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State of the Public Library System in Chandigarh: A Comparative Study

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Abstract:

The main aim of public library or any type of library is to satisfy as many users as possible by utilizing resources optimally. Libraries, especially public libraries are often considered an essential part of having an educated and literate population and generally offering resources for entertainment, leisure purposes and for educational purposes as well. The present study discusses the current state of the Public Library System in Chandigarh. T.S. Central State Library, Sector-17 is older than Divisional Library (South), Sector-34. Both of the libraries are automated using LibSys Library management software. CSL has 2, 40, 270 volumes of books whereas DL (S) has above 1, 10,000. Registered member in the CSL is more than 40,772 and in DL (S) membership are more than 10900. Both of the libraries served the needs of the tricity (Chandigarh, Panchkula and Mohali) and the users of outside from the Tricity.

Keywords: Public Library, Information Technology, Information Services, Library and Society, Public Library System, CSL, DL (S), Chandigarh.

Introduction

A public library is a library which is accessible by the public irrespective of age, sex, religion, language, status and education, supported by a mandate of law and is generally funded from public sources and may be operated by civil servants. The main aim of the public libraries is to serve the public's information needs generally, as well as offering information resources for general entertainment and leisure purpose. Public libraries provides free of cost services to its users. Public libraries offer various types of services and materials, such as fictions, non-fictions, movies, educational, latest IT based materials and services, community meeting rooms, storytelling sessions for school children, special services to visually challenged peoples and etc. etc. Thus the public library services became of the people, by the people and for the people.

Public libraries are concerned with the communication of the ideas and information in whatever forms and format they are expressed. The information has to be readily accessible,

widely available and organized efficiently. Public libraries, as per UNESCO manifesto, “should be maintained wholly out of public funds in the society, so that they can render free service to one and all in the society”. This involves the provision of adequate resources for comprehensive public library service comprising of the entire state and the nation. This can be possible and achieved by establishing a network of public libraries or developing public library system through organized execution of various elements and co-operation among different units.

According to Gardner, “Public Libraries are agencies that speak directly to the people. They help on literacy, foster culture and directly assist the production of books in local language.” The role of public libraries, therefore, can hardly be over emphasized.

Dr. S.R. Ranganathan defined the Public Library as: (a) any library established and/or maintained by a local library authority, including travelling libraries and services; (b) any library, open to the public free of charge and maintained and managed by the government or by any local body; and (c) any library notified by the government as a public library.

The UNESCO proclaimed the Public Library Manifesto in 1949, and revised it in 1972, under the International Book Year in 1994. The revised version gave a new dimension to the concept of a public library. It is stated that a public library is: “a living force of education, culture and information, as an essential agent for fostering of peace and spiritual welfare through the minds of men and women. The UNESCO in its manifesto defines the characteristic of a public library as one: (a) which is started and maintained under the clear mandate of law; (b) which is maintained wholly by public funds; (c) which is free to all sections of the community regardless of race, colour, age, sex, nationality, language, status or level of educational attainment; and (d) which does not normally collect any charge for service.

The Advisory Committee on Libraries, appointed by the Government of India (1958) advocated the internationally accepted definition of a public library. It is a library: (a) which is financed for the most part out of public funds; (b) which charges no fees from readers and yet is open for full use by the public without distinction caste, creed or sex; (c) which is intended as an auxiliary educational institution providing a means of self-education, which is endless; (d) which houses learning materials giving reliable information freely and without partiality or prejudice on a variety of subjects as will satisfy the interests of readers.

Missions of the Public Library

“According to UNESCO Public Library Manifesto, 1994, the followings key missions which relate to information, literacy, education and culture should be at the core of public library services:

- 1) Creating and strengthening reading habits in children from an early age;
- 2) Supporting both individual and self conducted education at all levels;
- 3) Stimulating the imagination and creativity of children and young people;
- 4) Providing access to cultural expressions of all performing arts;
- 5) Ensuring access for citizens to all sorts of community information;
- 6) Providing opportunities for personal creative development;
- 7) Promoting awareness of cultural heritage, appreciation of the arts, scientific achievements and innovations;
- 8) Facilitating the development of information and computer literacy skills;

- 9) Fostering inter-cultural dialogue and favoring cultural diversity;
- 10) Supporting the oral tradition;
- 11) Supporting and participating in literary activities and programmes for all age groups, and initiating such activities if necessary.
- 12) Facilitating the development of information and computer literacy skills”

