

## **Conservation and Preservation of Manuscripts in the Saulat Public Library Rampur, Uttar Pradesh. : A Survey and Proposal for their Modernization**

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**ABSTRACT:** *The manuscripts/oriental collection are important to the human society, scholar can measure the value of valuable collection, who they are able to access them. The aim of this paper is to show a view for responsible authority, which are working in the field of conservation and preservation of manuscripts. This study related to investigate the status and management of collection, services, staff strength, budget and policy for the conservation and preservation of the oriental collection in Saulat Public Library (SPL), Rampur and also describe the lack of awareness about the collection, which are facing many problem at the present time.*

**Keywords:** *Oriental Collection, Management, Conservation, Preservation, Manuscripts*

### **I. INTRODUCTION**

The brain of human being is incredible gifted by the nature, because the human mind stored the various knowledge/information in his mind, when the writing and storage materials were not invented. The old knowledge was very important for the ancient era, because in the past time no any written and storage media were available, only one media was present there for storage and preserve the information /Knowledge i.e. "human mind". So here no any doubt , that discovery of storage and written media, the valuable knowledge or any things which he known were kept in human mind. After the invention of writing media the scholars were store their knowledge in various media i.e. stone, wood, leather or in the form of manuscripts like papyrus, parchment, palm leaf, vellum and paper, which are the primary sources of the traditional knowledge in the present era. It is our responsibility to preserve them and to save for the next generation, because the ancient valuable resources are symbolize our significance of cultural and tradition, which are describe the history of development of earlier civilization. The invention of writing media, handmade Paper was the very important media for storage the information in the earlier time, handmade paper was dominate in every area of the life. Most of the earlier information/knowledge is available in the form of handmade paper manuscripts, which are stored in the museum, library, temple and monk. Now the present time, it is a very serious problem related to conservation and preservation of these valuable resources. Library and museum have continuously played an important role in the storage and dissemination of knowledge/information. It is a house of knowledge, where knowledge is stored in organised form. The library is fulfil the general and special need of users. "Among special libraries, Oriental libraries hold an important place because they preserve the cultural heritage of a nation or a civilization."<sup>1</sup>

India has been a great seat of learning from the ancient period. The Takashila/Taxila (now in Pakistan) and Nalanda in Bihar were two important seats of learning during 7th and 5th century B.C. These seats of learning had a good oriental collection in classical languages. In the medieval period, particularly during the Mughal rule, a large number of madrasas were established which had a rich collection in Persian, Arabic and Urdu languages. In the modern period a large number of institutions, schools, colleges, and universities were set up which possess a collection of oriental literature in addition to resources in modern Indian languages. Besides, India is quite rich in terms of oriental resources in the form of manuscripts, rare books, coins, edicts, "Shahi ,farmans" and other materials. This valuable treasure is in both classical languages and Indian languages namely Sanskrit, Pali, Prakrit, Arabic, Persian , Hindi, Tamil , and Urdu etc. These resources represent the history of Indian culture presentable in subjects of Theology, Languages, Literature. Philosophy, Religion, Mysticism, Architecture, Archeology, Epigraphy etc. <sup>2</sup>

## **II. MEANING OF ORIENTAL**

Oriental as defined by **Simpson & Weiner (1989)**<sup>3</sup> is a term which reflects something belonging to, found in, or characteristics of, the countries or region lying in the east of Mediterranean or of the Roman Empire, or Asiatic countries generally. The countries pertaining to east cover an area from Mediterranean to Japan and North Eastern part of Africa, Asia and Oceania. The languages spoken in these regions are Arabic, Persian, Urdu, Hindi, Sanskrit, modern Indian languages, Indonesian, Malaysian, Chinese, Korean, Japanese etc.

