CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION
CHAPTER I
INTRODUCTION

Knowledge is the totality of the ideas conserved by human beings through the ages. Knowledge is power. The quantity as well as the quality of knowledge differ from one person to another. Naturally, more knowledgeable person is more respected. Knowledge is acquired stage by stage in various ways. The knowledge earned by man must be useful and should be made known to others for their use. In the words of Shera "Knowledge, of course is that which is known and there can be no knowledge without knower." Knowledge is the sum total of facts, intelligence, thought, information etc., which is known and accepted. From time immemorial, knowledge has been transmitted from one generation to another generation. In ancient times knowledge was imparted by using only a few limited means like symbolization, tale tell, oral methods etc. Teaching was also done by word in the form of mantra. In this way of teaching, the preacher has to teach his disciples by word and the disciples has to commit it to memory. A.K. Das Gupta rightly says "For thousands of years we have sustained our culture through an oral tradition in our intellectual life. For centuries we have been learning from the preceptor's word of mouth and not from the printed word. When Caxton printed his 'Histories of Troy' in 1474, our Brahmin scholars were carefully preserving their palm-leaf manuscripts and transmitting their contents verbally to pupils. Even to-day there are many amongst us who depend more on their gurus and on pilgrimages than on books." There was a time when the priests were against the publication of books.
"Perhaps it was not to the interest of the priests that the sacred or scholastic texts would become an open secret to all. As far as we can trace Indian history we find a system of education always in the hands of the clergy, open at first only to the sons of Brahmins, then spreading its privileges from caste to caste."

With the changing of time and as experience gained by man he has introduced many media by which knowledge can be imported. To store all sorts of knowledge received through the media like books, periodicals, micro-cards, microfiche, films, tapes, cassettes, disks, T.V., video etc. and to use them are the main objectives of libraries. As knowledge is considered as power, library is the power house of knowledge. There are abundance evidences of libraries in the ancient world. History also reveals that thousands of years ago libraries were existed in palaces, noblemen's houses and religious institutions. The scholarly thoughts were written on clay tablets, waxes, stones, barks, leaves, metals, walls etc. The invention of paper and printing caused to increase the production of books and other documents. For keeping in view of the above, the reading materials are kept in a safe place and for allowing them to be used by the readers, of all walks of life; thus libraries came into existence.

The term 'library' derives from the Latin word liber, meaning book. This is a store house of books and other kindered reading materials for the use of readers. The term for the use of readers differentiate a library from the general store of books or publishers' store of books. The library
collects human experience represented through different media and cultivate a conducive cultural atmosphere which is nourishing to men's mind as fresh air does to the lungs. It is a living symbol significantly responsible to man, who is in eternal quest of knowledge for his mental perfection and happiness. L.M. Horrod defines a library as "a collection of books and other literary material kept for reading, study and consultation."^4

According to the mode of services rendered to the readers; libraries are broadly divided into three groups viz: (a) public library, (b) academic library, and (c) special library.

L.M. Horrod defines a public library as "A library provided wholly or partly from public funds, and the use of which is not restricted to any class of persons in the community but is freely available to all."^5 Public library is the most suitable institution for a democratic country. The sole aim and objective of democracy is to give the same facilities to one and all citizens. In the same way by public library we mean:

(a) to give the reading facilities to all citizens of the country without distinction of caste, creed, sex, religion, age and so on;

(b) free of charge for using the library;

(c) financed by the government, trustees etc; and

(d) a collection centre of documents on the locality and of the locality.
Academic library is the library which is attached to the academic institutions like schools, colleges and universities.

Special library become popular since the beginning of the 20th century. It is defined by L.M. Horrod as "Special library is a collection of books and other printed, graphic or record material dealing with a limited field of knowledge, and provided by a learned society, research organization, industrial or commercial undertaking, government department or educational institution. It may also be a special branch of a public library serving certain interests or occupational groups, such as a technical library, or a subject library to meet the needs of all enquirers on a given subject, such as a music library. A special library is broadly one which is neither academic, commercial, national nor public."^6

1.1 Need of the study

Public library is being a means to achieve success of democracy. In India different measures have been taken for the development of public libraries. Inspite of the attempts the present position of the public libraries in many states including Manipur are not satisfactory. As per the Indian constitution public library is under the state list. So the development of public libraries depends on the interest of the concerned state governments. Library legislation is the road which leads the library system in the right direction. Until and unless there is library legislation, no public library
can be developed systematically. Thus, the relationship between public library system and library legislation is of paramount importance. The public library system which develops without library legislation is like a big tree without roots. History has also witnessed that public library is well developed, in the states where there is a public library Act. Therefore, it is quite necessary to instigate the citizen in general and administrators in particular, the importance of library legislation in the development of public libraries in a state. This thesis will enlighten all groups of people to realise the importance of public libraries in the society and how much it will be effective when it is supported by a library legislation.

1.2 Scope of the study

India is a big country with various languages, cultures, races, religions etc. Basing on the above variations - India is divided into 25 states and 6 union territories. Every part of the country, (may be big or small) is an important limb of the whole country. If one of the states or union territories is backward, this will affect the glory of the whole country. It is just like the importance of every part of a body in a living being. As such, for maintaining the standard of public libraries, all the states and union territories of India have to take necessary measures for the development of public libraries in their respective states and union territories. Manipur as a state of India, has also to have the public libraries bill passed and implemented for the development of public libraries systematically. The scope of this thesis is to develop and maintain public library system through the Public Libraries Act with special reference to Manipur.
This thesis is the outcome of the study on the existing library Acts of India and their impact on the public libraries of the respective states. The analytical study is however confined to Manipur State. As drops of water makes a big ocean, the development of public libraries in different parts of the country will lead to the success of library networking in the state, in the region, in the nation and in the whole world.

1.3 Methodology

The data is collected by questionnaire methods. There are four different questionnaires, they are - (1) Questionnaire about the State Central Library, District Libraries and Netaji Library, INA Moirang, (2) Questionnaire about the club and voluntarily organised libraries and (3) Questionnaire about the staff members who are working in the Government libraries and (4) Questionnaire about the readers. The questionnaires are shown at Appendix I-IV.

The questionnaire method is supported by Interview and Survey methods. The interview with the readers are recorded on the tape cassettes. As the expected replies were not received through questionnaire, recording on tape become handy. The interview method is very much effective to study the personal feelings of the staff members who are working in the Government public libraries. It also helps in free and frank discussions about the problems faced not only by them but also the problems faced by the public libraries and the possible solutions of the problems.
The data collected by questionnaire method are processed by using the following steps of statistical method.

(a) Classification of the data: On the basis of certain attributes like similarities, variations, activities, processes, causes, results etc., the data is suitably classified.

(b) Analysis of the data: The whole map of data which is classified according to their attributes, characters are analysed to find out the clues for future plan.

(c) Interpretation of the data: The data after analysing is displayed in the form of tables seeing it even layman will clearly know the implication of the study.

The statistical method so followed helps in comparison between the present and the past activities and development. In many respects this method is applied.

(d) Besides, the working personal experience in the library since the last thirteen years helped to investigate and in giving suggestions for further improvement.

For finding out the facts the personal visits to all the Government public libraries and their sections were paid and taken necessary photographs.
The buildings and the rooms are also measured minutely. At the time of inspection of the club libraries for assistants by RRRLF the visits along with the section in-charge of RRRLF from the State-Central Library helped further understanding of the working of club libraries. It helps a lot in the survey of the club and voluntary organization libraries also. It further helped to see the suitable places where public libraries can be instituted.

REFERENCES


5. Ibid. P. 673.

6. Ibid. P. 774.