CHAPTER - IX

FINDINGS, SUGGESTIONS AND CONCLUSION

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0. INTRODUCTION:

The profession of Library and Information Science is the noblest of the noble professions. As in other professions, the professionals in this regime, are dedicated to the service of mankind. The Doctors, Engineers, Teachers and the like help confined only to the sphere of this activity, whereas the librarian endeavors to be helpful to several at all levels and in a variety of ways. His job is to provide knowledge/information in the form which the users desire, keeping in view the time factor, relevance of information and the requirement. A librarian is ever willing to use his professional skill to help users know about what has been done, thought, and published in all fields of study. He is in all respect a friend, a philosopher and a guide to the community of library users. In other words, library professional is a servant of the scholar, scientist, investigator, student and to a general reader who seeks knowledge/information for his use and enlightenment.

Right book to the right reader at the right moment of time is the quintessence of the Five Laws of Library Science.
Every bit of the laws emphasizes the role of the library as a 'partner in progress'. Dr. S.R. Ranganathan has aptly described the librarian as a high priest who conducts the wedding of the reading material with the right reader. In fact, he goes even further to claim that the librarian is a crusader who negotiates between the world of readers and the world of books.

The ethics of library profession demands an intensive and continuous study besides imaginative approach to the stimulating task of uniting books with readers. The library service requires ingenuity and persistent search, tireless application, wide reading, sharp acumen, sympathy, patience, perfection, meticulous attention, charm and professional expertise fine to the details. The librarian should be a model of simplicity. He must possess the knowledge of research and should be able to create congenial atmosphere to readers, for whose service he spends his entire life.

Public library is aptly called, "peoples University". A democratic Government is established from the public funds for meeting the spiritual, emotional, economic, educational, social and cultural, scientific and technical development of the public in general. A library as it is defined in the democratic setup, encompasses all the media of communication.
to disseminate knowledge or information in packages to suit the taste of the readers communities.

Public library is a centre recreation, entertainment and enlightenment. Day-by-day, its importance is being felt more by the public than ever. But in our country where over 70% of the population resides in rural areas, the focus of national development has to be on rural areas. It is Thus, obligatory that the network of public libraries to make headway into rural masses in order to minimise illiteracy and evoke national spirit in countrymen.

PR is a management function which evaluates public attitudes, identifies the policies and decides on procedures in the interest of public organization, and executes the programme of action which earns public understanding and acceptance.

Library PR is a rapport between the librarian and the users including potential users. Here, the purpose is to ensure that the maximum number of people are apprised of the existence of public library and of the details such as, location, contents, services, etc, by way of information to the public.
All is not well with PR activities in public libraries of Karnataka State. The very concept needs to be rejuvenated from the grassroots level of the professional group. It is the PR of staff which ushers a new era in public libraries. It has reached a critical point where the analysis of pros and cons of the subject and the steps taken there-on, transform the dreams of PR into a reality.

The present study, after taking into consideration the Management, Staff and Users, makes an honest effort to awaken the conscience of the heterogeneous groups involved in inculcating the spirit of PR will all its accruing benefits towards building the image of public library.

The questionnaire is designed to cover almost all the facets of the PR activity in a social establishment. The response from various samples is most revealing and at the same time pathetic. Whether the sampled group is professional or users, it has honestly unraveled the fact that every one in the set-up, is ignorant of PR.

In this space age full of innovative communication technology, the public library system in Karnataka State is yet to realise the merits of PR activity. Still the Library system is growing and making its presence felt by the public,
suggesting that PR if adopted in Library services, will accelerate the progress manifolds.

Most of the points covered in the research which is directly inquired into has shown a negative response.

Managers of public libraries are not inclined to understand the multifarious uses of the media particularly the mass media. The concept of PR in the minds of the professional is conspicuous by its absence. Releasing the news to the press, press conference, use of media like Audio, visual or both, has hither to not been employed by the professionals. They have failed in their strategy to rebuild the image of the public library in the light of fast changing life in a society. In all probability the public library has failed to impress upon the general public for whom the libraries are established.

Also, it is not true that elsewhere in the world the librarianship is bright. To the surprise of all, it is revealed in the classic document of Bob Usherwood, that "the library's worker's occupational self image is fairly poor and largely conforms to the poor image of librarianship held by society at large." (1) Further he says that, "Now all this is pretty negative and I believe that in general our
approach has been far too negative. It has been at the best reactive and more often than not, inactive. It is time I think that we become pro-active. It is time to hit the Vodka... As a profession we are dealing with some of the most potentially powerful of all present day resources – information and ideas. It is more than time for us to eliminate the negative and to accentuate the positive of and attitudes to the work we do".(2)

In the initial stages the things will be as rough as possible. Over the passage of time things may improve. The world is not that inactive which once it was, now, replication, has become a common phenomenon and the bright days may come soon in India and illumine the jobs of PR to publicise the role of libraries in the process of National Development.

