

A Selective Review of Literature on Social Contribution of Libraries

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ABSTRACT

This article focused a selective review of literature on the role of libraries on educational; social & cultural; economical and political development under the title 'A selective Review of Literature on Social Contribution of Libraries'. Libraries are changing their nature in the modern age and they offer their services to the user from various requirements of them and play a very important role in society. The library is considered as the heart of an educational institution as well as plays a role as the backbone of an educational institution. And also by offering various services, these libraries added value to education, social & cultural, economic, and political development. In this paper, the literature published on the social contribution of libraries is studied, analysed and, explained. The social contribution of libraries is crucial in the educational, social & cultural, economic and, political development of the nation. From this article scholars and researchers can understand how libraries play the important role in society and also aware of the literature available in this area.

Keywords: Library; Public Library; Academic Library; Educational development; Social development; Cultural development; Economical development; Political development

1. INTRODUCTION

Human life is developed day by day. The prime medium of the development of human life is the communication system. Chronically, changes have been done in the development of the communication system. Language is the base of the communication system. Languages have been developed for the contact between humans only and communication has been done between humans. It means the progress of man has been done mainly by the language. Chronically by the invention of the printing art, the communication system has achieved the topmost destination. Today, oral communication, verbal communication, audio-visual communication, mass media communication, telecommunication, and satellite communication, etc. are the types of communication systems. Communication is the transformation of information from one destination to another destination or one man to another man. By transforming information from one man to another man, humans achieved great progress for themselves and society and also achieving. For achieving this information in a better way and achieving more and more knowledge man wanted a centre for providing information sources. As a result, the library is established, and therefore it is made available for study.

“The term ‘Library’ is derived from the Latin word ‘Libraria’ is called ‘House of books’. It means the place where books are kept. But books can be kept at another place also,

for example by the publisher or by a bookseller in the market, etc. But these are not libraries. Thus it can be concluded that a library is a place where books were kept for reading. The words ‘For reading’ are very important in the reference of the library¹. Therefore only the availability of building and books are not called the library. But the place where books, users, building, and the staff for offering the services for reading to users is called a library. Academic, public, special, and national libraries are types of libraries. Dissemination of information is the main purpose of the library. Information is the foundation of the progress of individuals, society, and nations. Information is the need for a human in every sphere of life. Therefore we can say that the library is the main place for gaining information.

There has been significant growth in public libraries since independence. During this period, India faced many challenges. This has improved in the post-independence period but we have to go a long way in comparing our country's public library to the same level as in developed countries. The Delhi Public Library was established in 1951 jointly by UNESCO and the Government of India as the first UNESCO Public Library Pilot Project. The central government took part in this movement and in some places established public library laws. The role of the state government was important in improving public libraries. For the development of public libraries, the Government of India also allocated funds in the five-year plans but these funds were not effectively connected to planning². There were a total number of 153291 public libraries in India as of the year 2016³. These libraries are playing a very important role

in the development of society. Also, at the national level, the Parliamentary Library and Reference, Research, Documentation & Information Service (LARRDIS) provide vital services to the Ministry of Parliament as well as its staff. A small library was established in India in 1921 for the members of the Central Legislative Assembly. The library provides important services including the digital collection, documentation Section, the Press clipping section, the research, and information Division, the journal of Parliamentary Information quarterly Member Reference Service and e-Portal for members, etc. The library also has 1.25 million printed books, national and international reports, government publications, and other documents. The library has 85 Indian and foreign newspapers and 475 journals and periodicals in English, Hindi, and other Indian languages⁴.

In the state of Maharashtra too, the State Legislature Library is as old as the Parliament Library and were established in 1921. It is the oldest and largest library in the country with Acts and Bills, Proceedings, Gazette, Rare Books, LT Papers, Old Newspapers, Debates, Reports, etc. Manages and provides information to government officers, administrative staff, MLAs, ex-MLAs, etc. In making the members of the assembly and overall functions and activities of assembly very effective, the optimum use of the legislature library is instrumental⁵.

