Relevance of Automation and Networking in Public Libraries of Andhra Pradesh:

Dr. M.V.Subbarao., Librarian, Aditya Institute of Technology & Management. (AITAM)Tekkali ,Srikakulam Dist.

Abstract: *The present paper is shows from the current status and challenges that the public libraries in Andhra Pradesh State are suffering. Libraries all over the world have already transformed themselves from delivering traditional library resources and services to the technology based resources and services. Public libraries are good media for transformation of information to the general public of the society. Users of the public libraries are from child to adult. Unfortunately the public library system in Andhra lacks the basic infrastructure to support ICT implementation and also it lags behind in terms of its accessibility to the common man in Andhra Pradesh*

Key words: *Automation, Networking, Libraries, requirement*

1. Introduction

Public libraries played a very significant role in socio-economic, cultural and spiritual development of communities in all parts of the world. The history of the library movement is traced to ancient times. Foreign travelers, Hieuan-Tsang, Fahien, appreciated the working of the libraries in ancient Indian Universities like Nalanda, Takshasila etc. Nicholo Conti others significantly focused on libraries in medieval times. Dr. S.R. Ranganathan made useful contributions for the cause of public libraries in Andhra Pradesh and even established modern public libraries. The origin and evolution of library movement is traced to the establishment of Swadeshi Grandhalayam at Vishakhapatnam in 1886.1 the establishment of Sri Krishnadevaraya Andhra Basha Nilayam in 1901 at Hyderabad resulted in the spread of library movement in Telangana and Andhra desa.

The public library is an Anglo-Saxon idea. Public libraries, developed in democracies, are developed and maintained by the public. They are established by state laws and taxation.5 The concept of the modern public library is new to India. The advisory committee states that the British failed to give active encouragement for setting of public libraries in British India.6 the Ekbote Committee appointed by the government of Andhra Pradesh in 1976 to review the working of A.P. Public Libraries Act, 1960 expressed the same opinion. Library movement in Andhra Pradesh was an essentially a people's movement.

2. Objectives of the Study:

❖ To study the current status of automation of public libraries in Andhra Pradesh.

❖ To study the hardships and challenges in the implementation of IT based operations and services/automation in public libraries.

❖ Speed disposal of Library Work.

❖ Proper Use and Development of Human Resources.

3. Importance of Library Automation and Networking in Public Libraries:

At present, all the Govt. public libraries working under Directorate of Libraries are having more or less same collection of copyright books majority in Telugu language. These books are old and rare which are not easily available elsewhere and difficult to find if needed. Also data of books available in all libraries is not available at one point. Communication between libraries is also very rare. Hence, chances of duplication of books are more. Due to these barriers, libraries are lacking in giving services to its readers. People quest for more and more information to meet their problems along with the borrowing of library documents, which because of the advent of ICT now come in different packages and formats. With newer technological advancements the information seeking behavior of the user has also changed. Computer and information technology are pervading into every sector of this society. They should be introduced in the public library system in order to provide the muscle and strength to face the challenging and changing requirement of the society. Computer will act as efficient tool to store, organize and retrieve the material in the libraries. They can aid the library staff to discharge their duties efficiently by and accurately. It will help in immediate access to specialize information, economy in human labour, money and time. Automation of the public library therefore is the urgent need of the hour. In the changed scenario librarians have to equip themselves with the existing and new information communication technologies to enhance their status and also to achieve the basic objective for which the public libraries have been established.

Library Automation:

Library Automation is the use of automatic and semiautomatic data processing machines to perform such traditional library activities as acquisitions, cataloguing, circulation although these activities are not necessarily performed in traditional ways, the activities themselves are those traditionally associated with libraries; library automation may thus be distinguished from related fields such as information retrieval fields, automatic indexing and abstracting and automatic textual analysis." In short Library Automation means the use of computers to perform the different routines, repetitive and clerical jobs involved in the functions and services of the libraries.

4. Advantages of Library Automation in Public Libraries:

❖ Acquisition, accessioning, classification, cataloguing, circulation, serial control, information storage and retrieval, indexing etc. can be mechanised by using library software.

❖ A machine readable record can be used by many users for various purposes at many numbers of times. For example, a record created for acquisition section can be used for other purposes like accessioning, circulation etc. this saves the time of library staff.

