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**MODERN EVOLUTION OF INDIA’S ECONOMIC STRUCTURE:
FROM ANCIENT TRADE TO MODERN LIBERALIZATION**

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<i>Keywords</i>	<i>Abstract</i>
<i>Indian Economic History, Public Sector Development, Sustainable and Inclusive Growth, Economic Liberalization (1991), Globalization, Industrialization, Public Sector Development.</i>	The dynamic shift of India's economic structure from ancient agricultural systems to a modern mixed economy is reflected in the country's economic history. The main stages of India's economic development are covered in this study, including the flourishing of ancient trade networks, the agrarian-based economy of the Middle Ages, the effects of colonial economic policies during British rule, and the era of post-independence planning. Specific consideration is given to the economic drain theory, deindustrialization, land income systems, and the move towards liberalization after 1991. The study emphasizes how colonial exploitation drastically changed India's traditional trade and industries, while reforms after independence concentrated on industrialization, the development of the public sector, and poverty reduction. In addition, the study examines how economic liberalization, globalization, and technological innovation have impacted India's development path. This study offers a thorough overview of India's economic development and the difficulties encountered in attaining sustainable and inclusive development by analyzing past economic strategies and their long-term effects.



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Introduction

India's library economy has mirrored the country's overall social, economic, and political transformations. India's libraries have evolved alongside developments in information technology, education systems, and government patronage, moving from historical centers of learning to contemporary digital information centers. The financial difficulties, funding models, and economic underpinnings that have influenced the development of libraries in India are discussed in this article. Famous institutions like Nalanda University and Takshashila served as significant hubs for education in ancient times, funded mostly by royal patronage, religious gifts, and community donations. Economic assistance for libraries was strongly tied to religious and cultural values, and information was seen as a public benefit. With the founding of organized public and institutional libraries, such as the National Library of India, library funding experienced a major shift throughout the colonial era. The focus of financial aid gradually changed to include government funding, academic institutions, and subscription-based methods. Following independence, a number of systematic measures were implemented to improve library infrastructure through state funding, Public Library Acts, and the backing of organizations such as the University Grants Commission. The advent of economic liberalization and technological progress in recent decades has resulted in novel financial structures such as digital consortiums, open access programs, and public-private partnerships. Nevertheless, libraries continue to struggle with issues such as limited budgets, increasing costs of digital resources, and disparities in access between metropolitan and rural areas. As a result, in order to assess current funding models and create long-term plans for the future development of library and information services in India, it is necessary to comprehend the economic history of libraries there.

Historical Perspective

India is well-known for its rich cultural history as well as its long history of academic achievement. Renowned libraries were located in learning hubs and religious institutions during ancient and medieval times. In the Middle Ages, the rulers of the region were highly invested in establishing libraries. The introduction of printing and the work of Christian missionaries led to the founding of a few libraries in the sixteenth century. Libraries in the contemporary sense started to appear in certain areas, especially the provincial capitals, during the latter half of the 19th century, when the British brought English into the nation and started establishing some small educational establishments. The growth of libraries only came to light after the country became independent and the Five Year Plans began to be implemented. The nation's library infrastructure has been expanded significantly thanks to the nine five-year plans that have been implemented one after another. India has long been known as a nation of knowledge, education, and vibrant intellectual heritage. Valuable collections of manuscripts and scholarly publications were kept by religious organizations and educational centers since antiquity. Universities, monasteries, and temples served as repositories of knowledge as well as locations of instruction and devotion. In the Middle Ages, numerous monarchs actively encouraged the founding and upkeep of libraries, fostering the preservation and translation of significant writings. New influences, such as the printing press and missionary education, helped to expand organized book collections as European powers, particularly during the 16th and 17th centuries, arrived. Nevertheless, it was during British rule that a planned library movement started to gain momentum. The establishment of modern libraries, notably in provincial capitals and presidency towns, was a result of the introduction of English education and the growth of official educational



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facilities in the nineteenth century. Following India's independence in 1947, library growth was increasingly acknowledged as a vital element of the country's development. Education, literacy, and public access to information were prioritized in the implementation of the Five-Year Plans. Consequently, the library infrastructure grew significantly throughout the nation, including in both rural and urban regions. These deliberate measures formed the groundwork for a better structured and more inclusive public library system in independent India.

