CHAPTER 2
REVIEW OF LITERATURE

2.1 Introduction

In this study, the review of literature stated here is to know the state of the art of public library system in India and some other developing countries. Not all countries provide public library services of an equally high standard, but there has been a tendency everywhere to recognize their value and to improve the system where they exist or to introduce the system where it has not been established. Since Bhutan is one of the developing countries, this will help to constitute a comparative study of PLS with the other developing countries.

Libraries in developing countries have an important role to play in the development and maintenance of a democratic society. They provide the conditions by which people achieve free access to information and knowledge. They provide opportunities to participate actively in the country's further development into a democratic society. The strengthening of libraries in developing countries forms the most efficient weapon in the struggle against the digital divide. Libraries can provide access to global information via Internet. Libraries at all levels are tools for people to obtain better living conditions.

2.2 Public Libraries in some Developing countries

- India

The current status of the public library system in India is hard to ascertain and describe, because a consolidated picture is not available. There are twenty nine states and six union territories in India. All have their own public library systems, structure, and pattern of financial assistance. According to the available data, it has been estimated that there are 54,845 public libraries are serving the country which is given in the table 2.1.

All states except Sikkim have State Central Libraries (SCL). Out of 8 Union Territories (UT), all have SCL except Diu and Daman.
### Table 2.1 Public Libraries in India

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No</th>
<th>Divisions</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>Type of Library</th>
<th>Number</th>
<th>%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>States &amp; UTs</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>State Central Libraries</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>91%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Regional / Divisional Libraries</td>
<td>40</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Districts</td>
<td>441</td>
<td>District Libraries</td>
<td>362</td>
<td>82%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Cities and Towns</td>
<td>3366</td>
<td>City / Town Libraries</td>
<td>4656</td>
<td>100%+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Villages</td>
<td>557137</td>
<td>Village Libraries</td>
<td>49757</td>
<td>9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total Public Libraries</td>
<td>54845</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Ref: Majumdar, 2003: 964-966*

In India, only 13 states, & UTs as shown in table 2.2, have so far enacted library legislation, enabling the concerned State Government to provide a public library system:

### Table 2.2 Library Legislation in various States of India:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S. No</th>
<th>State</th>
<th>Name of the Act</th>
<th>Year</th>
<th>Library Cess</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Tamil Nadu</td>
<td>Tamilnadu Public Libraries Act</td>
<td>1948</td>
<td>10% on property tax</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Andhra Pradesh</td>
<td>Andhra Pradesh Public Libraries Act</td>
<td>1960</td>
<td>8% on lands and buildings</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Karnataka</td>
<td>Karnataka Public Library Act</td>
<td>1965</td>
<td>6% on lands, buildings, vehicles and profession</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Maharashtra</td>
<td>Maharashtra Public Libraries Act</td>
<td>1967</td>
<td>No cess - State Govt meets the expenditure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>West Bengal</td>
<td>West Bengal Public Libraries Act</td>
<td>1979</td>
<td>No cess - State Govt meets the expenditure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Manipur</td>
<td>Manipur Public Libraries Act</td>
<td>1988</td>
<td>No library cess</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Kerala</td>
<td>Kerala Public Libraries Act</td>
<td>1989</td>
<td>5% on property tax &amp; not less than 1% of State expenditure on education</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Haryana</td>
<td>Haryana Public Libraries Act</td>
<td>1989</td>
<td>Local bodies to levy cess</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Goa</td>
<td>Goa Public Libraries Act</td>
<td>1993</td>
<td>Surcharge on IFML @ 0.50 ps. per ltr. &amp; 0.50 ps. on bulk bear per ltr. And 1% on State Education Budget.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Mizoram</td>
<td>Mizoram Public Libraries Act</td>
<td>1993</td>
<td>No library cess - State Govt. meets the expenditure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Gujarat</td>
<td>Gujarat Public Libraries Act</td>
<td>2002</td>
<td>No library cess</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Orissa</td>
<td>Orissa Public Libraries Act</td>
<td>2002</td>
<td>No library cess</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Uttaranchal*</td>
<td>Uttarachal Public Libraries Act</td>
<td>2005</td>
<td>No library cess</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Ref: Majumdar, 2003. pg: 964-966) *from other source.*
The overall situation of the PLS in Tamil Nadu, Kerala, Karnataka, Andhra Pradesh, Mizoram and Delhi is better than other States or UTs. But in states like Bihar, UP, MP, Jammu and Kashmir PLs are starved on lack of funds and present a dismal picture.

