

# Library and Information Science in Educational Development to the Rural Population

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**Editors**

Champa Devi Goswami  
Prithiraj Barkakoty

Raha College Publishing Board  
Raha, Nagaon (Assam)



**PRESENT STATUS OF RURAL LIBRARY AND ITS  
PROBLEMS: A CASE STUDY UNDER TAMULPUR  
AREA, BAKSA DISTRICT, ASSAM.**

**Sri Sanjib Kr. Tarafdar, Librarian**  
AIRTSC, Guwahati

**Sri Shyam Thakuria, Librarian**  
NIRD, Guwahati

**Mrs. Gitika Das, Librarian**  
Karmashree Hiteswar Saikia College, Guwahati

**ABSTRACT**

This paper is an attempt to depict the picture of rural libraries under Tamulpur area. So far our study concerns, the ongoing scenario of rural library in the study area is not satisfactory, because of the non existence of sufficient numbers of rural libraries. From the field study it appeared that in a huge area comprising 48 numbers of revenue villages, there is a single rural library with a limited infrastructure and the library contains minimum number of books due to which the users have to visit other library like sub-divisional library. Moreover there is also a library run by NGO, which is located in Latibari area and it is known as Bodofa library with little bit of infrastructure. This library contains a few collection of books and thus fulfil certain demands of the users. It is observed that the area under the study has a great demand of rural library, unfortunately due to some technical lacunae it has posed certain problems in establishing rural libraries not merely in those areas under my study but in whole Assam as well. It is reported that there are 23 numbers of rural libraries in B.T.A.D.

which are running with a meagre condition. The real fact is that the public libraries in the state are surviving without library legislation. The library legislation is a virtual instrument for the development of libraries in a planned manner which maintains a uniform pattern of libraries. Though 19 states have so far enacted library legislation in India, unfortunately Assam has yet to become a part of it. As a matter of fact, the financial requirement is purely based on the consideration of the Government in each and every year. These are the basic problems encountered by the rural libraries in the area under our study, which further has enhanced the preponderance of present research problem.

## INTRODUCTION:

Public library system is a major library area in the society. It leads the society from various points like education, knowledge, information, culture, economy etc. Public library is known as people's university due to its unequal democratic characteristics. It is a common platform for the society without any distinction. Therefore public library is meant for the people of the people and by the people. Rural libraries are an important part of the public library system. It is only the knowledge disseminating centre for the rural society for the masses. Rural libraries may be called the heart of the rural communities.

## AREA OF STUDY

The study was carried out in Tamulpur development block that comprises twelve Gram Panchayats with forty eight revenue villages. The villages are dominated by tribal people. Paktijuli is a village in which the model rural library is located. It is 73 kms away from the district head quarter Musalpur. The total population of the block is 126326, out of which 46290 persons (36.64%) belong to Scheduled

Literacy Rate and total population of Scheduled Tribes Population.

	Persons	Males	Females
Literates	21150	13183	8527
Illiterates	24783	17186	14084
Literacy rate	55.5	67.6	43.2
Graduates	269	221	48

From the field study it appears that in a huge area comprising 48 of revenue villages, there is a single rural library at Paktijuli village under Kumarikata Gaon Panchayat and the said G.P. is constituted by 9 Revenue villages with a limited infrastructure and the library contains minimum number of books due to which the users have to visit other library like sub-divisional library. There is one Primary and Secondary Schools and a junior college which is located at Kumarikata. Currently the map of Bodoland includes the Bodoland Territorial Area District (BTAD) administered by the autonomous Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC). The territory came into existence under the Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC) accord which was signed in 2003. The maps of the Bodoland overlaps with the district of Kokrajhar, Baska, Chirang and Udalguri in the state of Assam.

## OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

The objectives of the studies are as follows:

1. To know the existing status of Rural Library of Tamulpur Areas.
2. To study the infrastructure of rural library.
3. To identify the real picture of rural library in Tamulpur Area.

