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Public Library Scenario in Karimpur Block, Nadia, WB: A Case Study

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Abstract:

The main aim of the study is to analyze the present scenario of public libraries in West Bengal. This study is focused on the public libraries under Karimpur area, a city under Nadia district, WB. According to public library network, Govt. of West Bengal there are total 110 government sponsored public library in Nadia district, out of which 100 are rural libraries and 10 are town libraries. There are 9 libraries in Karimpur block. Out of which 7 libraries are open till date. Two libraries (Bagdanga Public Library and Dhoradaha Sadharan Pathagar) are closed due to shortage of staff and user. This study is focused on the present scenario of the libraries in this area. A detailed study has taken place to show the original views of publics. The study has the following findings: Very less number of users is visited regularly to the libraries. Some of the libraries do not have permanent librarians. Some librarians are managing two libraries at a time. Only few libraries have computers for personal use only. Most of the libraries don't have toilet and drinking water facilities. After analysing the libraries, it is clear from the viewpoint of surveyor that Karimpur public library has the best facilities to attract users, which consist of its location, engagement of permanent librarian, ICT facilities, well maintained reading room, other facilities as a whole and Poraghati Jagarani Pathagar has the worst condition overall, mainly due to its location, no toilets, no drinking water facility, non cleanliness etc.

Keywords – Public library, Case study, Karimpur Block, Nadia, WB.

1. Introduction:

As we all know library is the heart of any institution, like public library is also a pillar of a society. The need of public library is well known to all. But the present scenario is not so good. Most of the libraries are in a poor condition. It is the condition of all states in India. For our paper we would like to focus on the public libraries under Karimpur area, a city under Nadia district, WB. According to public library network, Govt. of West Bengal there are total 110 government sponsored public library in Nadia district, out of which 100 are rural libraries and 10 are town libraries. There are 9 libraries in Karimpur block. These are following: Karimpur Public Library, Darermath Public Library, Kechuadanga Kishori Mohan Public Library, Poraghati Jagarani Pathagar, Bagdanga Public Library, Dhoradaha Sadharan Pathagar, Natidanga Tarun Samity Pathagar, Sankhanagar Public Library, Ganasikshapith Pathagar. Out of which 7 libraries are open till date. Two libraries (Bagdanga Public Library and Dhoradaha Sadharan Pathagar)

are closed due to shortage of staff and user. This study is focused on the present scenario of the libraries in this area. A detailed study has taken place to show the original views of publics.

1.1 Background

Library is no longer only a storehouse of books. Internet with modern technology changed the whole scenario. Now almost every educational institutes, public libraries, special libraries upgraded their library services for the betterment of the users. As we all know, the users are losing interest day by day to visit the library, so something innovative has to be done to attract users towards library. Karimpur is a city under Nadia district, WB. There is almost 4 lakh population and the literacy rate is almost 83%. As, it is a place of having higher literacy rate, people are interested in libraries. As already discussed there are 9 libraries in the locality and most of them are situated in the heart of the market and city. So there are plenty of reader exists. Libraries are also enriched with lots of books. So it has a reason to attract readers. But the scenario is not as good as expected. This is the reason for this kind of study.

2. Review of Literature:

According to Sipilä (2015), “public library as a place, as a space (makerspace) and as a relation. 1) The library as a place within the city, as a landmark and as a catalyst of urban development. 2) The library as a space for social interaction, as an important hub of the public domain and as an experience. 3) The library as a relation, with other cultural institutions and creative entrepreneurs. According to Ghosh (2005), public libraries in India are in an abject state. The condition of the majority of Indian public libraries in rural areas is poor. According to Bhattacharjee (2002), Indian public library system is generally in a state of disrepair and does not provide meaningful services to the masses. According to Pyati (2009), one way to begin development of Indian economy is to reinvest in improved public infrastructure, such as education, information, and library services. According to Kaul (2002), “Our public library system in the country failed totally in bringing knowledge to the doorsteps of every individual. It is advisable for us to look at the problem afresh, especially when the computer and communication technologies have now become available to us at a minimal cost”. According to Singh (2012), many states in India face major challenges in running public libraries due to an acute shortage in infrastructure, funds and lack of local policies.

