



Types of Libraries and Information Centres

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1. Introduction

In the previous lesson, you have learnt about the need, importance and functions of a library in the society. You have read that library play an important role in socio-economic, cultural, and educational development of a society. The libraries strengthen literacy among the people. Library services improve knowledge and skills of people for positive productivity thereby contributing to national development. There are many types of libraries throughout the world. In this lesson, you will learn about different types of libraries and their functions in the present-day society. We will discuss each type of library along with examples.

2. Objectives

- Identify the type of a library, viz., Public, Academic, Special and National;
- Explain the parameters (users, collections and services) for categorizing the libraries;
- Illustrate the objectives, functions and services of each type of library;
- List various levels of academic and public libraries; and
- Give examples of each type of library.

3. Type of libraries

Libraries can be categorised into the following four types, i.e. Academic, Public, Special and National libraries. The public libraries function with special libraries are those that are part of the educational institutions, ranging from primary schools to universities. The special libraries are a natural outcome of need for information support to research and development, business, industry, etc. A national library acquires all documents of and about a nation under some legal provision and represents publications of and about the whole nation. Different types of libraries emerged due to increase in number of users, enormous increase in information resources in all disciplines and demand for different types of services by the users. In the subsequent sections, you will read more about the need, objectives, functions and services of each type of library.

4. Public Library

A public library is a social institution. It plays a significant role in the welfare of a society. There are a number of factors responsible for the evolution of public libraries. These are:

- Peoples' urge for knowledge
- Improvement of literacy level through self-education
- As an Information dissemination centre
- Need for life- long learning centre
- To be Community's intellectual centre
- As a Recreation centre
- Advancements in science and technology

With the developments in computer and communication technologies, it is possible for the public libraries to provide quick information through mass media and internet.

4.1 Definition of a Public Library

A public library is a non-profit library established for the use of the general public and maintained chiefly by public funds. In other words, a public library is for the public, by the public and of the public. It provides service to every citizen irrespective of one's birth, caste, colour, sex, social, economic and educational standard without any cost. Libraries of all categories are generally used for five purposes, i.e., education, information, recreation, aesthetic appreciation and research. For example, Academic libraries are primarily used for education and research. Special libraries are meant for information and research, but Public libraries are visited for all the five purposes.

4.1.1 UNESCO's Public Library Manifesto

UNESCO formulated a Public Library Manifesto for member countries in 1949 and revised it in 1972. Later, in 1994, it prepared the Public Library Manifesto in cooperation with the *International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA)*. This manifesto is widely accepted by all countries. It provides guidelines regarding objectives, activities and services of public library; its funding, legislation and networks; its operations and management and implementation of the Manifesto. It has specified the missions of the public library. These are given below.

4.1.2 Missions of the Public Library

The following key missions that relate to information, literacy, education and culture should be at the core of public library services:

1. creating and strengthening reading habits in children from an early age;
2. supporting both individual and self conducted education as well as formal education at all levels;
3. providing opportunities for personal creative development;
4. stimulating the imagination and creativity of children and young people;
5. promoting awareness of cultural heritage, appreciation of the arts, scientific achievements and innovations;
6. providing access to cultural expressions of all performing arts;
7. fostering inter-cultural dialogue and favouring cultural diversity;
8. supporting the oral tradition;
9. ensuring access for citizens to all sorts of community information;
10. providing adequate information services to local enterprises, associations and interest groups;
11. facilitating the development of information and computer literacy skills; and
12. supporting and participating in literacy activities and programmes for all age groups, and initiating such activities, if necessary.

(Source: <http://archive.ifla.org/VII/s8/unesco/eng.htm>)

In short, the UNESCO Public Library Manifesto suggests that a public library is expected to play its role mainly in three principal areas viz. information, education and culture. It has to serve as a:

- centre for information;
- centre for self-education;
- centre for culture; and
- centre for local cultural materials.

4.2 The Objectives and Functions of Public Libraries

According to S. R. Ranganathan, the objectives and functions of a public library are as given below.

- i) Help the life-long self-education of one and all;
- ii) Furnish up-to-date facts and information on all subjects to one and all;

iii) Distribute in an unbiased and balanced way all recorded information to the citizens to help them discharge their duties towards local, national and international affairs; iv) Convey new knowledge to the researchers as early as possible; v) Preserve the cultural heritage of the country; vi) Provide facility for fruitful utilization of leisure time; and vii) Work for the continued social well being of citizens as the in-charge of all material.

