

Status Audit and Revitalization Strategies for Rural Public Libraries: A Study of Kamrup District, Assam, India

Manmita Baishya

Student

Indira Gandhi National Open University Maidan Garhi, New Delhi-110068, India

Email: manmitabaishya@gmail.com

Kankana Baishya

Assistant Librarian

National Law University and Judicial Academy, Assam, India

Email: baishya.kankana@gmail.com

Abstract

Purpose: This study evaluates the current infrastructure, collections, and functional challenges of government-recognized public libraries in the Kamrup district of Assam to address the lack of updated data for policymakers.

Design/Methodology/Approach: A survey-based descriptive approach was employed, using expert-validated questionnaires and physical site visits to collect data from 15 rural libraries.

Findings: The research reveals a critical stagnation in rural libraries, characterised by a 100% lack of professional staff, dwindling collections due to funding shortages, and minimal daily user engagement.

Research Limitations: The study is restricted to government-recognised libraries within the geographical boundaries of Kamrup district, excluding NGO-led and Satra libraries.

Practical Implications: The findings highlight an urgent need for the Government of Assam to implement a Library Act, recruit qualified ICT personnel, and integrate modern citizen-centric services to prevent the extinction of rural library systems.

Originality/Value: This paper contributes a unique, primary-source dataset and documentation of previously unrecorded library details, providing a modernized baseline for the Directorate of Library Services and RRRLF records.

Keywords: Public Libraries, Assam, Kamrup District, Rural Libraries, Library Survey, Library Management, Library Legislation

1. Introduction: According to Barman (2012), “a library that is open to the general public and that provides general library services without charge or with a minimum of charge to all residents of a given community, district, or region and is supported wholly or in part by public funds is the public library”.

A public library is a library that usually serves the general public such as children, young adults, adults, doctors, engineers, farmers or any literate or neo-literary person of a society. Public library services are generally available at free of cost or on a nominal fee and supported by the government or through library legislation. To access those services, one must be a member of the library for which it issues library cards to the users so that they can allow the users to borrow books from the library any time whenever they need them.

As of 21st June, 2020 as per the website of Directorate of Cultural Affairs, Government of Assam (<https://publiclibraryservices.assam.gov.in/about-us/history-3>) there are 246 public libraries in Assam i.e., 1 State Central Library, 26 District Libraries, 16 Sub-divisional Libraries, 4 Branch Libraries and 199 Rural Libraries.

How to Cite this Article

Baishya, Manmita, & Baishya, Kankana (2020). Status Audit and Revitalization Strategies for Rural Public Libraries: A Study of Kamrup District, Assam, India. LIS Links Newsletter, 6(1), 26-36. <http://newsletter.lislinks.com>

2. Review of Literature

A thorough search is being made in the Google Books, Internet Archive, Libgen, Z Library, PDF drive for the phrase "Public Library Assam" to retrieve the relevant book, Shodhganga to find out related thesis and Google Scholar to find out the related articles. The existing research and literature on the public library system in Assam highlight a recurring theme of untapped potential, systemic neglect, and the urgent need for modernization to remain relevant in the digital age. Here is a summary of the key perspectives:

a) Legislative and Policy Framework

i) The Advocacy for a Library Act: A consensus exists among researchers (Sinha, 2011; Deka, 2017; Gohain, 2018; Mazumder, 2020) that the absence of a Public Library and Information Service Act is the root cause of the system's stagnation.

ii) Reformation Needs: Barman et al. (2011) argue that for libraries to prove their relevance in the 21st century, the state needs new policies that move beyond mere book storage to active community engagement.

b) Regional and District-Level Realities

i) Depressing Scenarios: Studies of prominent libraries - including District Library Guwahati, Nalbari, and the Bishnu Nirmala Children Library - reveal a "depressing" state of affairs (Barman et al., 2011). Similarly, the BTAD area libraries (Bodoland Territorial Area District) are struggling with management issues, though automation has slowly begun (Chakraborty & Roy, 2017).

ii) The "Public" Question: Ahmed et al. (2019) critically examine the "publicness" of these institutions, questioning how well they actually serve the general populace versus their intended descriptive roles.

