

Future Libraries: A Need for Modernization of Public Librarian Nagaland

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ABSTRACT: Discusses briefly the importance of public libraries. Highlights public library scenario in Nagaland, and on the basis of the findings, the paper puts forth suggestions for the modernization of public library services in the state. Adopting new methods, tools, techniques, and gadgets in delivering library services is the surface level definition of modernising library services. However, it is also intended that library services should become more efficient, effective, faster, and cheaper per unit as a result of modernization. Regrettably, in today's world, many equate the use of computers in libraries (or even the printing of information products using computers) with the modernization of library services. Rather than being essential, library service modernization is often more of an attempt to appease patrons, boost the institution's profile, or both. Modernization via IT does not guarantee improved results if the existing manual methods of delivering library services are flawed, irrelevant, and unsatisfactory in and of itself. Organisational success, productivity, creativity, and innovation are all positively correlated with effective information assistance and technical communication.

KEYWORD: Public Libraries, Modernization, Information Technology, Nagaland.

Introduction:

Good libraries benefit people and strengthen communities. Libraries reach into every neighborhood and every family, giving free access for everyone to all of the world's knowledge whether of the intellect or of the imagination, whether in print or online, all modified by skilled and helpful library staff. Where libraries have risen to challenges of various changes- and have invested in strategic planning, improved opening hours, better buildings, skilled staff, and an in-depth range of print and digital resources- the graph of library use has been positive, and not discouraging. (Devchoudhary.,2009)

Public libraries play a significant role in the community. It is both a local resource and the gateway to a wider, national and international network or resources. If we want the library service to flourish in the future we need to ensure that they are relevant, popular and used by our community. It is clear that marginal improvement and efficiency alone are insufficient to maintain and modernize the public library services.

Public libraries in Nagaland: The modern concept of library services in Nagaland may be traced back to 1975-76 when the State government realized the need of setting up public library services for the common people. Today the state has a Central Library at Kohima, 11 district libraries, and over

230 rural libraries registered under the Department of Art and Culture, catering to the various informational needs of the community. The public library system in the state is looked after by the Ministry of Art and Culture, Government of Nagaland, headed by the Minister of the concerned department. (Nebeolise,2013)

Present Scenario: A study of the public library services in the State reveals that, even after the elapse of more than three decades of its existence, their track record has not been encouraging. Funding is an issue, and the organisational structure is complicated, for Nagaland's public libraries. Additionally, statistics on library services are not readily accessible. State policy does not address networking. People mostly think of the library as a place to borrow books, not as a source of knowledge. Rather from being information resources, they are cultural institutions. No longer does the public want libraries to provide them with information services; instead, they seem content with libraries playing this function.

Libraries are often seen as little more than places to borrow books, which contributes to the low demand for knowledge they provide. Libraries also tend to be located in buildings that lack modern technology and are thus stereotyped as being antiquated. Their seeming antiquated nature is mostly due to their lack of information technology. supporting issues exacerbate these challenges since public libraries cannot purchase books, making it harder for them to justify supporting nit. In light of the current state of affairs, it is imperative that the state's public libraries engage in marketing campaigns in order to transform their public perception, raise awareness of their potential inside the government, and bring library services into the information society as soon as possible. (Amusa and Osinulu, 2010)

The poor state of affairs of public library system in the state can be attributed to various reasons social, economic and political. This scenario is more evident in the district and rural libraries. The central library is the only instance where library activity is visible, although even here, most of the activities carried out are still practiced in the traditional method. The advances made in the field of telecommunication and the application of computers and ICT's have yet to make a positive impact on public library services in the State.

Potential of IT in Modernising Library Services: Information technology is not just one field or technology, but rather a collection of related fields and technologies that are virtually entirely outside of librarianship and the purview of developed nations. Information technology (IT) is very dynamic due to intense rivalry, enormous scope, and many uses; new IT advances become outdated before they are acquired, comprehended, and used in emerging and impoverished nations. The same logic applies to the fact that it offers a great deal of room for future "fantasies," modernization possibilities, and professional advice-giving in the classroom. There is an almost infinite number of possible uses for IT in libraries. Many experts are too enthralled. Researchers Saleem et al. (2013) Information technology news from wealthy nations provide ample fodder for daydreaming about idealised, idealised versions of library service delivery. Reminds me of a schoolyard joke about a hypothetical scenario where a doctor recommends a heart transplant after a patient's checkup, and the chemist offers a kidney transplant for free if the patient buys two hearts. Conveyor belt systems, magnetic strip lending systems, burglar alarms, bar code/wand reader based lending and stock verification, CCTV coverage for theft detection, and other planned or anticipated systems either never materialise or fail miserably, at least in part. Examples of this include expensive online access experiments, integrated library and information retrieval packages, and systems that fail to properly evaluate all alternatives and local constraints and conditions. When it comes to academic or theoretical ideas, as well as expensive trials to gather expertise, there is a significant time gap between when they are discussed in class and when they are put into practice to benefit the end users. When it comes to bast

chaining IT, the most dangerous and expensive problem is the time gap, or the delay in implementation. In 2006, the American Library Association