The functions of the public libraries are, summarized below: Most of the countries have legislation for public library system and they are set up considering the organizational structure and geographical distribution to reach all the people, i.e., in all states, districts and villages. In order to attract users to the library and to sustain their interest in reading, the library organizes cultural activities such as lectures, discussions, film shows, musical concerts, plays and art exhibitions and story hours for children. It not only serves as a repository of books, but as a cultural centre also. A public library, therefore, plays a very important role in building well-informed, skilled, and productive citizens.

Examples of Public Libraries

1. Delhi Public Library, Delhi.
2. Khuda Bakhsh Oriental Public Library, Patna.
3. Connemara Public Library, Chennai

4.5 Academic Library

The role of the library in any academic institution can be realized only in the context of the institution's philosophy of education. This is true of most of the libraries of the world's academic institutions. Education is a process of learning with an aim to develop the capabilities among the people. Academic libraries which comprise school, college and university libraries have normally four types of users based on the level of education they cater to. These are:

- a) Students
- b) Teachers
- c) Research scholars
- d) Administrative, professional and other staff of the institution

Their objectives, functions, sources of finance, qualifications, designations, and strength of staff differ according to the type of a library. Building up a collection of books, periodicals, reference books and other multiple media material constitutes an integral part of learning, teaching and research. The services such as provision of reading facilities, lending and reference services, etc., also vary in these libraries.

The objectives of an Academic Library are to:

- serve the needs of the academic community;
- collect and store all kinds of reading and reference material;
- provide reading areas for users;
- render lending service appropriate to students, teachers and researchers;
- provide an active reference and information service.

Academic libraries are grouped into three categories. These are:

1. School libraries
2. College libraries
3. University libraries

4.5.1 School Libraries

In India, schools are further divided into four groups according to the levels of education they cater to. Schools can therefore be primary, middle, secondary, and senior secondary.

4.5.1.1 Objectives of School Libraries

All types of schools have a library with the objectives to:

- awaken and foster interest in reading books;
- create love for books;
- promote reading habits; and
- inculcate communication skills through extra curricular activities like story telling, viewing and discussions on audio/visual programmes workshops etc.

Functions of School Libraries

In order to attract students to the library and develop their interest and curiosity, a school library should:

- acquire a good stock of teaching - learning material for students and teachers;
- display books in classified order;
- provide functional physical facilities such as building, furniture and equipment; and hire qualified committed staff.

Schools at primary, secondary and senior secondary levels require similar consideration as mentioned above. The school library services include:

- Lending
- Reading
- Reference service, and
- Guidance and advisory services with the objective of inculcating interest of children for reading books and other reading material.

Examples of School Library

1. Delhi Public School Library, New Delhi
2. Kulachi Hansraj Model School Library, Delhi

4.5.2 College Library

The support of a library at the college level is essential to broaden the minds of the young students to meet new challenges. Compared to school education, college education is totally different for students. There are a large number of students in each class, and therefore, it is not possible for the teachers to give individual attention to each student. However, the students have to, depend on college library for their studies and develop a habit of self-learning. College libraries are further classified in four categories, viz.,

- (1) Junior colleges
- (2) Degree colleges
- (3) Postgraduate colleges, and
- (4) Professional colleges.

4.5.2.1 Objectives of a College Library

The chief objectives of a college library are to:

- give the enrolled students a wider and deeper understanding of the various disciplines;
- provide guidance to students for higher studies and self-learning;
- prepare the students for shouldering higher responsibilities inschools, government departments, civic organizations, commercial establishments, business and industrial companies, etc. ;
- train them to become more enlightened, knowledgeable and responsible citizens; and
- prepare them for varied professions like law, medicine, engineering, technology, etc.

4.5.2.2 Functions of a College Library

The basic functions of a college library are to:

- assist its parent body to carry out the requirements of its teachers and students regarding reading, study and research;
- provide physical facilities such as functional building, furniture, equipment, etc; provide latest editions and multiple copies of curriculum based textbooks and recommended books for their study;
- equip the library with a wide range of reference books;

- develop collection of latest books in different subjects and periodicals including their back volumes;
- procure multiple media material and computer-aided teaching – learning material;
- subscribe to important newspapers and other light material such as popular fiction, biographies, travelogues, art books, etc. for recreation purpose; and
- preserve previous years' question papers to help the students.

4.5.2.3 College Library Services

College library staff provides the following services:

- Provide reading, lending and textbook services;
- Guide students in the use of manual or computer catalogue;
- Assist in locating books and reference books from the shelves;
- Train and instruct students to use library resources in an effective and efficient manner
- Provide information, reference and referral services to all library members;
- Display new books and lists of multiple media material;
- Procure adequate multiple media material and equipment to render them usable; and
- Reprographic service.