iii) Urban Heritage: In contrast to the general decay, Das et al. (2017) highlight the Karmabir Nabin Chandra Bordoloi (KNCB) Library as a site of "glorious heritage," focusing on plans for its renovation and preservation as a modern cultural landmark.

c) Rural Challenges and User Awareness

i) Engagement Gaps: Gohain (2018) finds that user awareness programs in Dibrugarh and Sivasagar are in a "miniature stage. Without ICT-driven services like CAS (Current Awareness Service) and SDI (Selective Dissemination of Information), libraries fail to attract the rural population.

ii) Shrinking Patronage: Kalita & Kalita (2017) observe that users are decreasing "day by day" due to inappropriate collections and a lack of trained staff. Deka (2017) emphasizes that libraries must become "attractive places" to foster reading habits in children.

d) Infrastructure, Automation, and Security

i) Digital Stagnation: While Hussain & Mozumder (2018) advocate for the digital future, Devi et al. (2017) and Chakraborty (2020) report that automation is stalled by a "paucity of funds" and lack of qualified ICT personnel.

ii) Security Vulnerabilities: Deka & Nath (2017) highlight a critical but often overlooked issue: the lack of Electronic Security Systems in major libraries like Guwahati and Dibrugarh, leaving collections vulnerable.

iii) The Role of RRRLF: The RRRLF remains the primary financial lifeline for infrastructure (Das, 2000; Lahkar, 2017), with suggestions that it should lead a national "Rural Libraries Network" (Deka & Singh, 2017).

3. Statement of the Problems: The following are some of the problems identified during the course of the literature search and are taken as a basis for the present study-

a) Difficulty in Tracing the List of Libraries: A list of recognized libraries of Assam is available with the Directorate of Library Services, Assam. However, the list does not contain the complete postal address and such other contact information and therefore, people who are interested in the libraries cannot reach them easily.

How to Cite this Article

Baishya, Manmita, & Baishya, Kankana (2020). Status Audit and Revitalization Strategies for Rural Public Libraries: A Study of Kamrup District, Assam, India. LIS Links Newsletter, 6(1), 26-36. <http://newsletter.lislinks.com>

b) Lack of Updated Information: The Directorate of Library Services, Assam and the Raja Rammohun Roy Library Foundation maintained a list of libraries with some basic information. However, all these data are outdated and fresh data needs to be collected.

c) Total Collections are not Known: The collection of each and every library increases with time. There is a need to find out the current collection of the libraries so that an informed decision can be taken based on it.

d) Services are not Recognized: Almost all the libraries provide a circulation service, Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC), Book Display, Newspaper Clipping Service, Reprographic facility and equipped with reading room facilities and children's section. There is a need to find out what the other special services are available in the libraries under study.

4. Objectives of the Study: The main objectives of the study are given below-

a) To conduct a survey of the government recognized public libraries of Kamrup district of Assam.

b) To assess the organizational staffing patterns and the professional competency levels of the personnel managing the public libraries in Kamrup District.

c) To study the collection of the public libraries under study.

d) To study the services and facilities provided by the public libraries under study.

5. Research Methodology: The study covered both urban and rural areas of Kamrup District. In order to gather necessary information and data census-based descriptive survey method is applied for the study. The survey method is conducted through a questionnaire. The data and information on a particular library are also collected from the available leaflets, brochures or such other documents.

First, a set of questionnaires is designed. The questionnaire is sent to two experts in the subjects – one is a working Assistant Librarian at a university and another one is an Assistant Professor of the Department of Library and Information Science at a university. Based on their feedback, the questionnaire is revised. The revised questionnaire is then physically handed over to the library staff of a particular library under study and is collected in-hand. In a few cases, data and information are supplemented by a structured interview based on the questionnaire.

All the data and information collected through the questionnaire, interview and leaflets and brochures are then systematically analysed to arrive at the conclusion.

6. Limitations of the Study: The study will include a survey of the government-recognized rural libraries located in Kamrup District of Assam. The libraries located outside the geographical location of Kamrup district are not studied. Again, there are lots of other public libraries within the geographical location of Kamrup district itself, i.e., satra libraries, libraries attached to NGOs and such others. However, as they are not government recognized, they are not considered for the study.