## METHODOLOGY:

The following methods of investigation have been adopted to carry out the study. For this study, survey method was adopted. The study was based on both primary and

secondary data. For collection of data, survey method was adopted and main data was collected through questionnaire. Required information were collected adopting personal observation and interview methods. Certain data and secondary information have been collected from the available micro and macro literature.

## RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

After formation of Bodoland Territorial Autonomous Council (BTAD), the BTAD authority has formed Directorate of Library Service, to improve, supervise and control the service in BTAD areas. The directorate of Library Service is headed after by the BTC administration. After its debut, BTC administration has established 4 District libraries in the districts of Kokrajhar, Baksa, Chirang and Udalguri along with 2 sub-divisional libraries, 4 Model Rural libraries. Hitherto 23 rural libraries have already been established in the different parts of the said council. The existing number of the libraries established under library service directorate so far the state is concerned may be highlighted by the following table.

Table no. 1

Structure of Libraries under the Directorate of Library Service

Sl. No	Types of Libraries	No. of Libraries
1	Directorate of Library Service, BTAD	1
2	District Library	4
3	Sub-Divisional Library	2
4	Model Rural Library	4
5	Rural Library	23
Total		34 Nos.

From the above table it is revealed that there are 34 of libraries of different categories with their minimum infrastructure.

Table no. 2

Districts wise distribution of rural libraries in BTAD area.

Sl. No	Status of Rural Library in B.T.A.D. Dist.	No. of Libraries
1	Kokrajhar	10
2	Chirang	8
3	Baksa	4
4	Udalguri	1
Total		23 Nos.

From the field study it appears that there are 23 rural libraries in 4 BTAD districts which are established by the BTC administration with a limited infrastructure and these libraries contain minimum number of books due to which the users have to visit other library like sub-divisional library. Moreover there is also a library run by NGO, which is located in Latibari area and it is known as Bodofa library with little bit of infrastructure. This library contains few collection of books and thus fulfil certain demands of the users. The Bodofa Library was established in 2006 with its aim to spread out the quality education in the villages located in the border areas of Assam bounded by Bhutan.

In Paktijuli village of Tamulpur development block which falls under the No.1 Paschim Kumarikata Gaon Panchayat, there is a Model Rural Library known as JB Gyansali Library which was established in 6<sup>th</sup> February, 2010. This is the only library which is trying to bridge the gap of educational needs of a huge area of the said block of 126326 populations.

## INFRASTRUCTURAL CONDITION OF THE LIBRARY:

Infrastructure development is one of the most important components for quality based library services. The building, furniture, reading materials etc. must be considered as an essential element. The infrastructure development is needed to satisfy the Five Laws of Library Science enunciated by Dr. S.R. Ranganathan who is the father of library science in



India. The infrastructure development of libraries in BTAD areas should be developed as per society's satisfaction.

### **BUILDING:**

Paktijuli Model Rural Library building is located in its own building and is attached with the community hall. It is a RCC one storeyed building and the area of the building is 2275 sq. feet. It contains sufficient numbers of rooms. It is observed that there is a separate room kept for librarian and computer operator. A well maintained counter attending area, reading space and book keeping space etc. are also observed during our visit of the library.

### **FURNITURE:**

Regarding furniture, the library is lagging behind. In the name of the furniture the library is having 4 reading tables along with 12 chairs. The library comprises ten steel book shelves. There are three numbers of office tables with storage drawers along with chairs for the Librarian, Computer Operator and Counter Attendants to perform their official works.

### **STAFF PATTERN, QUALIFICATION AND SALARY:**

The model library is taken care of by four numbers of staff. The following table shows the present staff pattern of the library under our study. It is observed that the library matter is looked after by a librarian who is assisted by a computer operator, a counter attendants and a grade-IV employee. A lump-sum amount of pay is given to the library staff which is borne by BTC administration. So far the qualification of the librarian is concerned, the present librarian is a simple graduate with a seven days training certificate which is not enough to be a librarian.