Role of RRRLF in Development of Public Libraries in India

“RRRLF (Raja Rammohun Roy Library Foundation) came into being in May 1972 (RRRLF, 1997) is a central autonomous organization established and fully financed by the ministry of culture, Government of India located at Kolkata. RRRLF is registered under the West Bengal Societies Registration Act, 1961. It is the nodal agency of the Government of India to support public library services and systems and promote public library movement in the country commensurate with the objectives as embodied in its memorandum of Association (RRRLF, 1961). The supreme policy-making body of RRRLF is called the Foundation. The Foundation works in close association and active cooperation with different State Governments and Union Territory Administrations through a machinery called State Library Planning Committee (SLPC/SLC) set up in each State at the instance of the Foundation. To participate in Foundation’s programmes, a State Government/U.T. is required to contribute a certain amount fixed by the Foundation. RRRLF functions as a promotional agency/ an advisory and consultancy organization a funding for public library development in India. Some important objectives are:

- ❖ To promote library movement in the country;
- ❖ To enunciate a national library policy and to help build up a national library system;
- ❖ To provide financial and technical assistance to libraries;
- ❖ To provide financial assistance to organizations, regional or national engaged in the promotion of library development;
- ❖ To publish appropriate literature and to act as a clearing house of ideas and information on library development in India and abroad;
- ❖ To promote research in problems of library development;
- ❖ To advise the government on all matters pertaining to the library development in the country;
- ❖ To propagate the adoption of library legislation in the country.”

Chandigarh Public Library System

Chandigarh Public Library System, following have two main libraries along with some branch libraries which play an important role in to cater to the information needs of the tricity (Chandigarh, Mohali, Panchkula).

T.S. Central State Library

The Tarlok Singh Central State Library, Sector-17, Chandigarh is a beehive of intellectual activities. Since its very inception it has carved a niche for itself in academic, literary and social circles of city beautiful. The library has a regular flow of visitors representing a cross-section of the populace of this region. Students, bureaucrats, doctors, engineers, children flock to the library as it affords a wide spectrum of books covering a large range of topics. Bibliophiles have a special affinity for it, as the latest books are the earliest to reach this

library. The library has given a positive thrust to book-culture and related activities. Central State Library caters to the demand of northern sectors and villages of the Chandigarh with a network of two branches, and a mobile van. This library network development has given a new impetus to book culture. People have free access to the quintessential reading material virtually at their doorstep. The Chandigarh Public Library System was initiated in 1955 under First Five-Year Plan. This was covered under the scheme of Government of India's "Promotion of Art and Culture." After reorganization of the state of Punjab, it came under the control of Chandigarh Administration (Union Territory).

The liberal grants by the Chandigarh Administration have helped the library grow rapidly to fulfill the divergent demands of the readers. It has a State Library Planning Committee under the Chairmanship of Home and Education Secretary, and Special Secretary Finance cum Director Higher Education is the Vice-Chairman. Eminent educationists and nominee of Raja Ram Mohan Roy Library Foundation are the members. The Committee meets at regular intervals to discuss and suggest policies for the development of library systems. The four-storied impressive library building in green stoned and concrete is based on modern principles of architecture.

Divisional Library (South)

Furthermore with the development of the third-phase of Chandigarh and, the coming up of satellite town Mohali, it was felt, all the more necessary to set up another big public library in the south Chandigarh. With the idea of fulfilling this need, State Library in the sub-city center in Sector-34 was conceived, as a hub of creative activities. State Library – 34, now renamed as Divisional Library (South), Sector-34, Chandigarh was inaugurated on 14th August 1995 by H.E. Lt. Gen. Sh. B. K. N. Chibber (retd.), Administrator Chandigarh and Governor of Punjab. It was initially started with collections of 5000 books of which about 2000 were gifted from T. S. Central State Library, Sector-17 and rests were received as donation from the general public. With the coming up of State Library in Sector-34, which is being developed as city sub-center, holds promise for lots of cultural and intellectual activities. This library has in its premises, the Chandigarh Sahitya Akademi, Chandigarh, Lalit Kala Akademi and Chandigarh Sangeet Natak Akademi. The activities of these Akademies make the environment of the library all the more lively. The library has developed as the hub of cultural and intellectual activities of Chandigarh. Its working hour is 10.00 am-5.30 pm. One Reading hall is open for 24 hrs. The library remains open from 10.00 am to 5.30 pm excluding last Saturdays, Sundays and all Gazetted holidays.