7. Findings and Analysis: There are, in total, 20 government-recognized libraries in Kamrup district. Out of these, Reference Library, Guwahati; Dispur Branch Library; Bishnu Nirmala Children Library and Karmabir Nabin Chandra Bordoloi Library (Reading Hall) are branch libraries and, together, can be called the State Central Library of Assam. Excluding these, there is one district library, i.e., District Library, Guwahati and 15 rural libraries. The branch libraries and district libraries cannot be compared as there is a huge difference in every aspect among them. Even all the branch libraries cannot be compared as their aim and objectives are different. For example, the Bishnu Nirmala Children Library is only for children, Karmabir Nabin Chandra Bordoloi Library (Reading Hall) is only for consultation and they do not provide a circulation service. Therefore, the study only covers the rural libraries and a comparison is being made between them.

How to Cite this Article

Baishya, Manmita, & Baishya, Kankana (2020). Status Audit and Revitalization Strategies for Rural Public Libraries: A Study of Kamrup District, Assam, India. *LIS Links Newsletter*, 6(1), 26-36. <http://newsletter.lislinks.com>

Sl. No.	Name of the Library	Year of Establishment	Year of Recognition	Nature of Building	Total Carpet Area (Sq. Foot)	Total Seating Capacity
1.	Bapuji Pathagar	1957	1986	Independent	600	25
2.	Chhaygaon Asomi Puthibharal	1980	1986	Independent	764	30
3.	Dharapur Sadhana Gramya Puthibharal	1954	1985	Independent	900	30
4.	Dolibari Samuhiya Kendra Puthibharal	1943	1986	Attached	350	20
5.	Janasewa Puthibharal	1960	1986	Independent	400	20
6.	Jeuti Puthibharal	1958	2004	Independent	500	30
7.	Khetri Lokapriya Bordoloi Puthibharal Cum Rongghar	1947	1986	Attached	450	20
8.	Khudradadhi Bapuji Puthibharal	1954	1987	Independent	1152	25
9.	Nowapara Neharu Yubak Gramya Puthibharal	1977	1986	Independent	300	10
10.	Panitema Jubak Sangha Puthibharal	1954	1985	Independent	400	10
11.	Parly Pragati Puthibharal	1950	1986	Independent	600	15
12.	Sanmilita Tiniali Sangha Puthibharal	1962	1986	Attached	800	10
13.	Satpur Pragatishil Sangha Puthibharal	1977	1986	Attached	600	12
14.	Sri Sri Sankardev Rajahuwa Puthibharal	1925	1985	Attached	550	20
15.	Sundarisal Sankar Puthibharal	1947	1986	Independent	350	10

Table 1: Basic Details about the Rural Libraries

It is evident from the above table that there are 4 libraries which were established before independence, whereas the remaining 11 libraries were established after independence. Excluding the Jeuti Puthibharal, all other rural libraries were recognized by the Government of Assam during 1985-87. Jeuti Puthibharal was recognized only very recently, in 2004. Five out of 15 (33%) of the libraries are part of the parent organization, whereas 10 (67%) libraries have

How to Cite this Article

Baishya, Manmita, & Baishya, Kankana (2020). Status Audit and Revitalization Strategies for Rural Public Libraries: A Study of Kamrup District, Assam, India. LIS Links Newsletter, 6(1), 26-36. <http://newsletter.lislinks.com>

independent houses or buildings. In terms of total carpet area, Khudradadhi Bapuji Puthibharal has more than 1 thousand square feet and other libraries are within the range of 300 to 900 square feet. In terms of total carpet area, Nowapara Neharu Yubak Gramya Puthibharal is the smallest one and it has only a total carpet area of 300 square feet. The total seating capacity for the libraries under study ranges from 10 to 30.

