

## Study on the User Need in Public Library in the Light of NML: A Case Study in Barrackpore Subdivision of West Bengal

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***Abstract** - Public Library is also called People University and it plays a vital role in the society. It provides free reading facilities for the users. To achieve the Lifelong learning role of public library is very much important. It supports both formal and informal education to the users. The services of the public libraries have been emerged with help of ICT. It supports the greater infrastructure and technology that help public libraries to provide their better services to their users. These papers focus the user needs under the light of NML; also highlight the scenario of surveyed public libraries in Barrackpore Subdivision so that the model framework can be developed.*

**Keywords:** User needs in Public Library, NML and Barrackpore Subdivision.

### Introduction:

Library is a store house of knowledge as well as best place for nation's buildings. There are three types of libraries such as Public Library, Academic Library and Special Library. Among those types of libraries enveloped to the society in modern times. Here Public Library is most fascinating ones for the different Geographical, Economical, Social, educational and Political performance. The fundamental needs of Public Libraries are communication of information, recreation and socio-cultural development. Today information is a vital resource for social-development. The value of information is determined on the basis of its availability that provides right users at the right time in the right form but now a day it is not enough to provide good services. Today public libraries compete with various agencies such as mass media, electronic media and internet etc. If the public library should presence their existence in to the society, they need to revamp their infrastructures and services.

### Review of Literature

According to **Dasgupta, (2000)** The community user needs analysis is a structured, planned, formal study that identifies the information requirements of a library's patrons. Need of information in changing environment is due to socio economic aspects, social condition, political conditions and behavioral aspects. **Parvathamma and Shanker (2009)** surveyed on use of information resources and services in the public libraries of Bidar District, Karnataka State, India show that a majority of the users were men between the age group of 11 – 30

years and they included students, unemployed youth or employees in private sector, belonging to lower and middle income group. In words of **Gausul Hoq, Kazi Mostak (2014)** Rural library and information centers could play a significant role in the socio-economic development of rural areas by providing information and communication services to the rural people. **Balasubramanian et.al. (2012)** In his paper discusses about modernization with programmes in public libraries with reference to Tamil Nadu. Modernization is a course that a library constantly applies to new technology by taking the computer as the core to replace manual operations so that it can meet the needs of society and serve better.

### **Scope and Coverage**

North 24 Parganas District has five subdivisions - Bangaon, Barasat, Barrackpore, Basirhat, and Bidhannagar. The area of study is limited to the public libraries at the Barrackpore Subdivision.

Barrackpore subdivision has been farther divided into the following:

- 16 municipalities ( Kachrapara, Halisahare, Naihati, Bhatpara, Garulia, Barrackpore, North Barrackpore, Newbarrackpore, Titagarh, Khardah, Panihati, Kamarhati, baranagarh, Dum Dum, North Dum Dum, South Dum Dum)
- 1 Cantonment board (Barrackpore Cantonment)
- 1 Census town (Ichhapur Defence estate)
- 2 community development block: Barrackpore I and Barrackpore II ([https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Barrackpore\\_subdivision](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Barrackpore_subdivision))

There are 72 public libraries in Barrackpore Subdivision. The earliest public library set up at Barrackpore Subdivision was Anriadaha Association Library & Literary Club in 1870. For the next sixty years only nine public libraries were founded. Those were Agarpara Pathagar (1891), Belgharia Parimohan Memorial Town Library (1904), Bhatpara Sahitya Mandir (1904), Mulajore Bharatchandra Granthagar (1906), Banikm Sahitya Sammilani (1907), Sriguru Granthashram (1910), Panihati Town Library (1914), Bandipur Sammilani Pathagar (1928), and Rastraguru Surendranath Institute (1928). Before independence another 10 public libraries came up. Most of the public libraries were established before the West Bengal Public Library Act was passed in 1979. Only 19 public libraries were founded during the period 1979 till date.

The earliest public library at the Barrackpore Subdivision to get government sponsorship was Ramkrishna Mission Asram Area Library in 1958. Altogether 9 public libraries received government sponsorship before 1979. The remaining 75 public libraries received government sponsorship in different period within 1988. Majority of the public libraries have their own building and all the public libraries have electric connections. Barrackpore Subdivision has one district library, Ramkrishna Mission Boy's Home District Library set up in 1955. There are 24 town libraries, 5 rural libraries and 54 primary unit libraries in Barrackpore Subdivision.

### **Objective:**

- To identify the user needs in public libraries under the Barrackpore Subdivision.
- To know the services which are being rendered at present.
- To relate the user needs with infrastructure and technological component of NML.

**Methodology:**

A combination of structured questionnaire and interview method was employed to gather data. Data were collected from 50 members selected randomly from among the regular members of 72 public libraries in Barrackpore Subdivision. The survey was conducted during November to March, 2017-2018.

**About NML:**

On 3<sup>rd</sup> February 2014 President Sri Pranab Mukherjee launched the National Mission on Libraries, an initiative of the Ministry of Culture to modernise and digitally link public libraries across the country.

Under the scheme, six libraries under the cultural ministry, 35 Central libraries in states and 35 District libraries will be developed as model libraries. Emphasis will on developing these libraries in economically backward districts. Further, 629 district libraries across the states would be provided network connectivity. For setting up of the model libraries, existing libraries would be identified in consultation with the state governments to improve infrastructures and upgrade technology used by them.

