4.1 Introduction

This chapter aims to study the genesis and development of public libraries in Malabar. A brief note on the physiographic of Malabar which has an important role in the cultural and political development of the area has been given. Educational, literary, political, cultural, and other social backgrounds which help the birth and growth of libraries in Malabar have been traced in this chapter. The workers’ unions, students’ unions, religious organisations, social reformers, political workers have their own role in the birth and growth of public libraries in Malabar and they also have been traced in this chapter. Ultimately the library movement led to the phase of organised movement which was started in the first half of the twentieth century. The organised movement of public libraries in Kerala particularly in Malabar has been arranged in a chronological order so that the evolution can be properly understood in a historical perspective. Now the public libraries in Kerala is under the Kerala State Library Council which is the controlling authority formed as per the Kerala Public Libraries (Kerala Granthasala Sanghom) Act, 1989. The activities and functions of the State Library Council and the present situation of libraries in Malabar in general terms have also been discussed in this chapter.

4.2 Land and People of Malabar

Malabar, earlier a part of Bombay presidency was transferred to Madras presidency on May 20, 1800 (Sreedhara Menon 1996).¹ Up to the formation of Kerala State on November 1, 1956, it was a district of the erstwhile Madras State. On November 1, 1956 Travancore and Cochin, the erstwhile States; Malabar; and Kasaragod of South Canara districts of the erstwhile Mysore State were formed in to Kerala. On January 1, 1957 Malabar district was trifurcated into Cannanore, Kozhikode and Palghat districts. On June 16, 1969 Malappuram district, on November 1, 1980 Wayanad district, and on May 24, 1984 Kasaragod district were formed (Ramachandran Nair 1986).² At present Malabar has 6 districts with 22
The language popularly spoken in Malabar is Malayalam. But other languages like Tamil, Kannada, Marathi, and Telugu are spoken by smaller sections of people. According to the 2001 census, the total population of Malabar is 206.06 lakhs. The females dominate the males in population in all districts except in Wayanad, where they equalise. Hindus form the largest section of Malabar except in Malappuram district, where the major community is Muslims. Christians are next to Hindus and Muslims in number. Wayanad district has the highest concentration of tribal population in Malabar. The economy of Malabar is mainly based on agriculture. Kerala has the highest literary rate in India. The literacy rates of the districts of Malabar are given in table 4.1.
TABLE 4.1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>Total Population (%)</th>
<th>Male (%)</th>
<th>Female (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kasaragod</td>
<td>85.17</td>
<td>90.84</td>
<td>79.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kannur</td>
<td>92.80</td>
<td>96.38</td>
<td>89.57</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kozhikode</td>
<td>92.45</td>
<td>96.30</td>
<td>88.86</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malappuram</td>
<td>88.61</td>
<td>91.46</td>
<td>85.96</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wayanad</td>
<td>85.52</td>
<td>90.28</td>
<td>80.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palakkad</td>
<td>84.31</td>
<td>89.73</td>
<td>79.31</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kerala</td>
<td>90.92</td>
<td>94.20</td>
<td>87.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Census report, 2001

Table 4.1 shows that in Malabar, Kannur comes first with the highest total literacy rate of 92.8%, followed by Kozhikode where the literacy rate is 92.45%. Palakkad ranks the sixth position with lowest total literacy rate of 84.31%. It is also noted that male dominates female in literacy rate in all districts.

4.3 Backgrounds

The different backgrounds which helped in the rise and development of public libraries in Malabar are illustrated below.

4.3.1 Educational Background

Kunhan Pillai (1970) remarks that “in ancient Kerala, education as well as
access to houses of recorded knowledge was open to all and there was a high level
of literacy in this area.” As in ancient period, in modern period also the government
as well as public is aware of the importance of education.

Unlike Travancore and Cochin region which had strong roots in indigenous
education under the princely rulers, Malabar did not get strong State support for
education till the formation of Kerala State. During 17th century, education through
“ezhuthupally” received a new impetus in Malabar (Sreedhara Menon 1996). The
Madras Local Board Act of 1834 and subsequent Elementary Education Acts were
the early attempts for speedy establishment of elementary schools in Malabar
(Malabar Gazetteer 1935). Basel evangelical mission took the lead in spreading
English education in Malabar. They established many schools in Malabar at
different places like Thalassery, Vadakara, Kozhikode, and Palaghat. Colleges
established early in Malabar are Zamorin’s college, Calicut in 1877; Brennen
College, Tellichery in 1891; Malabar Christian College, Calicut in 1907 (Innes
1951). The Malabar Education Society was established in 1926 at Calicut. Its
objectives were the promotion and advancement of education, award of scholarships
to poor deserving students, maintenance of educational institutions, libraries, reading
rooms, hospitals, boarding houses etc. (Sreedhara Menon 1962). The Labour
Department of Government of Madras had established many elementary schools for
the depressed classes in Malabar in 1930-31 (Innes 1951). The contribution of the
Malabar District Board in education was most remarkable. It had started many
schools in Malabar. Single-teacher schools were established in the remote villages of
Malabar. Many social workers started Schools. Ganapath School in Kozhikode is an
example for this. Many rulers of royal houses like Chirakkal, Nileswaram,
Kadathanad, and Samudiri opened schools in Malabar area (Ganesh 1997). The
caste organisations such Sree Narayana Dharma Paripalanayogam (S.N.D.P.), Nair
Service Society (N.S.S.), Sadhuparipalana Sabha, Yogakshema Sabha and various
Christian organisations started educational institutions of their own (Cherian 1999).
Various Muslim organisations like Malabar Muslim Association and Kerala Muslim
Association propagated education among Muslims and stressed the need for western
education (Cherian 1999). The Muslim Education Society (M.E.S.) established in
1964 runs a number of schools and colleges and has helped the Muslim community to forge ahead in the social and educational fields (George 2002).\textsuperscript{13}

The growing number of educational institutions and the rise in the literacy helped in the growth of number of reading rooms. Thus educationally benefited youths became aware of the power of knowledge and they started to establish reading rooms and libraries in different parts of Malabar to uplift the educationally and socially backward communities. They collected books from homes and started many libraries in small rooms.