Sl. No.	Name of the Library	Books	Current Newspaper	Current Magazine
1.	Bapuji Pathagar	3300	0	0
2.	Chhaygaon Asomi Puthibharal	5000	0	0
3.	Dharapur Sadhana Gramya Puthibharal	3200	1	2
4.	Dolibari Samuhiya Kendra Puthibharal	3500	1	1
5.	Janasewa Puthibharal	5000	2	0
6.	Jeuti Puthibharal	4000	0	0
7.	Khetri Lokapriya Bordoloi Puthibharal Cum Rongghar	5700	1	0
8.	Khudradadhi Bapuji Puthibharal	5300	1	1
9.	Nowapara Neharu Yubak Gramya Puthibharal	2500	0	0
10.	Panitema Jubak Sangha Puthibharal	6000	0	0
11.	Parlly Pragati Puthibharal	4000	0	0
12.	Sanmilita Tinali Sangha Puthibharal	6500	3	0
13.	Satpur Pragatishil Sangha Puthibharal	5800	0	0
14.	Sri Sri Sankardev Rajahuwa Puthibharal	4000	3	0
15.	Sundarisal Sankar Puthibharal	5000	1	0

Table 2: Collections of the Rural Libraries

From the above study, it is observed that out of 15 rural libraries, only 1 library has collections in the range of 2001-3000, 6 libraries have 3001-4000 collections of books, 3 libraries have 4001-5000 collections, 4 have 5001-6000 collections of books and 1 library i.e., Sanmilita Tinali Sangha Puthibharal has collections in the range 6001 and above.

From the above table, it is also evident that 2 libraries, i.e., Sri Sri Sankardev Rajahuwa Puthibharal and Sanmilita Tinali Sangha Puthibharal each subscribed to 3 daily newspapers, 1 library subscribed to 2 newspapers, 4 libraries subscribed to 1 newspaper each and the remaining 8 libraries are not subscribing to any newspapers due to the lack of fund. In the case of magazine subscription, 1 library i.e., Dharapur Sadhana Gramya Puthibharal subscribed to 2 magazines and 2 libraries subscribed to 1 magazine each. The remaining 12 (80%) libraries are not subscribed to any magazines.

How to Cite this Article

Baishya, Manmita, & Baishya, Kankana (2020). Status Audit and Revitalization Strategies for Rural Public Libraries: A Study of Kamrup District, Assam, India. *LIS Links Newsletter*, 6(1), 26-36. <http://newsletter.lislinks.com>

