PUBLIC LIBRARY IN APPLICATION TECHNOLOGY

Vijaya Bhaurao Suryawanshi
Research Student
KBCNMU, Jalgaon

Abstract: Discuss the importance of computerization of public libraries. Explains in detail the essential factors involved in the scope of computerization of different library functions using advanced information technology. Suggests also the networking of all public libraries. Examines different types computer networks along with network topology and security measures to be followed with examples of computer networks in India.

Definition of public libraries:

Public libraries are the center of education; culture and knowledge with social role to play in the society. Some definition of public library has been given as follows:

William Ewart “the libraries which are established by the public, for the public, and to entertain the people with certain rules and regulations, are called Public libraries”.

Prof Viswanathan (1965), “Public libraries are run by the people, for the people as a public organization. The foundation and conservation of public libraries should be done under clear authority of law. They should be managed by the public fund basically and be available for the whole social community without any discrimination such as class, creed, sex etc, in a democratic way.

(IGNOU 2003). Public library has been emerged as an important social institution. “This social institution set up and working is based on the definition of democracy. It is for the people, by the people and of the people.

What is a public library

The public library, the local gateway to knowledge, provides a basic condition for life long learning, independent decision-making and cultural development of the individual and social group. It is a local center of information, making all kinds of knowledge and information available to its users. It is a living force for education, culture and information and an essential agent for fostering of peace and spiritual welfare among people.

The public library is the local center of information, making all kinds of knowledge and information readily available to its users.
The services of the public library are provided on the basis of equality of access for all, regardless of age, sex, religion, nationality, language or social status. Specific services and materials must be provided for those users who cannot, for whatever reason, use the regular services and materials, for example linguistic minorities, people with disabilities or people in hospital or prison.

All age-groups must find material relevant to their needs. Collections and services have to include all types of appropriate media and modern technologies as well as traditional materials. High quality and relevance to local needs and conditions are fundamental. Material must reflect current trends and the evolution of society, as well as the memory of human endeavor and imagination.

Collections and services should not be subjected to any form of ideological, political or religious censorship, nor commercial pressures.

**Mission of the public library**

The following main missions, which related to information, literacy, education and culture, should be at the core of the public library services (UNESCO, 1994):

- Creating and strengthening reading habits in children from an early age:
- Supporting both individual and self conducted education as well as formal education at all levels:
- Providing opportunities for personal creative development:
- Stimulating the imagination and creativity of children and young people:
- Promoting awareness of cultural heritages, appreciation of the arts, scientific achievements and innovations:
- Providing access to cultural expressions of all performing arts:
- Fostering inter-cultural dialogue and favoring cultural diversity:
- Supporting the oral tradition:
- Ensuring access of citizens to all sorts of community information:
- Providing adequate information services to local interprises, associations and interest groups:
- Facilitating the development of information and computer literacy skills:
- Supporting and participating in library activities and programmes for all age groups and initiating such activities if necessary.
Important Features of a public Library

Some of the important features of a public library are:

   a) Equality of access: The services of public library are provided on the basis of equality of access, regardless of age, race, sex, religion, nationality, language or social status. In other words, it is open to the entire society.

   b) Free services: The public library shall in principal be free of charge. In other words, any member of the society can avail a himself/herself of the services of a public library without any fee.

   c) The public library is the responsibility of local or national authorities.

   d) Legal and financial basis of a public library: the public library must be supported by specific component of any long-term strategy for culture, information provision, literacy and education the public library legislation is a mandatory social action in support of a popular demand of the society. only gives recognition to a social demand but also assures continuity and development of its services.

In the light of the above discussion, it can be concluded that a public library has been created, maintained and operated by the society for progress of its members.

Impact of new information technology on public library in future: computerization

Computerization today is the need of the hour, not only to carry out routine library functions, solving the problems faced by the libraries and to make a library productive, but also to achieve its goals of information dissemination to support development. This compulsion is due to:

   • Information explosion
   • Economic feasibility
   • Routine jobs
   • Increase in users
   • Speed and accuracy
   • Storage capacity

Scope of computerization/automation

Computers can be used not only to perform operations of the library functions which are repetitive in nature, but also to perform such other functions of accessing world data bases off line as well as computers have brought about a radical change in library function information dissemination. Computers can be used in various library activities. Atleto J V Afonso stated such some library activities

1. Acquisition section/system: library has to maintain and use various records acquisition section and perform variety of functions such as:
   I. Search a bibliography file to determine the status,
   II. Order a duplicate copy,
   III. Search for the book-seller file as it helps in deciding what books to order immediately through on-line with the book-seller,
IV. Provide detailed financial information in a variety of ways, (v) retrieve potentially useful titles from an external database which could be used for selection purpose within the library.