Libraries play an active role in different social movements. Many social movements that have taken place and existed in India are broadly classified as follows.

- Traditional social movement: 1. Tribal movement; 2. Workers' movement; 3. Peasant movement and 4. National Movement.
- New social movement: 1. A Dalit movement; 2. The student movement; 3. Women's movement; 4. Ecological and the environmentalist movement; 5. The racist movement; 6. Naxalite movement and 7. Reservation-related movement.

The pioneers of this movement studied to justify their side and in it, they definitely used the library and strengthened their side by gaining knowledge. Due to the influence of educational institutions, newspapers, the English language, and knowledge of the world through it, some introspective social activists felt the need to bring about change in the religious and economic life of Indian society. Through Newspapers, Magazines, Meetings, Lectures, etc. they presented their advanced ideas to the world and activated social movements⁶.

Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar is one of the best examples of what has happened through the library. He received his M.A. Ph.D. degrees from Columbia University and M.Sc. & D. Sc. degrees from the University of London. "While studying at Columbia University, Dr. Babasaheb Ambedkar used to be present before everyone and would come out last" (Gaikwad, 2016)⁷. He did very important work in his life. His work was invaluable social work.

By offering information services, libraries play an important role in education, social and cultural, economic, and political development.

2. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objective of the study is as follows.

- To study the literature on the respective subject
- To understand the importance of the study
- To understand the role of libraries in education, social & cultural, economic and the political development of the society
- To aware with the social contribution of the libraries
- To understand the effectiveness and efficiency of libraries in social development

3. METHODOLOGY

In this study historical method is applied and it is based on a literature survey. For the study, data is collected from different articles published in various journals, conferences, reports, doctoral dissertations, etc.

4. LITERATURE REVIEW

The library is a prime need of education and educational institution. Without library, we can't run the educational system. Education is based on the library and therefore the whole development of the society is dependent on education and ultimately on the library. The social contribution of libraries is revealed from the aspects of educational, social & cultural, economic, and political development of the society. The studies have been done as per the following social aspects which are considered for the selective review of literature for this paper.

4.1 Studies on the Role of Libraries in Educational Development

Boucher; Lance⁸ identified the role of libraries in education in three sets. Every role is explained with relevant statistics and examples. In the first set, libraries provide access to education by teaching information skills. In the second set, libraries help ensure equity in education. And a third role is that of impacting academic achievement. Education is the process of acquiring knowledge or habit through instruction or study. For preparing new students for new learning, libraries provide information without any impediments like social, cultural, economic, and geographical based on equity⁹. Shukla; Singh and Mishra¹⁰ explained the objective of their study to establish the relationship among the library; literacy and education. They discussed that the library is a prerequisite for education for sustainable development at all levels of education. They also emphasised that libraries from the dissemination of information by audio-visual aids; story hours; lectures; books exhibition; pictures; newsreels; films, etc. play a vital role in mass education. Ogbemor¹¹ explained by providing teaching sources, information, and referral services, libraries try to do educational-related activities. Outreach programmes are designed by many libraries also to satisfy the needs of specific groups. Along with the programmes are offered by some libraries to solve the problems of groups related to education by accepting risks.

McRobbie¹² sketched some emerging visions from Distance University's main information officer perspective related to libraries of 21st century. The role of universities is central in education and research and research libraries of universities are transforming both nature and role accelerating the pace of technological change. Corral and Jolly¹³ focused on learning