3.1 Objective of the study:

There may be so many objectives of any kind of study. But the below mentioned objectives are the main aim of this study. These are as follows-

- i) To know the present status of public libraries under Karimpur block.
- ii) To know the innovative idea to attract users to the public libraries.
- iii) To trace the ways of development of public library.
- iv) To find the obstacles behind the development of public libraries.

3.2 Scope:

The responses would be gathered and analysed for future upliftments of public libraries in this block. Local management may be unaware about the present scenario of the public libraries; they may take necessary actions for the development of public libraries. Hidden problems will be detected and some state level policies will be taken for the development of libraries.

3.3 Sample Size:

To get information about public libraries in Karimpur block, a substantial quantity of data must be collected. We would like to take data of 9 govt. sponsored public libraries in Karimpur block,

although 2 of them are closed, so total 7 libraries comes under the survey and 107 users as a sample of this study.

4.1 Research Methodology:

We are trying to show public library scenario in Karimpur block under Nadia district as a case study. I would gather all the necessary information regarding public libraries in Karimpur block. This work is based on survey method. A structured method like written questionnaire will be used for the study. We have made two separate questionnaires for survey. The survey work includes public library visit for primary data collection. In the next stage, the librarians and the users will be questioned using separate structured questionnaire. At the last stage, the collected data will be summarized and tabulated through different tables considering different points of view. Then tabulated data will be analysed based on the tables with the help of Microsoft Excel. Lastly, conclusions shall be made based on the findings.

4.2 Limitations:

There are some limitations of this study. These are as follows-

- i) Only nine government sponsored libraries have been considered and out of which seven used for this study.
- ii) Convenience sampling logic is followed for selecting the samples. This kind of sampling is not a good way of sampling, biasness may occur during data analysis.
- iii) Only few of the categories were considered for comparative study. There may be some other categories also.
- iv) Only Karimpur block of Nadia district is selected for the study. The selection of area could be better. This area may not show the actual scenario of the district or the state.
- v) Only 107 samples were collected for the study, which may not show the actual results. But one thing has to clarify that it was very difficult to collect these number of respondents too. As day by day users are decreasing in number, so it was very difficult to find any respondents for survey. I had to visit several times to different libraries to gather information.

In spite of this kind of limitations, we hope that the conditions of the govt. sponsored public libraries in Karimpur block has been depicted in this study and it is expected that the government should take necessary steps for the upliftment of the libraries not only in this block, but also in other blocks of the districts of West Bengal as a whole.

5. Observations and Features:

In this section, we are going to discuss the overall observations and features of the seven libraries. All the pros and cons are listed of the selected govt. sponsored libraries under Karimpur block. The observations are the results of the survey. Total seven libraries were surveyed and features are listed on the basis of the observations during survey.

5.1 Karimpur Public Library:

This library was established in the year 1967. It is situated in the heart of Karimpur city beside state highway. This library has its own pacca two storied building with 2520 sq.ft. area including a reading room with a seating capacity of 70 people and two stack rooms. It has two computers but the internet connection is not available. Due to its location facility so many users are attracted to the library. Recently the trend is declining.

5.2 Darermath Public Library:

This library was started in the year 1970 and got its recognition in the year 1984. It's also a rural library, situated in Darermath, which is under Murutia police station. It has its own land, which includes 840 sq.ft. area. It has a two storied building including one reading room and one stack room. Computer is not there in the library.

5.3 Kechuadanga Kishori Mohan Public Library:

It is the oldest public library among all. It was established in the year 1947 and got its recognition in the year 1957. It is situated in Kechuadanga village near Paratala bus stop, under Tehatta subdivision. This library has a two storied pacca building with 3360 sq.ft. area. It has four rooms including one reading room and two stack rooms. It's an old public library but still there are no computers in the library.

5.4 Poraghati Jagarani Pathagar:

It is also an old library in this block. It was established in the year 1965 and recognised in the year 1980. This library has its own pacca one storied house with three rooms including one stack room and one reading room. The problem with this library is the location. It is situated under Rajapur gram panchayat, Hogalbaria police station, Tehatta subdivision. It is a remote place as compared to the other libraries. ICT facility is still not there.

