CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION
1.1 Introduction

Learning is a life long process. Every activity of human being, whether economic, education, health, business or developments are organized through learning. These organizations may be of different kinds, but are constantly changed in contributing learning and knowledge of which library is one of them. Library also serves also as a ‘learning and resource center’. The change of human value system has prompted great demand of information in different areas of life. Latest development of information systems, such as computers, telecommunications and other technologies are being cope up with the library to meet the demand of library users and hence the notion of library as “storehouse for books” have been come up to the extent of “digital library” and “virtual library”. The doors of the great library in ancient Thebes bore the words “The Healing Place of the Soul”. (Holgate;2006;6).

A library may be small or big, but falls under the broad categories of library systems, such as, national, academic, public or special. With the passage of time and also with the production of different writing materials this knowledge-communication system became very much congenial and therefore, a library in whatever forms it exists be a center of communication between the originators and users of thoughts and ideas. But the Public Library System, as the name implies, is user-friendly system as anybody can make use of this system without disseminating caste, creed, sex, religion, age, community and status.

Public library, from time immemorial, has been considered as social institution based on the democratic principle “of the people, by the people and for the people”. It is the living force of the world in different walks of life. Pierce Butler stated that,
“The American library, especially, bears many traces of the peculiar social forces by which it was created. In the minds of its active creators there was always a clear and rationalized belief that this social institution is so necessary an agent for public enlightenment that its support, like that of schools, should be assumed by the state” (Butler;1933;1).

This is the only institution, which caters all categories of users irrespective of age, race, sex, colour, creed and religion. Public Libraries serve as a catalyst for socio-cultural and educational development by providing access to information and knowledge. Therefore, the public libraries are considered as effective tools to mould the character of the citizens, which has wider impact on societal as well as national development. The IFLA/UNESCO Public Library Manifesto 1994 elaborates the significance of public libraries as “the local gateway to knowledge, provides a basic condition for lifelong learning, independent decision-making and cultural development of the individual and social groups”, and further stated impact of public libraries for education and society as “a living force for education, culture and information, and as an essential agent for fostering of peace and spiritual welfare through the minds of men and women”. (IFLA/UNESCO; 1994). On defining a public library it may be acknowledge that, “an organization established, supported and funded by the community, either through local, regional or national government or through some other form of community organization. It provides access to knowledge, information and works of the imagination through a range of resources and services and is equally available to all members of the community regardless of race, nationality, age, gender, religion, language, disability, economic and employment status and educational attainment”. (IFLA/UNESCO; 2001;2,3). Encyclopedia of Library and Information Science defines it as, “a public institution supported by taxation, one that opens its collections, facilities and services, without distinction, to all citizens”. (Kent;1978;267). According to Dr. S R Ranganathan, the Father of Library movement in India, public library is, “one which is open to any member of the public and annually free of any charge paid as so much service”. (Ranganathan;1960;21). IFLA/UNESCO Public Library Manifesto 1994 reads 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 favoring 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;
12. supporting and participating in literacy activities and programmes for all age groups, and initiating such activities if necessary. (IFLA/UNESCO;1994;2).

By considering different corners of the definitions of public library given above and the missions laid down by the IFLA/UNESCO Public Library Manifesto, it can be stated the purpose of public library as follows:

1. It is established, supported and funded by the community under the clear mandate of law.
2. It is a living force for education, culture and information, an essential agent for the fostering of peace and spiritual welfare through the minds of men and women.
3. It provides equal free resources and services to the society.
4. It provides knowledge, education, information and cultural development to all members of the community regardless of race, nationality, age, gender, religion and language or social status.
5. It is the responsibility of local or national authority.
1.2 Significance of the Present Study

Libraries are the fundamental sources of information to its clients by providing various categories of knowledge of the users. Everybody needs some sort of information to quench his or her thirst in one-way or the other. In this kind of act, public library presents various information needs to the society through its services to the community. Public libraries are of different in nature of functions and services, organization and structure. But, by and large public libraries are local center of information, established to serve the society in free of cost. Public libraries are considered basically significant in view that they generate everlasting efforts continuously to meet the changing situations and problems in the society. By taking public library in India, they can be various levels depending upon the organization and set up of the government. Nature and levels of public libraries may be different in various states of India. The nature of services provided is of the same by providing information to the community for the development in socio-cultural, education and other walks of life the society. Some of the levels of public libraries in India are:

- State Central Library;
- State Library;
- District Library;
- Sub-divisional Library;
- Tehsil Library;
- Taluka Library;
- Block Library; and
- Village Library.

