

# **Role of Public Libraries in Lifelong Non-Formal Education**

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## **ABSTRACT**

*Public libraries provide vital information, knowledge and entertainment to the community. In which various types of reading material, like books, periodicals, magazines, reference books, etc., are collected, keeping in mind the needs of society. This can be availed by all sections of the community free of cost without any discrimination. Therefore, this paper has given information about how public libraries support lifelong learning. Also, information has been given about the important contribution of public libraries to the development of society, for lifelong informal education. In today's competitive era, public libraries are becoming very important for job seekers. It is a very important institution for informal education after completing schooling at schools, colleges, and universities. Job seekers have prepared for competitive exams while sitting there. For which competitive books are available there? There is a separate reading room arrangement. It also provides other facilities. Thus, public libraries act as a very important organ for obtaining informal education*

**KEYWORDS:** Library, Public library, education, Lifelong, Non-Formal Education.

## **1. INTRODUCTION**

Public libraries play a vital role in lifelong learning by providing free, inclusive, and ongoing access to information for individuals of all ages. They support learning beyond informal education and adapt to the changing needs of individuals throughout their lives. In the present times, due to the development of science and technology, there have been very radical changes in the fields of research. New research is being done day by day. So, new information is being added to the information every day. The collection of all this information is now available in various forms due to the invention of new technology. For example, on the Internet, in online form on social media. While bibliographic information, that is, information is published in the form of books. The information available in book form is collected in various types of libraries. For example, there are academic libraries in educational institutions so that students, teachers, and professors can get study-related information. There are special libraries for research-related information. Also, after gaining knowledge in educational institutions, public libraries are available so that students or all the people of the community can easily get information. These public libraries provide vital information, knowledge and entertainment to the community. In such libraries, various types of books, periodicals, magazines, reference books, etc. are collected keeping in mind the needs of society. The benefit of which is

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available to the people of the community free of cost, without any discrimination of age, caste, religion or any other reason. In present times, the number of public libraries is continuously increasing keeping in mind the individuals of society, students, etc.

### **2. WHAT IS LIFELONG NON-FORMAL EDUCATION?**

**2.1 Lifelong learning:** Education that continues throughout a person's life — not just in childhood or formal schooling — adapting to changing personal and societal needs.

**2.2 Non-formal education:** Structured or semi-structured learning outside a formal system, such as workshops, community courses, self-study, skills development, and adult education programs.

<https://ebooks.inflibnet.ac.in/lisp13/chapter/public-library-and-society/>

### **3. ROLE OF PUBLIC LIBRARIES IN LIFELONG NON-FORMAL EDUCATION:**

In today's modern times, public libraries are proving to be very important. Which has a very important contribution to lifelong non-formal education. Therefore, here is given information about their important contribution which is as follows:

#### **3.1 Provides physical infrastructure facilities:**

Public libraries provide various types of infrastructure facilities to their users. Such as separate reading rooms with air-conditioning, light-fan facilities for readers to read, sit and study, drinking water facility, proper seating arrangement, toilet-bathroom arrangement etc. so that users can take good advantage of the library.

#### **3.2 Knowledge at your fingertips:**

Public libraries provide a wealth of reading materials of various kinds. Where a priceless legacy of knowledge and information is preserved. Which is thus continuously preserved from one generation to the next and flows endlessly. Public libraries offer a wide range of information, including entertainment literature, contemporary bestsellers, reference books, general books, and digital resources. The diversity of this collection enables individuals to explore their interests and passions at their own pace.

#### **3.3 Cultural enrichment:**

Libraries serve as cultural repositories, preserving historical artefacts, art, music, and literature. These cultural materials foster an appreciation for diversity and innovation by allowing individuals to deeply engage with various cultures.

#### **3.4 Job and career support:**

Libraries recognize the importance of workforce education and skills development. They provide jobseekers with career-related information, resources, and services, including access to job search, resume building, and career development resources. Free use of computers, printers, and high-speed Internet for job and career search; online job applications, resumes, and interview essentials; assistance in finding job openings and using job portals; guidance in creating resumes, cover letters, and LinkedIn profiles; career guidance and skills development for interview skills;

workshops on soft skills; access to online learning platforms (e.g., coding, language skills, certifications); collaboration with local employers, job centers, and government agencies; organizing job fairs and recruitment events;

### **3.5 Equal access to information and resources:**

Public libraries provide information and resources to all people of society, regardless of age, race, gender, religion, background, or status. Thus, public libraries deliver information and resources to society in an equitable manner.

### **3.6 Community centers:**

Public libraries organize various types of programs for the community. Such as book exhibitions, drawing competitions for children and students, quiz competitions, discussion groups for community and other events. These activities encourage social learning and community engagement.

### **3.7 Supports self-learning:**

Public libraries offer a wide range of reading materials, including books on different topics, magazines, digital content, audio-visual materials, community information, recreational literature like stories and novels, online courses, tutorials, and access to databases, among others. These resources can be utilized independently by users and readers. Hence, it promotes self-education.

<https://lis.academy/public-library-system-services/vital-social-role-public-libraries/>

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### **3.8 Bridging the gap in the field of education:**

Public libraries are very helpful for students to gain additional information or knowledge after acquiring knowledge in educational institutions like schools and colleges. These libraries help in fulfilling their academic needs by providing study resources, reference materials, and essential guidance.

### **3.9 Contributes to making society a better citizen:**

Public libraries provide various types of information and services to society. Consequently, the member of the community enhances himself by acquiring different forms of information and knowledge. Thus, public libraries contribute to society in making people better citizens.

### **3.10 Promoting collaborative learning:**

Public libraries, in addition to providing information, knowledge, entertainment, etc., also provide collaborative spaces for collaborative learning. Where learners can work on group projects, exchange ideas, and solve collective problems. In this way, public libraries promote collaborative learning.

### **3.11 Free access to information and resources:**

Public libraries provide free access to various types of reading material including books, reference materials, periodicals, magazines, newspapers, digital databases, e-books, audio-books, and more. This wide range of resources allows learners to explore new topics, update skills, and stay informed at any stage of life.

### **3.12 Inclusive adult and continuing education:**

Public libraries are crucial for supporting adult literacy programs and giving adults access to continuing education. Providing opportunities for lifelong learning to all members of the community is the aim of the continuous education project.

<https://www.lisedunetwork.com/role-of-library-in-formal-and-informal-education/>

## **CONCLUSION**

In the present times, public libraries are becoming very important for the people of the community to get information, gain knowledge, and entertain themselves. Which encourages the people of society to read and get information through various activities. Also, reading material is delivered to the remote areas of the village through village libraries and mobile libraries. Thus, public libraries are constantly striving to ensure that all the people of society can benefit. Thus, it is a unique social institution for getting informal education.

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