



National mission on library – a critique

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Abstract

National mission on library has been set up by the ministry of culture government of India in pursuance of the recommendations of Knowledge commission for sustained attention for library & information sector development. It facilitates a comprehensive database on digital resources in an open access environment. It was established for the promotion of reading habit being the primary concern, the major share of assistance is allowed for increasing the book stock of libraries. Acquiring digitalized information available with various government departments' non -governmental organizations building a comprehensive data base & making it user friendly with multi-lingual services is a challenging task & National Mission on Library aims to accomplish this challenge. This paper focuses on challenges of National Mission on library.

Key words: National mission on library, promotion of reading habit, promotion of research, library development, library movement

Introduction:

National mission on library has been set up by the ministry of culture government of India in 2012 in pursuance of the recommendations of Knowledge commission for sustained attention for library & information sector development . National mission on library has been set up to publish

appropriate literature , to act as a clearing house of ideas and information on library development in India ,promote research in problems of library development , advise the government on all matters pertaining to the library development in the country. (National mission for Library official website 2014)



National mission for Library works through 4 working groups

- Creation of National Virtual Library of India (NVLI)
- Setting up of NML Model Libraries,
- Quantitative & Qualitative Survey of Libraries
- Capacity Building

1. **National Virtual Library of India** -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. (National mission for Library official website 2014).

2. **Setting up on NML Model Libraries** -The setting up on NML Model Libraries would develop 6 Libraries under Ministry of Culture, 35 State Central Libraries and 35 District Libraries with particular emphasis on economically backward districts, as model Libraries. In addition, 629 district libraries across the states would be provided network

connectivity. (National mission for Library official website 2014)

3. **The Quantitative & Qualitative Survey of Libraries** - The Quantitative & Qualitative Survey of Libraries would be undertaken to prepare a baseline data of libraries in India through a survey of 5000 Libraries. (National mission for Library official website 2014).

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

Role of Raja Rammohun Roy Library Foundation The year 1972 is a significant year in the history of library movement in India. On the occasion of the bicentenary year of the birth of Raja Ram Mohan Roy, a pioneer social reformer who had stressed the need for modern education for the progress of the nation saw a new beginning in Indian libraries (Raja Rammohun Roy Library Foundation – Official website 2014).The year was also being celebrated as an International Book Year with the slogan



BOOKS FOR ALL. Emphasis was laid on promotion of reading habit among the masses for betterment of their lives. It was in this auspicious year that Raja Rammohun Roy Library Foundation (RRRLF) was established in May, 1972 by the Ministry of Culture, Govt. of India to spread library services all over the country in cooperation with State Governments, Union Territory Administration and Organization is working in the field. (Raja Rammohun Roy Library Foundation – Official website 2014). The Foundation is an autonomous organization fully financed by the Ministry of Culture, Government of India. Raja Rammohun Roy Library Foundation is registered under the West Bengal Societies Registration Act, 1961.(Raja Rammohun Roy Library Foundation – Official website 2014). The basic idea behind establishing the Raja Rammohun Roy Library Foundation was to take the library movement not only to small towns and villages but also to the remotest corner, in

cooperation with the state governments, union territory administrations and other organizations engaged in the library service and mass education.(Raja Rammohun Roy Library Foundation – Official website 2014).

Objectives of Raja Rammohun Roy Library Foundation-

1. To promote library movement in the country;
2. To enunciate a national library policy and to help build up a national library system;
3. To provide financial and technical assistance to libraries;
4. To provide financial assistance to organizations, regional or national, engaged in the promotion of library development;
5. To publish appropriate literature and to act as a clearing house of ideas and information on library development in India and abroad;
6. To promote research in problems of library development;



7. To advise the government on all matters pertaining to the library development in the country.

Raja Rammohun Roy Library Foundation works as a national agency for

1. coordinating library work
2. monitoring & developing public library service across India
3. starting a library movement across India irrespective of regional imbalances
4. creating all types of library services & library facilities for the benefit of all types of readers across India

Raja Rammohun Roy Library Foundation has strategic plans to improve readership. It works in close association & active cooperation with various state governments. (Raja Rammohun Roy Library Foundation – Official website 2014). Raja Rammohun Roy Library Foundation has set up state library planning

committee. Promotion of reading habit being the primary concern, the major share of assistance is allowed for increasing the book stock of libraries. (Raja Rammohun Roy Library Foundation – Official website 2014)

Raja Rammohun Roy Library Foundation provides- It Financial assistance is provided for

1. construction of library building
2. purchases of furniture
3. purchases of equipment
4. audio visual materials
5. computer , accessories

Raja Rammohun Roy Library Foundation is also promoting library services to the disadvantaged sections of society such as physically handicapped , mentally challenged etc with mobile library service & rural book centers.

Considerations

1. The purpose of National Virtual Library of India is to facilitate a comprehensive database on digital resources but



the problem of creating a database on digital resources is not speeded up.

2. The undertaking of Quantitative & Qualitative Survey of Libraries through National Mission for library to prepare a baseline data needs trained personnel which is lacking in India

3. The Capacity Building programs for Library improvement & creation of baseline data preparation is very weak & unresponsive.

4. Mobile library service has yet to catch up in urban India

5. Rural book libraries, book centers & book borrow services is not widening to the ratio demarcated.

6. monitoring & developing public library service through Raja Rammohun Roy Library Foundation has been very feeble

7. The problems of library development still persist in district level libraries which are not identified.

8. providing financial assistance to organizations, regional or national, engaged in

the promotion of library development is yet become a national agenda

9. Allocation of funding needs to be beefed up

10. Active cooperation with various state governments & National Library needs good coordination.

11. setting model libraries on the model of Raja Rammohun Roy Library Foundation needs to be channelized

12. existing issues of the libraries should be identified with coordination with state governments to improve the infrastructure without political intervention.

13. emphasis should be given to developing libraries in the economically backward areas through Raja Rammohun Roy Library Foundation model.

14. Library is a State subject and 16 States out of a total of 32 states, have enacted Library Acts, several other states have to take this seriously.

15. A national census of libraries needs to be monitored



16. up-gradation of infrastructure of reading resources of all libraries across India should be taken up

17. The work of modernizing and promoting the networking of libraries is a collaborative effort & needs good coordination with all states & union territories. It is a collective work of all state level, district level, union territories level & rural level libraries & they have to join hands in cohesion to make this a movement.

Conclusion- National mission for library thus is established to facilitate a comprehensive database on digital resources in an open access environment. Even though it was established for the promotion of thorough reading habit as the primary concern, the challenges ahead are more concerning. It has to monitor major share of assistance is allowed for increasing the book stock of libraries, publish appropriate literature, to act as a clearing house of ideas and information on library development in India, promote

research in problems of library development, advise the government on all matters pertaining to the library development in the country. Acquiring digitalized information available with various government departments non-governmental organizations building a comprehensive data base & making it user friendly with multi-lingual services is a challenging task & National Mission on Library aims to accomplish this challenge.

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