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IMPROVING RURAL PUBLIC LIBRARIES

SAIRA G. SHAIKH

Abstract:

The globalization, it is claimed has made the world a village. However, one has to keep in mind that the major device in the process of making world a village is communication relying heavily on the principle of cybernetics. The computer literate people can easily make avail of so many technical devices which might fall outside the reach of laymen. Here the public libraries come to their help.

KEYWORDS:

Rural, Libraries, Globalization, Computer Literate.

INTRODUCTION:

Ravindra Kumar Chanda opines that the libraries assist the people in many ways. In a nutshell, one can say that the libraries store, disseminate share and retrieve knowledge to enable social interaction and maintain culture. These expectations may well suit the city conditions but are far away from the rural areas. The increasing rate of literacy cannot be said to be a parameter of increasing development of libraries. The rural libraries are a damp squib.

It is not enough to say that the educative aspect of libraries is related with primary, secondary and higher education. Actually it is linked with the quality of education at different levels. There is no dearth of funds for the college and university libraries unlike the primary and secondary levels. Using reference books has not become habit in academic circles.

The educative value of public libraries depends on the insight of the leader- the librarian and the management no doubt they have responded actively to the choices of the readers but they also have a responsibility to mould their choices. At higher education level, it is easy to make librarians abreast of the fresh trends, which might have been scarcely possible for the librarians in rural as well.

1.Chanda Ravinder Kumar: The role of public libraries in India in age of I.T. CLIS observer 14(3-4)1999:4 in urban areas. One can understand that scope for utilizing reference books at primary and secondary levels might be limited but in lieu the libraries could provide literature created specially for children like historical stories, science stories, biographies of scientists etc. Due weight age to extra-reading. The examination- pattern needs to be mended as soon as possible.

Enriching culture also remains the monopoly of the city libraries.

2.Book exhibitions lecture series are arranged. Organizing lecture- series has however reached in the nooks and corners of Maharashtra. Libraries generally represent all shades of political thinking in their lecture-series social and religious issues are also reflected. Particularly in Ganesh Festivals certain cultural programmes can also be organized.

Concerning the services of storing information the public libraries provide renowned newspapers and journal. They are having large chunk of readers for newspapers in Marathi in Maharashtra. Even

English newspapers draw attention of select group of readers. The general readers opt for fiction and deepawali specials. Fictions contain literary values. Thus they provide literary information. The journals and special issues not only furnish information but also present scientific analysis of information.

2)The issue of culture has been brought out by Leigh Robert D: The public library in the United States, New York, and Columbia University 1950 p.12.

In democratic setup the libraries can pick up steam easily. The people are endowed with various fundamental rights. The freedom of speech and expression has been provided in Article 19(1) of the Indian Constitution. The libraries can flourish to empower the people with knowledge. Even during the freedom movement the newspapers played a vital role in arousing patriotic emotions of the people. Nowadays people can afford to purchase one or two newspapers daily. They can read more papers in libraries only.

Newspapers are one of the effective agents of forming public opinion, which has been a deciding factor in general elections. Of course, it is also argued that readymade opinions are supplied by the newspapers. To some extent this may be true, but the newspapers create political, social and religious awareness also. Undue religious awareness causes undesirable situations.

Every issue is multi dimensional. In democracy, with certain constraints, newspapers enjoy a free play in representing various views. Harsh criticism is leveled against the government and it has ample opportunity to defend itself. Since long this function has been carried out by newspapers. Venkatappaiah has rightly pointed out that on account of this the policy makers in India have seriously applied their mind to it. UNESCO has provided guidelines for the spread of library network. The manifesto was revised in 1972. The first stake holders in this mission were children reading habits were to be created among them. Rendering formal education and self education were the next targets.

3.Venkatappaiah V.: Indian Library Legislation State Library Bills and Acts (Vol 1). Delhi Daya Publishing House 1990 p.4

Opportunities were to be given for developing creativity among the young people. The cultural heritage was to be preserved in the fields of art and science. Performing arts were to be attended to. It was not aimed to devour the arts of the sub cultures but to groom them properly. The cultural mix was a welcome thing. The verbal tradition was also to be taken care of stored information should be kept open to all. From the business point of view the information wing was to support entrepreneurs, computer literacy and what not.

Ponder able point in this regard is how the present high sounding policy could be implemented in the case of native libraries. A few suitable suggestions could be made.

- (a)The library movement in vogue should be accelerated.
 - (b)It should be convinced that library has become one of the essential needs of the people.
 - (c)People should launch fund raising programmes for the libraries.
 - (d)People and voluntary institutions should donate books to the libraries in rural areas.
 - (e)The members of legislatures should allot some amount to the libraries and if law should not permit this, suitable law should b made.
 - (f)Competitions should be arranged to judge the reading habits of the readers.
- Adequate funds should be raised for awarding prizes.

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