In Mizoram, there are only two levels of public libraries established and administered by the state government, viz., State Library and District Library. These two levels of library are serving the society since last forty years. Therefore, it is quite significant that the assessment of the role of these two levels of public libraries for socio-cultural and educational development in Mizoram are adequately helpful to the entire society and the country at various levels of libraries and information centers.
1.3 Statement of the Problem
State and District libraries of Mizoram while providing its services to the society rendered valuable activities to the community to generate and development the society at different ways of life. It is an imperative need to assess the services and activities of these public libraries in the interest of the society to fulfill the requirement of the community in its services to the nation. By taking into consideration of the IFLA/UNESCO Public Library Manifesto 1994, these public libraries have to achieve its mission in serving the society. The present study examines the public library systems with their service facilities, activities of various professional associations and organizations for the community developmental works. While catering such activities, the prime importance taken into consideration is the role of State and District Libraries and its impact on educational and socio-cultural development in the state of Mizoram. The present study further elaborates how far public library services and activities have been instrumental for all-round development of the state for the last forty years.

Mizoram has developed a sound public library system for over a period of forty years, and also being the 9th state in India enacting a Public Library Act(1993), but so far, no study has been undertaken to explore and assess the impact of public libraries on socio-cultural and educational development of the state. NGOs, particularly Young Mizo Association, are touching different corners of the state for the establishment of local/village library. Mizo has distinct social life from the rest of the world. The ethical code of Mizo social life, a kind of self-sacrifice, is very valuable moral life that all the community is associated and the core of social life among the Mizos. The educational development of Mizo is also very fast growing during the last century. These two changes or development during the past may have some impact within the society and it is high value to assess the activities and services of State and District libraries in Mizoram to the society. Therefore, in order to assess the role these two levels of public libraries in the state, this research work is taken up under the topic of “An Assessment of Role of State and District Libraries in the Socio-cultural and Educational Development of Mizoram”.
1.4 Scope of the Study:
The scope of the present study is limited to State and District Libraries of Mizoram. However it provides an over-view of the public library scenario in India. Keeping in view of the Socio-Cultural and Educational Development of Mizoram, an investigation is made to trace out the impact of State and District Libraries in enhancing the growth and development of the state on socio-cultural and education as well. Among the four types of libraries, i.e. National, Public, Academic and Special, State and District Libraries fall under the category of public library system, and therefore, while taking up a research work on State and District Libraries, public library system was also included in the study.

The state government of Mizoram established one State Library at Aizawl and five District Libraries at the five district headquarters, viz., Aizawl, Lunglei, Saiha, Kolasib and Champhai, but three districts; namely, Serchhip, Mamit and Lawngtlai have no district library till today. By this date, there are 424 government recognized village libraries, which are generally run by voluntary organizations and other NGOs. These recognized libraries are not under the supervision and control of the government, but they are receiving some of the government grants and other special assistance particularly through State Library Committee. This study is confined the existing State Library and five District Libraries in the state and hence the number of libraries undertaken for study is 6(six).

1.5 Objectives of the Study:
It is widely acknowledged that Public Libraries are established on democratic principle and well versed to the community being an agent of information in the knowledge society. Any kind of public libraries, big or small, has to ascertain some guiding principles to serve the community and to provide best information services. State and District libraries in Mizoram, falling under the category of public library system, are also serving the society for almost forty years. By acknowledging this kind of services undertaken by public libraries, the present study has formulated the flowing objectives to:

- present the current library scenario in Mizoram with special reference to Public Libraries.
• examine the present structure, functioning and services provided by the State and District Libraries of Mizoram.
• examine the impact of State and District Libraries on socio-cultural and educational development of the state.
• explore any other agencies and organizations contributing for the development of public libraries of the state.
• know the effectiveness of State and District Libraries in the state towards Socio-cultural and educational development.
• suggest and recommend measures for the improvement of State and District Libraries in the state.

1.6 Review of Literature:
To achieve objectives of any system fully, it needs to assess certain methods of studies to identify deficiencies that encompass within the scope of the subject. There has been many changes in the filed of public libraries due to the exponential growth of an information systems as a result of ICT developments. This explicit growth has also witnessed a developing information society in India. By taking account to the changes of information systems, different kinds of public libraries are also needed to strengthen and develop through latest technical devices that can be accounted in its services to serve the community.

Many states in India are moving in their own way to provide best information to its users through library and information services. State and District libraries are such public libraries that the local community through latest ICT. Mizoram is also one of the states in India that can serve its community by using different modes of communication to develop local community through State and District libraries.