4.3.2 Literary Movement

The growth of the publishing industry started in Malabar during the first half of the 19th century. With the advancement of printing technology several literary publications came into existence. The first newspaper “Rajyasamacharam” by Basel mission at Thalassery (Kannur) started publication in June 1847 (Priyadarsanan 1981).\textsuperscript{14} Another newspaper, “Keralopakari” started by a German missionary in 1874 (Hari Sharma 1964).\textsuperscript{15} The literary activities of Basel mission included the compilation of a lexicon, publication of journals, textbooks, and grammar for the schools. (Sreedhara Menon 1996).\textsuperscript{16} In 1884 the proprietor of the English newspaper “Malabar Spectator” started a Malayalam newspaper “Kerala Sanchari”, which highlighted the various socio-political issues of Kerala. The newspaper “Malayala Manorama” came into existence in 1890. Swadeshabhimanis K. Ramakrishna Pillai, the pioneer of fearless journalism was the editor of the papers “Darpanam”, “Kerala Panchika”, “Malayali” and “Swadeshabhimanis” during 1899 and 1910. “Kerala Kaumudhi” was started in 1911, and “Mathrubhumi” started its publication in 1923. “Al-Ameen” newspaper was started by Muhammad Abdu Rahman in 1924 from Calicut with the objective of bringing Muslims into the stream of national movement. In 1924 another newspaper “Kerala Kesari” was published from Vadakara (Kozhikode), its publisher was Moyarathu Shankaran (Vijayan 2000).\textsuperscript{17} A periodical “Muslim” was published with the object of generating new insights in the social and intellectual life of Muslims. Vakkam Abdul Khadar Maulavi, a social
reformer was its editor (Sreedhara Menon 1996). In January 1935, “Prabhatham” the weekly newspaper was published by Kerala Congress Socialist Party (Namboothiripad 1976). In 1942 the Communist Party of India began to publish a daily “Deshabhimani” (Namboothiripad. 1964).

These dailies were subscribed to in village libraries and people were very curious to know the current events. The newspapers catered to the needs of the growing reading public. Newspapers served as an important means of mobilisation of public opinions. News about different social reforms like Vaikam and Guruvayoor temple entry satyagrahas and national movement received wide coverage in the newspapers. People often had to travel many kilometers for a newspaper. They wanted a centre for reading newspapers. This was one of the causes for the birth of reading rooms in the different parts of the State.

Dramas, novels, poems etc. depicting the life of ordinary human beings began to appear in those days. By this time, social and religious organisations entered the field of publication. Very soon, a “Progressive Literary Movement” was developed (Vijayan 2000). Consequently reading rooms and libraries increased in number. The establishment of Sahithya Pravarthaka Sahakarana Sanghom (Co-operative Society for the Literary Works) in 1949 promoted the publishing industry, and it acted as a catalyst agent in the library movement (Lenin 1982).

4.3.3 Political Awakening and Libraries

Along with the political awakening, a large number of reading rooms and libraries were opened in Malabar. They became the meeting places of people in the evening and they discussed various social, economic and political issues. Many agitations such as salt sathyagraha and toddy shop picketing were conducted as part of nationalist movement under the auspices of the libraries.

The national movement in the real sense was started in Malabar only with the setting up of the Malabar Home Rule League in 1916. On 4th and 5th May, 1916 the Malabar District Congress meeting held at Palakkad under the chairmanship of Annie Bezent resolved to establish autonomous local administrative units, which
would have full freedom in establishing schools and libraries in every village (Pillai 1986). After the Malabar rebellion, under the initiative of Devdar Malabar Reconstruction Trust (DMRT) which was established in 1922 under Gopalakrishna Ghokale’s “The Servants of India Society” established many adult education centres, reading rooms, schools, and orphanages in Malabar (Udayabanu 1982).

During public agitation against British imperialism and against the atrocities of landlords, P. Eashwaran, a congress worker came to Mayyil, a rural area in Kannur in 1932. He organised the young people of this place and conducted Hindi classes in a shed. Along with attending the Hindi classes, people actively participated in national movements. This shed was later converted as “Velam Pothujana Vayanasala” in 1934. This library was a centre for political activity and peasant movements against landlords and it played an important role in the political, cultural and educational development of this area. (Velam Public Library, Administrative Committee 1984).

In Kalliassery, a rural place in Kannur, a reading room namely “Sree Harshan” was opened in April 1935, which was a work-centre for K.P.R. Gopalan, Keralayeen, and A.K. Gopalan, the activists of Kerala Congress Socialist Party (Rairappan 2001). During this period many libraries were established in the surrounding villages such as Bakkalam, Parassinikadavu, Anchampeedika, Keecheri, and Kolachery. These libraries were centres of national movement and peasant movement (Poduval 1982).

Under the leadership of K.P.R Gopalan, a meeting of 44 libraries in Chirakkal thaluk was convened at Bakkalam, Kannur in 1934 (Thozhilali Library and Reading Room, Chovva 1982). When E.M.S. Namboothiripad was the general secretary of the Kerala Pradesh Congress Committee in 1938, he issued a circular to its all village committees to establish reading rooms and conduct night classes under their responsibility as part of the constructive social service programmes of the Congress. He stressed the role of public libraries and adult education programmes in uplifting the people (Namboothiripad 1964). In the Golden Jubilee Souvenir of Kodiyeri Public Library (1986), it was stated that during 1938, night classes were
held in this library, to teach five languages Hindi, Tamil, English, Malayalam, and Sanskrit and 38 students attended the classes and 5 teachers engaged the classes.

The Communist Party was formed in the Vivekananda Library at Pinarayi village in Kannur district on September 3, 1939. This library was established in 1935 in memory of the arrival of the then president of Indian National Congress, in Kannur. From this library, a procession went to the palace of Kottayam Raja to protest against the unnecessary levy. The secretary of this library was arrested then in connection with the “Quit India Movement” and this library did not function thereafter (Mukundan Master 2001).

The veteran Communist leader in Kerala, Azhikodan Raghavan was the secretary of the public library Deshabhivardhini Vayanasala, Kakkad, a rural area in Kannur during 1940-41. A majority of the population of this area was labourers. This library was the centre of many social activities during that period (Kumaran 2001). In the year 1943 when cholera spread in Malabar, many relief centres were started and some of them converted as libraries. When A. K. Gopalan, a veteran Communist leader was released from jail, one such relief centre was converted into reading room under his initiative. This is Mavilayi Public Library, Thalasserry, Kannur. Its main objectives were to help the downtrodden people, elevate them and make them conscious of irreligious works and superstitions. This library was renamed Moidu Memorial Library. Moidu, a young Muslim from a conservative family won acclaim for his social work. (Murali 1993).

The working class enthused with the leaders’ words, actively participated in the establishment of reading rooms. In the initiative of Kundanjeri Kunhiraman Master and N. E. Balaram libraries were established in Eranholi, Thalassery and under the leadership of K. T. Madhavan Master libraries were established in Mattanur. Libraries were established under the initiative of M. K. Kelu in Vadakara and Sugreevan Kunhiraman Master in Quilandy. P. C. Raghavan Nair, P.V. Kunhunni Nair, and E. P. Gopalan took initiative for establishing libraries in south Malabar (Poduval 1982). They were the centres for holding study classes, night classes, political discussions, and many cultural activities. They also made people
conscious of irreligious works and superstitions.

