

STUDY OF STAFFING PATTERN IN CENTENNIAL PUBLIC LIBRARIES IN VIDARBHA

Ajay M. Kamble

Librarian,

*Annasaheb Vartak College of Arts, Kedarnath Malhotra College of Commerce,
E. S. Andrades College of Science, Vasai Road (W), Dist. Palghar – 401202.*

Abstract

All the public libraries anywhere in the world were established with a basic motto 'providing information to the right person at right time'. For providing information, the public library had to rely mainly on its basic services such as circulation, cataloguing, reference, newspaper reading, periodicals etc. The existing staff in public libraries may be having hard times with the modernization in library services as they are providing traditional services from year. They must be in need of training for adopting the newer technology and use the same in their routine work. In this paper, an attempt has been made to find out the education qualification and pattern of working staff in centennial public libraries in Vidarbha region.

Keywords : *Public library, centennial public libraries, Library-Vidarbha-Maharashtra, library, library staff, staffing pattern, Problems – library staff.*

Introduction

In India, we have not yet realized that libraries play a very significant role in building up a healthy and progressive community. A considerable misconception persists in our country about the idea of a public library and the role it plays in developing the community. This misconception is largely due to a lack of proper understanding of the importance of a public library in a changing society. As a result, even the progress so far achieved in the cause of public library development has not yet been felt by each and every individual of the society.

The public libraries were established with a common motto 'providing information to the right person at right time'. These libraries provides library services such as circulation, cataloguing, reference, newspaper reading, periodicals etc. However, with the invent of information and communication technology, the concept of a modern library has undergone a sea change and is almost beyond recognition.

In this situation, the existing staff in public libraries may be having hard times with the modernization in library services as they are providing traditional services from year. They must be in need of training for adopting the newer technology and use the same in their routine work.

Few of the existing public libraries were established almost centenary years ago and hence the libraries and library staff were expected to follow the above said technology and expected to be crowning the knowledge world in the society. Nevertheless, actual picture of these libraries ought to be exact opposite and they found to be struggling for their existence in this world. Hence, a need arises to find out the reasons behind this development gap and to determine respective measures

that shall be taken in order to revitalize the library staff and their services in the changing technological era.

Centennial Public Libraries

Centennial public libraries are the pillars of the public library system. They had crossed a century of their age and still serving their users with the information they need. There are thousands of newer and smaller public libraries spread all over. These descendant libraries look at these centennial libraries as an elderly person in the house. Centennial public libraries ought to be a lighthouse for them to which they can concern and approach for help in times they felt need. The novice and smaller libraries follows the path of centennial libraries and functions in line with them. Eventually, it would add a sense of responsibility on the centennial libraries. In addition, the expectations of providing better infrastructure and services to readers' community raises high on their side as it would be followed by the younger libraries. Centennial libraries are expected to have with them a huge experience, a treasure of old and rare books and the strength to sustain in every situation for years without break and disseminating the right information to the right user at right time and help them to develop their instinct by making them information literate and a consistent and prominent reader. As a treasure of knowledge, these centenary libraries were serving their readers for years and many more to come. Hence, Centennial public libraries have utmost importance and responsibility of providing information resources to their users as well as the public libraries community and thereby maintaining and preserving the study and reading culture alive in the age of information technology.

Public library development in Vidarbha

Vidarbha is situated in the eastern part of Maharashtra. Vidarbha is said to be comparatively backward region in Maharashtra. Hence, Public library movement takes some more time to reach in Vidarbha.

In the ancient times, this area was known as 'Dandakaranya'. Later on, the 'Gond' community made habitation and established small kingdoms which made this area known as 'Gondvan'. There is not much existence of libraries and mentions about librarians in the record of history pertaining to this period. In the medieval period, especially during the Bhonsle rule, it was said that many Pundits and Vedic scholars were invited and made to write number of treatises. But unfortunately, most of these works must have been lost during the course of time. They may have got destroyed during that period. It also appears that no proper efforts were made to preserve those manuscripts in the library. Hence, in the earlier days, no libraries were developed. Book reproduction was also insignificant. It has been seen that the establishment of public libraries in this region was started only after the British advent in this region. The first library in Vidarbha was established in the year 1860 at Akola. During 1860-1895, number of public libraries came into existence at various places in Vidarbha.