**Table-3**

Designation	Qualification	Professional Qualification	Professional Training	Salary
Librarian	B.A.	Nil	7 days training has given by the District Librarian.	Rs. 5500/- Fixed PM
Computer Operator	B.A.	Diploma in Computer Application	Nil	Rs. 5200/- Fixed PM
Counter Attendants	H.S.	Nil	Nil	Rs. 3200/- Fixed PM
Grade IV	IX Pass	Nil	Nil	Rs. 2620/- Fixed PM

Regarding salary, the staffs are not satisfied due to which they have lost their mental encouragement of work.

### **FUNDS:**

Finance is the major determining factor for development of all non profit making social institutions. Library is such an institution where timely and proper financial allocation is an utmost important aspect. It is the force that defines the functions, power and amount of autonomy. The prime financial sources of rural libraries are public donation and government grant. But most of the rural libraries are unable to get proper financial support either from the public or from the government since they are functioning without library legislation.

Most of the rural libraries are maintained through public donation, but the people of rural areas are not financially sound and as such they are not able to donate for the library. This picture is also the same under the study area. In our observation it has been found that the model rural library of Paktijuli which is already termed as the only library of a huge area of Tamulpur development block has been receiving only Rs.10,000/- per year as contingency, which can't fulfil the recurring needs of the establishment although the expenditure on books, furniture, electrical supply etc. are borne by the BTC authority. An attempt has been made in the following table to highlight the present funding pattern of the library.

Table-4  
FUNDING PATTERN OF THE LIBRARY:

Source	2008-2011	2011-2012	2012-2013
Govt. Assistance	Rs. 10,000/- As Contingency and around Rs. 20,000/- for book purchase. The books are purchased by District authority.	Rs. 10,000/- As Contingency and around Rs. 30,000/- for book purchase. The books are purchased by District authority.	Rs. 10,000/- As Contingency and around Rs. 30,000/- for book purchase. The books are purchased by District authority.
Funding Agency	NIL	NIL	NIL
Donation	NIL	NIL	NIL
Managerial body	NIL	NIL	NIL

Thus it can very easily be assumed that Fund, Manpower, lake of awareness, lake of publicity etc. are the main factors that inhibits the development, spread and establishment of rural libraries in BTAD areas of Assam. Now time has come to lay utmost priority to establish rural library in remote rural areas so that the access can be easily absorbed by the rural marginal and poor users. One of the most noteworthy and noticeable factor existing in rural library is the procurement of books which is usually done or is a highly centralized procedure of bureaucracy in which the RRRLF or the Directorate of Library Service takes the active part and local needs of the community are summarily disregarded in acquisition of books for the library. Thus community's aspirations have been found to be neglected by the library service authority. Following table shows the collection of books available in the library under my study.

#### SERVICE RENDERED BY THE LIBRARY:

By and large, Paktijuli being a model rural library tries to render the maximum service though they possess minimum infrastructure. The library has a good reading room where 12 users can sit together. Moreover, the library has good power facility with attached toilet or drinking water facility. The bonafied members can borrow or issue books for a limited period. The books are classified by DDC scheme

and cataloguing is done by the district library, since the librarian has no professional qualification. Very carefully books are arranged in subject wise and kept in shelves in a classified manner. There is a computer to make entry of library data.

#### LIBRARY COLLECTION:

Table-5

Category of Books	Total No	Type of papers/Magazines/journals etc.	Name of papers/Magazines/journals etc.
General Collection	616 nos	News Paper-4 Nos	Assam Tribune, The Sentinel, Assam (Assamite), Employment News (Weekly), India Today (weekly) 1 no
Reference Collection	300 nos	Monthly/Weekly Magazine	Competition Success 1 no

Collection of books, reference books, journals, news papers magazines etc. are one of the most important essence of library activities. Therefore paying more emphasis on collection of books is a normal and essential aspect of Library. It appears from the above table that the model library of Paktijuli has comparatively a good collection of books. The library comprises 616 nos. of general collection and 300 nos. of reference collection. Similarly, there are a few collection of news paper i.e. 4 nos. and magazines that appears two nos. both monthly and weekly.

