8.1 Need for Planning

A close scrutiny of the Acts drives home the fact that the emphasis on planning and phased development of the Public Library services has not been laid, resulting in haphazard growth. This may very well be attributed to the fact that all efforts and endeavours are not properly planned. In our enthusiasm to have Public Library Legislation by all concerned has lead to the overlooking of this vital factor viz. planning. Way back in the 1950s S.R. Ranganathan presented his Library Development Plan: Thirty year programme for India with draft for the Union and constituent states. Subsequently in 1958 K.P. Sinha also suggested in his report to have a twenty-five years integrated plan for library development. Again in 1966 the Government of India constituted the National Advisory Board of Libraries to advise the Government on matters related to the libraries. The then Government did take steps to improve public libraries in the country by providing grants to libraries in all the Five Year Plans. Inspite of this fact the progress achieved
in this sphere proved to be not significant. This may be due to the fact that the Government paid more attention to the industrial and economic development of the country and regulated the development of libraries as a matter not of first priority.

The advanced countries could achieve much in all their spheres of developmental activities by activating the library services through planned programmes.

India being a democratic country having a rural base although industrially developed, illiteracy has not been completely wiped out, due to lack of library network to have a continuing education programme. Hence, the planning of public library network is an imperative necessity.

The unintentionally neglected library-field must be taken up on war-footing by the government to march ahead, which is a potent-weapon for the stability of democracy in the country. It is high time that the Government should take a second look for integrated phase-wise programme.

8.2 What is Planning?

Planning in general sense is a scheme for
accomplishing a purpose. It is designing of an environment for the effective performance of individuals working together in groups. The most essential factor here is to see that purposes and objectives and methods of attaining them are clearly understood. Planning is concerned with the future coordination, rationally and all good things. It is an effort to coordinate the mechanism of an organisation and direct them towards previously established objectives.

"Planning is deciding in advance what to do, how to do it, when to do it, and who is to do it. Planning bridges the gap from where we are to where we want to go. It makes it possible for things to occur which would not otherwise happen. Although the exact future can seldom be predicted and factors beyond control may interfere with the best-laid plans, unless there is planning, events are left to chance. Planning is an intellectual demanding process; it requires conscious determination of courses of action and the basing of decision on purpose, knowledge and considered estimates."  

Planning involves thinking through the general

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form and details of work so that it can be accomplished with greatest certainty and economy.

Gunnar Myrdal, world renowned Swedish economist, has emphasized the necessity of planning: "It is suggested to develop more systematized approaches to strategic plan and policy making, in such tasks as plan design and generation, the evaluation of alternative courses of action, the need to monitor on giving change and adapt plans and policies to changing circumstances."\(^2\)

E.A. Rose has characterized the planning approach as essentially:

1. "integrative, multi-disciplinary";
2. "normative and self-directing: concerned with choice, preference and goals";
3. "adapted to change-continuously modified";
4. "democratic and participative";
5. "based on adequate information and consideration of alternative courses of action."\(^3\)


Rational planning bridges the gap between day to day management decisions and the longer term adjustment to the wider environment which is necessary in improving the decision making.

8.3 Public Library Planning

The most effective use of the informational resources available in the region is to put to use, as quite a large amount from the state exchequer is to cull, collate, and disseminate to the maximum extent amongst the users, a coordinated development of information facilities becomes the prerequisite. And for this an integrated multi-disciplinary and flexible plan for public libraries is a sine-qua-non.

A public library is an enterprise to serve the information needs of the community where it is situated. It is established with a firm objective to serve the public as a whole. The benefits derived by the public through the library and its services is a long-term, wide-spread one, and latent energy consumed for useful production.

The ultimate goal of the plan is to provide continuously every individual in the region with equal
opportunity of access to that part of information, which will satisfy the individual's educational, occupational, cultural, recreational needs and interests, regardless of the individual's vocation, social, physical or political condition or level of intellectual achievement.

Like all other plans vis., economic, educational etc., implemented by the government for the community development, library planning also deserves attention.

8.4 Objectives

To achieve this ideal the following are the objectives to be considered while planning a public library system:

1. To ensure that all the local communities, cities, taluks, towns and villages are provided with basic, adequate library services;

2. To vitalize the existing regional resources and systems and to form inter-state networks compatible with each other with the national information network programme;

3. To provide adequate specialized services to
children, blind, physically handicapped, the illiterates and neo-literates, the correctives, the poor, the un-inhabited and minorities;

4. To ensure, the man-power in handling information by providing, basic and continuing education of library professionals at all levels for the efficient and effective implementation of the plan; further to avoid unemployment problems that exist in the field;

5. To bring about cooperation and coordination amongst all the existing libraries - public, academic and special;

6. To encourage private and public entrepreneurs to be active participants in the developmental activities of the public libraries like, industries, associations, societies and private libraries and others;

7. To establish an authority charged with the responsibility in implementing the plan and establish coordination with other national development programmes;
8. To build an infrastructure to plan, develop and implement a nationwide network of public library services and to maintain continuity;

9. To draft financially elastic budget and a continuous flow of funds respecting the law of parsimony;

10. To effect modification, adaptation, rectification and ratification at any stage in course of action.

A public library plan fulfilling the above objectives, brought into action with fervour would definitely provide a possible contribution to the accomplishment of organisational goal, to combat uncertainty and accommodate environment changes.