

Problems and Prospects of Public Library System in Karnataka State with Special Reference to Uttar Kannada, Karwar District

Manohar B. Lamani¹ and B. D. Kumbar²

¹Senior Research Fellow, ²Professor and Chairman,

Dept. of Library and Information Science, Karnatak University-Dharwad, Karnataka, India

E-mail:manulamani@gmail.com,bdkumbar@yahoo.com

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Abstract - In this paper an attempt has been made to discuss the problems and prospects of public library system in Karnataka state with special reference to Uttara Kannada (Karwar) district. The important objectives of the study are to know the Existing Structure of Public Library System of Karnataka in General and Uttara Kannada District in Particular, to know the annual income and expenditure of DCL, Collection of resources, branch libraries at taluka and gram panchayat libraries established in Uttar Kannada district and mainly to ascertain the problems being faced by the public library system of the district. Finally study gives the proper suggestions to overall development of the public library system in the Karnataka state in general and Uttara Kannada district in particular.

Keyword: Public Library, Gram Panchayat Library, Public Library System, Uttara Kannada

I. INTRODUCTION

The basic principle of the public library is to provide Information and knowledge resources of various fields to meet the needs and requirements of the people for various purposes like education, information, aesthetic appreciation, personal knowledge development including recreation and leisure. They have to play an imperative role in the developmental process and maintenance of a democratic society by giving the individual access to a wide and varied range of knowledge, ideas and opinions. UNESCO, public library manifesto 1994 emphasizes the role of public library as the local centre of education, information and culture. It states that knowledge is an important resource and public library is not only a cultural institution but also an essential welfare through the minds of people.

Karnataka is one of the progressive states in India with growth rate of 6.2 % for 2015-16 and is a hub of Information technology and R & D institutions. With 75.60% literacy rate (Census, 2011). The state is divided into 30 districts, 220 talukas. The studies on various aspects of public libraries in Karnataka have already been conducted. The district Uttara Kannada (Karwar) is located in the western coast of Karnataka State comprising of Karwar is headquarter and 11 talukas, Viz, Karwar, Ankola, Kumta, Honnavar, Bhatkal, Siddapur, Sirsi, Yellapur, Joida, Haliyal, Mundgod, with male literacy rate of 89.6% and female literacy rate of 78.04%. (Census, 2011).

Public Libraries are the vital sources of information and education by providing up to date and authentic information on various types of subjects to the entire people of a State/District. Each and every citizen of the society needs some kind of information to cater his or her information desire in one-way or the other. In the context of public library, it meets various information needs through its services to the society. Public libraries are different in nature of functions, services and activities. Public libraries are local center of information, established to serve the society free of cost without any bias. It has very important role to play in the development of society particularly in the socio-cultural and educational enlightenment.

II. OBJECTIVES

The main objectives of the study are

1. To know the Existing Structure of Public Library System of Karnataka in General and Uttara Kannada District in Particular
2. To know the annual income as well as annual expenditure of DCL, Uttara Kannada district for the operation of public library system of the district.
3. To know the different types of resources and services rendered by the DCL
4. To ascertain the problems being faced by the public library system of the district and
5. To give the proper suggestions for the overall development of the public library system of the district

III. METHODOLOGY

The survey method has extensively been used in the present study. A well structured two separate questionnaires one for DCL and another for branch libraries were designed to elicit the necessary data. The working professionals in different libraries and authorities concerned are interviewed to have a thorough understanding of the system. While designing questionnaire objectives which are stated earlier were kept in mind and published and unpublished documents also consulted to develop the theoretical knowledge.