A comprehensive review of literature is an essential part of any scientific investigation. It do not only gives an idea about the work done in the field and assists in the delineation of the study in hand, but also provides a basis for theoretical framework and an insight into the methods and procedures. It also provides significant methods for the basic interpretation and findings. The review of
literature also eliminates gap within the area of subjects and that can direct scholar to fill up the gap for research work. Therefore, it is an essential work for the researcher to identify already available literatures to know the status quo of knowledge in the area of study.

The survey of literature done by the researcher is in the pursuit of the present research problem that can facilitate the research problems and its objectives. A large amount of literature review are available in the form of library and information science journal articles and completed research works are reported in the library literature are also scanned. Already carried out studies on public libraries and particularly on related state and district libraries, are favorably considered. Dissertations submitted as a practical requirement for the degree of Master of Library & Information Science and activities of state and district libraries of Mizoram or other related areas are also scanned.

A number of works have been carried out with regard to the role of public libraries at national and international level. However, there is hardly any documentary source on public libraries, particularly on State and District Libraries in Mizoram in the form of books, articles and reports. Public library is considered as, ‘Peoples’ University’ where general public can meet their information on educational, recreational and socio-cultural needs. UNESCO has done significant work for the developments of public libraries especially in developing countries, which has also worked out as standards for public libraries.

The study of public library made by I.V.Ramanayya may be mentioned that, “Library is a center of social activity and a center of nigh schools for daily labourers. The role of public library is both in the creation and in the fostering of the learning in the adult for his own uplift through self-education and literacy. Library is the only institution which has equipment to the cause of spreading adult education and literacy”. (Ramanayya:1967;174-177). This study reveals that public libraries, in general, have contributions to the local community as a social nigh schools for self-education and literacy.
Another study worth mentioning here is that, “Information is a basic resource for the development of the individual and the society. Contributions of INSDOC (now NISCAIR), UNISIST, and NISSAT are of immense help for information seekers and the public library can also serve as an information system of national importance as well. It is for a local public library to ensure universal accessibility to information”. Here, B.P.Barua stressed public libraries as accessibility of information to the community. (Barua;1990;19-24).

Two scholars, M.Jatana and S.Khosla also stressed the status of public library as an essential civic amenity, providing services to all, irrespective of caste, creed and class. They regarded public library as a social institution, catalytic change agent in rural areas as a tool for dissemination of information, keeping alive the cultural heritage and writing amongst the general mass. Library develops the character and conduct of rural people. It is a heritage for cultural development as well as to eradicate superstitions, blind faiths and beliefs. Public library should be declared as the Fundamental Right as a follow up of compulsory education. (Jatana/Khosla; 2003;66-73).

Another study had been carried out some works on the contributions of public libraries, like State, Teshilla, Village libraries and stated, “If today the potential of these systems is to be tapped, it could be tied up with the Adult Education Programme especially till such time as the latter creates an infrastructure of its own”. (Esparanza;1986;189-193). It is clear that public libraries are related to adult education programme.

P.B.Mangla also stated public library as a vital agency for continuous education and information to serve the community. He also stressed the needs of library legislation and need for suitable reading and other materials, need for professional manpower. He suggested that:

1) Formulation and implementation of a Nation Policy for Library and Information Service so as to establish a well planned network of public library service in the country.

2) Training of the required manpower.
3) Developing relevant programmes of cooperation and coordination amongst the developing countries and with the developed ones so as to gain from each others rich experiences; and

4) Allocation of 10-15% of the budget meant for the informal education for public library services. (Mangla;1984;1-15).

T.N.Rajan discusses some features of the modern libraries as a product of the social milieu by pointing out the need for social studies and research in the library and information filed in order to serve the community more effectively. In his article he narrated some roles that a library can play for the development of the country with a need of strengthening of National Information System. (Rajan;1980;19-22).

D.R.Kalia, S.C.Biswas, Krishan Kumar and B.P.Barua had formulated guidelines for the public library systems and services in India. They stress the objectives of public library to the community and proposed different levels of public libraries in the states with a systematic functioning. The primary roles of such categories of public libraries at different levels were also highlighted. The public library services for the community were also given as recreation, research, education and recreation center. They also proposed library structures and furniture as well as human resources with the application of latest ICT in such public libraries for the better development of local community through public library services. (Kalia;1991;31-84).