**National Libraries of India:**

The National Library sector in India can be divided into two types of libraries. The first one comprises the National Library, Kolkata and the recipient Public libraries under the Delivery of Books Act i.e., Delhi Public Library, Connemara Public Library, Chennai and the State Central Library, Mumbai. These are the depositories of the printed cultural heritage of India under the delivery of Books and Newspapers (Public Libraries) Act, 1954, as amended in 1956.

The other part comprises the National level subject specific libraries such as National Science Library, National Medical Library, etc. In both these parts the National Library stands out as the largest single library which acts as the depository as well as the repository of all published material of India. The 20th century saw the development of all these national level libraries in isolation. The main challenge in the 3rd millennium in the national library sector would be to bring about close coordination between all these national level subject libraries and the National Library of India. (*Dasgupta: 2000*)

**Raja Rammohun Roy Library Foundation (RRRLF)**

Another positive step taken by the Central Government was the establishment of the Raja Rammohun Roy Library Foundation (RRRLF) at Kolkata in May, 1972, as a part of the centenary celebrations of the birth of Raja Rammohun Roy, a social reformer of the early 19th century. Its objectives are public library development including rural library development. It provides financial assistance to public libraries of different States, UTs at various levels. The Foundation assists State Central Libraries, District Central Libraries and Sub-divisional libraries in many States and Union Territories and develops rural public library services.

The primary objective of RRRLF is the promotion of the library movement. RRRLF is the first government-sponsored body specifically created for this purpose. The foundation also has a programme of assistance to libraries for workshops, conferences, and exhibitions.
The foundation has taken the major initiative for the formulation of a national policy on library and information systems for the country. The current programmes of assistance are:

- Collection building;
- Rural libraries and mobile library service for rural areas;
- Seminars, workshops, conferences, training courses, and exhibits;
- Facilities and equipment for storage and display of materials;
- Public library buildings;
- Television and VCR equipment for educational purposes;
- Assistance to voluntary organisations providing public library services;
- Assistance to children's libraries or children's sections in general public libraries.

(Baraun 1994: 65-66)

During the last three decades, the foundation has assisted more than 500 libraries, including many in rural areas. (Kumbar 2005)

- Bangladesh

In Bangladesh, there is a national library and a large number of government and non-government public libraries.

The national library at Sher-e-Bangla Nagar, Dhaka was established in 1985 with depository copyright. At present, it has over 200,000 volumes of books and journals and over 700,000 archival materials. (http://banglapedia.org/HT/N_0111.HTM)

Among the first public libraries established in Eastern Bengal were those at Barisal, Bogra (Woodburn), Jessore and Rangpur. All these four libraries were established in 1854. The North Brook Hall Public Library was founded in 1882 in Dhaka.

The Bangladesh Central Public Library was set up in 1953 in Shahbag (now known as Sufia Kamal National Public Library) is the largest of its kind with a collection of over 120,000 volumes, numerous daily newspapers, periodicals, journals and magazines. The Public Library Department is also housed in the Central Public Library. There are 3 divisional public libraries in Khulna, Chittagong and Rajshahi. In addition, there are now 21 regional, 64 district and 514 upazila public libraries. Many NGOs have their own
libraries and some of them, for example, the ones of BRAC and Ahsania Mission, are fairly large. Some NGOs also run rural libraries.

Most government ministries, departments and corporations maintain sizable libraries. Among the important government libraries are the Bangladesh Secretariat Library and the ones in the Federation of Bangladesh Chambers of Commerce and Industries (FBCCI), and Dhaka Chamber of Commerce and Industries (DCCI). Some other relevant associations have fairly good libraries containing professional books, parliamentary publications, commercial directories, financial bulletins, international tenders, magazines and newspapers and offer reading facilities, internet and e-mail services for the business community.

A number of excellent regional libraries have grown up in Bangladesh. Most important of them is the SAARC Agricultural Information Centre (SAIC), which provides all sorts of information and databases on agricultural sciences and allied disciplines of SAARC's seven member countries. The International Centre for Diarroheal Diseases and Research, Bangladesh (ICDDR,B) is an outstanding information centre extending most efficient documentation services both through internal and external resources. The library of Centre for Integrated Rural Development in Asia and the Pacific (CIRDAP) also renders valuable services in the field of rural development. (http://banglapedia.search.com.)

Other than these government public libraries, there are 1603 non-government public libraries also existing in this country which is as mentioned in the library directory, 2003 of Bangladesh National Book Centre.