4.3.4 Role of Workers’ Unions

The leaders of peasant movements, A. K. Gopalan, K. A. Keraleeyan, K.P.R. Gopalan, P. Krishna Pillai, T. S. Tirumumbu and such other leaders, were also the pioneers in the establishment of reading rooms such as Deshapiya Vayanasala, Mottammal, Kannur; Balabodhini Library, Kanchangad; and Deshiya Yuvajana Sangham Vayanasala, Kannur. When All India Students Federation sent a procession to Chirakkal, Kannur, they noted that informal peasant unions had set up reading rooms in the forest regions of north-east (EK 1939). The Malabar Karshaka Sangham (peasant union) officially formed in May 1938 led many peasant processions to the houses of the local jainmis (landlords). The libraries of the area gave enthusiastic receptions to these processions in the premises of libraries.

The Cigar Workers’ Union formed in Cannanore in 1934 resolved to set up reading rooms. Accordingly Thalassery Cigar Workers’ Union started a reading room namely Sree Narayana Beedi Thozhilali Vayanasala (Cigar Workers’ Reading Room) in March 20, 1934 to increase their knowledge. In 1940 they started to publish a hand written magazine “Thozhilali” (Labourer). During 1940-46, Hindi English, Malayalam and Tamil languages were taught in the night classes as part of the reading room. This reading room was kept open from 10 a.m. to 9 p.m. every day (Prabhatham 27 March, 1939). Other libraries set up by cigar workers at their work place are Pothujana Vayanasala, Edachovva, Kannur; Udaya vayanasala, later renamed as AKG Memorial Library, Marutha road, Palakkad (1950); Deshiya Reading Room & Library, Thalassery, Kannur (1953). Weaving labourers also started reading rooms such as Jankeeya Vayanasala, Karaltheru, Thalassery (1953) (Kerala. State Planning Board 1997). During the period 1920-1930 when movements like peasant movements and political movements were not alive in Malabar, the teachers union took active part in establishing reading rooms in Malabar (Kutty Master 2004).

4.3.5 Role of Students’ Organisations

Students’ Union in Kannur established a library namely Sree Narayana Library
and Reading Room at Punnol, Kannur in 1928. (Kerala. State Planning Board 1997). Muslim students’ organisation of Kozhikode started a public library at Idiyangara in 1951 with the fund obtained from cultural programmes conducted by the Yuvasahithi Samajam (Youngmen’s Literary Association). It is CIESCO, Kozhikode (Citizen’s Intellectual, Educational, Social, and Cultural Organisation) formed at Idiyangara, Kozhikode, which started a library and was affiliated to Kerala Granthasala Sanghom in 1957. In 1974 it started mobile libraries for women (Mammad Koya 1994).

4.3.6 Role of Religious Organisations

The lower caste movements of early decades of 20th century had emphasised the link between power and knowledge (Dilip Menon 1994). The Sudhujana Paripalana Sabha (Poor People Welfare Society) established by Ayyankali in 1907; The Keraliya Kammala Samajam (Kerala Artisans Association), started in 1911; Araya Mahajana Sabha (Fishermen’s Congress) 1920; Namboodiri Yoga Kshema Sabha (Namboodiri Welfare Association); Nayar Samajams (Nayar Society) did a lot for the upliftment of their community (Ganesh 1997).

Religious associations also showed interest in establishing libraries. Christian missionaries and Muslim associations also started libraries in Malabar. Muslim Brotherhood Library established at Kuttichira, in 1928 is the first library established in the Muslim majority area of Kozhikode. This organisation inculcated reading habits among the Muslims of this area (Mammad Koya 1994). YMMA (Young Men’s Muslim Association) formed in 1928 as part of nationalist movement established Muhammad Abdu Rahiman Smaraka Library, at Mattul (Kannur) in 1928 (Kerala. State Planning Board 1997). The scheduled castes and scheduled tribes libraries were established in areas with predominantly backward communities for their intellectual and social upliftment. C.M.P. Nair library, Hosdurg, Kasaragod; Jai Hind Reading Room and Library, Kadambkode, Hosdurg are examples of such
4.3.7 Social Reform Movements and Birth of Public Libraries

Many libraries were established as part of social reform movements. Sree Narayana Guru, the social reformer asked his followers to establish libraries as part of monasteries and to ensure that a library includes books on all religions, as this would ensure communal harmony (Sree Narayana Guru 1990). His followers and the workers of “Sree Narayana Dharma Paripalana Yogam” formed on May 15, 1903 (Mitra 1993) were enthused with his speeches and established many libraries in Malabar in his memory such as Sree Narayana Vilasam Library, Alavil, Kannur; Sree Narayana Memorial Library, Mokeri, Kozhikode; Sree Narayana Memorial Library, Mangattiri, Malappuram; and Sree Nararyna Library, Olavakkode, Palakkad. Another social reformer Sree Vagbhatananda Guru established ‘Athma Vidya Sangham’, a spiritual organisation. This Sangham established many libraries in the name of this spiritual master. He had shown much interest in the functioning of the libraries (Udayabanu 1982). ‘Vagbadanada Vilasam’, Kuthuparamba, Kannur (May 1929); Pattiam Gurudevavilasam Library, Thalassery, Kannur (August 29, 1936); Sree Vagbadananda Library, Azheekode, Kannur (1939); Sree Vagbadananda Gurudeva Memorial Library, Kuthupamba, Kannur (1956); Sree Vagbadananda Library, Eranhipalam, Kozhikode (1939) are libraries established by Athma Vidya Sangham.

In Chalapuram, a rural place in Kozhikode, reading rooms were opened as part of the movement against untouchability, casteism, outdated customs and traditions, and for the upliftment of poor and backward communities. Kasturba Memorial Library, Cherpulassery, Palakkad; Karalmanna Public Library (Palakkad), Sanmarga Darshini Library& Reading Room, Kozhikode (1929), Sengupta Library, Kozhikode (1933), Thozhilai Vayanasala (Labourers’ Reading room), Chovva, Kannur (1932) are some examples of the centres of nationalist movement, and also against the social evils.
4.3.8 Cultural Background

During the 1950s, due to the initiative of eminent literary figures like Thikkodian, K.T. Mohammed, and S. K. Pottekkatt, a Central Cultural Committee was formed. Under the auspices of this Committee, local libraries were formed. Many arts and sports clubs started libraries such as A.K.G. Arts & Sports Club & Library, Kattipoyil, Kasaragod; Labour Sports Club Library and Reading room, Keechery, Kannur; and Youngmen’s Arts Club & Library, Muchukunnu, Kozhikode. Namboothiripad (1964)\textsuperscript{50} puts the cultural development of Kerala of this period in these words: “The Congress Socialist Party which developed within the Indian National Congress and which later on converted itself into the Communist Party in Kerala did many services to the cultural renaissance of Kerala.” Young congress workers and the communists organised several cultural programmes like dramas highlighting the social, political, and economic problems under the auspices of libraries and attracted more people to national movements. The libraries acquired the reading materials published by the various political, religious, and social organisations. The increased use of libraries and reading rooms raised them to the level of cultural centres of the locality.

