

**Course** : - Bachelor of Library and Information Science (BLIS)

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**Topic:** PUBLIC LIBRARY

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# **PUBLIC LIBRARY:**

## **1. INTRODUCTION:**

The Public Library is a social institution based on the definition of democracy. It is for the people by the people and of the people. In the words of William Ewart, Public Library is founded by the people, and is established by law and maintained at public expenses out of local rates and sometimes by State taxes. It has been rightly described by Carlyle as Peoples University. No other social institution can perform such a wide range of service as a public library to the entire population of a given area. Dr. S.R. Ranganathan defined it as a library owned and maintained by the public of its area for the socialization of its books and kindred materials for free service to the people of the area. Therefore a Public library is freely open to all, irrespective of age , profession, race, sex, color or creed and provides free access to any literature required.

## **2. Historical Background:**

India celebrated its 72 years of Independence in 2019. A brief stock of its development in the library field help to introspect the progress made in the library field. An important landmark in the history of public library services in India was made by Maharaja Sayaji Rao Gaekward by introducing free compulsory elementary education backed by libraries in 1883 in the district of Baroda and thus free public library services in India were introduced as a system in 1907. There were only nineteen Universities in India before 1947.

The British also showed keen interest to set up educational societies with their libraries and public libraries in India. The establishment of Bengal Royal Asiatic Society library (1784), Bombay Royal Asiatic Society (1804) and Calcutta Public Library (1835) enlightened the public. The Calcutta Public Library became Imperial Library in 1903 and later became the National Library of India after Independence.

Dr S.R. Ranganathan also played a significant role in the library development as well as knowledge of library science. After joining the post of University Librarian at University of Madras in 1924, Ranganathan went to United Kingdom and gained knowledge on libraries.

## **3. Definition:**

**According to Dr. S.R.Ranganathan**, the father of Library movement In India, the Public Library is one which is open to any member of the public and annually free of any charge paid as so much service”.

**Encyclopaedia of Library and Information Science defines that** ‘ / Public Library is a Public Institution supported by taxation one that opens its collections\* facilities and services, without distinction to all students.

#### **4. Type Of PUBLIC LIBRARY:**

According to the mode of services rendered to the readers; libraries are broadly divided into SIX(6) types:

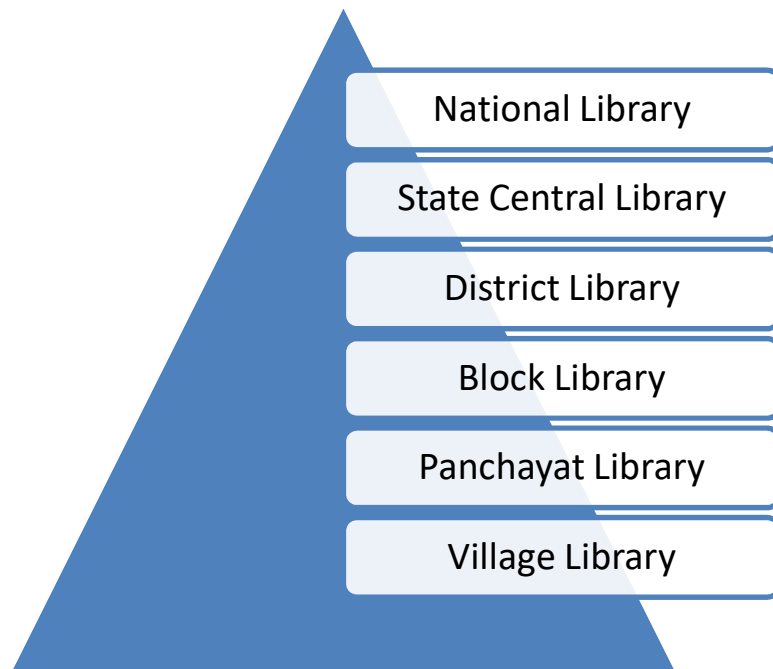


Fig: Shows Type Of Public Library

#### **5. Objective:**

The objectives and functions of Public library as enumerated by Ranganathan are as follows :

- a) Help the life-long self education of one and all,
- b) Furnish up-to-date facts and information on all subjects to one and all,
- c) Distribute in an unbiased and balanced way all sources of recorded reviews and thoughts to one and all and serve as a help in the discharge of their political responsibilities in respect of local, national and & international affairs,
- d) Contribute to productive drive by information to management of the latest trends in diverse enterprises by ploughing back in the minds of researchers, designers and technologists, every piece of relevant new thought promptly,
- e) Preserve the literary remains of humanity for posterity as vehicles of culture and source materials for antiquarian research,
- f) Provide to one and all worthy and elevating use of leisure,
- g) And in general work for continued social well being as the agency incharge of all socialized thought.

## **6. Function:**

Public Library functions as an intellectual powerhouse aspiring to meet the intellectual, educational, recreational, informational and cultural requirements of the people. The various objectives and functions enumerated above by individuals and institutions could easily be summed up in following functions:

- Self Education Centre
- Centre for Life Long Learning
- Community Information Centre
- Recreation Centre
- Cultural Centre for Society
- Centre to Support Economic Development
- Centre for Community Skills Development
- Centre for Strengthening Democratic Sprit

## **7. Importance Of Public Library:**

Public library plays an important role in people's lives as a source of accessing information and a place for knowledge creation. It has shown that public libraries are important informational, educational, cultural, and social institutions.

- Public library and Education
- Public library and literacy
- Public library and Non-formal Education
- Public library and Life long learning
- Public library and Economic development
- Public libraries and democratic governance
- Free and fair elections
- Citizen participation in decision-making
- Human rights
- Information Access

## **8. SUMMARY:**

The prominent public libraries at the national and state level did not spring up through legislation; however, they received continuous financial support and authority as public institutions for the equal service to every member in the society. The four states of South India, namely, Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka and Kerala, were in the forefront to adopt public library legislation in the country. Being at the apex of the public library system of their respective states the State Central Libraries need to assume leadership role. However, the criticism from the professionals indicates that the organization of resources and delivery of services are not satisfactory.