

## Relevance of Ranganathan's Five Laws of Library Science in Present ICT Rea

\* Dr. P. C. Meena

### Abstract

S. R. Ranganathan was a fascinating and influential figure in the field of Library Science. "Five Laws of Library Science" were profound when released, but are still application today. Now we have entered into a digital era. Information professionals as well as users are handling Information and communication Technology: ICT, in spite of multidimensional development in different areas of library work and services. Five laws of Library Science are equally application till date, since its inception in 1928.

### Keywords

Ranganathan's Five Laws, Library Automation, Information and communication Technology: ICT.

### Introduction

It is a well-established fact that the Five Laws of Library Science have been accepted as fundamental laws. There is no dispute on these elaborations depending on the changing information environment. The laws interpreted like: Eliminate the obstacles that prevent users from making effective use of electronic sources; Integrate electronic resources into virtual learning environment of the institution; provide meta searching capabilities so that users can search entire sets of electronic resources ; and offer 24x7, anytime access to libraries through electronic networks.

Five Laws of Library Science became the corner stone of the philosophical techniques of Western society's library experts. Unfortunately Ranagnathan lived at a time when computers had not come into existence but his contribution in various fields indicate that he lived very much ahead of his time. The vision and legacy of Ranganathan will be an inspiration and guiding spirit for the emergence of the new library and information science professionals, who are applying his principles and practices in different areas of library management.

Ranganathan's Five Laws of Library Science were developed about ninety years back and inspite of having so many changes in library world, these Five Laws are still relevant in today's context. These are applicable to all fields of library activities. We have entered into digital era and these five laws are equally valid in the present digital/information age as they have been in the conventional library environment. In spite of multidimensional development in different areas of library work and services and their enrichment with the application of modern technology Five Laws of Library Science are equally applicable in the present electronic and digital era. These Laws can never be obsolete as long as human civilization and culture exist and can never be consigned to oblivion in spite of the digital divide and information literacy barrier. As far as Indian librarianship is concerned, the present status and respect we are enjoying is due to the efforts of Dr. S. R. Ranganathan. It is our bounden duty to pay rich tributes by not only carrying his message forward to the generations to come, but also to preserve his legacy.

### Ranganathan's Five Laws of Library Science in Present Era

Dr S.R. Ranganathan has contributed many new ideas to library and information science, during his

---

## Relevance of Ranganathan's Five Laws of Library Science in Present ICT Rea

Dr. P. C. Meena

eighty-year lifespan. He wrote 60 books and about 2,000 research articles in his life really, he was a multifaceted personality. He devoted his life to the cause of development of library science in India. Dr. Ranganathan enunciated various laws, principles, canons, theories, etc. In LIS his theories are based on scientific principles. They are accepted universally and are relevant even today. We can say that his ideas are like a lighthouse for library professionals. His ideas are still exciting and, even today when computers and other developments in the field of telecommunication have changed the whole scenario of LIS. Libraries and information centers are facing the problem of challenges of implementing Information and communication Technology (ICT). Dr. Ranganathan's philosophy is relevant and accepted as a way to overcome with these problems.

Dr. S.R. Ranganathan is known as "Father of Library Science". He has developed the "Five Laws of Library Science" in the year 1928 and published in 1931. According to Dr. Ranganathan the entire process of library or an information institution i.e. organizing, managing, disseminating and retrieving of information are directly or indirectly related to these Five Laws.

During the time he had recognized there would be a possibility of problems in information handling due to information explosion. Five Laws are very useful and are guiding principles for library and information professionals. Nowadays, we the library professionals are facing the problems the help of IT in organizing, managing, disseminating the information properly & systematically. That is why the five laws of library science are reconsidered.

Ranganathan's Five Laws of Library Science are

1. Books are for use
2. Every reader his/her book
3. Every book its reader
4. Save the time of the reader
5. The library is a growing organism

#### **First Law – Books are for use**

The first law of library science emphasises on the optimum use of resources, facilities, and services. This law focuses on the maximum use of information. For proper uses of information there should be proper storage and dissemination of information. Library of information professionals have always kept in their mind that, they have to serve "Right information, to right user at the right time". Availability of digital technologies that Dr. Ranganathan could only have dreamt of has a vital role to play in preservation and access. Librarianship is now blessed to have the opportunity of making knowledge available through digitization, but digitization can best be justified by focusing on the priorities laid down in the first law. Library automation helps in computerizing library collections, where more than one user can retrieve the same information simultaneously. The first law is also forward thinking in its emphasis on the library's location. Increasingly we are seeing libraries location or even relocated, in more accessible locations in order to increase custom, OPAC of the library system helps users in accessing the bibliographical information with the help of Information and communication Technology: ICT across the globe at all levels. A number of efforts have been made to promote the use of information. Government has also taken initiatives to serve the information to its citizens in the form of e-government project. Through Internet one can avail information globally. The library and information navigator, knowledge manager, information evaluator etc.