The educational awareness, national movement, the emergence of political parties, the rapid growth of political consciousness, the formation of religious organisations, the social reform movements during the twenties and thirties of the twentieth century accelerated the genesis and growth of public libraries and hastened the birth of a library movement in Kerala.

There were several instances to mark the enthusiasm and the heart-felt attachment of the people for the development of the libraries. P.C. Lakshmi, a retired teacher form Thanur Devdar High School took membership in the Thanur Sanchara Library, Malappuram. After her retirement she went to her native place, Kannur and until her death she sent subscriptions to the library. Before her death she expressed her desire to contribute to the building fund of the Thanur Sanchara Library and her last wish was fulfilled by her brother P.C. Raghavan (Granthalokam April 1979).\textsuperscript{51}
Kodungallore Kunhukuttan Nambiar, a local ruler contributed a good collection of rare manuscripts (palm leaves) to Champathil Chathukutty Mannadiyar Memorial Library. Kerala Varma Valiya Koyi Thampuran, Raja Raja Varma also made contribution to this library. Unfortunately after 1977, it ceased functioning (Muthumaster 1997).\textsuperscript{52} Ruler of Nileswaram province, Kasaragod donated a land of 10 cents for building a library for the people of Achamthuruthi, a small island resided mostly by the tenants of the ruler. On this land Sree Narayana Guru Library was established on December 4, 1944 (Krishnan 2001).\textsuperscript{53}

Many activities such as chittis, auctions etc. were undertaken by the people for the purpose of raising funds for construction of library buildings. Cultural programmes were also organised for raising money. They received generous contributions from many people in the form of money and construction materials to build libraries.

Though several libraries and reading rooms sprang up during early period under the influence of social reform movements and national movements, many were short lived because the library workers who were also political workers were arrested during this period. Many libraries were destroyed in Malabar immediately after the independence because of political rivalry, e.g. Public Library, Irinavu, Kannur; Deshapriya Vayanasala, Mottammal, Kannur; Public library, Chalavara (Palakkad).

4.4 Early Developments in Travancore and Cochin

The history of public libraries in Travancore started with the establishment of the Trivandrum Public Library in 1829, one among the oldest libraries of this type in existence in India. It was founded by Col. Edward Codogan, a British Resident in Travancore. This library at its inception was for the use of the Europeans of Trivandrum and for those invited to the Durbar of the Maharaja (Menon 1974).\textsuperscript{54} Under the reign of Sree Moolam Thirunal it was opened to the public in 1898. In 1958 it was declared as the State Central Library of Kerala (Kerala 2002).\textsuperscript{55}

The first attempt to collect books in Malayalam and organise public libraries
was made during the reign of Vishakam Thirunal Maharaja (1880-1885) and thus Sugunaposhini Vayanasala at Vanchiyoor was established in 1880 (Ramanujan Nair 1974).\textsuperscript{56} Under the reign of Sree Moolam Thirunal, rules were framed to give grant-in-aid to libraries By 1917-18 there were about 47 libraries and reading rooms in Travancore receiving aid from the Education Department of the State. (Ramanujan Nair 1974).\textsuperscript{57} Three all Travancore library conferences were held under the auspices of Jnanapradayini Library at Neyyattinkara in 1925, Sree Chithira Thirunal Library at Trivandrum in 1933 and Diwan Nanu Pillai Memorial Library at Neyyoor in 1935. These conferences helped to convince the general public of the urgent need for a strong library movement in the State. The Education Reform Committee of Travancore made certain recommendations regarding government’s role in the development of libraries. In the light of these recommendations, the Director of the Department of Education prepared a scheme in 1932 to establish a central distributing library and a number of rural libraries. In 1935 the government opened 64 libraries as part of government primary schools and each of these libraries was given annual grants (Ramanujan Nair 1974).\textsuperscript{58}

The following are the libraries established early in Travancore: Suganaposhini Vayanasala, Vanchiyoor (1880); Kottayam Public Library (1882); Leo XI Public Library &Reading Room, Kaippuzha, Kottayam (1900); Chithira Thirunal Smaraka Library, Trivandrum (1913); Raja Raja Varma Library, Oachira (1913); Lalithavilasini Library and Reading Room, Padmanabhapuram (1916); Marthandavilasam Library, Eraniel (1917); Sree Moolam Silver Jubilee Library, Thodupuzha (1919); Avoor Deshabhandu Library, Avoor (1925); Jnanapradayini Library at Neyyanttinkara (1925); Sree Avittam Thirual Library, Kuriyathi (1934) etc.

4.4.1 All Travancore Granthasala Sanghom

The “All Travancore Granthasala Sanghom” was formed in 1945 under the initiative of P. N. Panicker, the leading figure in public library movement in Kerala at P.K. Memorial Library, Ambalapuzha. Forty seven libraries took membership in the Sanghom in 1945. P.N. Panicker was elected the secretary and
K.M. Kesavan the president (Panicker 1974). The Sanghom was registered as per the Travancore Company Act on May 27, 1947 (Lenin 1982). During the working period of the Sanghom, many libraries were established in Travancore.

4.4.2 In Cochin

In Cochin, rural libraries were started as part of the adult education programme of the Government since 1926. These libraries were under the direct control of Village Development Committees (Ramanujan Nair 1974). An important event in the history of library movement in Cochin is the establishment of the literary organisation called “Samastha Kerala Pusthakalaya Samithi” (All Kerala Library Association) under the leadership of Chenkulath Cheriyath Kunhirama Menon at Trichur in March 1931. The main objectives of this organisation were 1) to conduct campaign work stressing the necessity of establishing libraries in about 6000 rural areas, 2) to convince the government, locals bodies, and the rich sections of the society the importance of establishing more libraries, 3) to establish a book depot in order to collect books from the different publishers and to distribute them to the libraries, and 4) to publish a periodical named “Granthavihara” with the subscription rate of Re.1 per issue (Balakrishnan 1989). The public libraries in municipalities were under the control of the Director of Education and the government rural libraries were under the control of the Director of Panchayats (Krishna Kurup 1946). There were three types of libraries in Cochin by 1946 and they were public libraries, rural libraries, and village libraries. They all received grants from the government (Isaac 1971). The “Cochin Granthalaya Sanghom” was formed at Trissur on October 5, 1946 with R. Krishnankutty Nair, the Secretary and M.K. Raja, the Chairman (Krishna Kurup 1946). Libraries established early in Cochin are the following: Ernakulam Public Library (1869), Trichur Public Library (1873), Chittur Municipal Library (1910), Kodungalloor Public Library (1912), Yogakshema Library and Reading Room, Trichur (1915), Grameena Vayanasala, Cheruthuruthi (1929), Sri. Kerala Varma Public Library, Vadakkanchery (1934), Sri. Appan Thampuran Smaraka Vayanasala, Ayyanthole (1936) etc.