- Cambodia

There are four major libraries in Cambodia: the National Library of Cambodia (NLC); the Hun Sen Library (Royal University of Phnom Penh); the Buddhist Institute Library; and the National Assembly Library. Apart from these four major libraries, both in the governmental and nongovernmental sectors there have been a rapid growth of small libraries. The "Joy of Reading Library" is a small village-based mobile library service for children in Battambang, where books are taken by motorcycle from village to village. The
Cambodia Development Research Institute focuses on development planning and research, and the Library of the Cooperation Committee for Cambodia for the NGO community.

There are a number of other factors constraining library development in Cambodia. Cambodian society lacks a tradition of reading. Most of the publishing in the past was of religious books disseminated by the Buddhist Institute, which had a network of libraries in the pagodas in the provinces. Libraries in government departments and educational institutions have not received any funding for the purchase of books. Funding when it was available has come from overseas sources. Currently much of the impetus for developing or redeveloping libraries in Cambodia is coming from people who studied overseas in the 1980s in Russia, East Germany, Bulgaria and Cuba and those who more recently studied in the USA, Australia and France. These young people found, and learned to value, the wealth of information in libraries during their studies. Now they want to continue to be able to use libraries. (Bywater: 1998: 223-227)

- **Indonesia**

Indonesia lies between Singapore and Papua New Guinea in Southeast Asia. Indonesia is an archipelago-state with 219.2 million people. In Indonesia, there are One National Library, 26 Provincial Libraries, 355 District Libraries (Public), 252 Village Libraries and 170 mobile libraries serving the public. (Rachmananta: 1998: 28)

- **Jamaica**

Jamaica is the largest of the English speaking islands in the Caribbean, with an area of 10991 sqks and a population of approximately 2.5 million.

The modern history of the free PL in Jamaica began in 1938. The Jamaica Library Service continues to provide under the Ministry of Education and Culture in the following set up:

- A free Public Library Service and
- Schools of Library Service.
The PLS is organized through an Administrative Headquarters and a network of 627 service points as mentioned below:

- 13 Main Libraries
- 123 Branch Libraries: 50 Full time and 73 part-time
- 17 Bookmobiles serving 473 stops
- 3 Book Centres and
- 15 Special Services to public residential institutions such as infirmaries, hospitals and correctional services.

The Schools Library Service operates a service to 917 schools.

The national information system of the country also includes the National Library of Jamaica (NLJ) and other library networks. With a fleet of 17 mobile libraries, 454 rural villages and 19 suburban centres are served on a schedule of fortnightly and monthly visits. The public libraries of Jamaica provide many active outreach programmes for the communities which they serve. Story hour programmes, the annual national reading competitions and summer programmes are for children, lecture series, topical exhibitions, art competitions, film shows have all had enthusiastic public acceptance. The public response to the library services is outstanding. With the commitment of the public and their financial support many new libraries have been established. (Mahapatra: 1996: 59-64)

- Maldives

The Republic of Maldives is a small, Islamic nation situated to the south-west of Sri Lanka, in Indian Ocean. It comprises of 200 tiny islands. In Maldives there is one National Library, which was established in 1945 in Male the capital of Maldives. This national library has 30000 volumes of books in which 5000 are in Dhivehi (the Maldivian language) and 25000 are in English. There are ten more government libraries serve the country. It is sad to mention that there are no book shops outside of Male. (Weeks: 2000)
• **Mauritius**

In Mauritius, as compared to other countries, there are very few public libraries proper (as it is called) financed by public authorities such as municipal or regional libraries and those by private sources the British Council and the Centre Cultural Charles Baudelaire Library. There are many other small libraries existing in the country, and those in villages called regional libraries, administered and financed by District Councils. These are, in most instances, newly established libraries, smaller in size and with fewer infrastructures. There is no national library. All the regional libraries and those Municipal ones acquire documents mainly in English and French, but a few of them have minor collection in oriental languages. (Mahapatra: 1996: 32-35)

• **Nigeria**

Nigerians have traditionally been leaders in African Librarianship. Public Libraries in Nigeria, there are 30 PL headquarters in all the 30 states of the Federation and the Capital Territory, Abuja with more than 140 service points all over the Federation, spanning the urban and rural areas. Most of the PLs have been instituted by laws which differ from state to state. Attempts at producing a standard law for PLs has almost been completed by the Conference of Chief Executives of Library Boards in Nigeria and is awaiting ratification by the National Consultative Forum of Chairmen of PLs in Nigeria. When operational, this will serve as a model law which will determine how existing laws are modified and new ones formulated. There is no national legal coordinating framework for libraries in Nigeria. The National Library of Nigeria, as the apex library in the nation tries to coordinate their activities, while a national information policy is in the making. (Mahapatra: 1996: 35-36)