Indian librarianship's origins (Ancient Period)

The preservation of information through oral traditions marks the beginning of the history of libraries in the ancient world. The Gurukul system in ancient India was where education was first taught orally, with pupils learning the Vedas and other holy writings by heart. The invention of writing on palm leaves, birch bark, and other materials led to the written recording and preservation of knowledge, which in turn resulted in the creation of the first libraries. Major institutions of learning, like Nalanda University and Takshashila, kept significant manuscript collections. These libraries housed books covering religion, philosophy, medicine, mathematics, astronomy, grammar, and literature. Nalanda's well-known library, Dharmaganja, was one of the largest in the ancient world and drew scholars from many nations. The majority of the libraries during this time were located in royal courts, temples, and monasteries (viharas). Financial assistance was provided through gifts and endowments from kings, rich businessmen, and religious organizations. Libraries were revered as hubs of knowledge and learning, and knowledge was deemed holy. Libraries were therefore essential in the ancient world for maintaining and disseminating information. They made significant contributions to global civilization and laid the groundwork for India's rich intellectual and educational heritage.

Ancient Education System

Ancient India's educational system was very sophisticated and intimately related to moral principles, religion, and philosophy. The majority of instruction was given via the Gurukul method, whereby students lived with their teacher (guru) and underwent comprehensive education. Education aimed to promote spiritual development, discipline, character development, and knowledge acquisition. The Vedas, Upanishads, grammar, logic, mathematics, astronomy, medicine (Ayurveda), warfare, and political science were among the topics covered to the pupils. The majority of instruction was given orally, with a focus on memorization and discussion. Palm leaves and birch bark were later employed as writing materials for documenting texts. Famous universities like Nalanda and Takshashila drew students from all across India and the world, and higher education thrived there. These schools provided advanced instruction in law, medicine, philosophy, and other subjects. The majority of education was free, and upon finishing their coursework, students would frequently give guru dakshina (a token of respect or payment) to their instructors. The system placed a strong emphasis on social responsibility, moral principles, self-control, and respect for the elderly. Generally speaking, the ancient Indian educational system aimed to foster a person's overall growth and was instrumental in establishing India's rich intellectual and cultural legacy.

The Middle Ages

The history of libraries in India during the Middle Ages reflects major shifts in politics, culture, and religion. Many traditional centers of education were destroyed by invasions and political unrest



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following the fall of ancient universities like Nalanda University. Under new rulers and religious organizations, however, the practice of maintaining knowledge persisted. Libraries were often linked to royal courts, mosques, and madrasas (Islamic educational institutions) throughout the Delhi Sultanate and Mughal era. Particularly in the areas of theology, law, philosophy, astronomy, medicine, and literature, Muslim monarchs and intellectuals demonstrated a strong interest in gathering and preserving books. During this period, Arabic and Persian rose to prominence as languages of learning. The Mughal monarchs were well-known library supporters. For instance, Akbar's imperial court supported a vast royal library with thousands of manuscripts. To copy and preserve significant texts, calligraphers, translators, and scholars were hired. During this time, there was a cultural exchange that was facilitated by the translation of many Sanskrit texts into Persian. In South India, temples and monasteries also kept manuscript collections. Nevertheless, libraries were generally only accessible to religious leaders, academics, and royal employees, and there was no public library system like the one we have today. The majority of medieval libraries were maintained by religious organizations and royal sponsorship.

The Institutionalization of Public Libraries during the Colonial Era

The advent of British colonial government represented a turning point in the integration of Western library ideas with India's native customs. The first modern libraries in India were established during this time, and the first efforts were made to formalize librarianship as a separate profession.

The founding of the first contemporary libraries:

The late 18th and early 19th centuries saw the establishment of a number of important organizations that would influence the course of Indian librarianship in the future.

- The Calcutta Public Library (1836), which would eventually become the National Library of India, was an early example of the use of European library models in a membership library.
- Imperial Library (1891): After independence, it became the national library of India when a number of government collections were combined.
- Connemara Public Library (1896): One of the first public libraries in India, founded in Madras (now Chennai).

These establishments brought in professional personnel structures, methodical cataloging, and open access shelving, all of which were formerly unheard of in Indian libraries. The first official efforts to train library personnel were made during the colonial era. In 1911, the Maharaja of Baroda invited the American librarian W. A. Borden to start the first library training course. Although it had a restricted scope and reach, Borden's brief training course was the first professional library education program in India. Indians with higher education began to recognize librarianship as a unique profession by the beginning of the 20th century. The discipline, however, continued to suffer from a lack of uniform training, professional organizations, and defined career options. The foundation laid during this time would be essential for progress after independence.

The Post-Independence Era

Public Funding and Policy Development: The end of British control over India in 1947 marked the beginning of a new age for librarianship. Realizing the importance of information access for



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democratic development and economic progress, the new country increased its support for libraries and library education.