### **Definition of Oriental Libraries**

“Oriental Libraries” are those libraries that have literature pertaining to Oriental studies and languages. "Oriental" in this context refers to the ancient Near East, including India, Persia (Iran), and ancient Arabia, among other places, and the languages and literatures of those places and peoples.<sup>4</sup>

The literature on the history of libraries indicates that the mechanism of recording the human communication and its preservation was the first step towards the manifestation of libraries. The collections consisted of clay tablets, papyrus roll, and codices were created and housed with great care in rooms adjacent to temples. The aim of writing was to preserve sacred human communication and knowledge (Ameen, 2005, p.112).<sup>5</sup> Private libraries for citizens became possible after the invention of the printing press, which allowed individuals to develop personal collections. Today, the concept of a private library is broadly applied to any individual's personal collection regardless of its size. In contrast to public libraries, private libraries include one's own personal works, letters, diaries, photos, blogs, and other personal materials (Ferington, 2002; Private Libraries Association, 2007)<sup>6</sup> Famous private libraries of the world include; Queen Elizabeth II's Library in Windsor Castle; Tianyi Pavilion – the oldest private library in Asia (located in Zhejiang, China); Library of Sir Thomas Browne; Bibliotheca Lindesiana etc. (Wikipedia, 2010).<sup>7</sup>

### **The brief overview of Saulat Public Library (SPL) Rampur, U.P.**

Saulat Public Library(SPL) was established in 21<sup>st</sup> September 1934 by a social worker of Rampur , Saulat Ali Khan. Presently it is situated in old Tahseel building, near Jama Masjid, Rampur. Saulat public library, which is unique in its holdings of more than 25 thousand Urdu publication , most of them are huge the rare value. This library also possesses several hundred oriental manuscripts in Arabic, Persian and Urdu.<sup>8</sup> Other collection are books, periodicals, newspapers reference-books, journals, maps and others printed materials. Saulat Public Library has started free coaching classes for high school (U.P. Board) and computer training center for the poor students.

### **Research Questions**

The oriental collection of the Saulat Public Library Rampur is prosperous and valuable, due to the importance of oriental collection a detailed study is conducted of Saulat Public Library, Rampur. This study makes a clear picture of the present status of the collection, problems related to deterioration and conservation of Manuscripts, to study the various internal and external factors which are responsible for deterioration of oriental collection.

### **Research questions of the study**

1. What is the Status and type of library collection/ Information sources and services are available in SPL, Library?
2. Availability of Human Resources and Equipments in the SPL.
3. What is the Budget and Source of finance/sponsoring body of SPL?
4. What is the status of rare collection in SPL?
5. What is the status of the Library Building related to conservation and preservation for the Manuscript?
6. What is the status about maintenance and treatment Policy for the Manuscripts and Status of Library Modernization plan in the SPL.

### **Methodology of the Study**

In this study the data collected through a survey of Saulat Public Library in Rampur district of Uttar Pradesh by using interview, observation, and questionnaire method. A questionnaire was used as a tool for data collection for the survey.

### **Interpretation of data**

To achieve the objectives of the study, the data were collected about collection, technical processes, automation, environment and other facilities, methods of preservation and conservation, services and collection etc. Analysis of data and related discussion is as followed:

#### **Availability of Collection, Human Resources and Equipments in the SPL.**

The library has rich collection in cultural and intellectual heritage. The SPL having great collection of books, newspaper, periodicals, reference books journals, manuscripts etc. Sault Public Library contain approximate 1,04,000 collections (books, periodicals, newspaper, reference books, Indian journals maps etc.), which also includes rare and handwritten copies. Some manuscripts or rare books are written in attractive way. As for it collection, a part from its manuscripts, the library is proud of an up-to-date collection of complete file of "several National Newspapers, Hindustan Times, Statesman, National herald, Qawmi Awaz, Al-Jami 'at and Taj among them, together with the files of many another important Newspaper that flourished before '47. It processes a dozen files of the famous journals Al-Hilal of Maulana Abul Kalam Azad and the Comrade of Maulana Muhammad Ali. It has got the sole surviving copy of the first edition of Urdu diwan of Mirza Ghalib."<sup>9</sup> The library has precious collection but there is no Technical staff of Curator, Restorer, and Conservator, it is main problem for the library and the library is not well equipped with the modern equipment such as Air Condition, Photocopier, Vacuum Cleaner, Climate Meter, Fumigation Chamber, Theft Detector, Binding Machine, etc. The SPL Rampur has approximate 555 paper manuscripts with Nas-taliq script and languages are Persian and Arabic Pushto, Urdu. These manuscripts in these languages represent all important subject like History, Medicine, Philosophy, Religions, Art, and Literature etc.