5.5 Natidanga Tarun Samity Pathagar:

It is established in the year 1659 under PS Thakurpara, Tehatta subdivision. This library has its own pacca one storied house with three rooms including one stack room and one reading room. The area is around 4620 sq.ft.

5.6 Sankhanagar Public Library:

It is established in the year 1977 and got recognised in the year 1980. It is situated under PS Murutia, Karimpur II block. It has its own pacca one storied building with two rooms including one stack room and one reading room with the area 2100 sq.ft.

5.7 Ganasikshapith Pathagar:

This library was established in the year 1955 and got recognised in the year 1980. It is situated under PS Karimpur and the nearest landmark is Mahisbathan bus stop. It has its own pacca one storied building with four rooms including one stack room and one reading room with the area 1528 sq.ft. No PC's, no internet connections are available in the library.

6. Data Analysis and Findings:

The data analysis could be divided into two parts-One is Overall Library study and last one is Overall User study. Under library study, a comparison has been taken place among seven libraries under different categories. Three tables have been made to compare each and every category, which shows the conditions of the libraries.

6.1 Overall Library Study

In this section overall library study will be discussed. Comparisons have been done using tables. The analysis of the tables will show the real picture of the libraries.

Table 1: Comparison in terms of physical set up of the libraries

Name of the libraries	Year of Establishments	Year of Sponsorship	Building Type	Building condition	Building Area	Avg. Seating capacity	Reading room	Librarian	Type
Karimpur Public Library	1967	1967	Pacca	Own	2520 sq.ft.	70	Yes	Yes	Rural

Darermath Public Library	1970	1984	Pacca	Own	840 sq.ft.	30	Yes	Yes	Rural
Kechuadanga Kishori Mohan Pub. Library	1947	1957	Pacca	Own	3360 sq.ft.	60	Yes	Yes	Rural
Poraghathi Jagarani Pathagar	1964	1980	Pacca	Own	2520 sq.ft.	20	No	Yes	Rural
Natidanga Tarun Samity Pathagar	1959	1959	Pacca	Own	4620 sq.ft.	80	Yes	Yes	Rural
Sankhanagar Public Library	1977	1980	Pacca	Own	2100 sq.ft.	50	Yes	Yes	Rural
Ganasikshapith Pathagar	1955	1980	Pacca	Own	1528 sq.ft.	40	Yes	Yes	Rural

After analysing the Table 1, it is seen that all seven libraries are in rural areas. Every library has its own land and pacca building. Every library has a librarian. Most of them are old libraries. Kechuadanga Kishori Mohan public library (1947) is the oldest library among them and Sankhanagar public library (1977) is the newest among them. Natidanga Tarun Samity Pathagar has the most building area (4620 sq.ft.) and Darermath public library has smallest area i.e.840 sq.ft. Every library has a separate reading room almost same sitting capacity except Poraghathi Jagarani Pathagar. This library does not have any separate reading room.

Table 2: Comparison in terms of working procedure of the libraries

Name of the libraries	Avg. Daily Visitor	Avg. daily Issue of books	Total members	Avg. New user every year	Total books	Acquisition of Books	Classification Scheme	Card catalogue
Karimpur Public Library	10	3	2545	60	6626	Purchase	DDC	Yes
Darermath Public Library	4	2	1345	30	4095	Purchase	DDC	Yes
Kechuadanga Kishori Mohan Pub. Library	12	6	5224	70	6380	Purchase	DDC	Yes
Poraghati Jagarani Pathagar	2	1	2340	20	4196	Purchase	DDC	Yes
Natidanga Tarun Samity Pathagar	5	3	6326	80	6327	Purchase	DDC	Yes
Sankhanagar Public Library	5	4	3451	40	2831	Purchase	DDC	Yes
Ganasikshapith Pathagar	4	2	6517	50	4100	Purchase	DDC	Yes