National level projects

The profession of librarianship in post-independence India benefited from a number of significant advancements:

- Funding from the University Grants Commission (UGC): The UGC has given a lot of financial support to university libraries and library science programs since the 1950s.
- **The UGC's Role:** The university and college libraries were given a new lease of life by the UGC. It improved librarians' lives and gave them status and reputation. The key committees and commissions established by the UGC to advance the expansion and improvement of academic and university libraries are Committee on Libraries (1957): The UGC program (Commission) established a committee, led by Dr. S. R. Ranganathan, to provide guidance on a variety of topics, such as the norms and principles for library construction, equipment, and furnishings design, university library administration, librarian training, and more. Review Committee (1961): In July 1961, Dr. S. R. Ranganathan led a review panel that was tasked with looking into the problem of improving and harmonizing teaching standards in Indian universities, as well as conducting library science research. The UGC, which serves as the foundation for numerous advancements in the field of library science, created a note in response to this questionnaire. Additional noteworthy committees and commissions include: Education Commission (1964).
- **Pal Committee (1970)** chaired by A. B. Lal. Chairman of the Mehrotra Committee (1983): R. C. Mehrotra Committee on National Network• System for Universities (1988): Chairman Yash Pal. The Curriculum Development Committee on LISc (1990), under the direction of P.N. Kaula Workshop on Workflows: In New Delhi, the UGC held a symposium on "work flow" in libraries from March 4–7, 1959. The seminar's recommendations were distributed to schools and universities throughout the nation. The commission took these remarks into consideration and agreed with them.
- **Adjustments to the Pay Scale:** The modification of wage scales for professionally trained librarians under the third five-year plan is another significant advancement in the history of universities and college libraries. To create a network of all the libraries of the universities and colleges of the nation and aid in its automation and improvement, the UGC created an Inter University Centre (IUC) named INFLIBNET at Gandhinagar in 1988. UNESCO's responsibilities: The most significant thing UNESCO has done for the library profession in India is giving it an international reputation. The Delhi Public Library, which UNESCO founded in October 1951, marked the beginning of its first pilot initiative. With technical support from UNESCO, the Indian government established the Indian National Scientific Documentation Centre (INSDOC) in 1952. UNESCO once again helped INSDOC establish its regional center in Bangalore in 1964. In this line, the UNESCO took the second significant action by organizing a workshop in Delhi from October 6–26, 1955, on the growth of public libraries in Asia. This was the first international conference on this topic held in an Asian nation. In general, the seminar was a major triumph for the library community in India. The "Regional seminar on library development in South Asia," another UNESCO symposium, had a significant impact on the library industry in India. From October 3 to October 14,



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1960, the University of Delhi library served as the venue. The "grading of staff," "salary scales," and "status of librarian" were the most notable accomplishments of this course.

- **Advisory Committee (1957):** This government committee's advice led to improvements in library resources and educational opportunities.
- **Indian Library Association (ILA):** Established in 1933 but rose to prominence after independence, the ILA campaigned for professional standards and recognition.
- **Documentation Research and Training Center (DRTC):** Created by Ranganathan in Bangalore in 1962, DRTC was the first institution to provide cutting-edge instruction in information science and documentation.

The approval of public library legislation in a number of states, starting with the Madras Public Libraries Act (1948) and eventually extending to Tamil Nadu, Andhra Pradesh, Karnataka, Maharashtra, and others, occurred at the same time as these changes. Dr. S. R. Ranganathan's Five Laws of Library Science and support for legislation governing public libraries established the groundwork for organized development. To guarantee consistent funding through library tax (tax), a number of states passed Public Library Acts. Additionally, professional training in LIS grew throughout this time. To address the rising need for educated people, universities established bachelor's, master's, M.Phil., and doctorate programs in library and information science.

Technological progress revolutionized library services in the late 20th and early 21st centuries. The INFLIBNET Centre's founding encouraged academic libraries to embrace resource sharing, networking, and automation. The National Digital Library of India and other digital projects have increased the availability of electronic resources. Scientists, educators, and information professionals in India have come to the conclusion that it is time to share resources and harmonize mechanisms. As a result, there has been a noticeable shift in India's library environment including national networks like ERNET (Educational and Research Institutions), INFLIBNET (Universities and Research Institutions), and Metropolitan Area Networks like CALIBNET in Calcutta, DELNET in Delhi, BONET in Bombay, PUNENET in Pune, MALIBNET in Madras, HYLIBNET in Hyderabad, and ADNET in Ahmadabad, there are several library resource sharing networks in various stages of planning, design, development, and implementation and DESINET (Defense Laboratories), and sectoral networks like BTISNET (Biotechnology Networks). These library networks are essential to the expansion and advancement of the library system. In India, the development of Library and Information Science following independence has been characterized by government assistance, professionalization of education, passing of library legislation, and the adoption of digital technologies, all of which have contributed to the increasing importance of libraries in the nation's progress.

The Growth of Consortiums and library Networks

The nature, operation, and services of libraries have undergone a significant transformation as a result of the development and use of computers. Libraries are using computers to process, store, retrieve, and distribute information. The notion of a library has changed from a repository of books to a place where you may get the most cutting-edge media, such as CD-ROM, the Internet, and other digital forms of information. