Genesis' of Public Library movement in sustaining Educational needs: A special Reference to Goa Public Library system

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Abstract

This paper traces the genesis and growth of Public Library movement and development in the World and particularly in the State of Goa in sustaining the educational needs of the users. The first part covers the Global development in Public libraries; second part deals with the Indian scenario and the third part represents the Public library movement in Goa state specifically in meeting the educational needs. The paper also emphasizes the role of public libraries in formal and non formal education as well as public library as an educator and literacy center. It also presents an exhaustive picture of public library movement in supporting the future citizen of country as well as by providing related material to its citizens.

Keywords : *Public Libraries, Library Movement, User Studies, Library Service*

Introduction

A nation's progress depends largely on the education which it provides to its citizen, either formal or non-formal. The active and informal participation of the common masses in the country's affairs is essential for a real democratic

set up. A democratic society needs citizens who are aware of their environment and are well acquainted with cultural, social, political and economic heritage of the country. The public library is one such institution of non-formal education, which plays an important role in a developing country like India.

Public library is a nonprofit learning & education center. It plays an important role in building well informed skilled individuals & contributes in building a better country. Public libraries are considered as a essential part of the society as it plays a very important role in the diffusion of ideas, imparting knowledge & education, the creative use of leisure, preservation of national heritage, social, cultural& educational development of the community as a whole.

Development of society depends on mass education & library is the only media through which mass education is feasible. The need of Public Library service is also felt in view of mass education programme to remove illiteracy &ignorance among the masses. Public library caters to the educational needs of all segment of the population by providing different facilities, services & resources.

Public libraries are established under the clear mandate of law, which are maintained wholly from public funds, which levies no “direct charges” (fees) from its users for any of its services & which is open for free & equal use by all members of the community regardless of race, color, cast, creed, religion, age, sex, nationality, language, status or level of educational attainment.

The origin, the nature and the purpose of public libraries depends upon the understanding of democracy. The purpose of public library is to provide members of the society opportunity to overcome some of the social and intellectual barriers and that is why it is sometimes called “Poor man’s university’.

In short public library provides knowledge, information & education to the people of society.

Development of Public Libraries in the World

The earliest known library was a collection of clay tablets in Babylonia in the 21st century. B.C. Ancient Egyptian temple libraries are known through the

Greek writers. DiodorusSiculus describes the library of Ramses III, c.1200 B.C. The extensively cataloged library of Assurbanipal (d. 626? B.C.) in Nineveh was the most noted before Alexandria. The temple at Jerusalem contained a sacred library. The first public library in Greece was established in 330 B.C., in order to preserve accurate examples of the work of the great dramatists. The most famous libraries of antiquity were those of Alexandria, founded by Ptolemy I, which contained some 700,000 Greek scrolls.

The first Roman libraries were brought from Greece, Asia Minor, and Syria as a result of conquests in the 1st and 2d century. B.C. Caius AsiniusPollio established (c.40 B.C.) the first public library in Rome, but the great public libraries of the Roman Empire were the Octavian (destroyed A.D. 80) and the Palatine (destroyed c.A.D. 190) and the more important Ulpian library, founded during the reign of Trajan. In addition to these public collections, there were many fine private libraries by the time the Roman Republic was ended in 27 B.C.

The early Christian libraries were in monasteries; the Benedictines amassed a fine collection at Monte Cassino. The Romans had brought book collections to the British Isles, but important early monastic libraries were founded in York, Wearmouth, Canterbury, and elsewhere in England and Ireland by Anglo-Saxon monks. Some of the finest manuscript illumination was produced in these libraries

The Arabs in the 9th to 15th cent. collected and preserved many libraries, and the Jews and the Byzantines also developed fine libraries during the medieval period. In the 14th and 15th cent. Charles V of France, Lorenzo de' Medici, and Frederick, duke of Urbino, all formed fine libraries; part of the Urbino library is now in the Vatican Library. In the 15th cent. the Vatican Library, the oldest public library in Europe, was formed. In 1475, Platina, as its first librarian, made a catalogue that included 2,527 volumes. In 1257 the Sorbonne library at Paris was founded, and in 1525 the erection of the Laurentian Library in Florence, designed by Michelangelo, was begun. Many of the great university libraries (e.g., Bologna, Prague, Oxford, and Heidelberg) were opened in the 14th cent.