Table 2 comprises of the working procedure of the libraries. One important observation is that the average daily user visits to the library is very less in number for each and every library and the average daily issued books are also very less. There are several reasons for that. May be the library conditions are not good, may be the shortage of staff, non availability of updated books, due to the decreasing reading habits, all are discussed in the upcoming sections. It was found that every library has a hefty amount of members, among them Ganasikshapith Pathagar and Natidanga Tarun Samity Pathagar has more than 6000 members. Darermath Public Library has the lowest number of members. It is an important observation in the sense that it has the

capability to attract users, it has a sufficient collection but users are not interested to visit to the library. The reason may be a shortage of staff and the location may be a factor or some other issue. In case of yearly average user registration, Poraghati Jagarani Pathagar is the lowest among all. Due to its location members are not interested to visit to the library, as we know location is an important factor to satisfy the first law of library science, i.e. books are for use. It is seen that every library purchase books for improving their collections. Every library has its card catalogue and uses Dewey Decimal Classification (DDC) to classify books.

Table 3: Comparison in terms of User facilities in the libraries

Name of the libraries	Toilet facility	Water facility	Location	Newspaper facility	Electricity	Staff strength	ICT facility	Automated or not
Karimpur Public Library	Yes	Yes	Near Main Road	Yes	Yes	2	Yes	No
Darermath Public Library	Yes	No	Remote	Yes	Yes	1	No	No
Kechuadanga Kishori Mohan Pub. Library	Yes	Yes	Remote	Yes	Yes	1	No	No
Poraghati Jagarani Pathagar	No	Yes	Remote	Yes	Yes	1	No	No
Natidanga Tarun Samity Pathagar	Yes	Yes	Near Hospital	Yes	Yes	1	Yes	No
Sankhanagar Public Library	Yes	No	Near Primary School	Yes	Yes	1	No	No
Ganasikshapith Pathagar	Yes	Yes	Beside B.ed. College	Yes	Yes	1	No	No

In this table 3, I would like to discuss the user facilities in the libraries. It is observed that most of the libraries have toilet and water facilities but some of them do not have that facilities, which is very much essential for any kind of library. These are the primary requirements to the users, who are using reading room for their study. During survey it was observed that among all these libraries, Poraghati Jagarani Pathagar has the worst location, otherwise some of them have great positional benefits like Karimpur public library, and it is situated in the heart of the city, beside main road. All the libraries have electricity facilities and there are available Newspapers in all the libraries. The key factor about the libraries is staff strength; most of the libraries have only one staff i.e. Librarian, no other supporting staff are there to help them. One astonishing fact is that one librarian sometimes has to cover two libraries at a time due to retirement of the librarian. Another important observation is that only Karimpur and Natidanga libraries have computer facility, no other library has this facility. So it is expected that no library has automation facility, all procedures like circulation, cataloguing, issue/return of books are being done manually. When enquired about the barriers of automation, librarians were point out some reason for non implementation of automated system like lack of government fund for buying computers, lack of ICT trained staff and less number of users etc.

6.2 Individual Library wise User Study

In this part, we are going to analyse individual library wise user study. Earlier it was discussed that the total sample size was 107 and it is divided into seven libraries. Each library has more or less equal number of respondents. Karimpur and Sankhanagar public library has maximum respondents i.e. 17.

It is seen in table 4 that most of the library users are students for all library, after them retired and unemployed persons are also there. Natidanga Tarun Samity Pathagar has more number of student respondents from others.

Table 4: Occupation Wise

	Karimpur Public Library		Daremath Public Library		Kechuadanga Kishori Mohan Pub. Library		Poraghati Jagarani Pathagar		Natidanga Tarun Samity Pathagar		Sankhanagar Public Library		Ganasikshapith Pathagar.	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Student	8	47.08	6	46.15	5	31.25	5	35.73	11	68.75	9	52.95	7	50
Teacher	1	5.88	1	7.71	1	6.25	1	7.15	1	6.25	1	5.89	1	7.16

Research Scholar	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other service holder	2	11.76	2	15.38	4	25	3	21.42	0	0	2	11.76	2	14.28
Unemployed	3	17.64	2	15.38	3	18.75	2	14.28	2	12.5	2	11.76	2	14.28
Retired	3	17.64	2	15.38	3	18.75	3	21.42	2	12.5	3	17.64	2	14.28
Total	17	100	13	100	16	100	14	100	16	100	17	100	14	100

Table 5 shows the age of the respondents. It is observed that most of the respondents are from 5-30 age groups. Kechuadanga Kishori Mohan public library has the highest number of retired users.