R.S.Shastry has elaborated the role of public library as an agency that brings about change in the society by alerting and educating the people. According to him public libraries established and organize on the initiative of the people played a singularly role in raising the awareness of people against injustices of the alien rule. He stated the new role of public library as a switching system to connect the user with other people, other places, other systems acting primarily as a filter and negotiator in the process. And he stresses the new role of public libraries as the comprehensive repository of the literary, historical and cultural heritage of the society. (Sastry;1994;3-7).
Another learned Prof. Alaka Buragohain contributes article on the public library scenario in India. She emphasized on the role of public library system in continuing education with the major drawbacks in the provision of the existing Library Acts in Indian states with the solution of a comprehensive multipurpose public library system for social and cultural renaissance in India. (Buragohain;1999;5-13).

K. Veeranjaneyulu and T. Sreenivasa Rao stated the importance of a public library as a chief instrument for accumulating and using man’s intellectual heritage. According to them, libraries are the inheritors and repositories of the culture and civilization of the past without which we would have remained ignorant of the past and without a base to bud up our future. They stressed the importance of public library that it play a vital role in collecting and preserving the cultural heritage of the locality and make it readily available to the people to enrich their cultural awareness. It is an institution par excellence which provides all information demanded by all the people. (Veeranjaneyulu/Rao;1999;39-41).

Dr. V. Venkatappaiah stresses the need to formulate a policy covering various areas of services supporting education, preservation of cultural heritage, reading materials, human resources, private and aided libraries, comprehensive library legislation and restructuring the existing library acts in the states for public library services in view of the recent developments emerging in the field. He proposed a policy for literacy and education on the following priority basis:

- Illiterates and neo-literates, semi-literates and the participants of non-formal education;
- People pursuing self-education;
- People interested in self-employment schemes;
- Semi-skilled;
- Children and youth;
- Casual readers, housewives; and
- Higher education and research, etc.

Dr. Venkatappaiah also proposed a public library to act as a principal center for promoting awareness about cultural heritage, appreciation of arts, etc. as below:
• Preserve cultural heritage;
• Provide access to all forms of cultural expression;
• Make efforts to foster inter-cultural dialogue;
• Favour cultural diversity; and
• Support oral tradition.

He also proposed the different areas of public library services as:
• Irrespective of age, sex, caste, religion or social status;
• More particularly, it should cater to the needs of human beings starting from illiterates, neo-literate, semi-literate, dropouts, etc.;
• To the people living in rural areas, backward and remote areas;
• To the physically handicapped, prisoners and patients in the hospitals; and
• To the people at all levels with certain limitations. (Vankatappaiah; 1999; 20-26).

In his MLISc. Dissertation, submitted to Mizoram University in 2005, Mr. Jerry Lalrintluanga, mentioned the some of the services provided by State and District libraries of Mizoram. He pointed out various factors for the growth of libraries, such as:
1) Political and social stability of the society;
2) High standard of living;
3) High rate of literacy;
4) Encouragement from the local, state and national governments, and
5) Influence of leading traditions. (Lalrintluanga; 2005; 19).

Lalbiaksang Hnamte also highlighted functions of public library for social development by giving services of public libraries to the society in his MLISc dissertation submitted to the Mizoram University in 2006. He stressed that public library links people of various communities to knowledge society through its varied services to the society and also highlighted some of the activities rendered by public libraries for the welfare of the society as:
1) Self-education center of the society;
2) Community information center;
3) Cultural center of the society;
4) Center for recreation and healthy use of leisure time;
5) Supporting role of literacy activities;
6) Developing reading habits and creativity among children;
7) Services to disadvantaged section of the society; and
8) An impartial democratic institution of the society. (Hnamte;2006;19,20).

K. Vanlalnghaka has laid down the role of village libraries for the local community in his MLISc dissertation submitted to the Mizoram University 2005. He stressed the need of local emphasis for the development of village libraries being an agent as a social information center for the community. His study do not carried out exhaustive role of the village libraries within the state of Mizoram. (Vanlalnghaka;2005;26).

Ms. Lalrammawii study the growth and development of Lunglei District Library in her MLISc dissertation in 2006. She narrated the growth in terms of membership, visitors, document, i.e. books, journals, magazines. (Lalrammawii;2006;60). Ms. P.C.Lalhriatpuii also studies the problems and prospects of Champhai District Library in her MLISc. Dissertation in 2007. She stated the brief history of the library giving infrastructure, services and finance including the problems faced at the present situation with suggestions for improvement. (Lalhriatpuii;2007;65). Both these dissertations were submitted to the Mizoram University. These two studies have no much link with the present study on State and District Libraries of Mizoram. Much covered are the historical development of such libraries in collection and other services.

