended from time to time to make it relevant. Public libraries should be sufficiently funded to hire qualified staff, to enrich its collection. These libraries should reach to the society by organising various activities. So the public library systems should be reformed to make them to sustain in future.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

1. Badhusha, K., & Nagarajan, M. (2012). Development of Public Library Systems and Services in India. *V3 Journal of Library and Information Science, 1*(1).

2. De Gruyter Saur. (n.d.). *The mission and purposes of the public library*. Retrieved October 17, 2022, from https://www.degruyter.com/document/doi/10.1515/9783110232271-003/html?lang=en

3. *e-pgpathshala.* (n.d.). Retrieved October 17, 2022, from 1. https://epgp.inflibnet.ac.in/epgpdata/uploads/epgp_content/S000021LI/P000211/M002124/ET/145259796716-Etext.pdf

4. *Grant-in-aid to Public Libraries*. (n.d.). Retrieved October 18, 2022, from Government of Maharashtra, Higher and Technical Education Department, Directorate of Libraries: https://dol.maharashtra.gov.in/en/grant_in_aid

5. IFLA and UNESCO. (2022). *IFLA-UNESCO Public Library Manifesto 2022* . https://repository.ifla.org/bitstream/123456789/2006/1/IFLA-UNESCO%20Public%20Library%20Manifesto%202022.pdf: International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions.

6. *Library Legislation in Indian States: their salient features*. (n.d.). Retrieved October 18, 2023, from https://egyankosh.ac.in/bitstream/123456789/33049/1/Unit-10.pdf

7. *National Library of India*. (n.d.). Retrieved October 18 , 2023, from https://www.indiaculture.gov.in/national-library-india

8. *National Library of India*. (n.d.). Retrieved October 17, 2023, from National Library of India: https://www.nationallibrary.gov.in/

9. Patil, V. (2013). Library Automation and Networking: Need and Importance of Maharashtra Public Libraries. *Journal of Advances in Library and Information Science, 2*(3), pp. 152-156.

10. Philip, G. (2001). *The Public library service: IFLA/UNESCO guidelines for development.* München: International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions.

11. *Public Library Scenario in India*. (n.d.). Retrieved October 17 , 2022, from Raja Rammohun Roy Library Foundation: http://rrrlf.gov.in/StaticPages_PubLibSystem/PubLibScenario.aspx