In the United States a circulating library, the Library Company of Philadelphia, was chartered in 1732 on the initiative of Benjamin Franklin. A public library

had, however, been opened in Boston as early as 1653 Other early subscription libraries included the Boston Athenæum, the New York Society Library, and the Charleston (S.C.) Library Society. In 1833 the first tax-supported library in the country opened at Peterborough. The American Library Association was formed in 1876, and this organization spurred improvements in library methods and in the training of librarians.

Libraries in the United States and Great Britain benefited greatly from the philanthropy of Andrew Carnegie, who gave more than $65 million for public library buildings in the United States alone and strengthened local interest by making the grants contingent upon public support. Among the innovations of the late 19th cent. were free public access to books (involving elaborate classification schemes) and branch libraries or deposit stations for books in many parts of cities; in the early 20th century travelling libraries, or "bookmobiles," began to take books to readers in rural or outlying areas. By the end of the 20th cent., the digital revolution had resulted in many resources being available to library patrons in electronic formats that could be accessed directly from home or work. In 2009, for example, the European Union (EU) launched a digital library containing tens of thousands of EU documents dating back nearly 60 years; materials in 23 languages were made available to the public free of charge.

Development of Public Libraries in India

Pre-Independence Era : The first significant date in the development of public libraries is 1808 when the Bombay Government initiated a proposal to register libraries which were to be given copies of the books published from funds for the encouragement of literature. Europeans living in Bombay, Calcutta and Madras founded the so called "Public Libraries" at these three presidency town. As the main use of these libraries was confined to almost upper strata of society, these were not in the strict sense, public libraries. In 1867, the govt. enacted press Registration of Books Act (XXV) under which a printer of a book was to deliver free to the state government concerned. Baroda was the first state in the country to sponsor a scheme of free primary compulsory education in the state. Maharaja Sayaji Rao Gaekwad III was impressed by the services that libraries rendered to the people in the West and thought of

establishing such library services in his own state of Baroda. He took immense pains in providing library services &facilities to every nook and corner of the state and within a span of 20 years almost all town and 1100 villages in Baroda State had libraries of their own. The library movement in Baroda become torch bearer for the librarians in India and thus gave impetus to the library movement in the country.

The second important phase in the history of library development began in 1900, when the reading room of the Calcutta library was thrown open to the general public. The Calcutta library was later named as Imperial Library. Another phase of the library movement began in 1937 when the Congress government came to power in many provinces. The encouragement to establish village libraries continued beyond 1942. Dr. S.R.Ranganathan made a significant contribution towards the library movement in India. He prepared the library development plan along with the draft library bills for different states of India in 1930.

Post Independence Era: - After independence there has been number of significance development of public library services in the country. Delhi Public Library was established in 1951, as a pilot project of UNESCO in collaboration with Ministry of Education, Government of India. There were two British Librarians – Frank Gardner and Edward Sydney under whose expert guidance Delhi Public Library was set up. The library was planned to provide complete library services as available in USA & UK. The Advisory Committee appointed by the Government of India in 1955, in its report, submitted in 1958, recommended that library service & facilities should be free for every citizen of India and that the library pattern in the country should consist of a national library, state central library, district library, block libraries and panchayat libraries. Many states have now set up central libraries and district libraries also. Beside National library at Calcutta, Connemara Public library, Madras and Central library, Mumbai, were declared as recipients of all books and magazines published in the country under the Delivery of Books Act, 1954. During the Five Year Plan various schemes have been started by the Planning Commission. Some measures were taken by the Government of India to promote public library services in the country. Some of the important developments are as follows:-

- Establishment of district libraries in each state.
- Enactment of Press & Registration of Books Act.
- Setting up of a National Advisory Board for libraries to advise the central govt. as well as the state govt. on all matters relating to the development of libraries in the country.