4.4.3 Travancore-Cochin Granthasala Sanghom
With the integration of the States of Travancore and Cochin, the ‘All Travancore Granthasala Sanghom’ and Cochin Granthalaya Sanghom merged together and formed the “Travancore-Cochin Granthasala Sanghom” in 1949 (Ramanujan Nair 1974). In the library conference at Ernakulam Public Library under the chairmanship of Tottakkad Krishna Menon on March 11, 1949, it was decided to merge the libraries in both erstwhile States of Travancore and Cochin together. Accordingly a committee with twenty nine members; Tottakkad Krishna Menon, the president; and W.O. George and K.R. Sashtri, the covenors was constituted. In the meeting of this committee on April 3, 1949, a sub-committee including P.N. Panickar and P.V. Krishnan Nair was constituted for drafting rules and guidelines. Then the libraries in Cochin were merged together with the libraries in Travancore and formed the “Travancore-Cochin Granthasala Sanghom”. The Library Department of Cochin was abolished. (Murali 1997).

4.5 Library Movement in Malabar

The Madras government contributed much for the development of public libraries in Malabar which is a part of Madras Presidency. The Madras government allocated Rs. 20,000 for the public libraries in Malabar in the budget of 1920-21 (Ravi 1992). The private interests also contributed in the establishment of libraries in Malabar such as Victoria Memorial Library, Tellicherry; Payyannur Public Library, Kannur; and Alathur Public Library, Palakkad. The District Board Authorities invited Ambattu Sivarama Menon, a member of Administrative Committee for Libraries of Madras government to Malabar and he delivered lectures in Cannanore, Tellicherry, Calicut, Tirur, and Palghat in June 1931 and stressed the need for the establishment of public libraries. (Krishna Kurup 1946). Thus the visit of Sivarama Menon is considered as the beginning of library movement in Malabar.

4.5.1 Early Established Libraries

Some of the libraries established early in Malabar are the following:

Calicut Public Library (1890) which was later handed over to Calicut municipality and it functioned under its control till 1952; Victoria Library, now
renamed Maulana Kalam Azad Memorial Library, Tellicherry (1901); Sree Narayana Vilasam Vayanasala, Alavil, Kannur (1926); Cannanore Public Library, Kannur (1929); Samadarshini Library, Kozhikode (1929); Sanmargadarshini Library and Reading Room, Kozhikode (1929); Mahatma Library, Palghat (1931); Thozhilali Library and Reading Room, Chovva, Kannur (1932); Sengupta Library, Kozhikode (1933); Paral Public Library, Paral, Tellicherry, earlier known as “Kerala Chandrika” (1934); Aikyakerala Library, Kozhikode (1934); Tagore Library and Reading Room, New Mahe (1934), Kodiyeri Public Library, Tellicherry (1936), Gurudeva Vilasam Library and Reading Room, Pathayakunnu, Tellicherry (1936); Deshaposhini Vayansala, Kozhikode (1937); SJM Library and Reading Room, Kandakkai, Kannur (1938); Sree Vagbhadananda Gurudeva Smaraka Vayansala, Eranhipalam, Kozhikode (1939); Sanjayan Smaraka Library and Reading Room, Payyannur (1944); Chathamangalam Public Library, Chathamangalam (1944) etc.

4.5.2 Malabar Vayanasala Sanghom

The meeting of library workers held at Gramabandu Vayanasala, Tirur on April 17, 1937 resolved to upgrade the defunct libraries of Malabar and to hold a library conference in the following month. For this purpose a working committee with K. Damodaran the secretary was elected (Mathrubhumi 20 April, 1937). Accordingly the first Malabar library conference was held in June 1937 at town hall, Calicut. K. Kelappan, the president of Malabar District Board was the chairman of this conference. About 300 delegates from various places such as Badagara, Quilandy, Thottada, Kannur, Malapparambu, Kottapparambu, Nellayi, Kozhikode, Tirur, Beypore, Nadakkavu, Chirakkal, Puthiyara, Cherukulathoor, Kallissery, Athirakam, Pinarayi, Nilamboor, Kodiyeri etc have attended the meeting. The meeting recommended to form a separate library committee for each taluk and for Malabar district; to start a library in each elementary school; to conduct night classes, Hindi classes, and to establish rural industrial centres, Harijana Seva Sangham, Seva Samiti, and such other activities as part of libraries; to establish circulating libraries; and to form “Vayanasala Sanghom” to coordinate the works of all libraries in Malabar. Accordingly the “Malabar Vayanasala Sanghom” was
formed at Calicut town hall on June 11, 1937 with E. Raman Menon, president; Maduravanam C. Krishna Kurup, vice president; K. Damodaran, secretary; P.T. Narayanan Nair, joint secretary; and A. Balagopalan, treasurer (Mathrubhumi 13 June, 1937).  

### 4.5.3 Kerala Granthalaya Sanghom

The Kerala Granthalaya Sanghom was formed to extend the works of the “Malabar Vayanasala Sanghom” all over Kerala. E. Raman Menon was the chairman of the Sanghom. Nalappattu Narayana Menon, Balamani Amma, K. Godavarma, Panampilli Govinda Menon, Joseph Mundassery, S. Guptan Nair, and C. Unniraja, were members of the executive committee (Kerala Granthasala Sanghom 1971). As per XXI (Charitable Society) Act of 1860, the “Malabar Vayanasala Sanghom” was registered as “Kerala Granthalaya Sanghom” on December 6, 1943 (Mathrubhumi 10 December, 1943).

This organisation did a lot for the establishment and development of libraries in Malabar. It organised the first north Malabar library conference on November 30, 1946 at Calicut town hall under the chairmanship of veteran political leader K. Kelappan. This meeting resolved to take the following decision: 1) To give a memorandum to the government describing the existing condition of the public libraries in Malabar, 2) To request the government to draft and pass a public library bill in the legislation, 3) To appoint a committee to enrich the children’s literature section in the libraries, 4) To establish a research library in Calicut, 5) To increase the women membership in the libraries, and 6) To consult with the library associations in Travancore and Cochin for implementing one administrative structure in all libraries in Kerala (Mathrubhumi 4 December, 1946). The Sanghom organised several meetings of library workers and conducted training programmes for them. It invited S. R. Ranganathan, the chairman of the “Indian library Association” and he visited the libraries in Malabar in January and February 1945. It is an important event in the history of the library movement. He made speeches on various aspects of libraries in many places such as Sree Shailam, Badagara, Thalasserry, Paral, Kannur, Chirakkal, Payyannur, and Kallissery. He
had discussions with library workers, education officers, and members of Local Administrative Departments and made suggestions for the development of libraries in Malabar (Krishna Kurup 1946). It conducted the first book exhibition in Kerala at Calicut in May 1945 as part of the Madras State education conference (Krishna Kurup 1960). The Sanghom became defunct in 1953 as some of its workers were arrested, since they were the political workers (Lenin 1982).