Table 5: Age Wise

Age Group	Karimpur Public Library		Darermath Public Library		Kechuadanga Kishori Mohan Pub. Library		Poraghata Jagarani Pathagar		Natidanga Tarun Samity Pathagar		Sankhanga Public Library		Ganasikshapith Pathagar	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
5-17	7	41.17	4	30.76	3	18.75	5	35.71	7	43.75	6	35.29	3	21.42
18-30	7	41.17	7	53.84	2	12.5	6	42.85	5	31.25	5	29.41	6	42.85
31-45	1	5.88	0	0	2	12.5	3	21.42	2	12.5	3	17.64	4	23.52
46-60	0	0	1	7.69	4	25	0	0	0	0	2	11.76	0	0

60 and above	2	11.78	1	7.69	5	31.25	0	0	2	12.5	1	5.88	1	7.14
Total	17	100	13	100	16	100	14	100	16	100	17	100	14	100

Table 6 shows that almost there is equal gender distribution. Karimpur Public Library has the highest number of female respondents and Natidanga Tarun Samity Pathagar has the highest number of male respondents.

Table 6: Gender Wise

	Karimpur Public Library		Darermath Public Library		Kechuadang a Kishori Mohan Public Library		Poraghati Jagarani Pathagar		Natidanga Tarun Samity Pathagar		Sankhan agar Public Library		Ganasiks hapith Pathagar.	
	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%	No	%
Male	7	41.18	7	53.84	11	68.75	7	50	12	75	8	47.05	9	64.29
Female	10	58.82	6	46.16	5	31.25	7	50	4	25	9	52.95	5	35.71
Total	17	100	13	100	16	100	14	100	16	100	17	100	14	100

6.2 Overall User Study

Here, we are going to discuss the overall user study using tables and charts. As I discussed earlier the total responses was 107. Table 7 shows that most of the responses (i.e. 47.67%) are from students, but retired, unemployed and other service holders are also there in significant numbers too.

Table 7: Occupation wise Distribution

Occupation	No. of response	%
Student	51	47.67
Teacher	7	6.54
Research Scholar	0	0

Other service holder	15	14.01
Unemployed	16	14.96
Retired	18	16.82
Total	107	100

Table 8 is related to age pattern of the respondents. It is clear from the table that majority of the respondents are from age group of 05 to 17 and 18 to 30, i.e. 32.71% and 35.52% respectively. As in table 35, it is seen that most of the respondents are students, so the data of table 36 is also supports table 35.

Table 8: Age wise Distribution

Age Group	No of Responses	%
05-17	35	32.71
18-30	38	35.52
31-45	15	14.01
46-60	7	6.55
60 and above	12	11.21
Total	107	100

This table 9 shows the gender wise distribution of the respondents. It is seen that 57% respondents are male and 43% respondents are female. So, it can be assumed that male respondents visit libraries more than female respondents.

Table 9: Gender wise Distribution

Gender	Frequency	%
Male	61	57.00
Female	46	43.00
Total	107	100

Now, Table 10 shows the reading habits of the respondents. This result is not inspiring. Majority of the respondents (60.75%) are not regular visitor of the libraries. Only 39.25% respondents visit libraries regularly. The reason may be that the libraries are not so attractive to attract users regularly. Libraries have so many deficiencies.

Table 10: Reading Habits

Reading Habits	No. of response	%
Regularly	42	39.25
Occasionally	65	60.75
Total	107	100

Now it's time to focus on the main points that related to user study. The questions asked to the users about the facilities of the library on the basis of seven categories with three ranking options i.e. High, Average, Not satisfied. Table 11 shows the results of the survey. It is seen that most of the users are not satisfied (45.8%) with the reading room facilities, although most of the libraries has reading room but it is not quite satisfactory, there is a lack of proper maintenance. Cleanliness is also a big concern for the library. These libraries are not at all satisfactory to the users in terms of cleanliness. Users are quite satisfied with the arrangements of books and the location of the libraries. One important thing is that it seen that most of the users are not satisfied with the helpfulness of the library staff. The reason is expected as there is maximum one library staff to control the whole library; it's not possible for him/her to help every user at a particular time. After observing this table we could infer that all the facilities, which are given to the users are not high standard, it is below or average standards.