Scope of the study

The study covers two public libraries viz., T.S. Central State Library (CSL), Sector-17 and Divisional library (South) (DL), Sector-34, Chandigarh within the jurisdiction of Chandigarh Administration (Union Territory).

Objectives of the study

The main objectives of the study focus on:

1. To know about the status of the public libraries.
2. To know the current state of infrastructure available in Public libraries in Chandigarh.
3. To examine the status of automation of Public libraries in Chandigarh.

4. To know about given facilities and services offered by the CSL and DL library.
5. To examine the Qualifications, experience, membership of professional bodies, among the librarians and other activities of Librarians.
6. To provide suggestions and recommendations for improving library services and librarians expertise.

Methodology

For this study the questionnaire and census method have been used. The total number of 18 questionnaires was circulated between the Librarians CSL and DL out of which 17 questionnaires were return back. The collected data was analyzed and has been presented below in the form of tables.

Analysis and Interpretation of Data

After collecting the data from the Librarians, the data was checked and analyzed according to the objectives stated.

The analysis is divided into two categories- regarding

- Library services and infrastructure
- Librarian

(I) Library services and infrastructure

Table 1: General Information

Public Libraries	Year Of Establishment	Website address	Total no. of Librarian	No. of semi prof. Staff
CSL-17	1955	www.cslchd.nic.in	11	8
DL-34	1995	www.statelibrary34.gov.in	6	7

Table 1 provides the general information about the two major public libraries in Chandigarh city. The data shows that CSL is the oldest library in Chandigarh, established in 1955 under the scheme of Govt. of India, “Promotion of Art and Culture”, whereas Divisional Library was established in 1995 by Chandigarh Administration to provide the library facilities to the southern sectors. The table also provides the information related to the total library staff and semi professional of the libraries.

Table 2: Library Collections

Public Libraries	Books Collections	Periodicals	CD-ROMS	Registered Users
CSL-17	240270	160	1700	40770
DL-34	110000	81	2000	10900

Table shows that total book collection in CSL has 240270 whereas DL has 110000. CSL annually received 160 periodicals whereas DL received 81. DL has maximum number of CD-ROMs, i.e. 2000, whereas CSL has 1700. At present the membership of the CSL is 40770 whereas DL membership is 10900.

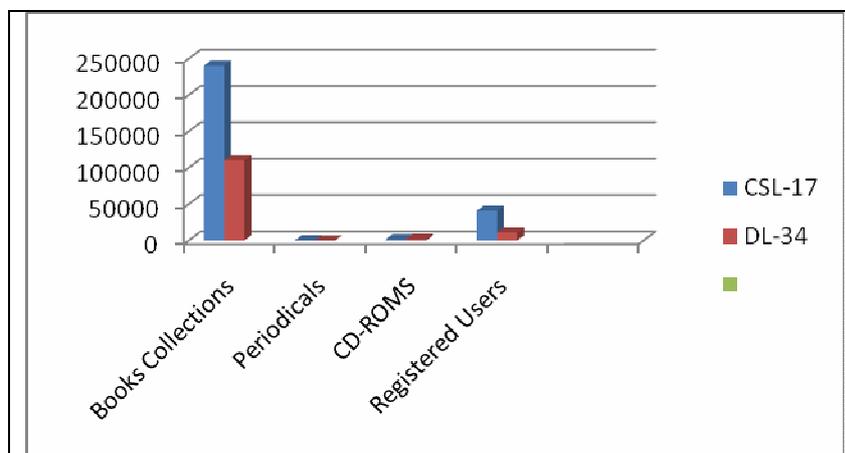


Figure 1. Library Collection of CSL and DL

Table 3: Status of automation housekeeping operations in Public Libraries

Name of Public libraries	Status of Automation	Software used for library Automation	Automated Areas	Automated not area
CSL-17	Yes	LIBSYS	Cataloguing, CD-ROM, Circulation, Online searches, DVD Rom search,	Acquisition and Serial control
DL-34	Yes	LIBSYS	Acquisition, CD-ROM, Cataloguing, Online search and Circulation	Serial control

The process of **library automation in CSL was started in 1955** using the TechLib basic plus software. In the year 2003 due to some technical problems the CSL changed the software with LIBSYS, which is an integrated multi user library management system and used web OPAC. The library is partially computerized and the automated areas include Cataloguing, CD-ROM, Circulation, Online searches, and DVD Rom search. The automation of the other module is under process. The process of library automation in DL was started in 2003 using the LIBSYS software. The library is partially computerized and the automated areas include Cataloguing, Acquisition, Circulation and Online searches. The automation of acquisition and serial control are under process in CSL and only serial control module is under process in DL.