- Establishment of Raja Rammonohun Roy Library Foundation to support and promote library services in the country.
- Establishment of library section under the charge of an Under Secretary, Dept. of Culture, Ministry of Education for the promotion of Public library services in India.
- Appointment of a working group for the modernization of library services & resources.
- Appointment of a committee on National Policy on library & information system under the chairmanship of D.P.Chattopadhayay.
- Universalization of elementary education, eradication of illiteracy in the 15-35 year age group.
- National library, Kalkatta undertook several initiatives to upgrade and modernize its collection, building programme, readers' services and conservation of material.
- Up gradation of existing libraries.
- Establishment of National Knowledge Commission under Sam Pitroda as the first Chairman, and
- Establishment of National Mission for Library.
- Since the passing of the Madras Public Libraries Act of 1948, a pattern of Public library system at the state level has emerged. Till date 19 states in country have enacted the public library act/legislation for fruitful functioning of public library systems.

Development of Public Library in Goa

Pre-Liberation Era: Libraries & institutions of learning flourished in the territory of Goa during ancient and medieval times like College of Holy Faith, College of St. Paul, College of Racholflourished in Goa in the 16th century. St. Paul College was the most important center of studies in medieval times in the whole of Goa. Other important Catholic educational institutions were St. Augustino Church and Convent in Old Goa. It had the best libraries.

In the 19th century, the Portuguese established the first public library at Panaji in the name of "Public Livraria" on Sep. 15, 1832. The name was changed several times i.e. Bibliotheca Public, Bibliotheca Publica de Mova Goa, National Library, and Bibliotheca National de Goa. Saraswati Vidyapeeth Pustakalaya was established in 1889 at Marcel in Ponda taluka. The second library was started in the name of Goa Hindu Pustakalaya in 1898. In 1907, two public libraries were established. One was Shri MahalaxmiPrasadic Hindu VachanMandir in Panjim and another Shri DurgaVachanMandir at Mapusa. In 1912 GomantVidyaNiketan Library was started at Margao. Another public library i.e. Shri SaraswatiMandir Library, Panjim came into existence in 1913. Besides these libraries, between 1910 to 1930, 17 public libraries were started throughout Goa.

Post-Libration Era: Soon after libration the Bibliotheca National de Goa was renamed as Central Library in 1964. The Curator for the Central Library was appointed in 1969. The present total collection of the library is 2,40,000. This library is the apex of the public library system in Goa. It has under its control seven taluka, one district and 126 village libraries. At present this library is under the administrative control of the Directorate of Art and Culture. The development of public libraries in Goa after liberation was slow,hence a need arose for the library movement to improve the status of public libraries in the state of Goa.

GomantakGranthalayaSangh (GGS) was established with aim of spreading the library movement in Goa. Mr. B. D. Satoskar becomes the first President of this organization. During all this years the GGS worked hard to boost the library movement in Goa. One of the most important contributions of the GGS was passing of "Goa Libraries Act" in 1993. The demand for which was initiated by

GomantakGranthalayaSangh in1970. The act after being passed in the State Assembly on July 16, 1993 was assented by the Governor on July 19, 1995. The Act was further amended on April 24, 1997 and its implementation started from May 30, 1997.

Education System in Goa

"Education is the process by means of which the individual is brought through training to an understanding of himself, of the life about him and of the infinitely numerous relations which connect him with it" By Louis R. Wilson.

Education system in Goa started way back in the year 1510 when Afanso de Albuquerque conquered Goa and fromkingdom of Bijapur . In 1751 the Jesuits were driven out of Portugal and its overseas possessionby Marques de Pombal. Thereafter praetorian priests took over the control of education in Goa. The college of st. Paul was converted into College of Natives. The role of local language came as the tool of eradication of illiteracy by the end of the 19th century.

After liberation in April 1962, the Government of India appointed a committee under the chairmanship of Shri B. N. Jha, then leader of the Education team, Committee on plan project, Planning commission, to make a thorough review of the educational system prevailing in the State of Goa and to make recommendations for its integration with the system generally prevailing in the rest of the country at all levels of education i.e. Primary to University level of education. Development of Primary, Secondary, Higher, Technical & Vocational education took place in rapid manner thereafter.