4.5.2.4 Library Committee

In every college, there is a library committee. The Principal happens to be the Chairman of the Library Committee in which the Librarian is the Member-Secretary. A few senior faculty members and outside library experts are the other members of the library committee. The librarian has the executive responsibility for the day to day management whereas overall policy decisions for the development of the library are taken by the Committee members. The major sources of finance of a college library are grants from the UGC, State Government, fees and fines from the students.

Examples of College Libraries

1. Kirori Mal College Library, Delhi
2. Lakshmibai College Library, Delhi
3. Government College of Technology Library, Coimbatore.

4.5.3 University Library

In India, several universities have grown very fast since 1947. The growth is evident from the growing number of students' enrollment, research scholars, courses in varied disciplines and multi-disciplines, creation of a number of new departments, research projects and a large number of faculty members. There are different types of universities such as conventional, professional, deemed, and open universities. A university library is established, administered and maintained to assist the university in five major functions such as - teaching and learning; research and generation of new knowledge; dissemination and publication of research results; conservation of knowledge and ideas; and extension programmes. The university libraries have to play a very challenging and difficult role to satisfy the demands of larger group of students, research and post-doctoral research scholars, members of the various academic and executive bodies of the management, administrative and professional staff of the university.

4.5.3.1 Objectives of a University Library

A University library plays a very important role by supporting and helping the university in achieving its aims and objectives. It has to cope with the multidimensional activities of the university. The objectives of a university library are to:

1. Provide intellectual and managerial leadership among the professionals in various fields of government, industry, health, engineering, law, medicine, defence, education, agriculture and inculcate in them a sense of social purpose;
2. Guide research workers in all areas mentioned above so that the results of research could be harnessed to improve the quality of life of the people; and

3. Conserve knowledge and ideas for posterity.

4.5.3.2 Functions of a University Library

The major functions of the university library are to:

- Develop collections of print and media resources in a wide variety of subjects for learning, teaching, research, publication, etc.; organize and store the acquired collection/knowledge for use by the readers;
- Provide a variety of library, documentation, and information services, both responsive and anticipatory; and
- Encourage students, researchers and teachers in using the library for pleasure, self-discovery, personal growth and sharpening of intellectual skill.

4.5.3.3 Services of a University Library

The nature and efficiency of services provided vary from library to library. With the introduction of information and communication technologies, most of the university libraries have automated their library operations using Library Management Software and are providing a variety of services which were not provided before. University library provides services as mentioned below.

- Reading and lending service;
- Bibliographic instruction and library orientation;
- Assistance in the use of the library catalogue and locating documents;
- Reference and information services;
- Current Awareness Services (CAS);
- Selective Dissemination of Information (SDI);
- Bibliographic services;
- Inter-Library Loan (ILL) service;
- Reprographic services;
- Maintenance of News Paper Clippings;
- Maintenance of vertical files containing pamphlets, prospectuses, reports, and question papers of previous years' examinations;
- Reservation of documents;
- User education;
- Exhibition and special displays;
- Special lectures, demonstration of new software and services; and
- User oriented seminars, workshops.

4.5.3.4 University Library Committee

The university library is headed by a Chief Librarian. It is governed by the statutory laws of the university. The library system is subjected to scrutiny and evaluation by its academic and executive councils. A Library Advisory Committee is constituted and chaired by the Vice-Chancellor or his nominee with the librarian as its member secretary and convener. The committee comprises some senior members of the university faculty, library and information science experts and a few scholars.

The library committee is responsible to lay down guiding principles and policies on all matters concerning academic and administrative affairs of the library system. The Library Committee approves the budget prepared by the librarian before it is sent to the Finance Committee. The main source of finance is University Grants Commission (UGC), Central/State Government Grants, Fees and Fines from the readers etc. It advises on the extraordinary purchase of bulk collection, back volumes of periodicals, e-journals, furniture, equipment, computers and communication hardware and software, and also acceptance of major gift collection.

Examples of University Libraries

1. Delhi University Library
2. Jawaharlal Nehru University Library
3. Madras University Library

4.6 Special Library

Special libraries came into existence in the 20th century. A Special library deals with special user groups, as special subject collections and renders special services. These libraries are established to meet the information requirements of the organisations to which they are attached. They are generally devoted to Research and Development (R&D) activities and procure all types of documents in the form of handbooks, technical reports, state-of-the-art reports, bibliographies, current awareness bulletin, periodicals, indexes, abstracts, directories, documentation lists and accession lists.