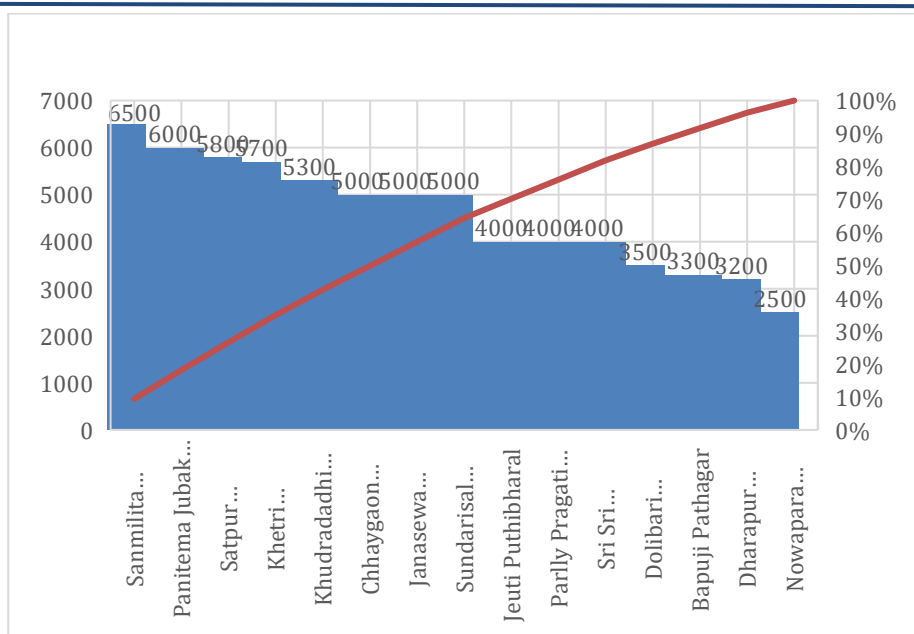


Figure 1: Collections of the Rural Libraries

Sl. No.	Name of the Library	Librarian	Helper
1.	Bapuji Pathagar	Class-XII	Class-XII
2.	Chhaygaon Asomi Puthibharal	B.A.	B.A.
3.	Dharapur Sadhana Gramya Puthibharal	B.A.	Class-IX
4.	Dolibari Samuhiya Kendra Puthibharal	B.A.	Class-X
5.	Janasewa Puthibharal	Class-X	Class-X
6.	Jeuti Puthibharal	Class-XII	Class-IX
7.	Khetri Lokapriya Bordoloi Puthibharal Cum Rongghar	Class-X	Class-VIII
8.	Khudradadhi Bapuji Puthibharal	Class-X	Class-X
9.	Nowapara Neharu Yubak Gramya Puthibharal	Class-XII	Class-VIII
10.	Panitema Jubak Sangha Puthibharal	Class-XII	Class-X
11.	Parly Pragati Puthibharal	Class-XII	B.A.
12.	Sanmilita Tiniali Sangha Puthibharal	Class-XII	Class-VIII
13.	Satpur Pragatishil Sangha Puthibharal	Class-X	Class-X
14.	Sri Sri Sankardev Rajahuwa Puthibharal	Class-X	Class-VII
15.	Sundarisal Sankar Puthibharal	B.A.	Class-X

Table 3: Qualifications of the Staff of the Rural Libraries

In terms of educational qualification, the qualification of librarian of 4 libraries (27%) is graduation, whereas the qualification of the librarians of 6 libraries (40%) are Class-XII and the qualification of the remaining librarians i.e., 5 libraries (33%) are Class-X.

In the case of library helpers, 2 are graduate degree holders, 1 is Class-XII and the helpers for the remaining libraries are Class-X or below. So, while 4 librarians are graduates, they are General Graduates (B.A.) and not Technical Graduates (B.Lib.I.Sc.).

Sl. No.	Name of the Library	Membership Fee	Total Registered Member	Total Children Member	Average Daily User	Average Daily Circulation
1.	Bapuji Pathagar	Rs. 0.00	130	25	7	10

How to Cite this Article

Baishya, Manmita, & Baishya, Kankana (2020). Status Audit and Revitalization Strategies for Rural Public Libraries: A Study of Kamrup District, Assam, India. LIS Links Newsletter, 6(1), 26-36. <http://newsletter.lislinks.com>

2.	Chhaygaon Asomi Puthibharal	Rs. 0.00	100	50	6	6
3.	Dharapur Sadhana Gramya Puthibharal	Rs. 0.00	105	30	10	8
4.	Dolibari Samuhiya Kendra Puthibharal	Rs. 5.00	35	30	15	6
5.	Janasewa Puthibharal	Rs. 0.00	90	15	15	7
6.	Jeuti Puthibharal	Rs. 0.00	160	40	10	6
7.	Khetri Lokapriya Bordoloi Puthibharal Cum Rongghar	Rs. 5.00	150	10	7	6
8.	Khudradadhi Bapuji Puthibharal	Rs. 0.00	700	60	10	8
9.	Nowapara Neharu Yubak Gramya Puthibharal	Rs. 5.00	160	40	7	7
10.	Panitema Jubak Sangha Puthibharal	Rs. 10.00	186	150	20	15
11.	Parly Pragati Puthibharal	Rs. 10.00	50	0	10	8
12.	Sanmilita Tiniali Sangha Puthibharal	Rs. 5.00	320	30	5	5
13.	Satpur Pragatishil Sangha Puthibharal	Rs. 0.00	80	20	12	8
14.	Sri Sri Sankardev Rajahuwa Puthibharal	Rs. 10.00	600	50	13	5
15.	Sundarisal Sankar Puthibharal	Rs. 0.00	250	50	11	8

Table 4: Registered Members and Other Details of the Rural Libraries

Though, as per the rules of the libraries, there is a membership fee of Rs. 5-10 in some libraries, in most of the libraries these fees are never imposed on the user. In most cases, it is considered as a voluntary contribution. So, even without paying any fee, nearby people can get membership of the library.

In the case of registered members, only Khudradadhi Bapuji Puthibharal and Sri Sri Sankardev Rajahuwa Puthibharal have a registered member base of 500 or more. All other rural

How to Cite this Article

Baishya, Manmita, & Baishya, Kankana (2020). Status Audit and Revitalization Strategies for Rural Public Libraries: A Study of Kamrup District, Assam, India. LIS Links Newsletter, 6(1), 26-36. <http://newsletter.lislinks.com>

libraries under study have fewer than 350 registered members. In the case of children registered members, only Panitema Jubak Sangha Puthibharal has 150 registered children and all other rural libraries have fewer than 100 registered children.