4.5.4 Local Library Authority (LLA)

The first library law in the country, Madras Library Act was passed in 1948. It came into effect on April 1, 1950. Under the provision of the Act, Local Library Authorities have been constituted one for the city of Madras and one each for the fifteen revenue districts including Malabar. Every Local Library Authority elects one of its members its director, he is the chief executive of the Authority. The District Educational Officer functions as the secretary of the Authority. In case the Authority ceases to exist, the secretary will carry out its work as usual till its reconstitution. The term of office of a member of Local Library Authority is three years. The Authority appoints an executive committee of seven members and delegates powers to this committee. Sub committees are also formed to enquire into or advise on matters connected with LLA.

Local Library Authorities have the powers to provide necessary infrastructure to the libraries, and conduct lectures and hold classes for library staff and workers. The movable and immovable properties of all public libraries in the area are vested in the Local Library Authority of that area. Periodical inspections of branch libraries and rural libraries are done by the Director of the Authority twice a year. The Authority recommends grants to libraries run by the panchayats, grama sanghm, and private agencies. Private agencies have to consult the Authority with regard to their bye-laws and the list of books they want to purchase.

Each LLA levies and collects library cess in the form of a surcharge on the property or house tax through local bodies. The State government contributes an amount equal to the amount collected by levying library cess. The other sources of
income of the Authority include contributions, gifts and income from endowments made for the benefit of public libraries; special grants from governments; fees, fines; and other amounts collected from the libraries.

Each LLA maintains and runs one district central library and various branch libraries. The branch library is opened in each village with a population of not less than five thousand. Full time librarians are appointed in these libraries. The staff in the libraries under the LLA are qualified, and salaried and have the status of government employees. Part-time librarians are working in the book delivery stations. (Madras. Education and Public Health Department 1949).

### 4.5.4.1 Malabar Local Library Authority

In order to manage, administer, and run library services in the Malabar region a Local Library Authority was constituted under the provision of Madras Public Libraries Act (1948) in 1950 (Madras. Education and Public Health Department 1949). Calicut was the head quarter of Malabar LLA. The first meeting of the LLA under the chairmanship of Special Officer for Libraries R. Janardhana Kurup was conducted at Government Training School, Calicut on August 6, 1950. K. P. Kesava Menon was elected the first chairman, and K. Kunju Kaimal was the first secretary. An executive committee was elected with C. Achutha Menon, Madhuravanam C. Krishna Kurup, and P. P. Ummer Koya the members. Two more members from panchayat boards were taken into the committee (Local Library Authority, Malabar 1950).

As per the Act, the district board, the municipal councils, and the panchayat boards collected library cess from April 1 onwards. With the formation of Malabar LLA, the government sanctioned a sum of Rs. 8,000 as advance for putting into effect library services as expeditiously as possible. There is a provision of Rs.1 lakh out of which Rs. 46,000/- for libraries under district board and municipal councils and Rs.54,000/- for libraries under panchayats and grama sanghoms were allocated in the budget estimate for 1950-51 towards grants to the public libraries (Local
The old Calicut Municipal Library was taken over by the LLA on July 15, 1952 and it was the District Central Library of the LLA (Local Library Authority, Malabar 1952). Many municipal libraries, panchayat libraries, and firka central libraries in Malabar were handed over to the LLA. The Municipal Library, Cannanore; Municipal Library, Tellicherry; Payyannur Reading Room & Library, Payyannur; Municipal Library, Palaghat; Municipal Library, Calicut; Perinthalmanna Panchayat Library, Perinthalmanna; Firka Central Library, Kumbala; and Firka Central Library, Tellicherry were such transferred libraries (Local Library Authority, Malabar 1952-56).

The LLA gave some aid to the local private libraries like Victoria Public Library, Tellichery; Payyannur Public Library; and Alathur Public Library, for “meeting the charges on dailies and periodicals approved by the Malabar LLA” The LLA were also giving grant to grama sangham libraries such as Vidyaposhini Reading Room, Karumankkad; Madhavan Nair Memorial Library, Cholapuram; Kunnamangalam Grama Sangham Library; Kottakkal Grama Sangham Library; and Pattuvam Grama Sangham Library. (Local Library Authority, Kozhikode 1959).

After the reorganisation of States and after the formation of the present constituent State of Kerala, the State government split Malabar region into three revenue districts viz. Calicut, Cannanore, and Palghat and consequently three Local Library Authorities were constituted on April 1, 1959, one for each district as per government notification no. Ed (d) 3-2447/57/EHD dated 18.6.57. A district central library, branch libraries, rural libraries, and book delivery stations were functioning under each Library Authority.

4.5.4.2 Local Library Authority, Cannanore

The first meeting of the LLA, Cannanore was held in 1959 and Govardhan Das was elected the chairman. The head quarter of this LLA was at Tellicherry. The District Central Library was functioning at Kannur. Many libraries in Cannanore
such as Victoria Memorial Municipal Library, Tellicherry; the Firka Central Library, Tellicherry; the Firka Central Library, Kumbala, and Hajee Memorial Library under the Cannanore municipality were transferred to the Cannanore LLA (Local Library Authority, Cannanore 1959-64).  

### 4.5.4.3 Local Library Authority, Kozhikode

The first meeting of the LLA, Kozhikode was held on May 24, 1959 at the office of District Educational Officer, Kozhikode. A. Balagopalan was elected the chairman (Local Library Authority, Kozhikode 1959). The Calicut Municipal Library which was handed over to the LLA, Kozhikode on July 15, 1959 functioned as District Central Library (Local Library Authority, Kozhikode 1959). In addition to this, 4 branch libraries at Badagara, Panthalayini, Manjeri, and Tirur; 4 rural libraries at Kottakal, Manjeri, Perambra, Vattoli; and 5 book delivery stations at Kunnamangalam, Koduvalli, Elathur, Beypore and Ramanattukara were under its control at the time of its formation (Sreedhara Menon 1962). Several libraries such as community centres under Wyanad colonisation scheme at Ambalavayal, Chulliode, Cheeral, and Nellarchal were transferred to the LLA (Local Library Authority, Kozhikode 1973). The government handed over 33.5 cents of land of Calicut to the LLA, Kozhikode in 1965 (Local Library Authority, Kozhikode 1965). The public libraries under the district board, corporations, municipalities, panchayats, private management, and grama sanghams and firka central libraries were aided by the LLA.

After the formation of the new Malappuram district, the activities of the LLA, Kozhikode were extended to the Malappuram district also. The District Central Library, Malappuram was opened on October 2, 1977 and the distributing librarian, Palghat was posted as district central librarian of Malappuram on work arrangement. The branch library at Ponnani and Malappuram came under the control of the LLA, Kozhikode. (Local Library Authority, Kozhikode 1977).