---

### **Relevance of Ranganathan's Five Laws of Library Science in Present ICT Rea**

*Dr. P. C. Meena*

**Second Law- Every reader his/her books**

The second law, "Every reader his or her book," means that we all have diverse interests and that there is a book to satisfy each of us. Our duty is to help users find the information they require barring access to knowledge is totally against the philosophy of Dr. Ranganathan's law. In fact, the second law provides roots to the freedom to access information and knowledge in the forms of writings of all kinds. This law is user oriented law. Every citizen has the right to access the information. The core need is to fight for the right of users of all kinds. The consistent battle against censorship and inequality of access that has governed civilization since its inception. Right to Information Act, guides the library or information professionals to take care of information users, so that they can access information without any obstacle. Here is a necessity of user survey, user study and user education. User orientation may help in acquiring the need and satisfying the purpose. Presently no information center or library is self sufficient to serve all types of information to a particular client because of information explosion, budget crunches in the library and raising cost of the primary resources. In today's library, a variety of formats are available from which to gather information from. Because of this, the information the patron is looking for may not even be best presented in a book. Simpson (2008) suggests that in the appropriate solution in some cases may be another format altogether, such as a DVD or educational web site. The increased diversity of resources available naturally increases the likelihood of connecting the patron to 'their' desired form of information but through the networking and the consortium approach of the E- journals, E- books, help to meet the needs of users.

**Third Law- Every book its reader**

Ranganathan's third law is closely related to the second law : "Every book its reader". We could interpret reader development as being part of the third law, this law speaks to the inherent usefulness of each text contained within the library, and putting reading material into the hands of people who do not necessarily know what they need is also the heart of the third law.

Third law is information oriented. In modern situation, information professionals have to accept the information technology to organize and manage the information. Except in rural area, most of the university and institutions libraries in India are automated. Few of them have taken initiatives in digitizing the collections. Now E-books and E-journals have taken place in the libraries instead of the print collections. Every piece of information should be serving to users. Libraries and information centers are launching virtual enquiry services through their websites. They are accepting models created for this purpose by world renowned libraries, especially university libraries. These are exciting developments, focused on expanding services to where and when users may need them. They allow librarians to continue to use their skills in tracking down quality information for users and will become a staple feature of library services. Thus information professionals have to organize the information in such a manner that maximum information is used by user correctly and properly. Automated technical process of the library collection such as cataloguing, indexing, and abstracting etc. helps user in the context of the third law of library science. The Internet supplies a vast variety of documents available for information seekers.

**Fourth Law- Save the time of readers**

Ranganathan's fourth law "Save the time of the reader" also relates to how we actually organize information. An efficient library would not have to keep its patrons waiting. Time is important to every person. The entire journey of librarianship is about devising, designing, and developing methods, systems of organization and dissemination of information to provide the best service to

---

**Relevance of Ranganathan's Five Laws of Library Science in Present ICT Rea**

*Dr. P. C. Meena*

their readers in the most efficient, accurate, and effective manner and thus saving the reader's time. Time management is a key to success in life. Libraries must have the objective of saving the time of the reader. Acceptance and adoption of Information and communication Technology: (ICT) save thousands of hours of the reader's time when compared to manual systems. This law highlighted on, how fast information can be delivered to its end users. Information and communication Technology: (ICT) has helped users in getting their required information into their laptop, palmtop, and desktops. The concept "library without wall" has come into the picture. Through broadband connection, information professionals save the information to its clients with in a fraction of second. Day by day internet is speedy and reaching to every user irrespective of the place and time. In order to save the time of the reader, adoption of technological advancements are needed in the cataloging field to connect all interface more intuitive, and ultimately at least as accessible as Google.

#### **Fifth Law – Library is a Growing Organism**

The fifth law, that the library is a growing organism states that libraries will continue to grow in the future and struggle with space problems. This is reflected in the statistics of information generation and the acquisition of information resources of libraries of any type. Because of the increasing digital nature of library collections, library science is becoming increasingly linked to the computer science advancements that support it. The implication of this are that on librarian can really predict what the future of their field will bring. Therefore as a librarian the best option for staying relevant is to remain informed about and proficient with modern technology as far as possible.