The above literature dealt with some of the impact and role of public libraries as an agent for the development of the community as a whole. Some of them have suggested policy and other measures for the strengthening of its services to the public. These literatures do not study the role of State and District Libraries of Mizoram as an agent of Socio-cultural and Education Development of the state. Still then, there is no any study carried out on the role of State and District Libraries of Mizoram in the socio-cultural and educational development of the state. Therefore, this study is taken up to assess the role of these two levels of libraries within the state.
1.7 Research Methodology:
Research method is the foundation of any research project carried out for a systematic study of the problem. It provides guidelines and channelises the available information of the given subject in a structured manner. It provides scientific thought to available resources and relevant data for the research problems. Research findings can be drawn on the basis of a systematic method of research. Thus it is very vital to follow certain methodology to carry out the research problem.

The present research is carried out with the following methods throughout the research work for the innovative conclusion of the research problem.

1.7.1 Questionnaire Method
Two types of questionnaires are designed to collect data and circulated to the selected respondents as:

1) to collect data and other necessary information relating to the research topic, a structured questionnaire was designed and circulated to the Librarian/in-charge of the State and District Libraries in Mizoram. *(Appendix -1)*

2) to collect data and other information relating to the research topic another questionnaire was designed and circulated to the selected renowned academicians, intellectuals, students, various library users of different categories and reliable NGO officials within the state to explore the factors responsible to influence socio-cultural and educational developments. *(Appendix - 2)*.

1.7.2 Interview Method
To obtain the best result on the services, organization, administration and development of libraries in the state, Semi Structured Method of Interview was conducted to the selected library users, library personals, social workers, intellectuals and senior citizens of the state and State and District Library Authorities.

1.7.3 Observation Method
The researcher carried out observation method in order to assess the real situation of the functioning of the State and District Libraries. Photographs, pictures and illustrations to supplement the study.

In addition to the above methodologies, the researcher explored and made use of documentary/primary sources of information such as official records and communicating Government reports and statistics to know the initiatives taken by the Government for the development of State and District libraries vis-à-vis socio-cultural and educational development of the state.

1.7.4 Data Analysis
Data collected are tabulated and analyzed to give the ground reality of the work with the help of tables, charts or graphs to derive the findings from the study.

1.8 Chapterization
The present research problem is analyzed and interpreted in an organized way based on different approaches including findings, suggestions and conclusion in the following seven chapters:

Chapter 1: Introduction
The first chapter of the research work deals about the significance of the present research problem undertaken, objectives, scope, and research methods adopted to clarify the research work.

Chapter 2: Public Library Scenario in India
This chapter expounds the historical development of public libraries in India. Public library system of Indian states was narrated along with the importance of library legislation in the states. Initiatives of government and other library organizations and associations are also incorporated.

Chapter 3: Public Library Scenario in Mizoram
This chapter illustrates public library system of Mizoram by giving the structure, functioning and services rendered by State and District Libraries as well as activities
taken by NGO and professional association for the development of public library system in the state.

**Chapter 4: Impact of State and District Libraries on Social and Cultural Development**

The fourth chapter presents the importance of public libraries for the socio-cultural development of a society in general and in particular give an account of State and District Libraries of Mizoram for such kind of services in the society.

**Chapter 5: Impact of State and District Libraries on Educational Development**

This chapter elaborates an establishment of education in the state and purpose of the research problem undertaken on education and gives role of State and District Libraries for education in the state.

**Chapter 6: Analysis and Findings**

The sixth chapter illustrates the profile of research work with the help of tables, charts and graphs to lead findings on research problems with interpretations and give findings from the analysis of the data.

**Chapter 7: Conclusion and Suggestions**

The seventh chapter consists of the suggestions for improvement in the problem raised from the findings of the research problem and gives a State and District Libraries summary and remarks of the research work under the study.

1.9 Conclusion

Library is as old as human society and is available at very country serving the people in various field of knowledge. It is one of the best means of communication that all the community within a society can have free access to its services. It is one of the most recognized institutions of a society to acquire knowledge and understandings in various information needs without hesitation. The public library services have been a lifeline and help to the people of India since ancient times. There is tremendous growth in its infrastructure and its services to serve the people from village to cities by giving knowledge and information to various communities, irrespective of race, tribe, religion, sex or gender. The study of State and District
Libraries in the Socio-cultural and Educational Development is also a part and parcel of public library system and services, and as such, it is quite essential to comprise the study of public library system and services to have authentic acquaintance of this research work.

References


