CHAPTER VII FINDINGS, SUGGESTIONS AND CONCLUSION

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CHAPTER-VII

FINDINGS, SUGGESTIONS AND CONCLUSION

7.1 Introduction

In the present study the researcher has made an attempt to study the existing system of public libraries in Karnataka state. The study provides a broad overview of Karnataka Public Library System, and the services it is offering to the public. And the researcher has also made an effort to study the problems confronted with the public libraries, and has tried to suggest some measures to improve and enhance the services by means of restructuring the entire system.

The researcher has also taken into consideration all the relevant resources both published and unpublished on different aspects of public libraries in Karnataka and examined them in detail to understand the existing situation. Inferences were drawn from the analysis of the data. Subsequently, the following findings have been evolved.

7.2 Major findings of the Study

1. Out of total 56 libraries, the respondents include 1 state central library (1.90%), 27 District central libraries and 24 city central libraries. However, 2 District central libraries and 2 city central libraries have not responded. So the sample size was reduced to 52 (100.00%) libraries (see table-9, pp 198).

2. It is observed from the study that 25 (48.10%) libraries have registered members in the range between 1,001 and 10,000, and among the daily visitors to the libraries, 19 (36.50%) libraries have below 500 users per day (see table-10, pp199).
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3. The professional staff working in the libraries has an important role to play. It is observed from the study that in the majority of libraries the staff (professional, semi-professional and supporting) is completely inadequate (less than 10). And most of the respondents opined that the staff employed in the libraries is inadequate (see tables 14-15, pp 203-204).

4. It is indicated from the study that the majority of the respondents say that the qualification fixed by the department is appropriate for Librarian, Asst. Librarian and other categories except Director, Dy. Director and Chief Librarian (see table-18, pp 207).

5. Regarding the existing promotional opportunities, it was found from the study that the majority, i.e., 29 (55.80%) respondents are satisfied with the existing promotional opportunities for the professionals (see table-21, pp 208).

6. It is clear from the study that the majority of the respondents say that the department does not conduct in-service training, workshops and orientation programmes for the benefit of the professional as well as the semi-professional staff working in the public libraries (see table-23, pp 210).

7. It is indicated from the study that the majority of the respondents say that the libraries have independent building, which are centrally located and are convenient to all the users.(see tables 25-26, pp 211).

8. The study also reveals that the majority of the libraries are located in rented buildings, and that they are satisfied with the reading room facility available for them (see tables 27-28, pp 212).

9. A question was raised about the furniture available in the libraries and equipments for use in the libraries. It is evident that the majority of the respondents are not satisfied with the furniture available in different branch libraries. And they are
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satisfied with the various instruments / equipments available in their respective libraries like Television, Photocopy machine etc. (see tables 29-30, pp 213-214).

10. It can be inferred from the data that the majority, i.e., 47 (90.40%) libraries have their own Collection Development Policy and 32 (61.50%) libraries opine that they are not satisfied with the present Collection Development Policy (see tables 32-33, pp 215-216).

11. It is learnt from the study that the majority of the libraries agree that their collection is value based and culturally oriented, suited to all the groups of the society, relevant to local needs and useful for children to develop reading habits (see table-34, pp216).

12. It is surprising to note that the study reveals that only 8 (15.40%) libraries conduct user survey on the use of library collection (see table-35, pp217).

13. From the analysis of the data it is found that most of the libraries subscribe to Kannada, English and Hindi periodicals in the range below 50 (see table-37, pp 220).

14. A pathetic situation was found from the study that none of the libraries has subscribed to online journals (see table-38, 221).

15. Technical section constitutes one of the most important sections in a library. It is indicated from the study that 41 (78.80%) libraries classify their collection. Among 41 libraries, 35 (85.60%) libraries follow Colon Classification (CC) scheme to classify the documents (see tables 40-41, pp 222).

16. Catalogue of the library is considered as a mirror of the library without which it becomes very difficult for the user to know whether the required book is available in the collection or not. It is very discouraging to know from the study that only 21 (40.40%) libraries catalogue their library collection. Among 21 libraries, most
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of the libraries follow Dr. S.R. Ranganathan's Classified Catalogue Code (CCC) (see tables 42-43, pp 223).

17. A question was asked about the availability of OPAC in their respective libraries. It is learnt from the study that 46 (88.50%) libraries do not have Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC) (see table-44, pp224).

18. It is found from the study that the majority, i.e., 43 (82.70%) libraries have separate counter for circulation. And it is interesting to note that 45 (86.50%) libraries have not automated their circulation section. Most of the libraries follow the Browne system for charging and discharging documents (see table 45-46, 225).