Keeping in view the information available and growth in the area, it is impossible for the single library to acquire all the information of a subject. There is space problem, staff problem and most importantly the fund problem every library has. In the present electronic age, resources are available in electronic forms, such CD-ROM, DVD, VCD, Optical Disks. Due to availability on electronic format of the resources, space problem of the library gets no sense and smaller place can acquire billions of collection. The main problem of the library is availability of inadequate funds. In that case resource sharing and networking between libraries and information centers are very much essential. To sort out the library budget problem, consortium approach has come to the picture making libraries agreeing to share the resources under common platform.

Perhaps we can look at digital information and conclude that the growth is not as pressing from the point of view of physical space, although this remains something that libraries struggle with. Even in the digital world, the analogue continues to be important. Book publishing remains healthy, and indeed a much less expensive endeavor than it was in 1931. Even the presence of e-resources does not stop the acquisition of new print material, and the pace at which they grow has not changed. Lancaster's dream of a paperless society is not likely to come true in the near future. The sacrifices librarians have to make between space for books shelves and space for computer terminals to deliver this ever- expanding need will continue to be an issue. One can also see the library as a growing organism in terms of staff and skills. As the library grows in services, the skills necessary to deliver these new services will also grow. Perhaps we could argue that both libraries and the profession of librarianship are growing organisms. The fifth law's implication for marketing is adapting the library to future user needs, including mobilizing resources, dealing with uncertainty about future user needs, new services, should also transform its services to keep up with other changes in the world. The library must not lag behind in adapting to new technologies. The library staff must be technology-literate.

---

### **Relevance of Ranganathan's Five Laws of Library Science in Present ICT Rea**

*Dr. P. C. Meena*

### Conclusion

The most important similarity between the library of Ranganathan's day and today is the dedication to services that aid the patron in finding their information, which is why his laws are still applicable today. The role that computers and technology have played in it. Because of these the amount of information available through a library has grown by several orders of magnitude, creating a wealth of knowledge available to the information seeker. But in that growth librarians are facing challenges in properly organizing the information in order to best make it available to the patron. Different pathways for libraries to obtain digital information have not yet been made compatible with one another, and so the search for information becomes compartmentalized. Progress has been made in the effort to establish an effective centralized search function for libraries but adoption does not appear to be taking hold.

Due to Information Technology, there are so many changes happening in the world. Information is growing rapidly. Information Technology is the only solution to manage and organize the information in proper way. Today Information and communication Technology: ICT application Library Science were devised ninety years back and in spite of having so many changes in library world, these Five Laws still fit in today's context.

\*Librarian

S. S. Jain Subodh P.G. College,  
Jaipur (Raj.)

### References

1. Babu, B. Ramesh (1996). Reflections on Ranganathan's staff formula. International and Comparative Librarianship and Information Systems. Edited by P. N. Kaula and others. Delhi: B.R. Publishing Corporation. Vol. 1, Section 30.
2. DLIBCOM. (2007). Journal of digital library communication. 2 (8-9), 11-14.
3. Moorthy, A Lakshmana and Karisiddappa, C. R. (2000). Internet for Libraries, 67-81, available at: <http://drtc.isibang. Ac.in:8080/jspui/bitstream/1849/354/1/SSMfect.pdf> (accessed 15 Dec. 2016)
4. Ranganathan, S.R. (1931). The five laws of library science. Retrieved from <http://hdl.handle.net/2027/uc1.b99721>
5. Ranganathan, S.R. (1988). Five laws of library science, 2<sup>nd</sup> ed. Bangalore, Sarada Ranganathan Endowment for Library Science.
6. Suominen, V. (2002). User interests as the rationale of library operations: a critique. Public Library Quarterly. 35 (2). Retrieved Dec. 15, 2016, from <http://www.splq.info/issues/vol35-2/07.htm>
7. Singh, S. P. and Krishan Kumar (2005). Special libraries in electronic environment, Delhi, Bookwell.
8. Satpaty, Kishore Chandra and Soni, Divya (2007). Indian library consortia & five laws of library science; XXVI All India Conference of IASLIC. Jamia Milia Islamia.
9. Thaker, Urmila and Rawal, Chandrakant. Five laws of library science in new perspectives.

---

### Relevance of Ranganathan's Five Laws of Library Science in Present ICT Rea

Dr. P. C. Meena