Table 11: Facilities of the Library

	High	%	Average	%	Not satisfied	%
Location	33	30.84	36	33.64	38	35.52
Arrangement of Books	41	38.31	36	33.64	30	28.05
Furniture and equipments	28	26.16	45	42.05	34	31.79
Lighting and Ventilation	31	28.97	51	47.66	25	23.37
Cleanliness	27	25.23	43	40.18	37	34.59
Helpfulness of Library staff	32	29.90	35	32.71	40	37.39
Reading room	22	20.56	36	33.64	49	45.8

Now, we are going to analyse Table 12, which is related to the satisfaction with library resources. This portion has also five categories, including the options high, average and not satisfied. It is seen from the table and graph that most of the users are not satisfied with the books, reference books, periodicals, newspapers, etc. So, it could be inferred that all the libraries may contain several good books but the books may be outdated or not properly maintained by

the staff. The less number of periodicals and newspapers are also a cause of concern for the users. So, it is clear that due to the lack of library resources or due to the lack of maintenance of library resources users not interested to visit the library.

Table 12: Satisfaction with library resources

	High	%	Average	%	Not satisfied	%
Books	2	14.28	2	14.28	10	71.42
Reference books	3	21.42	3	21.42	8	57.14
Periodicals	3	21.42	2	14.28	9	64.28
Newspapers	2	14.28	2	14.28	10	71.42
Others	2	14.28	2	14.28	10	71.42

Table 13 shows the results of the satisfaction with library services. The results are the same as expected. 57.14% of the users are not satisfied with the services. As there are no computers available in the libraries, so users are not getting internet services, reprography services, CAS, and SDI facilities. All the services are below average. The services are provided manually.

Table 13: Satisfaction with library services

	High	%	Average	%	Not satisfied	%
Circulation	2	14.28	3	21.42	9	64.28
Cataloguing	2	14.28	4	28.57	8	57.14
Reference	3	21.42	2	14.28	9	64.28
Reprography	0	0	2	14.28	12	85.71
Internet	0	0	0	0	14	100
CAS	0	0	0	0	14	100
SDI	0	0	0	0	14	100
Library network programme	0	0	0	0	14	100
Binding	2	14.28	4	28.58	8	57.14

Now, while asked about overall library functions, the results are like that table 14, only 16.83%

users are highly satisfied, while 41.12% users are averagely and 42.05% users are not at all satisfied with overall library. This shows the actual results of the survey. If we add average and not satisfaction percentage, almost 83 percent of users are not satisfied with the libraries. It's a big concern for the sake of public libraries. If users are not satisfied with the library, they would be reluctant to visit the library and it is the case for all libraries. It is kind of a threat to the libraries because already two libraries (Bagdanga public library and Dhoradaha Sadharan Pathagar) under Karimpur block were closed due to less number of staff and users. If the same situation persists, then the list would be longer after the retirement of the librarian.

Table 14: Overall library functions

High		Average		Not Satisfied	
No	%	No	%	No	%
18	16.83	44	41.12	45	42.05

7. Conclusion:

After the detailed analysis of the libraries, the final conclusion could be made. The conclusion could be divided into two parts- one is justification and another is suggestions. In the justification part, I would like to justify the objectives of the study and will show how the objectives of the study fulfilled? The second part is suggestion, in this section; I would like to suggest whatever suggestions came from the survey both from the library perspective and from the user's perspective.

7.1 Justifications:

The first objective was to know the present status of public libraries under Karimpur block. The result is very shocking. Very less number of users is visited regularly to the libraries. Some of the libraries do not have permanent librarians. Some librarians are managing two libraries at a time. Only few libraries have computers for personal use only. Most of the libraries don't have toilet and drinking water facilities. After analysing the libraries, it is clear from the viewpoint of surveyor that Karimpur public library has the best facilities to attract users, which consist of its location, engagement of permanent librarian, ICT facilities, well maintained reading room, other facilities as a whole and Poraghati Jagarani Pathagar has the worst condition overall, mainly due to its location, no toilets, no drinking water facility, non cleanliness etc. Two libraries, under Karimpur block are already closed due to the above mentioned problems, so if proper action is not taken at the earliest the list will be longer.