NML also intended to create a National Virtual Library of India to facilitate a comprehensive database on digital resources, carry out a census on the resources available in the libraries and conduct a study on the reading habits in different regions of the country. In the revamped libraries, cataloguing will be done not only books and journals but also of all policies of the government in public domain to facilitate easy access and research work. Efforts will also be made to provide reading material in a multilingual mode. Besides upgrading the infrastructure of public libraries, a major component of NML is to initiating need-based training programmes to develop managerial skills and IT companies of their personnel in tune with demands of the Internet era.

The chief objectives of NML are to create world class library system, fostering reading habits, facilitate research work and provide information to people in a timely and convenient manner which is also universal and equitable.

**NML Components:**

Among below two main infrastructural components, we have selected some sub components for up gradation. Following sub components are two main components are:

**Infrastructure components**

- Generator set
- Purified drinking water
- Proper reading room
- Proper section for different able persons.
- Proper section for children

**Technological components**

- Computer facility
- Internet facility

- Wi-Fi facility
- OPAC terminal
- Online facility

**Analysis of Data**

**Studies in Public Library Infrastructure**

**Table 1: Infrastructe Facilities**

<b>Building capacity and section</b>	
Reading room	All libraries have a reading room facilities
Librarian room	64 libraries have separate librarian room
Hall	Only 9 libraries have common room or hall
Children section	60 libraries have separate children section and rest are not
Reference section	55 libraries have separate reference section and rest are not
News paper section	72 libraries have news paper section
Different able person	72 libraries have no particular different able section
Computer facility	61 libraries have computer but use only librarian
Internet facility	No libraries provide internet facility
Purified Drinking water	Only 5 library have purified drinking water facility

Most public library facilitates this common section for their users. But the capacity is very less; it is not adequate in present time.

**Table-2: Age group of respondents**

Age group (years)	No. of respondents	Percentage
10-20	9	18%
21-30	20	40%
31-40	5	10%
41-50	3	6%
51-60	6	12%
61-70	7	14%

Mostly public library users among the respondents studied belong to the age group of 21-30 years. This may indicate that students who belong to lower age group prefer libraries attached to their academic institutes to public libraries. While the information needs of respondents belonging to comparatively higher age group are satisfied by the public libraries.

**Table-3: Distribution of respondents by gender**

<b>Gender</b>		<b>Total</b>
Male	Female	
44 (88%)	6 (12%)	50(100%)

Table 3 shows that out of 50 respondents, 44(88%) are male candidate and 6(12%) are female candidate.

**Table-4: Distribution of respondents by Academic Background**

Academic Background			Total
School	College	Universities	
16 (32%)	28(56%)	6(12%)	50(100%)

Table 4 shows that out of 50 respondents, 16(32%) are School level candidate, 28(56%) are College level candidate that shows the highest and 6(12%) are the Universities level candidate that are shows the lowest.

**Table-5: Distribution of Resources**

Age Group (years)	Books	News Papers	Magazines	Carrier Guidance
Up to 15	√	√	-	-
16-18	√	√	-	-
19-21	√	√	X	X
22-30	√	√	X	X
31-40	√	√	√	X
41-50	√	√	√	-
51-60	√	√	-	-
61-70	√	√	-	-

Table 5 shows that all the age groups are consent books and newspaper are adequate in library, up to 18 age group people are not concern about magazine and carrier guidance, up to 19-30 are consent there are not adequate magazine and carrier guidance, up to 31-50 are admitted there are sufficient magazine but not concern about carrier guidance and up to 51-70 are not concern about magazine and carrier guidance.

**Table-6: Number of members of surveyed libraries**

No. of Members	No. of Libraries
200	15
400	11
600	20
800	17
1000	6
1200	3

Above table shows that 600-800 members are most in Public Libraries and second is 200 members, less numbers of libraries reach 1000 above members

Table-7 Collection of libraries

No. of Collections	No. of Libraries
Less than 5000	14
10000	10
15000	20
20000	27
25000	1

This table shows that 600-800 members are most in Public Libraries and second is 200 members, less numbers of libraries reach 1000 above members

**Table-8 Distribution of electronic gadgets**

Age group of year	Computer	Internet	OPAC
Up to 15	√	√	X
16-18	√	√	X
19-21	√	√	√
22-30	√	√	√
31-40	√	√	√
41-50	√	√	√
51-60	√	√	√
61-70	√	√	√

Table 8 shows that all the age groups are admitted to provide computer and internet facility to the users but they are not aware OPAC facility. And rest of the respondents are admitted all the facility need to provide the Public Library for the users.

### Findings

- The highest numbers of 20(40%) respondents are belonging to the age group of 21-30 are used public library.
- Out of 50 respondents, 44 (88%) are male users and rest 6(12%) are female users visit to the library.
- Out of 50 respondents, 28(56%) are college level users which is the highest to use public libraries.
- Below the 18 age groups of users are not interested to read magazines and carrier guidance books.
- 19- 30 age groups of users agreed that there are not suitable magazines and carrier guidance books for informal education.
- 51- 70 age groups of users are not interested to read magazines and carrier guidance books.
- 600 members are present in 20 libraries which is highest number of libraries. Highest numbers of members are 1200 which have 3 libraries.
- 20000 collections are present in 27 libraries, out of 72 surveyed libraries.
- Computer, Internet and OPAC facilities are approved by the respondents of all surveyed public libraries.

### Conclusion

Most surveyed public libraries have no sufficient infrastructure and electronic equipment to provide their better services to the users. Public libraries may exist their importance to the society they need to improve their services, through computers, internet, mobile apps, books fair and exhibition and seminars.

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