#### USER SUPPORT AND MEMBERSHIP:

Regarding membership the responses of the users are not satisfactory. Because during the time of our visit to the library, it was reported by the librarian that there are total 15 numbers of regular member out of which women member are two, college student ten and teacher member three. All the members have acquired membership by paying Rs. 15 as membership fee. This is quite a discouraging scenario. Similarly the number of users other than the regular members are also very

discouraging. Because in an area with a population of 12000, the number of regular users in the library are very negligible. It is reported that the average number of users per day ranges from 23 to 28, out of which 7 to 10 aged users come for daily news paper, 8 to 10 youths come to read books related to their courses for their schools or colleges, 5 to 7 school children visit to enjoy story books. Following table shows the membership pattern.

Table-6

## MEMBERSHIP PATTERN (CARD HOLDER):

Sl. No.	Type of Member	No. of Member
1	Women Member	2
2	College Student	10
3	Teacher	3
4	School goers/ Children	10
Total		15

USERS RESPONSE:

Regarding responses of the users it was attempted to analyse the views of the users who usually or occasionally took the resort of the library and it was found that 70% viewed the service of the library as very good, while 20% responded as good. Significantly 10% users viewed service rendered by the library as average, what according to the need to be taken serious initiative by the administration.

## PROBLEMS OF MODEL RURAL LIBRARY OF PAKTULLA

It is an established fact that the rural library plays a poignant role in spreading educational messages among rural people who are lagging behind due to lack of proper financial support to get access of education. Though the Ram Mohan Roy Library Foundation has directed its efforts on providing certain facilities like assistance provided towards organising seminars, training, book exhibition, etc.

and display of books and mobile library service, book deposit centre, TV, VCP, children section and Computer application etc. in rural library to draw the attention of the rural people, unfortunately this approach has not been able to touch the implementing authority due to which the rural libraries are witnessing lots of problems. These problems can be solved if public library legislation act could be enacted in our state like other states of India.

FUTURE PROGRAMMES:

It is known that BTAD administration has taken a keen interest for development of public library system in broader way. It is expected to establish more libraries in coming years for uplifting the society in the field of education, information, culture etc. It is to be mentioned that another 4 nos. of Sub-Divisional Libraries are going to be established within a short span of time in the locations like Parbatjhora (Kokrajhar), Bijni (Chirang), Salhari (Baksa) and Bhergaon (Udalguri). Rural libraries can change the face of society by extending information support in the form of augmenting culture, child recreation etc. In view of this it is utmost important to establish more and more rural libraries in the rural areas. If possible every village there should have one rural library. At present rural libraries are very less.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS:

The rural libraries that are run by the general public, NGO, Club etc. does not feel it as obligation on their part to register them under the Society Registration Act, Sadou Asom Gramya Puthibharal Santha etc. The Government of BTAD through Directorate of Library Service is also unable to take their responsibilities. The government grant distributed through the Directorate of Library Services BTAD and RRRLF are unable to cover even a fraction of the total need of rural libraries in BTAD. Therefore, time has come to review



the matter seriously so that the proper objectives of library service could be reached to the rural folk people who are considered as an important asset of grass root development.

This is more applicable in case of tribal areas where in most cases the infrastructural facilities are yet to be brought to the notice of the rural tribal folk, which can't be repudiated. Many well meaning development schemes have been implemented. Public libraries in village, therefore, should play a catalytic agent in dissemination of knowledge and information so that development of planning remains in proper tract. The emphasis should be laid more on tribal areas as awareness among them is yet to be brought in. The libraries in these villages are only in name and a modern library movement is required with latest Information Technology so that the tribal development engineered by the authorities becomes people friendly and meaningful. The expenditure incurred in improvement of public libraries is surely an investment for better upliftment of the human society as a whole.

It can be suggested that the library should have reprographic service whereby the users can get access of the library service. Moreover, library awareness service, reference service etc. should be properly maintained in order to maintain the ethics of library. Besides this, the librarian should have proper technical training so that he can make proper arrangement of books as per library guidelines.

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