

# Information Resources and Services for Public Libraries Users

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**Abstract:** *The public libraries have recognized their role to satisfy information needs of all of people in the society. The government at the state level & national level has taken initiatives to make public libraries as important source of information's for people formal walks of life. Public libraries are essentials since they improve literacy. It is local getaway to knowledge that provides basic condition for life learning and facilities culture development of the individual & social groups. The public libraries provide service to all irrespective of age, sex, cast, religion education and social studies. Generally all users get the materials relevant to their needs and requirement in the public libraries. A public library is a non profit library maintain for public use.*

**Keywords:** Public Library, Information Resource

## 1. Introduction

Library is a growing organisation. Growing organisation means a set of goal to be achieved through appropriate planning. It case of public is no exception. First of all, the process of planning, goal then how to execute this goal through guidelines. A public library (also called People's university) is a library which is a accessible by the public and is generally funded from public sources / Government.

Norms or standards are to be followed every time in every library. Every librarian wants to impart the best of his knowledge to the Library, but this is not enough. It may happen that the existing knowledge may not be sufficient or up to - date.

### Public Library Guidelines:

Guidelines are guides or indications of future course of action. Guidelines tell you that the goal and objectives of public library are to be achieved and how. On the other words they will guide you towards the goals as delineated in the plan for development. For example based upon the UNESCO manifesto, 1994 (a public declaration of objective of public library) on meeting the needs of the users. According to the guidelines, it is done through identification of potential users, offering services to the users, use education, resource sharing.

### Public Library Manifesto:

UNESCO'S public library manifesto was first formulated in the year 1949 and updated in Paris on 29 November 1994, with a update scheduled for 2021. The UNESCO public library manifesto define a public library as "the local gateway to knowledge" which provides a basic condition for long life learning and independent decision making and cultural development of the individual and social groups. (IFLA/UNESCO Public Library Manifesto, 1994)

### Indian Public Library Standards:

In India, reports starting from the Advisory Committee by K. P. Sinha (1958) to the latest National Policy on Library and Information System (NAPLIS, 1986) have stipulated various norms/standards, goal and guidelines for public libraries. However, the comprehensive document on this

topic has been the one published by the Raja Rammohun Ray Library Foundation (RRRLF) in 1991 entitled *Guidelines for Public Library System and Services*. The RRRLF is a Government organisation engaged in the promotion of public library movement of India. These Guidelines are generally based on UNESCO Public Library Manifesto and IFLA Standards for Public Libraries.

- a) **Site:** The library building should be located centrally in a high density area. It should be in close proximity with education institutions or the main commercial area. Transportation facilities should also be given appropriate priority. The frontage should have minimum sun exposure and should have protection from strong winds.
- b) **Building:** Generally a gross area of 21520 sq. ft is provided for a population of 25000, i.e., .086 sq. ft. Per person, these being the international standards. For all public libraries in town and villages, these international standards will be applied. However, in case of village, the minimum areas of a library building should be 1000 sq. ft. in order to facilitate its functioning as a community centre.
- c) **Services to users:** The services of the library should not be subjected to any form of ideological, political, religious or commercial purpose. Services must be able to adjust and develop to reflect to changes in society. The library should facilitate access to children, young adults, physically disability and adults.
- d) **Co - operation and Resource Sharing:** The library should establish formal links with other organisation in the local community, e. g., school, cultural institutions such as museums, galleries and archives, literacy programmes, chambers of commerce or boards of trade, in order to jointly improve services to the community.

### Use of information resource & services in public libraries:

A public library is a library that is all library resources use by the general public. Information resources are mainly two types, one is paper based and another is machine readable materials. Paper based information resources include books, dictionaries, encyclopedias, journal, newspaper, magazines, vertical files materials, map and atlases etc. Machine readable materials include CD - ROM, database, electronic

journals and electronic books, tapes and record etc. Public libraries are open to everyone and most of their services are free.

You can use some library services without becoming a member. In most libraries, you can read books, consult reference material, use the internet and study areas, and print and photocopy documents without being a member.