and teaching in academic libraries, the innovation agenda in academic libraries, sources of contribution and key themes, strategic alignment with institutional agenda, collaboration and partnership in disciplinary settings, library support for open educational resources, collaboration and partnership in library spaces, reorganizing around the engagement agenda, professional development tools for teaching librarians and the social turn in library innovation. Open Educational Resources have become very important in today's world, so the availability of educational materials very quickly has created a very important facility for the learners. A study by Upenja¹⁴ examines the participation of libraries and information professionals in the context of open educational resources in India. The library is a backbone of educational institution which provides information sources in a wide range. The study of Mahwasane¹⁵ provides an overview of the school library's roles in sustainable quality education for secondary students. College and university libraries are considered as academic libraries. In these libraries students, researchers and staff fulfill their educational needs. Educational libraries are the national precious property and they cannot be compared with material and money. These libraries are integral parts of college, university, or other educational institutions¹⁶. Although academic libraries play an important role in the field of education, public libraries also play a vital role in complementing this field. A public library is a kind of university for the general public. Mahesh and Adithya Kumari¹⁷ in their study investigated that public libraries also serve as an alternative to the academic library or university library while providing educational services and can be used by the students for their educational purposes. At Bangalore University, the survey of distance education students is a comprehensive study of them.

4.2 Studies on the Role of Libraries in Social and Cultural Development

Murugan; Krishna¹⁸ described the role of libraries in changing society. In this age, traditional libraries are transforming towards digital libraries. ICT plays a very important role in the activities of libraries in the world every day. All institutions which work with information, knowledge, and culture, should redefine their status and goals again. The discussion about media and education is done in the European Union actively. The situation is changing. For the development of democratic information, society libraries identified a key element for information open access which is crucial¹⁹. In modern information society/knowledge-based society, e-services and web-based information sources are constantly increasing, the management of libraries is being democratically, and the communication system is more flexible. And functions, organisation, and their development of quality services are user-oriented services. Future Estonian research and developmental activities have focused on knowledge-based information society²⁰.

The report, 'Enriching Communities', provided clear evidence of the contribution and value of New South Wales public libraries in terms of the triple bottom line, or economic environment, and social impact²¹. Lal²² discussed in his study, by providing information wherever necessary on all level

information conceptualisation broadly in nature accepting for the development of the social and cultural activities of people in rural areas. In turn, it is a link in social development, empowerment, and usage of rural public libraries in India. In Malaysia, the government invests in public libraries particularly in rural areas for development. Through the thesis by research it is reported that with the process of empowerment and social development, the purpose is to explore the relation between Malaysia and Australia²³.

Libraries are performing a great role in the social field by providing their services. Library staff needs to have such facilities so that they can feel job satisfaction while providing services. Pandita and Dominic²⁴ in their study showed how job satisfaction of library and information professionals can be improved through the application of ICT by collecting primary data from employees of the library and information sector working in the higher education sector of Jammu and Kashmir. Abu, Grace, and Carroll²⁵ Report on early investigative findings into the usage of the links in Australia and Malaysia between community development, empowerment, and rural public library. The key purpose of the study of Mansour²⁶ is to explore the potential role of Egyptian rural public libraries. Public libraries are social agents for development. According to the agenda of the United Nations 2030 the goals are towards achieving sustainable development.

Britain is a developed nation, but the society is divided with the widening division between advantaged and disadvantaged in the local and global community, the libraries in Britain and across the world have to play the role in bridging this divide²⁷. Delica and Elbeshausen²⁸ described that for minority groups, how public libraries have worked with social innovations to develop and strengthen their services in at-risk-neighborhoods. The role of the public library in fostering national integration for the development has received broad study but a small or no similar review has been conducted or carried out in the PHLS library. Hence, the study seeks to investigate the various areas and it has contributed to integrating various groups within its host community²⁹.

Gupta; Gautam and Khare³⁰ identified selective social media application and utility frequency of application of the awareness level in library staff on the working place in the power sector organisation. With the utility of application as well as they learn about the application of media from where the sources are available. The study also identifies the perception of library staff. Knowledge economy and growth of knowledge management are essential competencies of the organisation, it provides new opportunities to librarians and information experts to expand their existing role and provide new opportunities to utilise their competency more hone and to achieve the corporate objective³¹. Ferguson³² examined commonly expressed ideas in library and information services literature. Public libraries are the developers of social capital. And public libraries are bearing some research body into social capital.