Public Library System of Karnataka

With a view to universalize the right of reading Karnataka Public Libraries Act, 1965 has come into force on 1st April 1966 and enacted the same thereby laying a sound foundation for the growth of public libraries in this state. The then Mysore Library Association worked hard in the direction of bringing the Karnataka Public Library Act into force with the accelerated motivation of the popular opinion. The efforts made by the then education minister Sri S.R.Kanthi, Sri Vaikunta Baliga the then speaker of the assembly, Dr. S.R. Ranganathan and Sri Aiyengar N. proved successful in implementing the Library Act in the state. Today, as far as the development of public libraries is concerned it has achieved remarkable progress in the state. The Karnataka State is one of those few states in the forefront in view of the public library system in the country

as a whole. The department of public library in Karnataka has rendered 50 years of salutary service by installing a network of libraries throughout the state. The Department is, by way of offering library facilities striding fast from the capital towards the villages in the direction of evoking an intellectual revolution among the people by instilling in the common man an active interest for reading. As far as the acts of Public Libraries and establishment of Libraries is concerned, Karnataka is the 3rd state in the country to enact library legislation. The Act facilitates the establishment, maintenance and development of libraries in rural as well as in urban areas. Important feature of act is the provision has been made for collection of library cess in the form of surcharge on property or house tax and other services. In fact the KPL Act, 1965 is going to be considered as one of revolutionary and model act in India.

TABLE 1 TYPES OF LIBRARIES ESTABLISHED IN THE STATE

Sl. No.	Types	Numbers
1	State Central Library	1
2	Indira Priyadarshini Children's Library	1
3	Public Technical Library	1
4	District Central Library,	30
5	City Central Library	26
6	Mobile Libraries	15
7	Branch Libraries	490
8	Service Stations	107
9	Reading Rooms	31
10	Gram Panchayat Libraries	5766
11	Aided Libraries	21
12	Slum Libraries	200
13	Reading Rooms in Slum Areas	600
Total		7,289

The above table clearly indicates that, the types of libraries established in the state of Karnataka in accordance with the provision made in the act. Total of 7,289 libraries are serving in both rural as well as urban areas of the state. Out of which, 5766 Gram panchayat libraries serving in all the panchayat areas of the state, and 600 reading rooms in slum areas. There are 30 District central libraries, 26 City Central Libraries in the urban areas at the districts and 490 branch libraries are working at the taluka and towns in the state.

District Central Library, Karwar

According to the provision made in KPL Act 1965 section 16 & 18, the DCL is established by the District Library

Authority in every district head quarter. In the district of Karwar the DCL was established on 27/09/1977 by the Department of Public Library, Government of Karnataka. There is district central library in every district headquarters to establish and maintain branch and panchayat libraries in the district. At present 30 district central libraries are working in the state, particularly in Karwar district 11 branch libraries and 218 panchayat libraries are working. The prime function of the DCL is to provide library services to the rural folk by establishing the community information centres viz. branch libraries and panchayat libraries including book delivery stations.

TABLE 2 BRANCHES OF DISTRICT CENTRAL LIBRARIES

Sl.No.	Name of Branch	Year of Establishment
1	Karwar	27/09/1977
2	Ankola	1985
3	Kumta	1982
4	Honnavar	1988
5	Bhatkal	1980
6	Siddapur	1980
7	Sirsi	1982
8	Yellapur	1980
9	Dandeli	1982
10	Haliyal	1978
11	Mundgod	1980

The above table presents the data about the branch libraries of DCL in the district; the first branch library was opened in 1977 in Karwar and last in 1988 in Honnavar, in a span of 11 years in all the talukas branch libraries has been opened.

The branch libraries established at the taluka level are acting as a leader and model libraries at the taluka level. They are also trying their level best to meet the needs of the people of taluka.

TABLE 3 SEATING CAPACITY AND WORKING STAFF

Sl. No.	Branch	Seating capacity	Working Staff
1	Karwar	60	10
2	Ankola	40	02
3	Kumta	30	02
4	Honnavar	25	02
5	Bhatkal	25	02
6	Siddapur	10	02
7	Sirsi	40	03
8	Yellapur	30	02
9	Dandeli	20	02
10	Haliyal	40	02
11	Mundgod	20	02

The table 3 states that, the seating capacity of all branches; the Karwar branch only has the more seating capacity that is 60 as compare to all the branches. The number of staff is also working more in Karwar branch as compare to them.

A good building and furniture attracts the user for proper utilization of library resources and services, so the table 3 identifies that the seating capacity of branch libraries depending upon the availability of space in the library building. Due to insufficient space there are no adequate seats for longer reading and feel natural. The various branch libraries under DCL Karwar are housed, either in their own, rented or donated building. A study further reveals that majority of the branch libraries do not have their own functional building. Some buildings are old, without sufficient natural light and ventilation.