Panitema Jubak Sangha Puthibharal has, on average, the highest number of daily footfalls in the library (20), which is followed by Janasewa Puthibharal and Dolibari Samuhiya Kendra Puthibharal, each stand at 15 followed by other libraries. In terms of average daily circulation, Panitema Jubak Sangha Puthibharal (15) is followed by Bapuji Pathagar (10). All the remaining libraries have less than 10 average daily circulation of books.

Sl. No.	Name of the Library	Reading Room	Circulation	Other Services
1.	Bapuji Pathagar	Yes	Yes	Library Outreach Programme
2.	Chhaygaon Asomi Puthibharal	Yes	Yes	None
3.	Dharapur Sadhana Gramya Puthibharal	Yes	Yes	Library Outreach Programme
4.	Dolibari Samuhiya Kendra Puthibharal	Yes	Yes	None
5.	Janasewa Puthibharal	Yes	Yes	Library Outreach Programme
6.	Jeuti Puthibharal	Yes	Yes	None
7.	Khetri Lokapriya Bordoloi Puthibharal Cum Rongghar	Yes	Yes	None
8.	Khudradadhi Bapuji Puthibharal	Yes	Yes	Library Awareness Programme
9.	Nowapara Neharu Yubak Gramya Puthibharal	Yes	Yes	None
10.	Panitema Jubak Sangha Puthibharal	Yes	Yes	Library Awareness Programme
11.	Parly Pragati Puthibharal	Yes	Yes	None
12.	Sanmilita Tiniali Sangha Puthibharal	Yes	Yes	Library Awareness Programme
13.	Satpur Pragatishil Sangha Puthibharal	Yes	Yes	None
14.	Sri Sri Sankardev Rajahuwa Puthibharal	Yes	Yes	None
15.	Sundarisal Sankar Puthibharal	Yes	Yes	None

Table 5: Service of the Rural Libraries

All the rural libraries under study only provide the reading room facility along with circulation. They don't have any other kind of service at the user's disposal. However, very recently, as per the recommendations of the Government of Assam, some of the libraries are organizing some sensitization or user awareness programme in their nearby area to attract people towards the libraries.

A situational audit revealed a 100% absence of functional computer terminals and internet connectivity across all 15 rural libraries, explaining the digital stagnation noted in the literature review.

The major findings of the study against the objectives laid out are stated below:

How to Cite this Article

Baishya, Manmita, & Baishya, Kankana (2020). Status Audit and Revitalization Strategies for Rural Public Libraries: A Study of Kamrup District, Assam, India. *LIS Links Newsletter*, 6(1), 26-36. <http://newsletter.lislinks.com>

i) There are 20 Functional Libraries in Kamrup District: The study found that there are 20 government recognized public libraries in Kamrup district of Assam, out of which 1 is a district library, 4 branch libraries and 15 rural libraries (Refer Annexure 1 and 2).

ii) Lack of Information on the Historical Development of the Libraries: The libraries which are considered for study, some of which were established before India got its independence, do not have their own written records of historical development.

iii) Details of the Rural Libraries are Documented: The study documented the details of all the surveyed libraries in the form of brief description, their photographs, collection of books / Newspapers / Magazines, services and facilities available, postal addresses (Refer Annexure 1 and 2), Google map location along with contact information and such other details which were even not available with the Directorate of Library Services or RRRLF.

iv) Lack of Skill Manpower: Out of the 20 public libraries of Kamrup District of Assam, only the 5 libraries i.e., 1 district library and the 4 branch libraries have professional library staff and the remaining 15 rural libraries have only non-professional library staff. In each of the rural libraries under study there is a Librarian and a Helper and most of them are not even graduates in any discipline (Refer Table 3).

v) Less Number of Registered and Daily Users: The daily users in rural libraries are very limited as compared to the district and branch libraries (Refer Table 4).

vi) Lack of Information About the Libraries: In most cases, excluding the District and Branch Libraries, even the basic information about the libraries like total collection, service offered, type of building, complete postal address and such other information is not available with the Directorate of Library Services Assam not to speak about the RRRLF.