19. A question was raised whether the libraries provide Inter Library Loan service to the users. It is evident from the study that most of the libraries do not provide Inter Library Loan facility to its clientele (see table-51, pp 228).

20. It is inferred from the data that the majority, i.e., 49 (94.30%) libraries conducts stock verification and library staff is held responsible for the loss of books. The study also shows that 24 (46.20%) libraries occasionally weed out the books (see tables 53, 54 & 56, pp 229, 230 & 231).

21. A few questions were raised regarding the availability of separate section for reference, children and physically disabled and senior citizens. It is evident from the data that only 33 (63.50%) libraries have a separate reference sections in their libraries. And most of the libraries do not have separate section for children and physically disabled and senior citizens as well (see tables 57, 58 & 59, pp 232-233).

22. Libraries are recognized by the services they provide. A question was asked about the type of services the libraries provide. It is indicated from the study that most of
the libraries provide issuing of books and reference service. Where as, other services like, Inter Library Loan, referral, news paper clipping, internet, access to online databases and other services are provided by only few city central libraries. (see table-60, pp 234).

23. It is found from the survey that most of the libraries do not have Public Information KIOSK in their libraries (see table-61, pp 236).

24. A question was asked regarding organizing of library extension activities and programmes. It is evident that the majority, i.e., 46 (88.50%) libraries organize book exhibitions. Among these, almost all the libraries organize extension activities like arranging lecturers, debate competitions, quiz competitions and essay competitions. Whereas, other activities like, story telling for children, film shows (documentary) health awareness programmes are given less importance (see tables 62-63, pp 236-237).

25. It is happy and worth mentioning here that all the 52 libraries celebrate National Library week between November 14th - 20th to create awareness among the people, particularly the children about the public library and its services (see table-64, pp 237).

26. It is clear from the data that for most of the libraries the major source of finance is library cess. The majority of the libraries are confronted with the problem of inadequate finance (see tables 65, 66 & 67, 239-240).

27. A question was raised on the need for a Special Advisory Board to mobilize the financial resources. The data indicates that the majority, i.e., 50 (96.20%) libraries felt the need for having a Special Advisory Board to mobilize the financial resources (see table-70, pp 242).
28. From the analysis of the study, it is clear that the majority, i.e., 43 (82.70%) libraries do not have computers in the branch libraries (see table-75, pp 245).

29. There are many areas in the library where automation can be applied like book acquisition, circulation, serials control, technical works, maintenance of accounts, statistics, etc. A question was raised regarding the status of library automation in the libraries. It clearly indicates that the majority, i.e., 32 (61.50%) libraries have not automated their library (see table-76, pp 245).

30. The advent of Internet has drastically changed the world into a global village. In fact, it is a great boon to the libraries to provide advanced and variety of information services to the users. A question was asked regarding the availability of Internet connection in the libraries. It shows that most of the libraries do not have Internet connection to their libraries. The reasons are also spelt out by the professionals that is, they don’t have trained professionals in computer operations and maintenance (see tables 77-78, pp 247-248).

31. The public libraries in the rural areas have a major role to play in creating awareness and uplifting the rural community by eradicating illiteracy and ignorance of the rural folk. It is evident from the study that the majority, i.e., 51 (98.10%) libraries do not provide special services to rural folk (see table-80, pp 249).

32. A question was asked about the opinion of having Divisional / Regional public libraries to provide a comprehensive library services for the rural and urban people residing in different regions of the state. The study reveals that the majority, i.e., 47 (90.40%) libraries expressed their desire to have Divisional / Regional public libraries for the smooth conduct of the system (see table-81, pp 250).
33. Karnataka Public Libraries Act (KPLA) was enacted in the year 1965. Since then many changes have taken place in every aspect of our society. In the recent years the information technology has revolutionized the human way of life. But it is very interesting to note that since 1965, nearly 44 years have passed by, but so far no amendments have been made to KPL, Act 1965. The study depicts that the majority, i.e., 42 (80.80%) libraries are in favor of having overall amendment to KPL Act - 1965 (see table-82, pp 250).

34. A question was raised regarding the overall satisfaction with the existing public library system in Karnataka. It is learnt from the study that the majority, i.e., 44 (84.60%) libraries are not satisfied with the existing system in Karnataka (see table-83, pp 251).

7.3 Implied Suggestions

The views and comments offered by the respondents have enabled the investigator to offer some feasible suggestions for restructuring the public library system in Karnataka and for the overall amendment of KPL Act, 1965 in major areas like finance, existing structure, qualifications of the staff, provision of libraries in rural areas, application of Information Technology to the libraries, networking of libraries, and digitization of collection.