Findings:

The following are the findings of the present study

- (i) There is no library Act in the state
- (ii) There is a lack of proper public library policy or framework document, and a lack of clear vision for the libraries in the state
- (iii) Lack of financial support
- (iv) Training, seminar, workshops for staff were few and far between. These were conducted by RRRLF through the Department of Art and Culture;
- (v) Libraries were not automated;
- (vi) Resources sharing and networking were new concepts for almost all the libraries;
- (vii) With the exception of the State Central Library, there were no trained professionals in the district and rural libraries;
- (viii) Services provided by public libraries were traditional and outdated. Records of library activities were maintained in registers in majority of the public libraries;
- (ix) Community activities(inclusive of children) were mostly conducted by the State Central Library, in the district and rural libraries such activities were almost non-existent;
- (x) District and rural library infrastructure, in most cases, were found to be lacking to provide efficient and effective services to its community.

From the above finding it becomes evident that if public libraries in the State are to play a proactive role in today's Information Society, it becomes an outmost necessity that they review their function and fully utilize their key role of integrating and supporting the whole community. Libraries to remain useful and usable must be responsible to changing library scenario ushered in by telecommunication facilities and modernize its services and activities, if it is to remain abreast with the times, and continue to provide the right information, to the right person, and at the right time.

Suggestions: The following suggestions for the modernization of public libraries in the state are set forth.

- (i) There is a need to modernize Public library management in the State.
- (ii) The library services in the state should be organized on the basis of legislation.
- (iii) District libraries should form stronger links between the State Central Library and village libraries.
- (iv) Libraries should offer proactive services to its user community. Library staff should be information literate, should be at ease with networking technology, and should be able to keep up with the changing pace and character of knowledge production. Presently, in majority of the public libraries staffs are not adequately prepared to handle and properly face the ever-changing work environment.
- (v) Libraries should be able to address their problems and challenges to the concerned authority to ensure a holistic development of information services in all areas of its activities.

- (vi) Public libraries should take necessary steps to mobilize and upgrade the existing library and information systems and services, taking advantages of the latest advances in Information Communication Technology(ICT)
- (vii) Libraries should explore the possibilities for innovation and initiate new programs relevant to their community needs. They should encourage greater community participation in Library management.
- (viii) Public libraries, especially in the rural areas, should facilitate donation and maintenance of private collections. The funds for undertaking developmental projects and forming consortia of public libraries need to be pooled from Government, charitable societies, public trusts and individual donations.
- (ix) Public-private partnerships in development of library and information services should be encouraged. Public libraries should develop strong and sustainable working relationships with other information centres, special and academic libraries in the state to develop collaboration for promoting and modernizing their library services.
- (x) Improve its collections and services on a containing basis in consultation with users;
- (xi) Resource sharing and networking should be encouraged.
- (xii) Government should allocate sufficient funds for developments and expansion of public libraries in the State. The public libraries efforts are hampered by persistent lack of adequate funding to implement new technologies.

A massive investment in public libraries in the state is the need of the hour to make them true information resource centres for the layman. The way we think about libraries reflects the way we think about society. If we believe in community, opportunity, equality, and democracy, then we will invest in our libraries even when times are hard. And the reverse is also true.

Conclusion: Both financial resources and qualified library staff are severely underfunded in Nagaland's public libraries. To give free access to the global information network to the general people, most of them lack the necessary infrastructure and skilled staff. Libraries in remote locations, in particular, sometimes occupy single-room structures and have very limited or nonexistent information technology resources. So that its residents may actively participate in the democratic administration of the nation and in its integration into the global community, it is imperative that all stakeholders work together to upgrade the state's public libraries into vibrant global information hubs.

Bringing library services up to date is important for two reasons: first, it will allow various kinds of libraries to work together more effectively and second, it will make libraries more relevant to current users. Nevertheless, including IT capabilities is only one aspect of modernising library administration. The physical structure of a library should be updated to make it more welcoming, and the services offered should be rethought to be more proactive and relevant to the community of users. Libraries must be more widely used and less neglected. Our libraries must reimaging themselves for the digital era, reclaiming the value of the public library.

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