The first library in Vidarbha was Babuji Deshmukh Wachanalaya which was established in Akola. In 1863, Rashtriya Wachanalaya was opened in Nagpur. After this, native general libraries were established at various places like Bhandara in 1864, Arvi in 1865, Amravati in 1867, Wardha in

1870 and other places too. In 1895, Rajaram Sitaram Dixit Library was entrenched at Nagpur. This library plays an important role in promotion of public library movement in Vidarbha.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of the study are as follows:

- To take review of the present qualification and status of library staff of Centennial Public Libraries in Vidarbha.
- To find out the effect of qualification on library services in these libraries.

Aims and Objectives

The aims and objectives of the study are,

- To study the present status of library staff in Centennial Public Libraries in Vidarbha.
- To study the status of library services given by library staff of these libraries.

Scope and limitations

There are many public libraries in Vidarbha region. But, the scope of the study was confined to Centennial Public Libraries in Vidarbha Region. 20 such public libraries that have completed centenary years were found. These 20 public libraries were as follows:

Table 1- Centennial Public Libraries in Vidarbha Region

Sr No.	Name of Library and Place	Establishment Year
1	Babuji Deshmukh Wachanalaya, Akola, Dist. Akola	1860
2	Rashtriya Wachanalaya, Mahal, Nagpur	1863
3	Lokmanya Wachanalaya, Arvi, Dist. Wardha	1865
4	Sarvajanik Wachanalaya, Paratwada, Tq. Achalpur, Dist. Amravati	1866
5	Amravati Nagar Wachanalaya, Amravati	1867
6	Rajaram Sitaram Dixit Wachanalaya, Sitabuildi, Nagpur	1869
7	Satyanarayan Bajaj Sarvajanik Granthalaya, Wardha	1870
8	Navyug Wachanalaya, Tehsil Road, Akot, Dist. Akola	1874
9	Nagar Wachanalaya, Darwaha, Dist. Yavatmal	1885
10	Deshbhakt Shankarrao Sarnaik Sarvajanik Wachanalaya, Pusad, Dist. Yavatmal	1886
11	Nagar Wachanalaya, Yavatmal	1887
12	Dastur Ratanji Granthalaya, Khamgaon, Dist. Buldhana	1889
13	Sarvajanik Wachanalaya, Mehkar, Tq Mehkar, Dist. Buldhana	1890
14	Shri Sarvajanik Wachanalaya, Malakapur, Tq Malakapur, Dist. Buldhana	1891
15	Sarvajanik Wachanalaya, Bhandara, Dist. Bhandara	1891
16	Nagar Wachanalaya, Wani, Tq Wani, Dist. Yavatmal	1894

17	Sarvajanik Wachanalaya, Achalpur Shahar, Tq Achalpur, Dist. Amravati	1895
18	Mahatma Gandhi Sarvajanik Wachanalaya, Hinganghat, Dist. Wardha	1895
19	Raje Vakatak Sarvajanik Wachanalaya, Washim, Dist. Washim	1899
20	Lokmanya Tilak Wachanalaya, Brahmपुर, Dist. Chandrapur	1903

Methodology and Technique

This study was mainly based on the present status of the libraries under study. Hence, literature search and survey method both were used in the study to collect information. A survey was conducted to find out the current information regarding the subject. All the libraries mentioned in the above table were visited for collection of relevant data. Some other libraries in Mumbai and Vidarbha were visited for collecting historical information of libraries in Vidarbha region. For current information about the libraries, a questionnaire was designed and got filled up from these libraries.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

The number of staff in those libraries varies as per the staff formula provided by DOL office as given below:

Table 2 : Staff Formula for Grant-in-aid Public Libraries (Class-wise)

Sr. No.	District A	District B Taluka A	Other A	Taluka B	Other B	Taluka C	Other C	D
1	L - 1	L - 1	L - 1	L - 1	L - 1	L - 1	L - 1	L - 1
2	AL - 1	AL - 1	AL - 1	C - 1	C - 1	P - 1	P - 1	
3	CA - 1	C - 1	C - 1	P - 1	P - 1			
4	C - 1	P - 1	P - 1					
5	P - 1							
Total	6	4	4	3	3	2	2	1

L – Librarian AL – Assistant Librarian CA – Circulation Assistant C – Clerk P - Peon

Further, A question was asked to fill out the information about the library staff working in various capacities in the library with their educational qualification. The data was collected and tabulated as shown in table below :