vii) Libraries are Struggling for Survival: The public libraries, especially the rural libraries of Assam, which are even recognized by the Government of Assam, are struggling for their survival and this is especially due to the lack of library users and (Refer Table 4).

viii) Old Documents are Destroyed: One can generally think that, especially in the rural libraries which were established before independence, they must contain some very old rare books in their collection. However, surprisingly, such documents cannot be found in the rural libraries under study and they are destroyed over the period due to lack of awareness and interest.

vix) Less Number of Collection of Books: Most of the rural libraries have a very smaller number of collections of books in their libraries (Refer Table 2).

x) Newspapers and Magazines are not Subscribed: Due to lack of funds, most of the rural libraries hardly subscribe to any newspaper or magazines which are otherwise considered as the main attraction for the rural libraries (Refer Table 2).

xi) Circulation of Books and Reading Rooms are the Main Attraction: In the rural libraries which were studied, the circulation of books and reading room facilities are the only attraction. However, very recently they have started the user awareness programme (Refer Table 5).

8. Recommendations: The following recommendations if put it into practice hoped to enhance the public library services.

a) Recommendations to the Library Authority

i) Serious Emphasis is Needed for the Development of Public Libraries: The government of Assam should make a serious effort for the upliftment of the libraries with the changing times, otherwise the rural libraries may entirely vanish from the scenario.

ii) Making the Library an Attractive Place: The library authority should try to make the public library an attractive place for people to spend their leisure time.

iii) Allocation of More Funds with Added Responsibilities: Government should allocate more funds than they are providing and, at the same time, can integrate some other government to citizen services with libraries, as they already have the required infrastructure as well as staff

How to Cite this Article

Baishya, Manmita, & Baishya, Kankana (2020). Status Audit and Revitalization Strategies for Rural Public Libraries: A Study of Kamrup District, Assam, India. LIS Links Newsletter, 6(1), 26-36. <http://newsletter.lislinks.com>

on which the government can save. Funding for periodicals is the immediate solution to low footfall.

b) Recommendations to the Librarians

i) Writing their Own History: Most of the public libraries which are located in rural areas do not have any leaflets, brochures or such other documents from which the history of the library can be traced. It is the responsibility of the librarian to maintain it for the future generation.

ii) Maintaining Rare Documents with Care: A single rare document can make a library popular. By considering this, if any library has any rare documents, the responsibility must be taken by the library staff for its subsequent preservation and conservation for their own benefit.

iii) Keeping the Library Open for Designated Hours: Most of the libraries deviate from their allocated opening and closing timing and used to remain open only for a few hours. Even if there is not a single user, it is the prime duty of the library staff to keep the library open for the designated opening hour.

iv) Organizing Extensive Awareness Programme: The library professionals should try to improve the reading habits and create interest among the people in the library by organizing as many as they can user awareness programmes.

c) Recommendations to the People

i) People Need to Maintain the Public Library for their Own Benefit: People surrounding the library should try to maintain the public library for their own benefit, as if it has vanished from society in the coming days, people from lower income groups would not be able to access their desired knowledge and will not be able to compete with the people who can afford it.

9. Conclusion: Assam's public library system is facing a critical decline, particularly within rural areas where historical institutions are nearing extinction due to a sharp drop in users and the distractions of the digital age. While central and district libraries remain functional, rural branches suffer from underqualified staff and a lack of community engagement among the youth. This crisis is further complicated by outdated statistics from governing bodies like the Directorate of Library Services Assam and the RRRLF, highlighting an urgent need for professional intervention and modernized data to preserve the state's literary legacy.

