

LIBRARY DEVELOPMENT PLAN FOR DELHI STATE

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[Makes a population-analysis of the Delhi State from the angle of library service. Recommends the use of the Social Education Centres for reading books to the 10 lakhs of illiterates. Estimates the ultimate library personality of the State to be made of one State Central Library as distribution centre, 16 service branches and 6 librachines. Recommends the establishment of one service branch and one librachine each year. Recommends placing the development of the library system on a statutory basis]

1. Social Data

11. In Delhi State eighteen lakhs of people live in 600 square miles giving a density of 3,000 per square mile. Library service to a closely packed population like this has to be planned quite differently from that for the ordinary distribution of population in the districts of the other States in India.

12. The density in Delhi State is not uniform. It is as much as $1\frac{1}{2}$ lakhs per square mile in Delhi Municipal Area where 900,000 people live in seven square miles. It is 8,000 per square mile in New Delhi with its population of three lakhs. Indeed these two areas account for twelve out of the eighteen lakhs of people in the Delhi State.

13. Of the remaining six lakhs one and a half lakhs live in the two small city-like areas—Civil Lines and Delhi West.

14. About a lakh and a half live in the six small townships Cantonment, Shahdara, Red Fort, Narela, Mehroli, and Najaf Garh.

15. The remaining three lakhs live scattered in 300 villages.

16. The organisation of library service cannot therefore be uniform even for the compact Delhi State.

17. Literacy is another factor determining the form of organisation. In the Delhi State about two lakhs are infants needing no library service. About two lakhs form school-going population.

With its limited finances and technical man-power, India cannot afford to have a separate children's wing in its public libraries. Lack of transport facilities and poor safety measures make it also undesirable for children to walk to a public library far from their homes to get their library service. The proper thing will be to develop a library in each school. The school library will not have the necessary atmosphere unless it is put in charge of a full-time librarian with training in teaching as well as in library service. Moreover the school library should function outside the class hours. It will be less of a strain for the children if the school library tunes its service in resonance to work in class room as well as to the life in the community.

18. The public library service will have to serve only fourteen lakhs of adults. Out of these only four lakhs are literate. They alone can take advantage of the normal mode of library service. This does not mean that the remaining ten lakhs are to be overlooked by the library system of the State. These ten lakhs of illiterates cannot all be made literate within their life time. But even without literacy they are all educable. They can all benefit from books if books are read to them. Library service to these ten lakhs will have therefore to provide for readers who will read books to them. Who should be the agency for this? In Delhi, thanks to the enlightened policy of the Delhi Municipal Authorities and the Government of the Delhi State there are several Social Education Centres. These Centres should be increased in number. The public library system of the State should provide books to these centres. In them social education leaders should organise the reading of books to the illiterates.

2 Ultimate Library Personality

On an average, there should be one branch library in every square mile with a population of not less than 5,000. The size of the Delhi State is too small to have a District or City Central Library over and above the State Central Library. The ultimate library personality of the Delhi State may have to consist of the following:-

State Central Library	1
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Branch Libraries in the area of the Delhi Municipality	9
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Branch Libraries in New Delhi	3
Branch Library in Civil Lines	1
Branch Library in Delhi West	1
Branch Library in Delhi Cantonment	1
Branch Library in Shahdara	1
Total Branch Libraries	16

Library Van for periodical exchange of books between the State Central Library and the 16 Branches	1
Librachine (= Travelling Library carrying about two thousand volumes for service) in the rural areas).	5

Note:-The three lakhs of people in the rural areas may require about two hundred Delivery Stations. One Librachine can serve forty Delivery Stations, twice a month.

3 First Stage

31. Obviously such fullfledged service will not be practicable in the earlier years of development. For we have neither the library man-power nor the finance nor the books to start library service in fullfledged form. We have to cut the coat according to cloth. It is also necessary that there should not be wastage or duplication of machinery. Perhaps the first step will be to pool the existing resources. No social purpose can be served by having the Hardinge Library and the Delhi Public Library as independent institutions within a few yards of each other. One of them should function as the Branch Library for the area. The other should form the nucleus of the State Central Library.

32. I am aware of certain vested interests which have developed round the two libraries and may resist any pooling. But in the interest of the social service which they were originally intended to do, it should be possible to rise above vested interests and do what is best for social service.

33. The one chosen to be the State Central Library will not have to do any direct service to the public. It will really be a distributing centre. All purchases of reading materials and their technical organisation and physical treatment will have to be done by the State Central Library. The State Central Librarian should

administer it. But his work will not be exhausted with the purchase and distribution of books. He should promote the development of Branch Libraries and Travelling Libraries. He should also prepare the public for the acceptance of library service. For this he should be a man of sterling character. He should place service to the public above his own narrow private interests. He should not be a predatory.