Table 4: Services

Services	CSL-17	DL-34
Bibliographic	√	√
CAS/SDI	-	-
Computer for MS word service	√	√
Indexing	-	-
Infotel	√	-
ILL	-	√
Internet	√	√
Library awareness drives	√	-
Newspaper clipping service	√	√
Mobile Library	√	-
Reading Room	√	√
Reference service	√	√
E-Reference service	√	-
Reprographic	√	√
OPAC	√	√
WEB-OPAC	√	√
SMS alert	√	-
Blog	√	√
Wi-fi	√	-
Total	16(88.8%)	11(61.1%)

Table 4 reveals that CSL provide the 16(88.8%) services to the users and the other side 11 (61.1%) services provide to the users. the various services to the users like Bibliographic, Infotel (Furnishing of information on telephone requisition is recognised as a value added service of the library. The library answers queries of facts through telephone, and also re-issue and reserve the books through telephone), Internet, Wi-Fi, Newspaper clipping service, Mobile library, Reading room, Reference and E-reference service, Reprographic, OPAC and WEB- OPAC SMS alert and Blog. And DL gives the bibliographic, ILL, Internet, Reading room, Reference, Reprographic, OPAC, WEB-OPAC and Blog services to the users.

Table 5: Total collection of IT Infrastructure

Item Name	No. Avail. (CSL)	No. Avail. (DL)
Computer Server	1	1
Computer	30 (6 - Internet)	28 (4-Internet)
Printer	9 (2-laser) (7-Ink-jet)	7
UPS	2 (5kv) 3 (5kv)	2
CD Writer	10	8
Barcode Scanner	3	5
HP Scanner	2	1

The table shows that both libraries has good IT infrastructure. CSL have 30 computers in

which 6 computers use only for Internet and they have 9 printers for their official work. 5 UPS power backup of computers. Total 5 scanners used in check-out and check-in CSL. On the other side, DL used 28 computers in library routine work; out of which 8 computers have CD writer and 4 computers are used for Internet purpose. DL use 7 printers attach of computers for their library work and 2 UPS power backup of computers. 6 scanners used in issue/return in the library.

Table 6: Classifications and Cataloguing

Library Name	Classification scheme. (CSL)	Cataloguing. (DL)
CSL	DDC-23	AACR- II
DL	DDC-21	AACR- II

The table shows that these libraries are using DDC 23, 21 ed. for Classification scheme and AACR II for Cataloguing.

Table 7: Stock Verification

Period	No. of Libraries
Annual	-
Bi- annual	-
3 Yearly	1
5 Yearly	1

It becomes imperative for the Librarians to carry out periodical stock verification, failing which library services will qualitatively decline. Investigations show that this practice is almost neglected. Table 7 reveals that CSL done stock verification after 5 years and DL done after a span of 3 years.

(II) Analysis regarding Librarians

Table 8: Gender of the professionals

Gender	No. of Librarian
Male	8
Female	9

As regard sex, Female professionals are more 9 in Public library than males 8.

Table: 9 Strength of different categories of Staff

Posts	Total no.
Librarian	17
Assistant Librarian	-
Library Restorer	15
Staff are Library Attended	7



Figure 2: Staff Strength

Table 9 reveals that all the Public libraries in Chandigarh have qualified librarians to look after the libraries various section. Total 17 librarians are there and library restorers are only 15. And other supporting in the libraries is 7.