The second objective is to find the obstacles behind the development of public libraries. After the detailed survey, it is found that there are several policy level obstacles. The first is the ignorance of state government. Although this state has a library minister but the recruitment process of librarian was stopped for the last 7 to 8 years. No recruitment process occurs after the retirement of librarians. Last few years some retired librarians were recruited with a token amount of money. The public library network of the state is trying to link all the libraries with networking, but ground level scenario is very poor. Most of the libraries do not have ICT facility. Most of the

libraries do not have minimum user's facilities like drinking water, toilet, reading room etc. Some library buildings are in poor conditions, proper maintenance could not take place.

The third one is to trace the ways of development of public library. More funds are required for the development of infrastructures. Users are not attracted to the library, only by its collection. Without proper development of user facilities like drinking water facilities, sanitary facility, proper reading room, ICT facility, it's difficult to attract users. There is an urgent requirement of immediate recruitment in the vacant posts, without a librarian it's impossible to continue a public library. State should provide computers and other accessories to attract users and also to provide CAS, SDI type of services. User awareness program is also required to run these libraries.

7.2 Suggestions:

The fourth objective is to know the innovative idea to attract users to the public libraries. During the survey several suggestions came out from the respondents. Some of them are merged and listed below:

Library Perspective:

- i) Recruitment of more staff: Recruitment process should continue to provide better services.
- ii) Recent updated books: Recent updated books should be purchased to attract users.
- iii) Permanent librarian for all libraries: Every library should have a permanent librarian.
- iv) More furniture for keeping books and other important documents: For arrangements of books more furniture to be purchased and comfortable chairs for reading rooms are required.
- v) More number of journals/magazines/newspapers: More number of journals/magazines should procure to attract users. Local newspapers should also be collected.
- vi) Community development programs: Libraries should arrange more community development programs to show its importance towards society.
- vii) User awareness programs: User awareness programs should be continued to let them know about the local libraries.

User Perspective:

- i) Toilet and sanitation facility: Toilet and washrooms should be constructed near the libraries.
- ii) Drinking water facility: Arsenic free drinking water project should be implemented.
- iii) ICT facility: Purchase of computers and internet facilities for all libraries.
- iv) More reference services: Reference services should be there for career counseling.
- v) Polite behavior from the staff: Staff behavior should be polite to attract users.

7.3 State government policies:

State government has taken some initiatives to attract users to the libraries. The main initiatives are listed below:

i) Computerization and digitisation Programme of Libraries:

The Directorate of Library Services, with the help of Raja Rammohun Roy Library Foundation, presently working on implementing a computerized networking system of the libraries in the state of West Bengal. It is being done to meet the demand of the users and to disseminate information through electronic media and to make public library as a place to visit. The step by step procedure is too followed like a) Creation of library catalogue b) Digital archive of rare books and Government publications c) Community Information Service.

ii) Digitisation of rare books with the help of C- DAC, Kolkata:

An initiative has been taken to digitalise of rare books with the help of C-DAC. Presently, it is working in state-central library, government libraries and district libraries. In near future it will work for rural libraries too.

iii) Establishment of community library cum information centres:

Community library cum information centers are to be established in those Gram Panchayats only where there is neither a Govt. nor a Govt. sponsored library under initiative of the community. This will help community.

iii) Free membership for all: Government of West Bengal has started a plan to boost the public library users, i.e. free membership for all. Earlier if someone wants to become a member of the library, he/she has to pay some amount of money, which may be a cause of concern for rural poor people. So, the membership fees are waived now to attract more users to the library.

After all these discussions, hope Government could realise the need of the librarian for every public library and focus on other lacunas, to save the public libraries of the state. Presently, state government is taking some initiatives for the development of the public library, hope this will help in the progress of public library.

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