❖ Library automation relieves the library staff of repetitive work and save the time of the library professionals in routine housekeeping operations.

❖ To bring accuracy and speed of work.

❖ To bring economy and provide prompt library services.

❖ To increase efficiency of technical processing over a manual system.

❖ To do financial savings due to automation.

❖ To improve library and information services for end users.

❖ To improve the efficiency of library administration and management

Networking: Business dictionary defines Networking as "In the world of computers, networking is the practice of linking two or more computing devices together for the purpose of sharing data. Networks are built with a mix of computer hardware and computer software".

Library Networking: The National Commission on Libraries and Information Science (NCLIS) in its National Programme Document (1975) defines a network as: "two or more libraries and/or other organizations engaged in a common pattern of information exchange, through communications, for some functional purpose. A network usually consists of a formal arrangement whereby materials, information and services provided by a variety of libraries and other organizations are available to all potential users. Libraries may be in different jurisdictions but they agree to serve one another on the same basis as each serves its own constituents. Computer and telecommunications may be among the tools used for facilitating communication among them".

5. Advantages of Networking in Public Libraries:

❖ All Andhra Pradesh public libraries will be connected through network.

❖ Networking will help in Cooperative Collection Development.

❖ Development of Union Catalogue, bibliography and database of all libraries at one place will be possible.

❖ Meets Specialized User Demands in Andhra Pradesh .

❖ Breaks Financial Constraint.

❖ Reduces Unnecessary Duplication of Work.

❖ Library networking of all Andhra Pradesh public libraries will break the barriers of distance, time and the physical movement of library resources.

❖ Hardware Resources Sharing: Various hardware resources like computer, printer, scanner etc. can be procured by networking group for the benefit of all the libraries of the network. Networking is also needed to connect personal computer with the mainframe or super computer for problem solving.

❖ Software Sharing: Individual library is not able to procure expensive library software. Hence, all participants' libraries can procure the software in group which will reduce the cost of software or one library can procure the software and all the libraries will share the same by networking as server and client machine.

❖ Document Delivery Service.

❖ Data of all Andhra Pradesh public libraries can be placed on internet by

creating internet website. With the Internet website facility, access to various types of information *viz* industry, agriculture, information technology, and so on can be searched and the same information may be sent through e-mail, or social networking sites also.

❖ People will be connected to mainstream and global access to information would be possible.

❖ With the introduction of ICT, the public libraries may act as community information centres.

6. Challenges of Library automation In Andhra Pradesh:

Lack of Library Legislation:

The foremost reason of the poor public library system in Andhra Pradesh is the non- implementation of library legislation in Andhra Pradesh . "Only legislation can empower the appropriate authorities to provide the service and endure adequate financial support and efficient administration according to national standards", UNESCO (1991). Library legislation lays down the structure of libraries and ensures their development and maintenance on an approved and uniform pattern for the service of the community.

Human Resources/Scarcity of Staff:
The development of a library depends greatly on its human resources. Staff is a mirror of any organization. All housekeeping operations and services including automation of public libraries are based on educated and trained staff.

Public Library Budget/Paucity of Funds

The finance plays a significant role in automation and administration of a library. No plan can meet any momentous success in the absence of requisite funds. The finance is the axis round which the entire machinery of a plan revolves.

Inadequate Infrastructure

Automation requires computer hardware, software, communication and networking systems, Electricity backup system, furniture and other infrastructure. Budgetary provision for the infrastructure is a must for automation and development of public libraries.

7. Conclusion

Automation of Public Libraries has to travel a long distance in Andhra Pradesh and what is required at the present time is the willingness on the part of the state government to support the cause of library automation and enact library legislation by way of making it an act. It is largely achievable in the states where Library Legislation has been implemented. Library automation depends on adequate infrastructure, manpower and financial resources but unfortunately public libraries of Andhra Pradesh have shortage of these resources. Public library services have been expanded to serve the local people, but after 67 years of independence, public libraries could not be administered and managed with the clear mandate of law in A P state. The public libraries need to have mobile library concept to reach out the people in countryside. So briefly it can be depicted that the whole public library structure in AP needed to be improved in the real sense.

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