Table 3 - Educational Qualifications of Library Staff

Qualification	Librarian	%	Assistant Librarian	%	Clerical Staff	%	Peons	%	Total	Percentage
Under SSC	-	-	-	-	-	-	14	52%	14	15%
SSC	1	5%	4	22%	7	26%	7	26%	19	21%
SSC + LTC	4	20%	2	11%	1	4%	-	-	7	8%
SSC + C.Lib.	2	10%	2	11%	-	-	-	-	4	4%
HSC	2	10%	-	-	6	22%	3	11%	11	12%
HSC + LTC	-	-	-	-	1	4%	-	-	1	1%
HSC + C.Lib	1	5%	3	17%	3	11%	1	4%	8	9%
Graduate	1	5%	2	11%	2	7%	-	-	5	5%
Graduate + LTC	1	5%	-	-	1	4%	-	-	2	2%
Graduate + C.Lib	4	20%	3	17%	2	7%	-	-	9	10%
Graduate + B.Lib	1	5%	-	-	2	7%	-	-	3	3%
Graduate + M.Lib	1	5%	1	6%	1	4%	-	-	3	3%
PG	-	-	1	6%	-	-	1	4%	2	2%
PG + LTC	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0%
PG + C.Lib	-	-	-	-	1	4%	1	4%	2	2%
PG + B.Lib.	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	0	0%
PG + M.Lib	2	10%	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	2%
Total	20	100%	18	100%	27	100%	27	100%	92	100%

The following graph shows the overall qualification of the library staff in these libraries:

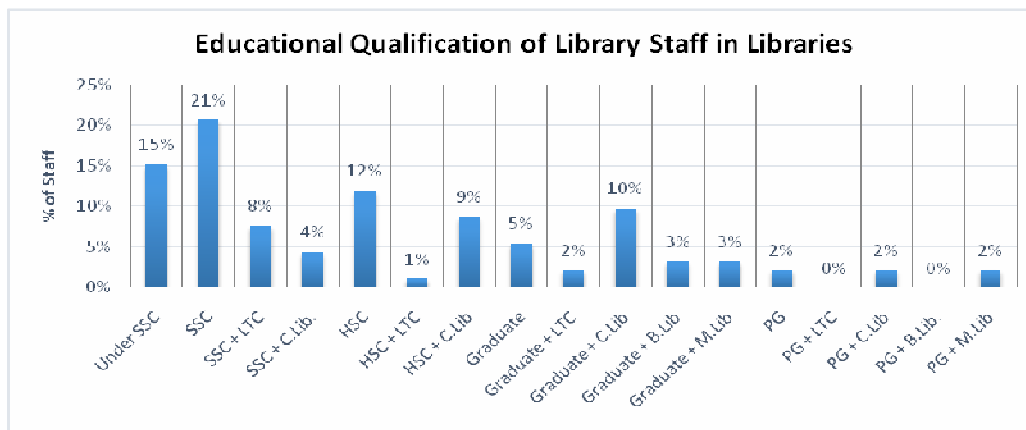


Figure1 : Educational Qualification of Library Staff in Libraries

Out of the 92 library staff working in Public Libraries, it was found that 36% of the staff members were SSC qualified or less. It goes on declining as the study moves towards higher education. Only 2% staff had completed PG degree in Library and Information Science. The major educational qualifications of these library staff were found as SSC, Under SSC, HSC and Graduate + C.Lib. There were various types of responses for four types of designation in the library. Somewhere the librarian was mere SSC passed and somewhere was qualified with post graduate degree with Masters in Library and Information Science too. In some libraries, even the person working as a peon was also qualified with the library science degree. As the post of librarian was expected to have atleast one course in Library and Information Science, the graph shows a variation in the educational qualification of the Librarian and other posts. The above graph contains the overall positions in the library. Hence, the data was split-up designation wise as given in the following graph :