1. Along with the existing libraries there is a need for Divisional / Regional libraries in the hierarchy between the State Central library and District / City Central libraries to have an effective coordination and comprehensive development of the public libraries in both rural and urban areas. At present, all the DCLs and CCLs are working in isolation. Therefore, it is recommended to establish, Divisional Public Libraries, at five divisions, viz., East, West, North, South and Central in...
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Karnataka. Each divisional library shall control, supervise and coordinate all the activities of their respective DCLs and CCLs under its jurisdiction. The divisional libraries shall be responsible for the overall development of libraries in their respective regions or divisions.

2. It is learnt from the study that there are a number of posts that are vacant in different categories in the department of public libraries that have not been filled for a long period. Therefore, the Government must take keen interest and necessary steps to fill up the vacant posts, and also to create new posts that are necessary at different levels to provide effective and efficient services, particularly in the rural areas where the libraries are suffering from inadequacy of staff. Hence, it is suggested to the higher authorities of the public libraries to recruit more number of professional staff as well as the semi-professionals and supporting staff to the public libraries.

3. In order to provide the best possible services to the public, it is necessary to recruit highly qualified and well trained staff to make effective use of the resources of the library and to meet the demands of the user community. However, the study reveals that the department of public libraries is not conducting regular training programmes for the professionals, semi-professionals. In the absence of such programs, the public libraries are not providing satisfactory services to the public. Therefore, it is recommended to the higher authorities that the department must take the initiatives to conduct regular training programmes and refresher courses, including workshops by establishing training centres at divisional libraries to develop a range of skills and techniques, including interpersonal skills, social
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awareness, team work and leadership and competence in the practices and procedures of the ideal public libraries.

4. Functional library building is one of the most essential components of a library, and has an important part in public library provision. But the study indicates that the majority of libraries do not have independent building. Instead, they are housed in rented buildings. Keeping in view, the department must take the necessary steps to construct attractive library buildings for all the libraries throughout the state with uniform basis. It is also recommended that the libraries must also be provided with comfortable furniture and equipments of high quality to create a congenial atmosphere in the libraries and to provide minimum comfort for reading to the public.

5. Public libraries must provide a wide range of reading materials in a variety of formats and in sufficient quantity, to meet the varied needs and interests of the user community. The collection of public libraries should reflect on five important purposes of public library they are information, education, recreation, aesthetic appreciation and research. All the information should be made available, irrespective of format. However, the study shows that apart from books, the public libraries do not possess other resources of notable size. Therefore, it is recommended that the public libraries must adopt a written collection development policy that ensures people to have a constant choice of new materials in the light of today’s technological advances, along with the books. Greater emphasis must be given to electronic resources.

6. Adequate levels of funding are crucial to the success of a public library in achieving its pre-determined goals and objectives. It is the prime responsibility of
the state government to provide the required finance to the public libraries in the state. However, the Karnataka Public Library System is suffering from dearth of financial resources. Here it is worth mentioning the observation of C.G. Vishwanathan that “All institutions need stable and adequate financial support and guarantee from the authorities creating them. In fact, it is the fullest responsibility of the parent body to maintain all its institutes in such a way as to expect satisfactory service from them to the community served. Therefore, it is recommended to the state government that the necessary financial assistance must be provided regularly.

7. It is evident from the study that application of Information Technology is very poor in the public libraries. In an environment of rapid technological change, libraries must explore the potential of new technology to create and provide a variety of services to the common public in a changed environment. Therefore, the government must take the necessary steps to provide the basic infrastructure for IT applications for all the public libraries, including all the DCLs, CCLs, branch libraries and Gram panchayat libraries throughout the state. And all the libraries must be provided with the Internet facility so that the users can at least get access to the resources of other libraries and can develop a network in due course of time.

8. The process of digitization in the public libraries of Karnataka is far away from reality. The public libraries are considered to be conservators of local knowledge, history, culture and heritage. The modern Information technology has enabled the mankind to preserve all kinds of rare documents in digital form. This not only helps to provide multiple access to the users but also helps in preserving the documents for the future generations. Digitization of collections is a must in
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having an effective networking and resource sharing between all the public libraries in the state. Therefore, it is recommended that the Government must initiate the process of digitization of important collections in all the public libraries.