This study has emphasised the need for training from the primary stage about the PR and its importance. All the samples have subscribed to this view. They have also emphasised vehemently that there is a need for introducing PR as a subject of study in different levels and further have over-emphasised the need for appointing a trained PRO to look after the library PR in the KPL System.
Another thing which is always haunting, is the fact that in similar fields PR has occupied the pivotal position to popularise the system to and promote services and goods. So is the case in all walks of life that lobbying, attention driving, eye catching, extension activities, using all the mass media, are indeed becoming the part and parcel of life. Library PR and its application with particular reference to public libraries, is not an exception.

1. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

Following are the findings of the study which reflects the essence and objectives and hypotheses formulated in the first chapter of this study. The findings are also based on the analysis of the empirical data in respective chapters.

PR is yet to take shape in KPLS and there is an immediate need for it.

Utter ignorance of PR prevails among the Professionals, Government and User community. Importance of PR in publicising the public library activities is yet to be realised in Karnataka State.

The empirical testing confirms the conceptualised hypotheses.
PR is only in a formative stage, and no tangible efforts are made by the concerned to initiate it. PR in KPLs today is manifested as a mechanical activity amounting to only traces of PR.

The consensus of opinion emerging from samples affirm in favour of applying systematic PR to KPLS and recommend steps to introduce the subject from the grassroots level of professional courses.

Celebration of National Library Week, Book exhibitions on certain occasions and the celebration of National days and birth days of very important persons is just a part of the PR. There have been sincere efforts made towards utilization of Mass media and AV equipments to propagate the library usefulness. This is a good beginning. An organised effort, using the concepts of PR needs to be done in this direction.

Inertia of the Government and a raw deal shown to the Departments and developmental activities cause concern to the guardians of libraries. These require immediate attention. The step-motherly attitude needs to be stopped. Government should be motivated to promote PR activities in order to harvest maximum benefits of public libraries.
An unanimous agreement is voiced to have a group of dedicated workers including professionals, to impress the Government to have a benevolent attitude towards libraries.

User inter-action and need for user orientation inorder to propagated information both in the urban and rural sectors, is strongly felt. In a nutshell, the KPLS should be geared to respond to the demands of the contemporay society.

2. SUGGESTIONS ;

i. Advertising and Publicity Activities:

i) There is a dire need for thorough understanding of the means, objectives and purpose of advertising and publicity on the part of the professional group.

ii) Advertisement and publicity gain much in the form of popularity of public library activities and in turn, this enhances the membership. Further, it will change the mind of the sponsors who can support the developmental activities of the public library. It may even sometime exceed the amount collected from the regular library cess.

iii) The potentiality of the libraries can further be reinforced by strategic use of Advertising and publicising the contents, services and activities of the public library.
ii. Multimedia Activities:

i) Efforts should be made to train the staff to understand the concept of library as a multi-media centre.

ii) Concerned authorities should be persuaded to give top priority to the acquisition of Audio-visual materials and other forms of recorded materials, besides conventional documents to the library in order to attract the attention and facilitate the requirements of the public.

iii) Appropriate measures be taken to ensure the transfer of knowledge to both the literates and illiterates by systematic use of audio, video and audio-video materials.

iv) Considerable foresight be exercised in developing the Rural community Resource Centers, where in, the information requirements of the rural folk, is adequately met with.

v) The projects and programmes of the national and international coverage be exploited to the benefit the development of public libraries.

iii. Extension Activities:

i) All possible efforts be made to develop library culture among the children. Variety of collections, development programmes and services should be encouraged. Library building, its location and adequate facilities should be expanded speedily and without any restriction.
ii) Concrete measures be planned to educate the users at all levels to make full use of the public library. "Library College" concept be promoted on war footing to increase the use as well as understanding the purpose of library services.

iii) Library staff be constantly exposed to recent developments in the field, by facilitating them to participate in education programmes. All the resources be wisely tapped to collect adequate funds to conduct extension activities of libraries.

iv) National Library Week, National Festivals and other important occasions be celebrated and proper utilization of facilities as well as resources be made by using the occasion for future enrichment of the programmes.