### 4.5.4.4 Local Library Authority, Palghat

The first meeting of the LLA, Palghat was held in the office of District Educational Officer, Palghat on May 30, 1959. K. Narayanan Nair was elected the
chairman. The district central library, eight branch libraries, and nine rural libraries were functioning under the LLA, Palghat in 1959. Many libraries under the panchayats and the municipalities in the Palghat district were transferred to the LLA, Palghat (Local Library Authority, Kozhikode 1959).  

The government in the notification no. 24769/A3/84 H. Edn. dated 1-11-85 has ordered to reconstitute six LLAs, one each for the revenue districts of Kozhikode, Malappuram, Wayanad, Palakkad, Cannanore, and Kasaragod (Kerala Gazette 1985). As per G. O. no. M3-97063/83 dated 27-1-86, LLA committee of Kozhikode, Cannanore, and Palakkad was dissolved. But the chairman of the LLA, Kozhikode filed a writ petition against this order in the High Court of Kerala, and a stay order was obtained. As per government notification no. Ed (d) 3-2447/57/EHD dated 18.6.87; LLA of Kozhikode, Palakkad, and Cannanore were continued. But the proposed six LLAs did not come into existence. Since 1987, no committee was constituted for the LLAs of Cannanore, Kozhikode, and Palghat and all powers of the LLA were vested upon the secretary.

The LLAs, since its formation has tried its best to form public libraries in the urban and the rural areas under its jurisdiction. The main problem they faced was the shortage of funds, as the cess collected by the local bodies was not handed over to them. This situation adversely affected the development and day to day functioning of the libraries under the LLAs.

4.6 Kerala Granthasala Sanghom

In the meeting of north Malabar library conference under the chairmanship of K.P. Kesava Menon in February 1957, initiative was taken to form “Kerala Granthasala Sanghom.” In the administrative committee meeting of the “Travancore–Cochin Granthasala Sanghom” on September 15, 1958, it was decided to rename “Travancore–Cochin Granthasala Sanghom” as “Kerala Granthasala Sanghom”. Accordingly an elected administrative committee comprised of members from all taluks in Kerala was constituted. In the meeting of the administrative committee convened on 28 September 1958, a working committee with Panampalli Govinda Menon the president, K. Damodharan and N.P.Mammadan the vice presidents, and P.N. Panicker the secretary was formed (Murali 1997). The main
The objective of the Sanghom was to function as the central organisation for all libraries in the State and to work for their improvement.

The activities of the Sanghom were then extended to Malabar. Though the Madras Libraries Act was in force in the Malabar area, a number of libraries in this area were organised and administered by the Sanghom. The Thanur Sanchara Library, Malappuram which was affiliated to “Kerala Granthasala Sanghom” on February 16, 1957 is the first library to be affiliated from the Malabar area (Lenin 1982). Public meetings, symposia, seminars, and workshops were periodically held under the direction of the Sanghom. The Sanghom received “Krupskaya” award from UNESCO in 1975 for its literacy works (Bhaskara Panicker 1982).

The most outstanding achievement of the Sanghom was the establishment of the grass roots democracy in the State.

The government dismissed the Sanghom on the issue of mis-management by an ordinance on March 16, 1977 and the powers of the Sanghom were transferred to the newly constituted “Control Board” (Lenin 1982). It was a nominated body. The Control Board was reconstituted several times and it was abolished in 1991 with the enactment of Kerala Public Libraries (Kerala Granthasala Sanghom) Act.


The enactment of the Kerala Public Libraries (Kerala Granthasala Sanghom) bill is an important event in the history of development of public libraries in Kerala. After several attempts, Education minister K. Chandrasekharan (in charge of libraries) presented the libraries bill in the assembly. The assembly gave unanimous approval to the bill on February 23, 1989. The Act got presidential assent on May 16, 1989. Thus the Kerala Public Libraries (Kerala Granthasala Sanghom) Act, 1989 came into force in Kerala as per government notification no. 1951/ Leg.C1/89/Law dated 18-5-1989. The rules and regulations of this Act were published in 1991 for the working of the libraries affiliated in the State Library Council (Kerala Gazette 1991). As per this Act, three tier systems of library councils are controlling the library functions in the State. They are State Library Council, District Library Council, and Taluk Library Union. Every library has a library committee to manage its functions.
4.8 Kerala State Library Council

The first elected State Library Council came into existence on April 27, 1994. (Das 1997). The important duties and powers of the State Library Council are:

1. To advise the government on all matters regarding library administration,
2. To co-ordinate the works of the district library council and the taluk library unions,
3. To supervise and direct all matters relating to library services in the State,
4. To carry on propaganda on the importance of library development in the State by providing lectures, conference etc., and
5. To conduct other activities such as imparting training to librarians, promoting distance education, adult education, and eradication of illiteracy (Kerala Public Libraries Act 1989).

It organises various programmes and services such as conducting certificate course in Library Science, children’s section, women’s section, jail libraries, sanatorium libraries, juvenile home libraries, reading contest, book banks, orphanage libraries, academic study centres, rural book-circulating programmes, rural information centres, career guidance centres, and model village libraries.

4.9 Present Situation

As per the State Library Council’s record, there are 6490 public libraries affiliated to the State Library Council in 2003-04 and they are classified into six grades from A to F based on standards formulated by the Council for the purpose of giving grants. Standard for grading of libraries and rates of annual grant are furnished in table 4.2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Books (Annually)</th>
<th>Issue (Annually)</th>
<th>Paper (Dailies)</th>
<th>Periodicals</th>
<th>Building</th>
<th>Rate of annual grants (Rs.)</th>
<th>Librarians’ allowance (Annual) (Rs.)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

TABLE 4.2
Standard for Grading of Public Libraries and Rates of Annual Grant in 2003-04
The government grants to the State Library Council for the 5 years from 1999-2000 to 2003-04 are shown in table 4.3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Grant from the Govt.</td>
<td>620.28</td>
<td>509.00</td>
<td>530.00</td>
<td>658.00</td>
<td>642.20</td>
<td>943.20</td>
<td>724.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cess</td>
<td>263.03</td>
<td>198.46</td>
<td>193.86</td>
<td>234.31</td>
<td>425.49</td>
<td>311.80</td>
<td>691.94</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>883.31</td>
<td>707.46</td>
<td>723.86</td>
<td>892.31</td>
<td>1067.69</td>
<td>1255.0</td>
<td>1416.26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Kerala State Library Council, annual reports, 1999-2005

The data given in Table 4.3 reveal that there is no steady increase of government grants to the libraries during the period from 1999-2000 to 2005-06 and maximum was in 2005-06 and minimum was in 2000-01. This fluctuating trend will adversely affect the proper development of the public libraries. It can be also seen that there is a variation in the cess collected.