The table 3 although states that, the working staff of the branches, it can be observed from the table that very less

staff working in the branches. So another important problem of the public libraries in the areas is running without professional library staff for which the condition of the libraries is in a negligible position. The concerned authorities never feel the need for the appointment of well qualified and trained personnel to run the library. Table also reveals that staff working in the various branches of DCL almost except Karwar almost all the branch libraries in the district are managed by the non-competent and non professional staff only. So by this one can assume that what type of services they may render to the public.

IV.COLLECTION OF SOURCES

Collection is one of the most important components of the library activity which can be termed as backbone of the library. The proper use of the library shall be based on its collection.

TABLE 4 COLLECTIONS OF SOURCES

Sl. No.	Sources	Number of Sources
1	Books	314595
2	Periodicals	3744
3	News Papers	1968
4	Others	36
	Total	320343

According to the table 4, the branch libraries in the district has total 320343 resources, in that majority that is 314595 books and 3744 periodicals and 1968 news paper. It clearly shows that between 11 taluka branch libraries and 218 panchayat libraries the collection of DCL is very meager.

Through which these libraries are not in a position to serve the real needs of the people. It needs sound and huge collection of books and other reading materials in accordance with the needs and taste of the reading community.

TABLE 5 GRAM PANCHAYAT LIBRARIES

S. I no	Name of the Taluka	No of Gram Panchayat Libraries
1	Karwar	25
2	Ankola	19
3	Kumta	20
4	Honnavar	26
5	Bhatkal	16
6	Siddapur	21
7	Sirsi	27
8	Yellapur	15
9	Dandeli	15
10	Haliyal	21
11	Mundgod	13

It is found from the table 5 that, number of gram panchayat libraries working on different talukas of Karwar district, the Sirsi taluka has the majority of gram panchayat libraries that is 27 as compare to the district head quarter Karwar and Honnavar branch library also has more gram panchayat libraries 26 than Karwar. The Mundgod taluka has least that is 13 gram panchayat libraries.

Panchayat library plays a vital role for the spread of knowledge and information to the rural community. For the benefit of rural people and to support the rural activities, there is a need of Panchayat libraries with all the required facilities. Panchayat libraries help to the rural community keeping fresh their knowledge by providing needed information of the rural community. So the table further indicates that, the number of Panchayat libraries in the district are less than number of gram panchayats, the act strongly suggests that to establish pachayat libraries in all the gram panchayat centres.

Annual Grants and Expenditure of DCL for the year 2012-2015

A public library and its maintenance are to be completely depending upon public funds. The resources in the form of

annual grants are collected from various sources such as state government, library cess, donations and gifts etc. The provision made in the KPL Act, 1965 (section 30) for collecting library cess on property tax land revenue is in fact major source of finance. The department of public library in addition to this the assistance of state government grants and the funds received from RRRLF, donations etc.

The table 6 indicates that, for the year 2012-13 a total budget of Rs 5209502 has been granted to maintain the public library system in the district. An interesting fact can be noticed that all granted budget is collected through library cess only. But according to the provision made in the KPL Act, 1965, the state government has to contribute equal amount to the DCL. The data in the table clearly shows that, the state government grant is nil In Rs 5209502 maximum expenditure has been done on purchase of books i.e. 2481294 (47.63%) whereas, other expenditure done on purchase of periodicals Rs 384530 (7.38%), salary 143000 (2.14%) etc. the salary paid only to the temporary employees serving in taluka and gram panchayat libraries. For the permanent employees salary will be paid by the consolidated fund (C F) of the state government.