Chibuzor and Ngozi³³ investigated the role of public libraries in the preservation of cultural heritage in Nigeria. They explained the challenges being encountered as well as the strategies for overcoming these challenges. These days

throughout the world new momentum has been achieved by the efforts to preserve cultural heritage resources. Protecting cultural heritage is an economic as well as historical and cultural process³⁴. There is a growing discussion on the importance of effectively and efficiently cultural heritage information management in the few last years. Specifically, with the use of the best relevant and efficient standard, there is a need to describe cultural heritage information. Like this in research as well as in collection management and services provider, the role of library and especially information professionals is crucial³⁵.

Librarians have long been pioneers in innovation related to knowledge organisation and dissemination. They are the most engaging technology in academic disciplines³⁶. A growing priority with sustainable agendas is made by cultural sustainability, and now it is often described as a fourth pillar. And also it is related to social, economic, and environmental. Museums and libraries play a unique role in their community heritage preservation with cultural sustainability³⁷. The importance of a public library is not possible to overlook in preserving and maintaining the history and traditional culture. By achieving the independence of Botswana, the care of the literacy of people is taken from the national process by the establishment of public libraries. From the public library, the information and knowledge are given free for research, education, and entertainment³⁸. Skot-Hansen; Rasmussen and Jochumsen³⁹ present a research project in urban development on public libraries focusing on how libraries contribute to culture-led urban regeneration as icons, place makers, and community vitalisation. There was a fast growth by social tourism in the past few decades. As a result more income, higher-level education, the world as a smaller place by globalisation process, technology, media and telecommunication, and new kind of cultural attractions are created⁴⁰.

4.3 Studies on the Role of Libraries in Economic Development

The social and economic contribution made by information is usually not noticed. Within society, the study revealed that the scientific research process as well as enhancing cultural awareness as a whole and enhancing individual professional skills are caused for achieving significant value⁴¹. In tight economic conditions, people are especially conscious to spend their tax dollars wisely. The public funds received by public libraries are scarce and therefore, need to prove how the money of taxpayers is utilised to benefit both the individual citizens and communities⁴². Ahunanya⁴³ explored the important role of social science (Library Science) in the social and economic development of any nation. According to his study in every sector of the economy, the rightful place is given to the impact of library services in the scheme of things. Public libraries play an important role in promoting rural community development in rural areas. The needs of users of rural public libraries especially the backward community peoples who have less income are different from other public library users. For this study, the survey is conducted of the Lodha community in Senna and Chandana village of Western Medinipur⁴⁴

Various libraries and librarians in Namibia through Namibia Library and Information Council (NCLI) embrace the theme, "Strong Libraries, Strong Societies: the Role of Libraries in Socioeconomic Development" of the president of IFLA. Because it resonated with his developmental efforts⁴⁵. Aboyade; Ajayi and Madu⁴⁶ discussed the role of various libraries in economic development. They emphasised the necessity of partnership between libraries and librarians with the provision of information by which economic redemption is convenient. When we talk about the economic contribution of the library, we must with art and culture increasingly while local authorities face important economical challenges⁴⁷. Ferreira dos Santos⁴⁸ proposed refocusing public libraries towards citizens, small businessmen, new entrepreneurs, and community institutions by the satisfaction of their needs about information for the contribution towards local economic development. Gomez⁴⁹ commissioned the study for searching how public libraries contribute to the human dimension of economic development. In the process researcher also strengthening evidence of contribution in the place of public libraries and the quality of life of the community. The aim of the study of Suriya and Malathi⁵⁰ is to measure the quality and value of the library in the center of Linguistic Studies in Annamalai University as an economic system of university libraries. Libraries bring men continually in contact with the world. They function as a knowledge repository to bring them in all forms and shapes to fulfill their needs. Academic libraries and information centres in the sectors of economics in Nigeria present the enormous strength of information⁵¹.