iv. Educational Activities:

i) User centered seminars, conferences, gathering and meetings be promoted. Reading clubs, Circles, symposium on some issues of vital importance be encouraged with which the users will get ample chance to express their views about the library resources and services.

ii) Organization of debates, quiz, and essay writing etc. be conducted on regular basis in order to inculcate the
spirit of competition and to develop good library habit among the user community of all ages and sex. Encouraging the good performance by way of awards, prizes, in the form of books will go a long way in preparing the informed citizens.

v. Other Public Relations Activities:

i) A strong but dedicated group of professionals be formed to apprise the Government from time to time about the requirements of public library at all levels.

ii) Inviting periodically the representatives of the Government to the libraries, creation of public opinion about the library activities, documentation of printed items on library services and activities, should form an integral part of each and every library irrespective of its location and status.

iii) A Unified approach be adopted by the librarian of the public library as a leader to coordinate the academic, special and other library staff for the purpose of solving day to day problems. At the same time, this builds mutual understanding among the professionals, besides establishing the role of library in society.

iv) Close contact be established with organised and unorganised, social and public groups so as to instil in
them, the inseparable role of the library in one's life. On occasions, the library should provide a forum for their meetings and gathering. Specially Youth clubs, Voluntary organization like rotary club, lion club, and women organizations, need the facilities of this type which in turn paves the way for propagation of the library activities.

v) Public libraries should emerge as saviours of educated youth by way of starting employment and career information section. This aspect needs the immediate attention and gives a new dimension to the vitality of the public library activities. Proper cooperation and coordination are to be promoted among the related Departments of the Government to enhance this service.

vi) Arrangements be made to keep the suggestion box in public libraries to get the proper feedback. Communication through letters or by personal talk about the needs and demands of the users be encouraged. Proper scrutiny of the suggestions be made regularly with an open mind and develop the healthy trend in the minds of the public.

vii) Attempt should be made to form an "user's advisory committee" to present the problems and requirements of the users to the library authorities.
viii) Looking into the over burden of the professionals in all levels and the findings of this study, it is strongly felt that there is a need for appointing a separate PRO to look after all the library PR activities at the head quarters of the District and City libraries of the state. Over and above these PRO's, there should a chief PRO at the, state level to plan, programme and coordinate the entire PR activities for the KPLS.

x) Adequate steps be taken to convince the concerned authorities to introduce the PR as a subject of study at all levels of library and information science education and training.

3. CONCLUSION :

PR is a back bone of any library system. Without PR, libraries are not able to utilise their resources in an optimal way. PR is all the more important because it co-ordinates and integrates the components of the library, such as its books, library staff, library administration and the regular users of library, potential users and non users of the community in its ambience as well as the higher supervisory authorities namely, the Government, local authorities, other funding agencies etc., into one well organised system so that the library resources are
PR, in other words, is a binding force between the library and the public and the library and the Government. Further, it is a force which brings results far surpassing the investments in terms of time, energy and money spent on it.

This is the background which has made the western countries to adopt and practice library PR. A comparative assessment of status of PR in the libraries of India, unravels that it is lagging far behind in the country. This observation has led to the present investigation about several aspects of PR, the extent of their application, and the financial implications involved in it. As a result of the present research, a few suggestions regarding PR application to libraries in Karnataka State, have been made. As PR is a discipline of Kaleidoscopic view, only some aspects bearing relevance to KPLS, Libraries have been covered in the present study, which may be viewed as a preliminary probe of a wide nature.

'Right to know' is a fundamental principle in an Information Society. The development of information infrastructure is going on a rapid speed in all the countries of the world. Public library is not merely an inanimate and
static centre, but it is a symbol of national progress, an index of modern society and a yard stick with which the prosperity of the nation could be measured. It is in fact a social power house providing motive force for the all round development of the individuals, in all walks of life.

It envisages that the professionals should act as the canvassing agents and interpreters of the contents of the library. It also calls for developing the spirit of sublime Salesmanship in revitalising the image of the public library so as to create the awareness and enlightenment in the public. Because enlightened citizen is a must for a successful democracy and PR is one such indispensable activity which is going to usher in a new era in the history of public libraries in Karnataka.

PR is an amalgamation of all contents of libraries by way of books and its personnel and the agencies concerned with libraries, from outside, knit into a cohesive pattern so that the objectives of running libraries are fully achieved. To make this dream true, library PR is very necessary. Time is not far off when libraries cannot be run without proper PR. Earlier the implementation of PR concepts to KPLS, better it will be in the view of the fast changing human society.
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