References

- Baishya, A. (2018). Problems and prospects of networking in public library system in Assam: A study [Doctoral dissertation, Gauhati University]. Shodhganga. <http://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in:8080/jspui/handle/10603/249786>
- Barman, B. (2007, March 27–28). Scenario of rural library movement in Assam. In N. Lahkar (Ed.), Proceedings of the National Seminar on Problems and Prospects of Rural Libraries with Reference to North East India (pp. 117-128). Central Reference Library. <http://www.badanbarman.in/p/conference-papers.html>
- Barman, B. (2012). Library and information science: UGC NET guide. DVS Publishers.
- Borpatra Gohain, A. (2018). User awareness program in the rural libraries of Dibrugarh and Sivasagar: A study. International Research: Journal of Library & Information Science, 8(3), 435–439. <https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=6474&context=libphilprac>
- Chakraborty, K. (2020). Survey of district libraries in lower Assam. PalArch's Journal of Archaeology of Egypt / Egyptology, 17(6), 13154–13164. <https://www.archives.palarch.nl/index.php/jae/article/view/3387>
- Das, N., Sarma, U., & Barman, B. (Eds.). (2017). Public librarianship and glorious heritage of Karmabir Nabin Chandra Bordoloi Library (Reading Hall): Plan for renovation and development. Assam Library Association. <https://archive.org/details/public-librarianship/>

How to Cite this Article

Baishya, Manmita, & Baishya, Kankana (2020). Status Audit and Revitalization Strategies for Rural Public Libraries: A Study of Kamrup District, Assam, India. LIS Links Newsletter, 6(1), 26-36. <http://newsletter.lislinks.com>

- Das, U. (2000). RRRLF founding on public libraries in Assam. *Indian Journal of Information Library and Society*, 104–110.
- Deka, D., & Nath, R. (2017, November 7–9). Implementation of security systems in public libraries of Assam with special reference to Guwahati and Dibrugarh district libraries: A comparative study. In *Proceedings of the IASLIC 31st All India Conference 2017 on Public Libraries in India in 21st Century* (pp. 160–168). IASLIC.
- Deka, P. K. (2017). Study of rural libraries in Kamrup district (Assam) with special reference to Chayygaon and Hajo educational block. *Knowledge Librarian: An International Peer Reviewed Bilingual E-Journal of Library and Information Science*, 4(6), 230–235. <http://www.klibjlis.com/4.6.25.pdf>
- Deka, P. K., & Singh, S. K. (2017, November 7–9). Scenario of rural libraries in Assam with reference to Kamrup district. In *Proceedings of the IASLIC 31st All India Conference 2017 on Public Libraries in India in 21st Century* (pp. 117–128). IASLIC.
- Devi, P., Baishya, R., & Kumar, M. (2017, November 7–9). Status of library automation in public libraries of Kamrup district, Assam: A study. In *Proceedings of the IASLIC 31st All India Conference 2017 on Public Libraries in India in 21st Century* (pp. 281–287). IASLIC.
- Hussain, M., & Mozumder, S. K. (2018). Digital library: The future role of public library system in Assam: Problem and prospects. *Library Progress*, 38(2), 291–298.
- Kalita, D., & Kalita, B. (2017, November 7–9). Public library as an information provider in the rural areas: A case study on the rural libraries of Nalbari district of Assam. In *Proceedings of the IASLIC 31st All India Conference 2017 on Public Libraries in India in 21st Century* (pp. 129–135). IASLIC.
- Lahkar, N. (2017, November 7–9). Networking of public libraries of Assam: Challenges and opportunities. In *Proceedings of the IASLIC 31st All India Conference 2017 on Public Libraries in India in 21st Century*. IASLIC.
- Mazumder, P. P., & Mazumdar, N. R. (2012, August 12). Unfulfilled dream of Dr S. R. Ranganathan and Assam. *North East Today*. <https://www.northeasttoday.in/2020/08/12/unfulfilled-dream-of-dr-s-r-ranganathan-and-assam/>
- Singh, S. K., Hazarika, T., Deka, D., & Barman, B. (Eds.). (2019). *50 years of LIS education in North East India*. Department of Library and Information Science, Gauhati University.
- Sinha, M. K. (2011). Scenario of library development in North East India with special reference to Assam. In H. N. Prasad, A. Tripathi, M. K. Verma, & R. Mishra (Eds.), *Librarianship in 21st century* (pp. 435–453). Ess Ess Publications.

How to Cite this Article

Baishya, Manmita, & Baishya, Kankana (2020). Status Audit and Revitalization Strategies for Rural Public Libraries: A Study of Kamrup District, Assam, India. *LIS Links Newsletter*, 6(1), 26-36. <http://newsletter.lislinks.com>