4.4 Studies on the Role of Libraries in Political Development

Some innovative initiatives in the USA and Scandinavia suggest that the conceivable help of public libraries can strengthen and revitalise democracy and the public sphere⁵². The library plays a significant and indispensable role as a public utility institution. In this study, it is examined that public libraries as an agent play an important role in social and political transformation⁵³. The studies of Alex - Nmecha; Horsfall and Igbinovia⁵⁴ are a qualitative review on the role of libraries in enhancing political integration in Nigeria. According to them, there is a need to promote national integration from the political dimension by the library as an information institution.

Ugwuanyi and Achebe⁵⁵ highlighted the relation between democracy and public libraries and mention their proximity with the community, offering free services to all and made available fund characteristics of public libraries by society. The main purpose of the study of Goulding; Walton and Stephens⁵⁶ is to discuss important skills of political and strategies needed by library leaders in the present atmosphere. This discussion is based on the opinion of library leaders and the small-scale research project.

5. SOCIAL CONTRIBUTION OF LIBRARIES

By reviewing the literature, social contribution and the role of libraries are revealed in educational, social & cultural, economic, and political development. The increasing use of

information technology from the middle of the 20th century has gradually changed the process of information, collection, organisation, storage, and dissemination. Today, society is regarded as an information society or knowledge society. The libraries provide different types of reading material in the form of microfiche, CDs, DVDs, ebooks, e-journals with the traditional reading materials in the form of books, manuscripts, journals, and periodicals, etc. The use of ICT is increasing day by day in all types of libraries hence the demands of users are diversified and the libraries' effort to satisfy their demands. By providing information services libraries perform social contributions. The social contribution and the role of libraries implicate from the following points:

- Playing a very important role in all levels and types of education
- Strengthening reading habits in users
- Offering opportunities for self-development
- Creating awareness of cultural heritage
- Inspiring to perform the activities about social change
- Improving leadership in interested users
- Strengthening democratic and peaceful environment
- Giving guidance to achieve employment and self-employment
- Giving guidance to promote business and to improve agricultural products
- Promoting national integration to develop the nation
- Promoting the user about information and computer literacy skills

6. CONCLUSIONS

The main function of the library is to satisfy the lust for knowledge of the users. The discovery of the art of printing has revolutionised the way of information dissemination, as well as the communication system. In modern times, communication has played a very important role in the dissemination of knowledge. Today the informational needs of users are diversified and information has acquired a very important place in every sphere of human life. Education and the library are twin sisters and cannot be separated from each other, just as the library is called the backbone of education. In education, libraries offer a wide range of services such as book exchange, technical services such as classification and cataloguing, reference services, bibliographical services, reprography services, newspaper clipping services, etc. By giving these services, they carry out very important work in education and make education quality.

Libraries carry out a variety of activities such as lectures, story hours, birth and death anniversary celebrations of great men, book exhibitions as well as offer services in various social movements to serve social reformers, the community and play their role in social work. Similarly, while providing study facilities to the students for competitive examinations, they are provided with seating arrangements and books and help in job creation. It also provides a variety of information services to farmers and traders to create favorable conditions for progress for farmers and traders. Libraries also provide important services in the political arena. Provides up-to-date information on current affairs in the country and abroad as

well as information services for the preparation of debates and competitions and develops leadership qualities in the students as well as helps in shaping the ideal politician personality. And also established peace by introducing various thinking and strengthen democracy by maintaining the atmosphere friendly and providing more and more information about the political system etc.

Considering this significant function of the library, the Government of India has taken the responsibility of developing the public library. Similarly, funds have been provided for it in the five-year plans, but this fund is falling short. The state government has also provided grants for public libraries but these grants are meager and the salaries of the staff are also meager. Similarly, due to the shortage of school libraries and the existing libraries are very weak; these libraries are unable to provide effective services.

For the development of the country, the Parliamentary Library (LARRDIS) is providing valuable information services to the ministers, government officers, and its members and is playing a very important role at the national level. Moreover, in Maharashtra too, at the state level, such services are being provided by the Legislature Library and are contributing to the development of the state.

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