Table 10: Academic qualifications

Qualifications	No. of Librarian	%
Post- Graduate	16	94.1%
Doctorate	1	5.8%
Post- Doctorate	-	-

The Academic qualifications of library professional are reasonably good. Table reveals that 16 (94.1%) personnel are PG while only 1 (5.8%) is doctorate. None of them is post-doctorate is depicted in Table 5.8

Table 11: Professional Qualifications

	No. of Librarian
B. Lib.	17
M. Lib.	17
M.Phil	2
UGC-NET	6
Ph.D	1

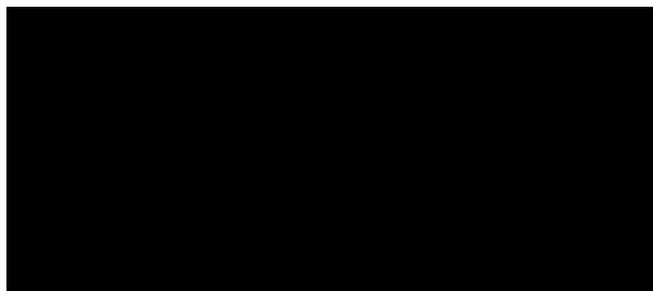


Figure 3: Professional Qualification of Librarians

Academic qualifications of the Librarians are sound in comparison to professional qualifications as 17 personnel are B. Lib and M. Lib. Only 2 are M.Phil holders. 6 librarians hold UGC-NET qualification and Only 1 Librarian have PhD. degree.

Table 12: Interest for further studies

Opinion	No. of Librarian	%
Yes	4	23.5%
No	13	76.4%

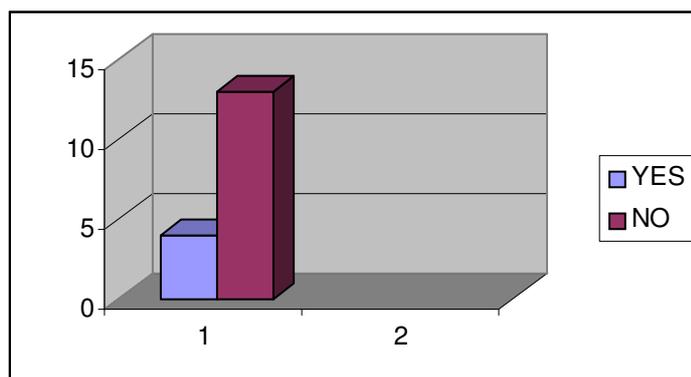


Figure 4: Interest for further studies of Librarians

Although it is note that only 4(23.5%) professionals are interested in further studies, but at the same time almost triple of them are not interested in improving their professional qualification. They are satisfied where they are.

Table: 13: Experience of professionals

Period	No. of Librarian
0-5 years	4
5-10 years	2
11-15 years	-
16-20 years	2
21-25 years	1
+25 years	8

Table 13 shows the +25 years work experience of 8 professionals range higher and 4 librarians have experience between 0-5 years. In case only 2 Librarian are working for more than 5-10 and 16-20 year and only 1 librarian have experience between 21-25 years.

Table 14: State/City Level membership of professional bodies

Membership of proff. bodies	No. of Librarian	%
%1	6	35.2%
2	-	-
+2	-	-
Nil	11	64.7%

It is very unfortunate for Chandigarh that out of 17 professionals only 6(35.2%) librarians are members of only one professional body and 11(64.7%) are not members of any professional body.

Table 15: National Level Membership of profession

Response	No. of Librarian	%
Yes	1	5.8%
No	16	94.1%

The study reflects that the library professionals do not bother for the national level professional membership. The figures are as low as only 1 (5.8%) Librarian has the national membership. 16(94.1%) Librarians are not the members of any association (Table 5.13)

Table 16: Seminars/ Conference/ Workshops attend by the professionals

Response	No. of Librarian
Yes	17
No	-

Table 16 reveals that all Librarians attend the seminars, conferences and workshops to keep update themselves.

Table 17: Professional Publications

Response	No. of Librarian	%
Yes	8	47.0%
No	9	52.9%

Librarians have restricted their roles to administrative and supervisory areas only. It is high time that they come out of the narrow sphere and stretch out to scholastic world of research and writing. As Table 5.15 reveals that only 8 (47.0%) Librarians have contributed for the same, 9 (52.9%) are silent about it while the majorities have not contributed in the professional journals. However, it is found that some professionals are writing general articles for newspapers and even they write books also in library science.

