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# “THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITION OF PUBLIC LIBRARIES IN BIHAR: A STUDY”

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**Abstract:** Public libraries have been often regarded as a mainstay to the frontiers of the available knowledge domain made available to common people deprived of access to tools, resources, media, and the enabling infrastructure in an era of digitalization. In recent, research on public libraries has lost its importance among the savants and has become a neglected area. An adequate public library service is essential to the citizen's social, material and cultural development. In all countries represented at the seminar, public library service is already being provided to some degree, and the time is ripe for further development. Public libraries are crucial resources during the difficult economic times for job seeking and training but are also one of the first public resources to face the budget cuts. The protection of the environment or defense is today invariably entrusted to institutions and organizations. Libraries and other similar types of institutions are those that collect, stock, possess, organize, disseminate and distribute information/knowledge recorded in documents.

**Keywords:** digitalization, adequate, budget cuts, disseminate.

## I. INTRODUCTION

The study entitled “THE SOCIO-ECONOMIC CONDITION OF PUBLIC LIBRARIES IN BIHAR: A STUDY”. There was no study conducted to know the status of the socioeconomic conditions of public library

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users in Bihar. The status of the socio-economic conditions is not known, so the topic has been undertaken to study the socio-economic conditions of public library users in Bihar.

### Aims and Objectives of the Study

- To explore the status of public libraries in Bihar
- To explore the collection development

policies of the public libraries in Bihar;

- To find out the ICT facilities available in the public libraries in Bihar;
- To find out the socio-economic status of the library users of the public libraries in Bihar;

### **Research Methodology**

Research begins when the researcher experiences some difficulty, i.e., a problem demanding a solution to the subject area of his discipline. Keeping in view the objectives, problems, and limitations of the study, an effort is made to evolve a suitable methodology for the research. The study has been designed, developed, and carried out to determine and analyze the socio-economic condition of public library users in Bihar. A survey method has been used to know the status of socio-economic condition of public libraries of Bihar.

### **Literature Review**

Balaji, Vinay and Raju (2018) wrote a research paper on a policy review of public libraries in India. The purpose of this paper is to analyze the status of policies, legislation, and finance concerning public libraries in India. It attempts a critique of existing policies related to public libraries in particular and the culture sector in general, which governs the Galleries, Libraries, Archives, and Museums (GLAMs) in India. Of India's 29 states and 7 union territories, 19 states have passed state library legislation, of which only 5 have the provision of a library cess or tax levy and it was found that states with lower literacy rates do not have library

legislation. Bihar and Chhattisgarh in 2008 and Arunachal Pradesh in 2009 have recently passed these legislations without a library cess. Prasad (2016) in his research article mention that public libraries have recognized their role to satisfy the information needs of all types of people in society. The government at the state level and national level have taken initiatives to make public libraries an important source of pieces of information for people in formal walks of life. His article describes the development of the public library system in India, several exercises in its evaluation during the mid-1990s, and the current direction of its planning. Quantitative and qualitative survey data portray the demographics of library clientele, their information needs, their rating of library materials, facilities, and personnel, and the relationship between their evaluations and the preliminary stages of automation.

Yuvaraj and Maurya (2014) conducted an explorative study on Public libraries in Varanasi (Uttar Pradesh), India. The main purpose of the study was to explore the current status of public libraries in Varanasi. A structured questionnaire was designed and personally distributed to 100 respondents over seven months of the study. Responses present a dismal outlook of the libraries. Financial deficit and lack of computers, infrastructure, and staff have stagnated the development of these libraries. These libraries continue to stand the same way as they stood 60 years before.

**Das (2010)** in his research paper entitled

“Library Advocacy in India in the Light of education for sustainable Development – Perspectives of an Emerging Economy” mentioned that India is considered a world leader among developing countries in terms of economic sustainability and growth. However, when it comes to education for sustainable development (ESD), India stands more elitist to serve only privileged sections of the population. Indian public library system remains inadequate to fulfill the huge demands from neo-functional literates or lifelong learners who mostly belong to underprivileged sections. His paper discusses the trajectories of various actors and stakeholders in India who are catching up on ‘library advocacy’ to bridge the knowledge gaps in the country. The paper also analyses the impact of the Indian government’s policy frameworks toward building inclusive knowledge societies and their implications for future library advocacy in India.

### **Public Library Conditions in Bihar**

Historically, Bihar has been a major center of learning, home to the ancient universities of Nalanda, Odantapurā and Vikramashila. Bihar saw a revival of its education system during the later part of British rule, when Patna University, the seventh oldest university in the Indian subcontinent, was established in 1917. Some other centers of high learning established under British rule are Patna College, Bihar School of Engineering (now known as National Institute of Technology, Patna), Prince of Wales Medical College (now Patna Medical College

and Hospital), Science College, Patna, Patna Women's College, Bihar Veterinary College, and Imperial Agriculture Research Institute (now Dr. Rajendra Prasad Central Agriculture University, Pusa).

Bihar State Public Libraries and Information Centre Act, 2008 to provide for the establishment, and re-constitution of public libraries in the State of Bihar and to regulate, guide, control, and supervision for systematic development of libraries. The powers and functions of the State Library and Information Centre Authority for the organization, guidance and development of public libraries in the State are.

- (a) To control the State Library Fund and to make available aid to libraries out of this fund and determine the conditions and qualifications of Aid.
- (b) To establish libraries at a different level, to initiate the conduct and development of established libraries, and to decide necessary conditions, situations, and standards for this.
- (c) To make rules/regulations for achieving objectives of this Act.
- (d) To initiate and analyze the short-term/long-term plans for the development of libraries and to make recommendations relating thereto to the Government.
- (e) To disseminate teaching and training of State Library and Information science and to prepare standards thereto.

Public libraries have always been the door to learning for a great majority of the populations

that they serve. They are knowledge centers and contribute to lifelong learning. For India, there are bumps in the road that leads to the goal of having an institution to serve the masses, which is even more imperative in the present information society, in a nation where 40 percent of the population is living below the poverty line. A massive investment in public libraries is needed to make them true information resource centers for laymen.

In modern societies, every human activity is organized through institutions. Every major social task, whether the economic performance of health care, education or research, business or industry is institutionalized. The protection of the environment or defense is today invariably entrusted to institutions and organizations. Libraries and other similar types of institutions are those that collect, stock, possess, organize, disseminate and distribute information/knowledge recorded in documents. Since knowledge and information are so vital for all-around human development, libraries and other institutions that handle and manage knowledge and information are indeed invaluable.

### **Conclusion**

Bihar is a large state with an almost 10 crores population the government needs to align its priorities to serve users and learners and work towards universal education and accessibility of information. Public libraries are indispensable as community hubs to enrich and nurture knowledge and mold intellectuals. For multiple

purposes, libraries are increasingly reinventing themselves to facilitate maker spaces, social gaming, and events—as spaces that strongly embody human rights, social justice, community development, information literacy through continuing education, and access to cultural heritage. Public libraries can help equalize opportunities for citizens, and play a national role by catering to children, adults, and youth. Public libraries have always been the door to learning for a great majority of the populations that they serve. They are knowledge centers and contribute to lifelong learning. Public library system efforts to support resource sharing have greatly contributed to the development of the system. Public library system members serve the library and information professionals. Public library system compatibility has greatly improved the library user's ability to access materials not available locally but held by other public library system members.

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