ROLE OF PUBLIC LIBRARY IN KNOWLEDGE SOCIETY

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ABSTRACT

The Public libraries have recognized their role to satisfy information needs of all types of people in the society. The Government at the State level and National level has taken initiatives to make public libraries as important source of information’s for people formal walks of life. The National mission on libraries setup by ministry of culture has provided recommendations for development of libraries ad information centers to make public libraries equipped with information.

Keywords: Public Library; Knowledge Society; National Knowledge Commission; Collection Development

INTRODUCTION

The Public Library is regarded in the people’s institution. It is local gateway to knowledge that provides basic condition for life learning and facilitates cultural development of the individual and social groups. The public library provides services to all irrespective of age, sex, cast, religion, education, and social studies, generally all users get the material relevant to their needs and requirements in the public library.

UNESCO, in its Public Library Manifesto has described public libraries its “democratic institution for education, culture and information (UNESCO Public Library Manifesto, 1972). The Manifesto further states that “the public library should be established under clear mandate of law... it should be maintained wholly from the public funds and no direct charge should be made to any one for its services.”

UNESCO, public library 1994 emphasized the role of public library as the local centre of culture and information centre. It states that knowledge is an important resource and public library is not only a cultural institution but also an essential welfare through the minds of people.

OBJECTIVES

1. To ascertain the changing role of Public Libraries in the age of information technology.
2. To study the impact of ICT on functioning of Public Libraries.
3. To highlight the mission of Public Libraries, which enables Public Libraries to act as local gateway to knowledge.
4. To underline the importance of national mission on libraries,

ICT and Public Library

The advent of information technology from the middle of 20th century has gradually changed the traditional process of information acquisition, communication and storage. The society is transformed with new a paradigm which is regarded as information society or knowledge society. Along with the traditional form of reading material such as books, manuscripts the new forms like microfiche, CDs,
DVDs, Journals, have become very important. The impact of ICT is slow in the public library in developing country like India compare to other types of library.

**Mission of the Public Library**

- Creating, Developing, and strengthening reading habits in early age children and newly literature people.
- Supporting formal and informal education.
- Providing opportunities for self developments.
- Creating awareness of cultural heritage.
- Supporting oral traditions.
- Ensuring access to all sorts of community information.
- Facilitating the development of information and computer literacy skills.
- Supporting and participating in literacy programs for all age groups.

**Important Features of Knowledge Society**

1. Unprecedented growth of knowledge, its dissemination, distribution and accessibility.
2. Globalization of trade, commerce and business.
3. Emergence of new profession class.

The changes are taken place at the astonishing speed with the advent of ICT. Knowledge has become core resource for economic growth, development and employment generation as its value and investment is intangible. The factors that distinguish a knowledge society from information society are easy access to information, the capability to absorb and interpret information and ability to use information for transformation to higher quality to society.

National knowledge commission was established is India is 2007 which underlined the key role of PL which can act as extremely important element of the foundation of knowledge economy. The PL play an important role to bridge the Gap between the information poor and the information rich by ensuing the people from all walks of society easy access to knowledge they seek.

The NKC was appointed by Dr. Manmohan Singh the Prime Minister of the country which aims to use knowledge as an instrument of development of our nation and makes it useful for the up gradation of the masses in different walks of life.

Today information society demands multifaceted competencies and skills therefore to fulfill the information of the people large the PL has to work in close collaboration with other knowledge partners in private as well as public sector.

In addition to routine functions and service the public library are to some extent perform following functions as it should match the changing scenario of information needs of the people.

**The structure of Public Library System in India**

State Central Library= Collaborative publishing, e-governances, compilation of bibliographies in regional language i.e. –learning.

District library- Contact development, co-ordination of rural knowledge centers.

Sub divisional – Town library- Inter library loan, web based service such as e-learning, community information organizing programs for all age groups of people.

Rural knowledge centre – Community Information Centre
Panchayat level information centre and programs that will help to maintain harmonious relation among rural community.

The NKC expects following services from PL in addition to their basic function, of lending, references and reading facilities.

1. Inter library loan
2. Photocopying
3. Online – Public Access Catalogue (OPAC)
4. A/V Material
5. Electronic Document Delivery
6. Promote use of library among non-users by identifying them.
7. Periodic checking of effectiveness of library services.

For collections development following guidelines are provided.

1. The collection should reflect the local requirement and majority of the collection should be in the regional language.
2. 60% of the library budget should be utilized for collections development in pursuance of NKC recommendations for sustained development of libraries and information centers The National mission on library has been set up by ministry of culture. Government of India on 4th May 2012.


National Mission on Libraries set up four working groups and after deliberating on the recommendations of the working groups formulated the scheme “National Mission on Libraries (NML) – up gradation of libraries providing service to the public”.

The scheme consists of four components.
Creation of National Virtual Library of India (NVLI)

Setting up of NML Model Libraries,

Quantitative & Qualitative Survey of Libraries

Capacity Buildings

The purpose of National Virtual Library of India is to facilitate a comprehensive database on digital resources on information about India and on Information generated in India, in an open access environment.

The setting up on NML Model Libraries Would develops 6 Libraries under Ministry of Culture, 35 State Central Libraries and 35 District Libraries with particular emphasis on economically backward district, as model libraries. In addition, 629 district libraries across the stated would be provided network connectivity.

The Quantitative & Qualitative Survey of Libraries would be undertaken to prepare a baseline data of libraries in India through a survey of 5000 Libraries.

The Capacity Building would be undertaken to enhance the professional competence of library personnel.

Public libraries in India will soon be digitized. The government is planning to digitize reading material in different languages and launch the national Virtual Library of India.

President Pranab Mukherjee on 3rd Feb 2014 launched a massive scheme into upgrade public libraries in India, as recommended by the National Knowledge Commission. The National Mission on Libraries, expected to cost Rs 400 cr, Will develop 35 central libraries and 35 district libraries as model libraries. Over 600 libraries will also get network connectivity.

CONCLUSION

In the information society of today there is information explosion in all the disciplines. To collect, organize and disseminate the information effectively and efficiently professionally qualified and trained personnel are required. They should also have good communication skills, only then the public libraries can perform their role as the institute of life long learning.

REFERENCES


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