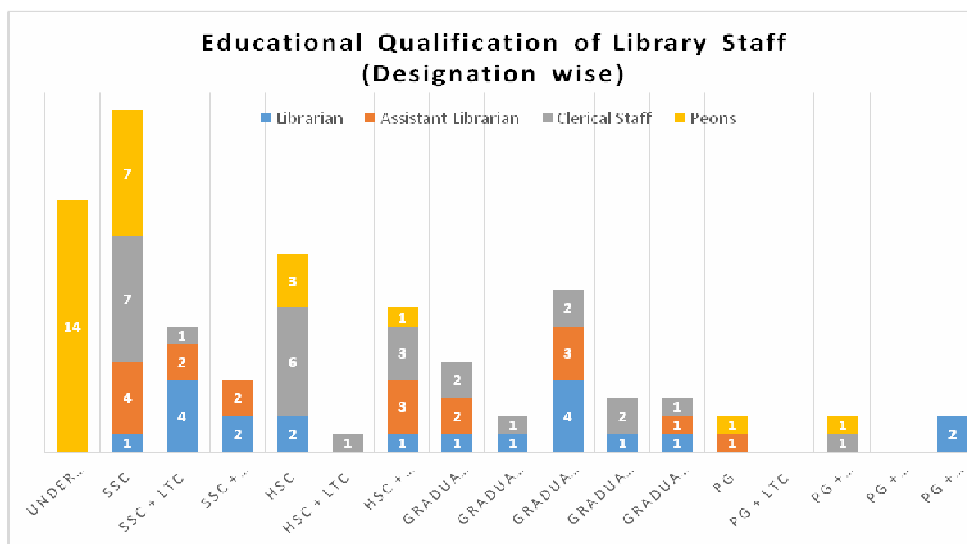


Figure2 : Educational Qualification of Library Staff (Designation wise)

Some facts that were found out in connection to educational qualification of library staff in centennial public libraries are being listed below:

1. It was found that the most 50% of the librarians were HSC or less educated. 35% of them had graduated and only 15% of them were having the Master's degree in Library and Information Science.
2. Out of the 18 Assistant Librarians working in the centennial public libraries, 44% were having SSC, 28% graduates, 17% HSC and the minimum 12% were having PG degree either in Library Science or other subjects.
3. Among the 27 library clerks and circulation assistants in these libraries, the maximum 37% had completed HSC, 30% SSC, 25% graduates and 8% post graduates in library science or other subjects.
4. It was also found that 27 Peons are working in these libraries, of which, the most 52% were having educational qualification less than SSC, 26% SSC, 15% HSC, 4% PG in other subject and 4% were having degree in library science.

Conclusion

The library staff members working in public libraries are ill-paid having no pay-scale regulations, non-pensionable service etc. This may be affecting the appointment of professional librarians having atleast a degree in library science in these libraries. Hence, less educated people were found on most of the posts right from librarian to technical staff of the library. If the staff at the position of head of the library would have appointed on the basis of professional education in Library and Information Science, he would have contributed a lot in automation, technical development (classification and cataloguing) and development of the library. But, as most of the libraries were having non-professional librarians, the libraries lag in proper sequencing and classification of book, cataloguing, automation and applying innovative ideas in the library. Hence, these libraries should appoint some professional and technical staff so that they can manage all the functions related to automation and online services of the library. Centennial public libraries shall ensure that users are treated with courtesy and respect by library staff. They shall pay special attention to the needs of children, women senior citizens and the physically challenged. The library staff shall be sent for training courses in areas such as cataloguing, conservation and preservation, digitization, digital archiving, archival management, rare languages and scripts.

References

- Bhawalkar, G. N. (1999). *Library Movement in Vidarbha*. Nagpur: Nagpur University.
- Bhosale, B. K. (1975, July). Vidarbhatil Granthalaya Chalwal : Kaal, Aaj aani Udyo (Library movement in Vidarbha : Yesterday, Today and Tommorrow). *Wachanalaya*, p.5 - 8.
- Khanna, J. K. (1987). *Library and Society*. Delhi: Ess Ess Publication.
- Kumar, G. (1986). *Library Development in India*. New Delhi: Vikas Publishing House.
- Kumar, P. S. (1999). *Library Development in Vidarbha*. Nagpur University, Department of Library and Information Science. Nagpur: Nagpur University.
- Kumar, P. S. (2008). *Library Movement and Library Development in Maharashtra and Goa* (Vol. Library in India Series). New Delhi, India: B R Publishing.

- Mahajan, S. G. (1984). *History of the Public library movement in Maharashtra : Erstwhile Bombay Presidency*. Pune: Shubhada-Saraswat Publications.
- Pandey, S. K. (1985). *Public Libraries in India*. New Delhi: Ess Ess Publications.
- Rege, S. S. (1978, October). Maharashtraatil Granthalaya Chalvalicha Dhavata Aalekh (Library Movement in Maharashtra). *Wachanalaya*, pp. p4-6.
- Shantaram, G. M. (1985, July-October). History of public libraries movement in Maharashtra : 1805-1921. *CLIS Observer*, 2(3-4), p. 22-24.
- UNESCO. (1995). *Manifesto on Public Libraries*. Hague: International Federation of Library Association.
- Vairagade, S. (2009). *Nagpur Shaharatil Shatayu Purna zalelya Sarvajanik Granthalayanacha tulanatmak abhyas (Comparative anyalysis of Centennial Public Libraries in Nagpur City)*. Radha College of Library and Information Science, Department of Library and Information Science. Nagpur: Radha College.