#### **Budget and Source of finance/sponsoring body of SPL?**

The Saulat Public Library does not obtain any type of Fund or support from Govt. or other institutes.

#### **What is the functionality of the Library Building related to conservation and preservation for the Manuscript?**

The library building is situated in the market area near Jama Masjid Rampur, in old Tahseel building on the 1<sup>st</sup> floor. The building has some facilities such as sufficient arrangement for ventilation, Windows safe form weather and rain, few fire extinguisher (Carbon dioxide and Powder/Dry chemical) are install near the stack room, office and reading section for the protection of the valuable collection and section of the library like acquisition, processing, circulation, newspaper, manuscript etc. fire detection system are not installed in the library building.

#### **Causes of deterioration of collection and About maintenance and treatment Policy for the Manuscripts and Status of Library Modernization plan in the SPL.**

The information about the factors of deterioration of the collection in SPL, the deteriorating factors are like termites, fungus, book-worm, silver fish, wood borers, etc are found in the library, valuable library's collection is suffering from different types of deteriorations such as holes, old repair, stains, acidity, charring, yellowing, brittleness, darkening of papers, fungus, termites and silverfish etc. The SPL suffering from the Physical, Chemical and biological factors, which are the main reasons of the deterioration of the valuable collection.

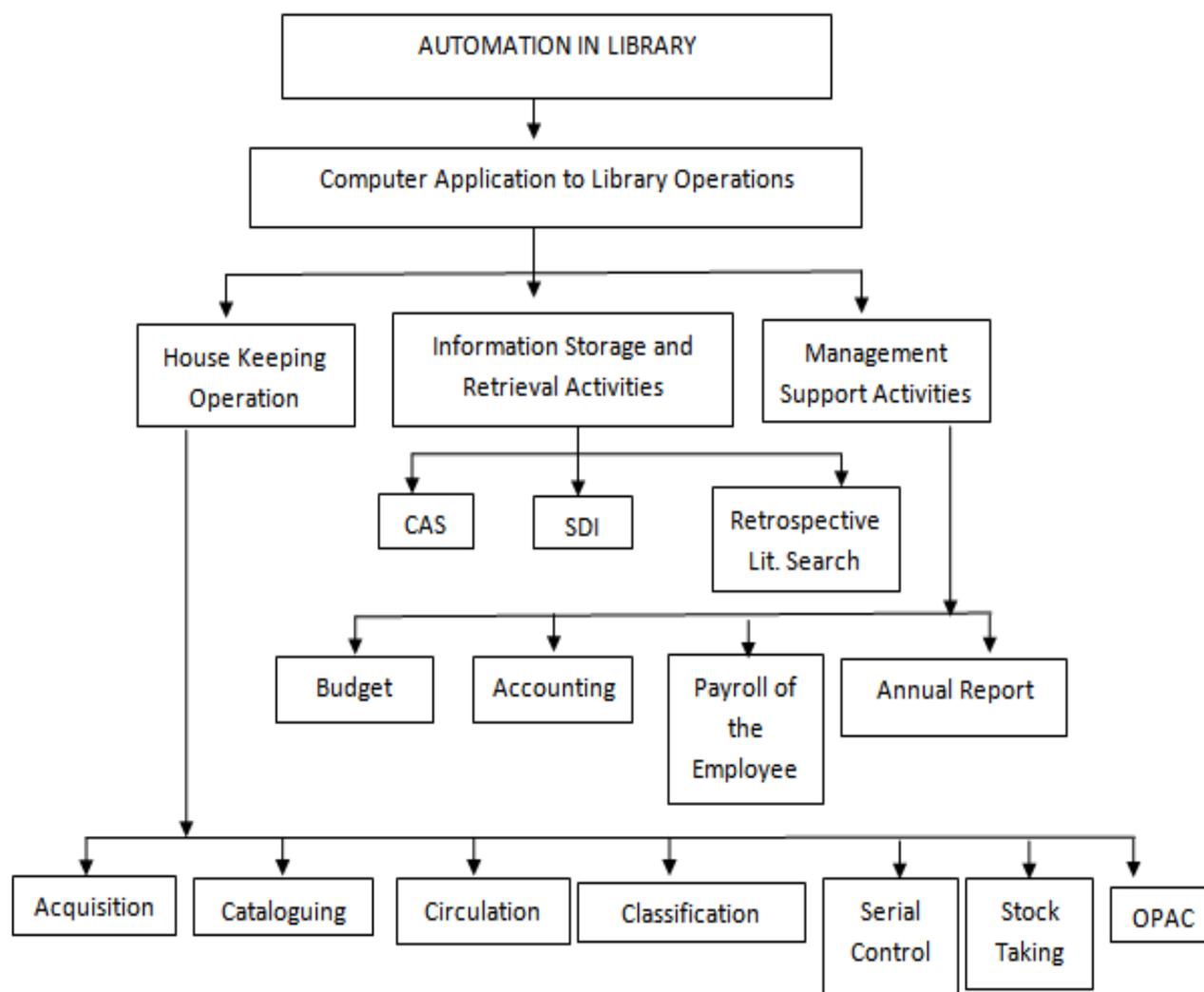
### **III. CONSERVATION AND PRESERVATION POLICY**

The SPL has no facility of laboratory and any agency for conservation and preservation of the library collection, due to many reasons. The library uses some familiar method for the conservation and preservation of manuscripts and collection i.e. close access, system, regular dusting, Gamaxine powder, use of Nephthalene balls/brick methods/techniques. The library used the general Alamiraha for stored the Manuscripts/ collection of the library. The SPL has not much modern tools and techniques are available for the modernization of the library.

#### **A brief suggestion and proposal for Modernization of SPL**

In the present information age the knowledge of computer is essential for not only the librarian but also for all endeavour of our life. We use computers in each and every aspect of our life. Computer have been playing significant role in every walk of life. Libraries are no exception. In the present day context, it is important for the library and information professionals to aware of the information and communication technology that are vital for libraries and information activities.<sup>11</sup> Application of new information and communication technologies in the management functions of the library are known as Library Automation. The process and functions of automation is given below in the figure 1,