• **Pakistan**

In Pakistan there are 4373 public libraries in 1989, in the form of state, regional, district, city, town and village libraries. (Ramaiah: 1997: 99) The public libraries are maintained by local bodies like metropolitan or municipal corporations, municipal or town committees, cantonment boards and district councils. Among the PLs in this country, 33 libraries have a collection of more than 10000 volumes. The Punjab Public Library,
Lahore (established in 1884) holds the largest collection with 256000 volumes, followed by Dayal Singh Trust Library, Karachi (established in 1908) with the collection of 150000 volumes. (Haider: 1998: 51)

- **Thailand**

As in **Thailand**, the "Public library" was developed from the "public reading room", which was firstly established in Bangkok in 1916 by the Education Department, in which the first three "public reading room" were organized to make use of existing facilities of the following schools: Wat Sutat Thepwararham, Sam Chean and Prayoonrawongsawas, Thonburi. In 1949, Ministry of Education had set up more public libraries to expand both quantity and quality, as well as promulgated public library regulation. Its purpose was to inculcate reading and learning habits into people's minds. Those libraries were also utilized for providing training and giving knowledge to people in terms of discussion, conversation, and excursion. At that time there were 20 public libraries in various provinces, after which it increased to 64 public libraries in 1950.

At present (1999), there are altogether 850 public libraries over the country, which can be classified into 3 sizes as Large-sized public library, Middle-sized public library and Small-sized public library. Besides 850 public libraries under the responsibility of the department of Non-Formal Education, there are still 13 public libraries attached to the Bangkok Metropolis Administration, 30 municipal public libraries, as well as 7 public libraries of Srinakorn Bank.

In this country, public library is considered as a significant knowledge source and learning centre for population of all sexes and ages. In public libraries, people have the opportunities to study continuously. Thus, it is seen significant to improve public library to have more efficiency and ability response to the needs of learning of all target groups. In Thailand the public libraries play a vital role to convert the Thai society as a fully learning society. (Kulthorn: 1999)

- **Other Developing Countries**

In **Nepal** about nine hundred public libraries are being existed. In **Sri Lanka**, one National library, five hundred and eighty public libraries and thirty government libraries
are serving the public. In Tanzania, during the WOALP (Work Oriented Adult Literacy Pilot Project) from 1968 to 1972, ninety rural libraries were established. By the end of 1980s this raised to 3400 libraries. (Vincent: 1996)

2.3 Previous studies on PLs and PLS:


Libraries and literacy in Developing Countries by Rebecca Knuth, Barbara Perry and Brigitte Duces, report to the International Reading Association, Newark. in 1996.
Status of Library Profession in Pakistan since 1947 by Mohammad Khan Marwat, the paper was presented in the 62nd IFLA General Conference on Aug 25-31, 1996.

Characteristics of Public Library Development in India by P. N. Kaula, appeared in the proceedings of the All India Library Conference at Chandigarh on 5-8 Feb 1996.


The social impact of public libraries by Emir Jose Suaiden, appeared in Library Review, 52 (8), 2003.


A Study of Different Kinds of Library Systems as Community Resource Centres in Nagaland: Realities and Challenges by A. Takatemsu Imchen for his Ph. D programme in Dept of LISc, Guwahati University, 2006.

Growth and Development of Public Libraries in North Eastern Region of India during Post-Independence Period by Pranab Sarkar for his Ph. D programme in Dept of LISc, Guwahati University, 2006.


• Comments
Almost all the above studies are talking about the well established library systems in various countries and the status of librarians, or particular phenomena like collection development, digital libraries, legislation, user study, different kinds of services, resource sharing, quality issues and so on, or comparative study with some other libraries, or some theoretical principles. But this study on “Public Library System in Bhutan: A systematic approach for the future developments” differs from all the previous studies on the ground that it talks about the system which is almost nil in the country. Though the country has a long traditional history, it is not well known to most of the people, because the country itself was first opened for tourism in 1974 only. Hence until 1974, Bhutan is not so familiar to most of the world. There are no research studies on Bhutan libraries or the reading habits of the people. This implies that the study of Public Library System in Bhutan is the need of the hour.