TABLE 6 ANNUAL GRANTS AND EXPENDITURE OF DCL KARWAR FOR THE YEAR 2012-2013

Sl. No	Annual Grants	2012-2013	Annual Expenditure	2012-2013
1	State Govt. Grants	-	Salary	143000
2	Library Cess	5209502	Books	2481294
3	RRRLF	-	Periodicals	384530
4	Donation	-	Furniture and Equipments	98800
5	Others(if any)	-	Stationary and Postage	98625
6			Telephone	48194
7			Binding	
8			Others	1955059
	Total	5209502	Total	5209502

TABLE 7 ANNUAL GRANTS AND EXPENDITURE OF DCL KARWAR FOR THE YEAR 2013-2014

Sl. No.	Annual Grants	2013-2014	Annual Expenditure	2013-2014
1	State Govt. Grants	-	Salary	280000
2	Library Cess	4952561	Books	2588573
3	RRRLF	-	Periodicals	372233
4	Donation	-	Furniture and Equipments	626000
5	Others(if any)	64534	Stationary and Postage	182295
6			Telephone	43034
7			Binding	
8			Others	924960
	Total	5017095	Total	5017095

Table 7 shows that, total budget of Rs 5017095 approved for the year 2013-14. In that majority of expenditure has been done on purchase of books i.e. Rs 2588573. Whereas, other expenditure done on binding 924960 (18.43%), furniture and equipments 626000 (12.47%) etc. The salary

paid only to the temporary employees serving in taluka and gram panchayat libraries. For the permanent employees salary will be paid by the consolidated fund (C F) of the state government.

TABLE 8 ANNUAL GRANTS AND EXPENDITURE OF DCL KARWAR FOR THE YEAR 2014-2015

Sl. No	Annual Grants	2014-2015	Annual Expenditure	2014-2015
1	State Govt. Grants	-	Salary	404000
2	Library Cess	4829939	Books	3334700
3	RRRLF	-	Periodicals	474965
4	Donation	-	Furniture and Equipments	593720
5	Others(if any)	221853	Stationary and Postage	202729
6			Telephone	41678
7			Binding	
8			Others	
	Total	5051792	Total	5051792

The table 8 reveals that, Rs 5051792 has been allocated for year 2014-15, in that Rs 3334700 (66.01%) has been spent for the purpose to buy books and Rs 593720 (11.75%) has been spent for the furniture and equipments. In the total budget Rs. 404000 (7.99%) has been allocated for salary. The above table clearly shows that, Govt. is spending more money to develop the public library system in the district although the public libraries are lagging behind to attract the users towards libraries. The govt. should come forward to know whether fund is properly utilized or not and also it is

sufficient or additional funding is required by DCL. The salary paid only to the temporary employees serving in taluka and gram panchayat libraries. For the permanent employees salary will be paid by the consolidated fund (C F) of the state government.

As per as finance of public library is concerned library cess is the only dependable and perennial source of income for the library authorities. Due to inadequate grant it is not possible to purchase required number of books, furniture

etc; there is less scope for construction of library building and basic facilities like furniture, electricity, toilet, drinking water etc so it will be difficult to manage libraries. Most of the public libraries are not given importance by the Government in funding for smooth functioning and running of such libraries. Due to the lack of proper and adequate funding policy the development of public libraries are not satisfactory in the district of Uttara Kannada (Karwar).

Gram Panchayat Library in Karwar District

The government of Karnataka has introduced the Panchayat Raj system in the state in the year 1987-88, accordingly each Gram Panchayat consists of 5 to 6 villages. During which a scheme of library to every Gram Panchayat was launched with the view to establish Gram Panchayat library in the entire state.

In the budget for the year 1987-88, the Government of Karnataka announced policy for the establishment of Mandal libraries for each mandal. The department of public libraries was entrusted with work of establishing grama panchayat, libraries in all the districts. The department of public library created a separate cell with a special officer for this new project. This project was given funds under plan scheme in a phase manner every year, districts were intimated to identify the grama panchayat as with availability of suitable building for housing the libraries taking into consideration the population, literacy, Educational institutional facilities and other civic amenities like school, banks, post etc;

Grama Panchayats were selected for the purpose. The demand of the public and people's representatives were also given to priority in updating this list. Between the periods 1987-1988 to 2014-2015, 5766 Grama Panchayat libraries are established and they are providing the library service to rural population in the state of Karnataka.

V. PROSPECTS

There are positive and potential prospects to improve the system of public library in the district but the concerned authorities should come forward and seriously look into the matter. The provision made in the KPL act section (16) Constitution of Local Library Authority, each district in the state has District Library Authority which supervises, controls, directs on all matters relating to library affairs in the district so there is an independent library authority for DCL Karwar.