Public Library as an Educator

The province and purpose of the public library is to provide for every person the education obtainable through reading. This does not mean education in any narrow or formalized sense but, rather, the culture of mind and spirit that books can diffuse in life. Education implies the use of books for spiritual and intellectual as well as for material and vocational profit, books for mental resource, reading for individual and personal joy.

Education is the process through which he passes in gaining for himself a proper knowledge of the various circumstances of life; from which he acquires the ability to adjust himself properly to them; and by which he learns to know the standards of the true, the good, and the beautiful with which to measure them. Education is the source of individual'senlightenment, happiness and self-fulfillment, the modern welfare states have established the school, the museum, and the institutions of higher learning for importing education to help man to know himself and his role in society. The role of public library 'lies in helping the students to learn when they are away' from their teachers by providing learning environment.

Public libraries will be accepted as such when it is open to all and has a stock of books and other graphic materials adequate for the educational, recreational, informational and research needs of its public. Thus public library has educational, informational, political, economical, industrial, cultural & antiquarian objectives. Public library provides and serves the material which is used in Education. It is prime educational function which provides adult education, community information and recreation center. Public library is the product of modern democracy.

Role of Public Libraries in Formal and Non-Formal Education

Education and libraries have an integral relationship. A Public library plays an important role in all instruments of education, the informal, formal, semi-formal and non-formal.

Informal Education : The first instrument that we can think of, that humanity had used from the very beginning is the first institution in which ordinarily the child holds membership is the home. It is in the home that the child learns his first lessons in the arts of life. Another informal instrument of education that was very influential in the past is the community that mixed fabric of institutions and social groups with which individuals come in contact. It includes the neighborhood, the families of neighborhood and Public library, when functioning for the community as a whole.

Formal Education : In formal education, men and women receive education of a specified level based on specified syllabi. This form of education is

imparted in academic institutions, such as schools, colleges, universities, research institutions etc. Library does occupy a significant place in all the academic institutions. Educationists and scholars hold that it is a 'better proof of education to know how to use a library than to possess university degree. The Public library has become still more important in academic set-up due to change in the nature of education.

One of the main purposes of thePublic Library movement is to educate the illiterate, diffuse knowledge amongst them and dispel their ignorance. In a country where large masses of the people are steeped in ignorance and illiteracy and consequently lead imperfect lives, the least part of our duty is to help them to lead more virtuous and perfect lives by educating them to that end. Public library plays an important role to mould such community/masses in their day to day's life by providing various types resources, facilities and services.

Semi-Formal Education :- When the informal instrument of the home and the community proved ineffective and the formal instrument of the school proved to be inadequate, the semi-formal instrument in the Public library came to recognized. The new role ofPublic libraries is the message of the modern library movement, which has assumed worldwide dimensions since the Great War. One great affect of the recognition of the library as such a semi-formal instrument of education, that should supplement the formal school, is that the state, which is responsible for the general welfare and of the general education of the masses, is the beginning to wield that instrument, in a way which the State alone can wield.

Non-Formal Education: - Today non-formal education has become popular and has established a unique place in Indian Education System. This establishment has influenced the Public Library System. The services rendered by the public libraries cannot be underestimated; actually it is a parameter with which one can assess the literacy of a nation.

Public Library as Literacy Center

Many Govt. and non-govt. agencies are engaged in the problem of illiteracy and they are working for eradication of the malady. But the magnitude of the

problem is so high that comprehensive and combined efforts by all the individuals and organizations together are called for.

Public Libraries can lend their strong helping hand to tackle the problem. The first noticeable factor is that adults do have appetite for education and ability to learn. In survey made by the Adult Education Department of the University of Rajasthan, it was reveled that 'making the facility of library open to them' was considered to be the best help, the university could render to the community for continuing education. People also argued for better library facilities like branch and mobile libraries and improved library services. The Public library should, therefore, function as a center for adult education.

Conclusion

Today Goa has achieved almost 84% of literacy, and for this Public Libraries are equally responsible. As they provide lot of Facilities, resources and services to the illiterates/ Semi literatepeople. It is very much important that the role of the public libraries of educating all the community of the society has to be fulfilled by providing different types of services and facilities to its members. If Goa wants to achieve 100% literacy then, more power has to be given to the public libraries.

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