The public libraries in Malabar fall under five categories. They are 1. Libraries run independently, 2. Libraries run by local bodies, 3. Libraries formerly under the Local Library Authority, 4. Libraries run as part of Sports and Arts Club,
and 5. Libraries run by other governing bodies. The first four categories of libraries are affiliated to the State Library Council and are provided grant-in-aid by the Council. But for the libraries run by the local bodies, the grant is provided only for books. The libraries under other governing bodies get the revenue form different sources such as donation, membership fee and private agencies. The public libraries, grade-wise and district-wise are given in table 4.4
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Kasaragod</th>
<th>Kannur</th>
<th>Kozhikode</th>
<th>Malappuram</th>
<th>Wayanad</th>
<th>Palakkad</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>43</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>45</td>
<td>179</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>90</td>
<td>87</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>56</td>
<td>310</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>107</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>18</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>330</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>D</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>51</td>
<td>389</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>46</td>
<td>168</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>48</td>
<td>425</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>100</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>340</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td><strong>177</strong></td>
<td><strong>611</strong></td>
<td><strong>436</strong></td>
<td><strong>311</strong></td>
<td><strong>140</strong></td>
<td><strong>298</strong></td>
<td><strong>1973</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: District Library Council’s records, 2003-04

As figured in Table 4.4, there are 1973 well functioning public libraries in Malabar. But as per the records, 2152 libraries are affiliated to the State Library Council in Malabar. Kannur has the largest number of public libraries in Malabar and also in Kerala and Wayanad has the lowest number. The economic and educational backwardness of Wayanad has a positive correlation in this slowness; besides this, the library movement started later in this district, whereas in Kannur it started during the national movement itself. The growth of public libraries during the period from 1999-2000 to 2005-06 is furnished in table 4.5
Table 4.5
Growth of Public Libraries in Malabar from 1999-2000 to 2005-06

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Kasaragod</td>
<td>158</td>
<td>165</td>
<td>172</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>183</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>193</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kannur</td>
<td>596</td>
<td>621</td>
<td>639</td>
<td>655</td>
<td>672</td>
<td>680</td>
<td>693</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kozhikode</td>
<td>405</td>
<td>427</td>
<td>438</td>
<td>445</td>
<td>453</td>
<td>460</td>
<td>470</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wayanad</td>
<td>113</td>
<td>121</td>
<td>124</td>
<td>132</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>142</td>
<td>145</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Malappuram</td>
<td>284</td>
<td>297</td>
<td>305</td>
<td>310</td>
<td>317</td>
<td>318</td>
<td>326</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palakkad</td>
<td>339</td>
<td>361</td>
<td>371</td>
<td>378</td>
<td>387</td>
<td>391</td>
<td>395</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>1895</td>
<td>1992</td>
<td>2049</td>
<td>2094</td>
<td>2152</td>
<td>2176</td>
<td>2222</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kerala</td>
<td>5943</td>
<td>6136</td>
<td>6250</td>
<td>6364</td>
<td>6490</td>
<td>6495</td>
<td>6594</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>


The data in Table 4.5 show the libraries which are affiliated to the Kerala State Library Council and their growth from 1999-2000 to 2003-04. It reveals that each year new libraries varying between 2 and 25 were established in all the districts.

Table 4.6 makes a comparative study of the status of public libraries in 6 districts in Malabar in terms of number of libraries, members, book stock, cost of books, income, expenditure on books and periodicals and staff, and ownership of building.
Table 4.6
Facts and Figures on Public Libraries in Malabar as on March 31, 2004

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Kasaragod</th>
<th>Kannur</th>
<th>Kozhikode</th>
<th>Wayanad</th>
<th>Malappuram</th>
<th>Palakkad</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No. of libraries affiliated to the State Library Council</td>
<td>183</td>
<td>672</td>
<td>453</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>317</td>
<td>387</td>
<td>2,152</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of libraries functioning properly</td>
<td>177</td>
<td>611</td>
<td>436</td>
<td>140</td>
<td>311</td>
<td>298</td>
<td>1,973</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No of libraries in rural area</td>
<td>167</td>
<td>515</td>
<td>369</td>
<td>137</td>
<td>285</td>
<td>274</td>
<td>1,747</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of libraries in urban area</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>96</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>26</td>
<td>24</td>
<td>226</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of panchayath/ municipal libraries</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>19</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of former LLA libraries</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of library members</td>
<td>37229</td>
<td>1,86,518</td>
<td>1,26,462</td>
<td>32,424</td>
<td>68,499</td>
<td>61,184</td>
<td>5,12,316</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total book stock</td>
<td>568026</td>
<td>2401671</td>
<td>1275657</td>
<td>491960</td>
<td>1316168</td>
<td>1364471</td>
<td>74,17,953</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total cost of books (Rs.)</td>
<td>12957199</td>
<td>51805519</td>
<td>39500209</td>
<td>12356641</td>
<td>27321319</td>
<td>26286860</td>
<td>17,02,27,747</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total income of the libraries (Rs.)</td>
<td>4509935</td>
<td>21951258</td>
<td>16472512</td>
<td>5449528</td>
<td>9349188</td>
<td>9149360</td>
<td>6,68,81,781</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total expenditure on reading materials (Rs.)</td>
<td>1293604</td>
<td>6075817</td>
<td>5547987</td>
<td>1124700</td>
<td>3910349</td>
<td>3373926</td>
<td>2,13,26,383</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total expenditure on staff (Rs.)</td>
<td>855349</td>
<td>2974299</td>
<td>2958601</td>
<td>680461</td>
<td>1623804</td>
<td>2409451</td>
<td>1,15,01,975</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of libraries having own building</td>
<td>126</td>
<td>489</td>
<td>295</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>173</td>
<td>221</td>
<td>1,426</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No. of libraries functioning in rent-free building</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>12</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>112</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Compiled from the statistical data collected by the Kerala State Library Council.
4. 10 Conclusion

Changes in the socio-political context in the first half of the 20th century, especially during the nationalist movement helped the genesis of public library movement in Malabar. It was a people’s movement. This movement flourished with the establishment of several reading rooms in different parts of Malabar which created national consciousness among them.

With the enactment of Madras Libraries Act in 1948, the library administration in Malabar was a part of government missions and LLAs were formed for this purpose. A number of libraries were formed on their initiative. But the public library development in all its aspects did not take place in its full dimension due to the improper administration and lack of fund. When Kerala Granthasala Sanghom became the apex body of the public libraries in 1956, there was a rapid growth of public libraries in Malabar in its number. Even though it had several objectives they couldn’t be successfully implemented in all the libraries due to lack of effective planning and lack of funds. During the period of Control Board administration in 1977, there was a stagnation in the growth of the library movement because the bureaucrats became the official bearers of the Board.

The Kerala State Library Council formed as per the Kerala Public Libraries (Kerala Granthasala Sanghom) Act, 1989 assumed the charge of public libraries in Kerala adopted several development programmes to convert the libraries into a social institution to fulfil their educational, cultural, informational, and recreational role. But its reflection was seen only partially in the libraries due to lack of fund, lack of scientific organisation, and lack of effective services. So it can be concluded that the multidimensional development of public libraries in Malabar is in a slow pace.
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