- a. District Library Authority is an independent body for planning to the overall development of branch libraries and panchayat libraries in the district.
- b. There is a scope and prospect to have proper planning to rejuvenate the public library system in the district and has the freedom to plan in a proper way.

- c. There is an enormous prospect of creating awareness among each and every people about the library resources and services and its importance through the District Library Authority.
- d. There is a Prospect of creating separate budget for the development of DCL Karwar.
- e. The District Library Authority can recommend to the State Government to bring required amendment to the existing Karnataka Public Library Act, 1965. So it is possible to bring the major changes in the public library system in Karwar district.
- f. Most important prospect is that use of Information Communication Technologies for libraries. Use of new technologies in public library for automation, networking etc is going to ease work of staff. Moreover, ICT can also attract young users towards public library.
- g. One of the greatest prospects for public libraries is ever increasing literacy rate for the reason that, it will make sure more and more use of public libraries by people.

VI. SUGGESTIONS

- a. In the preamble of Karnataka Public Library Act 1965 it has been clearly mentioned that, the State Government must take the initiation to establish and maintain the libraries so State Government and concerned department should facilitate the well structured building with all the necessary facilities and building should be situated at the heart of the city or where people can access very easily especially in rural areas.
- b. The Karnataka Public Libraries Act 1965 should be modified while keeping in mind the latest developments in the field of information and communication technology (ICT). Then only it is possible to provide even minimum networked service for the urban and rural elite.
- c. The department of public Library in collaboration and cooperation with all Library and Information Science departments in Karnataka can organize effective and efficient training programmes for all professional employees serving in the department of Public Libraries. Then only it is possible for all the employees to think and rethink about how to serve the different community of readers by using variety of resources available within and outside the library.
- d. Finance is the only hurdle for the overall development of public libraries in the state; therefore it is suggested that the state government and local governments should ensure proper financial support for the public library system.
- e. Library Personnel are going to play a pivotal role in helping the present and potential user. Therefore during appointment of library personnel the state government in general and authorities of the department in particular must take keen interest in

- appointing well qualified and trained personnel especially at the Grama Panchayats level.
- f. The collection resource of the library should be developed by taking into consideration different needs and requirements of all community of readers such as children, adult, age old, house wives, labours, farmers, people involved in different professions etc.
 - g. Public libraries will have to respond to the changing needs of the public, serve them with necessary information resources and contribute to developing a knowledge society.
 - h. Every district library should be linked to all the rural and branch libraries in the district in a hub and spokes model with responsibilities to support, nurture and promote service delivery.
 - i. Study strongly suggests that need to provide ICT facilities and services such as Computer network, Xerox, Printer etc to the panchayat libraries and provide necessary training to operate the ICT tools by the personnel serving different types of libraries in the district of Karwar.

VII.CONCLUSION

Growth and development of public libraries in Karnataka is generally in good health as it is reached deep into rural level. The organizational structure of public libraries in the state has been considered as model Structure in India. The District Central Libraries of Karnataka holds the key role in the whole structure since; they work as nodal centre for taluka and gram panchayat libraries of a particular district. Thus the district central libraries should get more attention from the state government because they serve urban and rural folks.

Development of any country or region should start from grass root level and to achieve this timely information is

pre-requisite for empowerment especially among rural community. Government of India in General and Government of Karnataka in Particular have been showing keen interest to improve the public libraries but there is a need to establish qualitative and functional public libraries with better information sources and infrastructure. In the Karwar district there is an urgent need for improvement of public libraries at both taluka level and Gram panchayat level in terms of their building, collections, resources infrastructure, human resource and library services. The basic facilities such as drinking water, wash rooms should be provided on priority basis. And also all the public libraries in the district should adapt Information and communication technologies. The concerned authorities at the state and district level must come forward and take minimum interest to develop ICT based libraries in the district of Karwar. For this they can prepare a separate proposal and submit the same to the RRRLF through proper channel and get the extra funding from the foundation as well they can seek special grant from the government of Karnataka.

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