4.6.1 Definition of a Special Library

Harrod's Librarians' Glossary of Terms defines that a, "Special library is a collection of books and other printed, graphic or recorded material dealing with a limited field of knowledge and provided by a learned society, research organization, industrial or commercial undertaking, government department or serving certain interests or occupational groups such as a technical library or a special subject library, meeting the needs of all enquiries on that given subject such as music library.

4.6.2 Objectives of a Special Library

A special library is an integral part of a parent institution and fully supports its programmes and activities. The main objectives of a special library are to develop current as well as retrospective collection in core subjects based on the projects and programmes of the parent organization. Their aim is to provide promptly the latest information about the significant developments in the field whenever requested by the users. It provides all types of academic, technical and documentary support to render appropriate services to the specialists.

4.6.3 Functions and Services of a Special Library

A special library performs various functions and provides services as mentioned below.

- Performs exhaustive literature search to compile comprehensive lists;
- Selects, procures, organizes, stores and retrieves current information required by the users;
- Analyses, synthesizes and evaluates available information;
- Provides state-of-the-art-reports, critical reviews, monographs, research reports, reprints,
- Provides indexes, abstracts and extracts;
- Prepares accession lists, bulletins, newsletters, summaries, handbooks or manuals; bibliographies;
- Issues documents including inter-library loan;
- Renders reference and referral services; and
- Provides Current Awareness Services (CAS), Selective Dissemination of Information (SDI), and Translation Services.

Type of Special Libraries

There are varied type of special libraries. They are –

□ *Government Libraries* -

Parliament Library, New Delhi

Central Secretariat Library, New Delhi

□ *Libraries of Societies and Institutions* –

U.P. Historical Society, Lucknow

World Poetry Society Intercontinental, Chennai

Industrial and Commercial Organisations –

Library of Larsen and Toubro, Mumbai

Bharat Heavy Electricals Limited Library, New Delhi

□ *Research Organisations* –

Indian Council of Medical Research, New Delhi

Indian Council of Agricultural Research, New Delhi

□ *Academic Institutions* –

Indian Institute of Technology at New Delhi, Bombay, Chennai, Kanpur, etc. School of Planning and Architecture, New Delhi

Lal Bahadur Shastri Institute of Management, New Delhi

□ *Public Libraries* –

New York Public Library, New York - Science Division

Delhi Public Library, New Delhi

Examples of Special Libraries

1. IIPM Library, New Delhi

2. National Institute of Immunology, New Delhi

4.7 National Library

In most countries there is a national library maintained by national resources, usually entrusted with the responsibility of publishing a national bibliography. National libraries collect and preserve the nation's literature. Most national libraries receive, by legal right (or copyright, or deposit), one free copy of each book and periodical printed in the country.

A National Library is a library specifically established and funded by the government of a country to serve as the pre-eminent repository of information for that country. In National Library, a limited number of books are lent out to readers under certain terms and conditions. It rarely allows citizens to borrow rare, valuable or significant works.

4.7.1 Definition of a National Library

Harrod's Librarians' Glossary (1987) defines a National Library as a library maintained out of government funds and serves the nation. The books are mainly for reference. They usually receive material through legal deposit legislation. The function of such a library is to collect and preserve for posterity all the published records viz. books, periodicals, newspapers, and other printed and multimedia material of the country's cultural heritage. This is best done by a law requiring publishers to deposit copies of all publications produced by them and by purchasing books on their country published in other countries. A legal deposit normally has penalty clauses to enable the act to be enforced.

4.7.2 Objectives and Functions of a National Library

The main objective of a National Library is to identify, acquire, organize, store and retrieve all print and non-print documents published within or on a particular country and by or on all the nationals of that country in other countries.

The functions of the national library recommended in the *Final Report of the Regional Seminar on the Development of National Library in Asia and Pacific Area* held in Manila in 1964 are to :

- provide leadership among the nation's libraries;
- serve as a permanent depository for all publications issued in the country;
- acquire other types of material;
- provide bibliographical services;
- serve as a coordinating centre for co-operative activities; and
- provide service to the government.

Examples of National Libraries

There are comprehensive National Libraries of the countries performing all activities and functions. They are:

1. The National Library of India, India
<http://www.nationallibrary.gov.in/>
2. The Library of Congress (LC), USA
<http://www.loc.gov/index.html>
3. The British Library, UK
<http://www.bl.uk/>

References

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