34. The library chosen as the Branch Library for an area should be relieved of all administrative work. It should be a Service Library. Its man-power should be entirely turned on book service to the literate public and the running of all forms of extension service to make the library the true hub of all the intellectual development and social activities of the area.

35. Reading to the illiterates can be taken on hand immediately in each mohalla and village having a Social Education Centre. The Social Education Centres should be for most purposes under the management of the Social Education Department. But in its library service it should be regarded as an agency of the State Central Library.

4 Second Step

Perhaps it will be possible to establish one additional Branch Library and one additional Travelling Library each year. The Centre where the former should be established and the area that should be served by the latter, will have to be determined from year to year. In this manner in about ten years, library service can be brought within easy reach of every citizen of the Delhi State.

5 Service by Librachine

Until Branch Library is established in each area, a Librachine may be set up to serve books in each mohalla at stated hours once in a fortnight or once in a month. The ladies may have to be served in this way for a few years. Perhaps three Librachines might prove sufficient during the first two years. There is already one set up by the Delhi Public Library. Two more should be added as early as possible.

51 TRAVELLING LIBRARY PERSONNEL

Each Librachine should be manned by three persons :

1. One Reference Librarian capable of helping readers

in the choice of reading materials and canvassing readers for books ;

2. One Assistant who can be incharge of the mechanics of issue and return of reading materials. He should also be able to drive the Librachine. In our country people may think it infradig to drive the Librachine. But I have seen in all the developed countries of the West that it is one of the library staff that drives the Travelling Library Van.

3. An Unskilled Assistant who will keep the books in proper order and will also look after the cleaning etc. of the Librachine. This staff can go out to field service only for five days in the week. The sixth day will have to be spent by them in the State Central Library :

- 1 To make the weekly discharge of the books ;
- 2 To select the books needed for the next week's round ;
- 3 To have the Librachine serviced.

The seventh day will naturally be a weekly holiday for the staff.

6 Production of Literature

61 One of the handicaps in the development of library service today is book-famine. Books in Hindi and on all kinds of subjects including arts and crafts and not merely philosophy or politics, are not available in sufficient quantity and variety. This book-famine, however, cannot be lifted by the Government of the Delhi State all by itself. For this purpose it should ally itself with the Governments in the entire Hindi-speaking area of the country. Perhaps the best way in which book production can be stimulated is for all the governments in the Hindi-speaking area jointly to give guarantee for the purchase of a certain number of copies for the public library service maintained by them, provided the books satisfy a certain prescribed standard in regard to subject coverage, readability, illustrations and physical make up. In my book on *Social education literature* I have examined all these factors from the angle of library service to the common man. In that book I have also examined the danger of the government itself becoming the publisher or of leaving the whole job entirely in the hands of private profit-making publishers. I need not repeat all those arguments here. It occurs to me that stimulation in the manner suggested above may prove least harmful. Even the method of offering prizes etc. by

the government for the best authors often gets vitiated in the hands of the bureaucracy. This method of discovering and encouraging authors can be done more effectively by the publishing trade. Therefore it seems to me that it is best for the government to prescribe standards and to promise purchase of several copies of books.

62 To begin with, it may be difficult to have original books written on all arts and crafts and on the fundamental sciences, be they natural or social. Therefore the State should be willing to give similar guarantee in regard to adaptation of foreign books to the needs of Indian readers.

63 Another method of benefitting the authors more assuredly and thereby encouraging new authors to come forward, and of protecting them from capitalist publishers is being practised by Norway. According to its latest Library Act which came into force on 1 July 1949, 50% of the library budget voted by Government is being used as subsidy for a Royalty Fund for Norwegian authors. This fund is used to give royalty to contemporary authors and to widows of authors.

7 Legislation

In an ordinary constituent State which has to raise its own fund for public library service, I would insist on library service being based on a full-blown statutory basis. But the Delhi State is in a peculiar condition in regard to its income and expenditure. If it can get the assurance of the Central Government for continuing library grant on an agreed scale depending on the size of the population served, there may not be necessity for a regular Library Act. Perhaps a modified Act setting forth the pace of library development and the standards to be maintained might prove sufficient.

8 Details

In the *Library legislation: Handbook to Madras Library Act (1953)* I have established objective methods for determining the funds necessary for library service, the man-power needed and the proportion of different grades of professional staff for the library system of a State as a whole. When the Time is ripe for getting into such details, the details of the plan for each year can be decided objectively and in the measure of the resources available.