FIGURE:-1



### Automation process in the library<sup>13</sup>

A computerized library is always better than a manually operated library in terms of organizing, processing and dissemination of information to users effectively and efficiently. A computer increases the efficiency and speed of library operation which is not possible in a manual system because of the physiological limitations of man. Library automation involving creation of database and information retrieval, computerised library networks and users of telecommunication for information handling, needs careful and systematic planning.<sup>12</sup>

Some issues for the Sault Public Library, which are play a role of barriers to conservation and preservation of valuable collection.

1. Lack of fund.
2. Lack of trained library staff.
3. Lack of basic treatment/modern technologies.
4. Lack of national level collaboration.

### Some suggestion and recommendations

- ✓ The SPL should need to pay more attention towards the better conservation and preservation of valuable collection by adopting the latest techniques.
- ✓ The SPL should be need to trained staff for the conservation and preservation of oriental collection, who has knowledge of the nature of library collection.
- ✓ The SPL need fund from some National funding agencies, which are working for save the intellectual and cultural heritage of nation.
- ✓ The SPL need to take up digitize plan of the rare collection.
- ✓ The National authority should help and support for the upcoming generation for the nation by providing them with fund.

#### IV. CONCLUSION

From the above discussion it is clear that the Saulat Public Library is far away from the new information communication and technologies, which are better for the libraries. It is recommended that new tools and technique related to ICT should be implement in the library, because the Saulat Public Library has valuable manuscripts/rare collection, Which is intellectual property of our nation. Manuscripts are the primary sources of our culture and tradition, the collection of manuscripts are available all over the maximum part of the country. Today most of them face many problems due to many reasons, in the past we have also lost a big number of manuscripts due to lack of awareness. Manuscripts cannot survive without proper care, so it is our duty to conserve and preserve those manuscripts, save for the next generation

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