The services libraries provide differ depending on their size, location and policies. Some of the services available include:

- **Lending services:** Library members can borrow books, and other materials. Libraries also have many books available in large - print format.
- **Children's lending service:** Most libraries have a junior section with books and other materials for children of all ages, from babies to teenagers.
- **Internet services:** Some public libraries have computers that you may need to be a member of your library to use the internet.
- **Reference sections:** Public libraries have reference sections, with books and other materials which can be consulted in the library. These reference materials include Story book, dictionaries, government publications, yearbooks and atlases etc.
- **Magazines and newspapers:** Public libraries carry a range of journals and periodicals including national and local newspapers and magazines on a variety of topics. .

- **Educational supports for schools and students:** Public libraries offer a range of services to primary and post - primary schools. A collection of teaching and learning resources for primary and secondary schools are also available in the library.
- **Information services:** Public libraries also provide information on the services provided by the local authority or corporation and by government departments, for example, social welfare information.
- **Local studies:** – Public libraries collect materials about the history of their county or locality, for example, State and District histories, maps, photographs, drawings, old records, and newspapers.
- **Community groups:** Public libraries often provide a space and support for a range of groups. Most libraries also hold a lot of local information about clubs and societies and events in their locality.
- **Photocopying and printing:** Some local public library may provide photocopying and printing services.

A survey on use of information resources and services in the public library of south 24 parganas district, West Bengal state, in India show that a majority of the users were the age group 11 to 65 years and they included students, unemployed youth, employees in private sector and government sector, belonging to lower and middle income person. They spent less than one hour in the library and main reason for read the newspapers and magazine in frequently. Majority of users are needed to enrich their information sources collection and access to internet in particular library.

**Find out the various age groups from register user in a library:**

Particular	Sri Ramkrishna Library	Sree Sree Ramkrishna Sadharan Pathagar	Sagar Town Library	Total
<b>Year of establishment</b>	1978	1975	1958	
<b>Register users</b>	1125	714	352	2191
1) Children (11 - 18)	345	255	117	32.72%
2) Young Adult (18 - 30)	550	325	155	47.01%
3) Adult (30 - 45)	185	95	52	15.15%
4) Older adult (45 - 65)	45	39	28	5.11%
<b>Books collection</b>	5927	5238	5225	16390
<b>Avg. no. of visitors/day</b>	45	20	16	81
<b>Access of library resource in day</b>				
Reference books	30	14	8	64.20%
Magazines	15	12	9	44.44%
Newspapers	23	16	11	61.73%
Internet	12	11	6	35.80%
Photocopying facility	2	3	Not available	6.17%

**2. Analysis**

A survey of user community in four public libraries in South 24 parganas district was undertaken with the help of a librarian. The age group 11 to 65 years are divided into four categories are 1) children 2) young adults 3) adults 4) older adults. Above this table show the various age groups from register users. It is found that 32.72 % of the users are between the age group of 11 - 18 years i. e., children, and 47.01% are between the age group of 18 - 30 years i.e., young adults and 15.15% are between 30 - 45 years i, e., Adults and 5.11% are between 45 - 65 years i, e., Older adults.

Total 81 users are on an average visited per day in these libraries but only 52 (64.20%) users are access to reference books, 36 (44.44%) users are access to magazine, 50 (61.73%) users are access newspaper, 29 (35.80%) users are access internet and 5 (6.17%) users are used photocopies. It is clear that, maximum users access to newspaper in these libraries. Photocopies are less used by the users in these libraries.

So, we can say that majority of the users of public libraries are used reference books and newspapers.

**Keyword:**

**Library Standards:** These standards provide both a quantitative and a qualitative approach to assessing the effectiveness of a library and its librarians.

**Library resources:** Library resources are those materials, both print and non print, found in a public library which support curricular and personal information need.

**Library Services:** Public libraries are libraries serving the public. They freely engage in service of all sections of society at all time without discrimination.

### 3. Conclusion

Public libraries have always been the door to learning for a great majority of the population that they serve. They are knowledge centre and contribute to lifelong learning. Public libraries need to enrich their information resource collection, provide access to internet and offer community based services including literacy programmes.

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