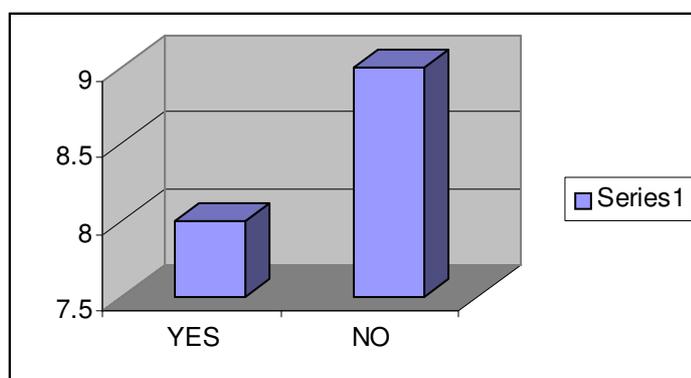


Figure 5: Publication of Librarian

Table 18: Job Satisfaction of professionals

Response	No. of Librarian	%
Yes	13	76.4%
No	4	23.5%

The majority of professionals i.e., 13 (76.4%) are satisfied with this profession while 4 (23.5%) are not satisfied.

Major Findings of the Study

Some of the major findings are:

- ❖ T.S. Central State Library is older than Divisional Library (South).
- ❖ Collection in T.S. Central State Library is more than 2, 40,770. While in Divisional Library (South) collection is above 1, 10,000 only.
- ❖ Huge members registered in T.S. Central State Library, i.e., more than 40, 772. And in Divisional Library (South) it is more than 10, 900.
- ❖ Both of the libraries using LibSys library management software, and share moreover equal IT infrastructure.
- ❖ TSCSL using DDC-23 and DV (S) using DDC-21 for classification of documents.
- ❖ Majority of the librarians are females.
- ❖ Only librarian is PhD. Degree holder, who is currently working in TSCSL-17.
- ❖ More than 76% librarians are not interested for further studies. Almost all the librarians regularly attending the seminars/conferences/workshops.
- ❖ Majority of the librarians, i.e., 76.4% are satisfied with their profession.

Suggestions and Future Plans

The following suggestions have been derived from the above results and findings. They might prove to be useful guidelines for library improvement in general.

- ❖ Adequate library supporting staff as per the norms set by UGC and DPI (Director of Higher Education) is necessary.
- ❖ Development of qualified professional staff in computer applications.
- ❖ Library supporting staff should also contribute towards the improvement of library services.
- ❖ Use targeted marketing techniques to reach new audiences.
- ❖ Start new interacting services to its users.
- ❖ To decide the separate silent study zone.
- ❖ Develop more IT based services.
- ❖ Reach out to common man in the society.
- ❖ Do some cultural and social activities for the citizens.
- ❖ Organise regularly seminar, conferences and workshops in different fields for professionals, general public, children's and senior citizens.

The CSL plans to install another 16 computers with Internet connectivity for its members from the present 6 computers. A separate facility for Internet is also being planned in the children section of the library for its children members. Some Internet based services will be

started in very soon. Plan to revamp and reorganized their traditional services, whatever both of the libraries providing. It is planning in TSCSL-17 to give more specific and valuable services to the visually impaired users.

Conclusion

So, we can say that the public library is a centre of information, making all kinds of knowledge and information resources readily available to its users. The explosion of knowledge has created innovation among the general public in the different fields to know more and more in their respective field of interest. To provide right information at the right time to the right person is the motto of the library professionals.

The general conclusions emerging after critically evaluating the existing information services and facilities provided by the T. S. Central State Library (CSL) and Divisional library (DL), Chandigarh is that, both the library is partly computerized. The computerization has provided very effective and efficient functioning of the library in compact storage capacity, fast retrieval of information, on-line access and more accurate and better services to general public. The Information Technology facilities are available for the promotion of the research activities in different fields. Presently, Internet has become the key factor in retrieving the information. In recent times the CSL and DL Library is trying to be at par with latest trends. The Library is providing Internet, Wi-Fi facility, e-mail, serial database, WEB-OPAC, current awareness service and reprographic services to the members of the library efficiently.

The Public Libraries must popularise their services and Librarians should keep themselves updated about the latest trends and try to implement them. Librarian should be a member of State and National level bodies for their academic growth. In recent times the CSL and DL Library is trying to be at par with latest trends, committed to 24x7 accesses to library services; utilize all library resources as well as the Internet.

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