V. Authorise operator to place an order on-line directly to the book, seller,

VI. Maintain comprehensive files giving the library complete information on all items on order or in process and to alert the library staff when the expected items do no arrive.

VII. Deal with all financial transactions and adjust it accordingly.

VIII. The system needs to be capable to accommodate a variety of material exchange materials, audio-visual material etc.

IX. Maintain up-to-date records of books and of the other materials acquired, withdrawn, written off and missing.

X. Duplicate checking, etc.

2. Cataloging system: this section undertakes the following functions which can be performed by computer:

   I. Prepare duplicate cataloguing cards.
   II. Prepare authority file/subject heading.
   III. Sort, check and file catalogue cards.
   IV. Automatically generate added entries.
   V. Generate monthly accession list.
   VI. Developed centralized and co-operative cataloguing system.
   VII. Assist in the choice(selection) of a book or a new addition(bibliography) or its characters.
   VIII. Use MARC(machine readable catalogue) file off or online.

3. Circulation section: this section undertakes the following functions which can be performed by a computer

   I. Registration of member
   II. Charging and discharging of documents
   III. Reservation
   IV. Updating the record files.
   V. Preparation of reminders
   VI. Maintaining statistics.
   VII. Information retrieval, etc.

4. Serial control: briefly, the serial control section has to maintain all records of periodicals purchased, gifted or exchanged, monitor periodical receipts, ensure time payment of subscriptions, procure duplicates issues in case of loss damage, maintain list of volumes sent to binding, ensure prompt circulation and retrieval, etc. one important area often ignored by section is the processing of various important articles particularly appearing irregular serial which do not issues indexes.

5. Reference and documentation work:

   I. the basic functions of this section are
   II. indexing of micro and documents; construction of thesaurus;
   III. abstracting work; completion of union catalogue/list;
   IV. Dissemination of information. All this functions can be carried out by computer application.
6. **Management information, accounts and statistics system/section:** One of the important functions of this section is maintenance of accounts and statistics. Although this is a routine task, using computers as spreadsheet packaged like Lotus 1-2-3 would both simplify the procedure and facilitate retrieval of information when called upon. The preparation of annual budget and report depend upon proper maintenance of records. Apart from this, the section has to correspond and communicate with government, funding agencies, etc. The use of electronic mail comes in handy in this process. In addition to what has been outlined above, more library operations can be manipulated with the computer system which are more complex services like,

- Information service;
- Literature service;
- Indexing service;
- CAS and SDI services;
- Translation services;
- Offline and online services;
- Electronic mail, internet service, etc.

7. **Creation of large databanks:** Computers will not only help in creating large databanks, and retrieving the information whenever required, but also for acquiring information through international information network and scanning the webs.

8. **Use of electronic mail:** Electronic mail (E-mail) is a means of communication which can cover a multiple means of communicating texts electronically between libraries/offices. In such systems, computer technology is used to control transmission of messages and provide a number of associated message-handling facilities, such as texts editing and message storage and retrieval. Library in India with a view to enter 21st century, yet we are too far in computerizing our public libraries and using advance information technologies. Inspite of our computerization we are far behind the advanced countries like USA specially in using super highway technology, where the user is in a position not only to accrue the intimation at his own computer terminal at his residence, but also have interaction with the libraries without stepping into library. It is hoped that India in the 21st century will be able to utilize all the advanced information technology developed in the universe in the public libraries, were one, irrespective of his status will be able to access the existing information, and information generated at any corner of the world, not only using the keyboard but verbally, from wherever he may be, on board a plane, train, ship, car or from his residence, notwithstanding the barriers of language.
References:

3. IGNOU (2003), MLIS-06, Public Library System and Services, Block-I, 2003,p3
12. KUMAR P S G: computerization of Indian libraries, New Delhi; B R publishing Cooperation. 1987