9. The study reveals that the element of networking is completely absent in Karnataka Public Library System. All the DCLs, CCLs and branch libraries and gram panchayat libraries are working in isolation without having cooperation, networking or resource sharing. The libraries functioning in isolation cannot provide the effective service to the user community, as per their needs and requirements. Hence, it is recommended to the higher authorities that it must develop an effective networking model for all the public libraries in the state, and involve all the libraries to participate in the network with a view to providing effective and comprehensive services to the people of the state.

10. There is a need for the establishment of the Divisional Public Libraries in all the five Divisions of the state. These divisional libraries can effectively coordinate between the Department of Public Libraries and all the DCLs and CCLs of their respective divisions. The divisional libraries shall supervise, monitor and control the activities of their respective DCLs, CCLs and branch libraries. Therefore, divisional libraries can be instrumental in having the overall growth of public libraries in their respective divisions and can provide comprehensive library service to the people of different divisions / regions. Hence, it is recommended to the Government to take necessary actions for the establishment of the divisional / regional libraries across the state.
11. Proper growth and development of public libraries can be possible only with the support of proper legislation. Therefore, the Government must make the necessary amendments to the existing public library Act. The major areas of the Act that need to be amendment are the finance, existing structure, qualifications of the staff, provision of libraries in rural areas, provision for the establishment of divisional libraries, application of Information Technology to the libraries, networking of libraries, digitization of collection, etc. The existing provisions of KPL Act, 1965 are outdated, and as such seem to be irrelevant to the existing situation. Today's society is dominated by Information and Communication Technology (ICT), which has to be brought under the provision of legislation. Considering all these aspects, it is recommended that the Government should constitute an expert committee consisting of the senior professionals to suggest the necessary amendments to be made in the Act.

7.4 Conclusion

Public libraries are a world-wide phenomenon. They occur on a variety of societies in differing cultures and at different stages of developments. The primary purposes of the public library are to provide resources and services in a variety of media to meet the needs of individuals and groups for education, information and personal development, including recreation and leisure. They have an important role to play in the development and maintenance of a democratic society by giving the individual access to wide and varied range of knowledge, ideas and opinions. Similarly, the Karnataka Public Library System was established with the same motto of providing comprehensive services to the people of rural and urban area.
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As per the constitution of India, the subject “Libraries” forms part of the state list. So, it is obligatory on the part of the State Government to formulate a policy for public library service and pass laws for implementation of the policy. In view of this, Karnataka Public Library Act (KPL Act) was enacted by the State Government of Karnataka in the year 1965. This act is considered to be one of the milestones in the history of library legislation in India.

However, the provisions made in the act were relevant and suitable for the conditions existing at that time. In the course of time, drastic changes have taken place in all aspects of the society. Today, the society is dominated by Information and Communication Technology (ICT), which has reduced the whole world into a global village. The society we are living in is referred to as a knowledge society, where knowledge is the key for all human endeavors. But the Government of Karnataka seems to have sidelined the importance of public libraries in the society, and has failed to make the necessary amendments to KPL Act, 1965 in keeping with changing times. Hence, the role of public libraries in the state has been reduced to that of warehouses of books and other reading materials. And the entire public library system is in a pathetic situation.

Hence, there is every need to rejuvenate the entire public library system by way of restructuring several areas, aspects and services. The process of restructuring should be undertaken in different phases, from the State Central Library to the remote village libraries in the state, covering all the District Central Libraries, City Central Libraries, Branch Libraries and other libraries existing in the system. The National Policy on Library and Information System (NAPLIS) and National Knowledge Commission have made valuable recommendations to the government of India in this regard. The
government of Karnataka has also constituted Karnataka Knowledge Commission which has made some important recommendations related to public libraries in the state.

Therefore, the state government of Karnataka must consider all these aspects and initiate restructuring process to revamp the existing public library system in Karnataka, and ensure that public libraries in Karnataka remain vibrant to the technological breeze of information society and act as a catalyst in the promotion of universal education, life long learning and empowerment of citizens for the socio-economic development of the state, by providing a comprehensive library service throughout the state.

7.5 Areas of Further Research

The present study gives a vivid picture of the existing public library system in Karnataka State and reveals the problems confronted by it. This study focuses on District Central Libraries and City Central Libraries together. However, there is ample scope for further research. The present study may be continued with intensive approach, for instance, comparative study of District Central Libraries and City Central Libraries, planning rural library service in Karnataka State, etc.

Public libraries should function as the gateway to local knowledge to the community they serve and must become an integral part of it. In the present information society, they have a vital role to play and contribute to life long learning of the concerned community. The present study reveals that much needs to be done to make them relevant for use in this vibrant environment of changing society.

The present study also provides wide scope for restructuring different areas and aspects of the Karnataka public library system.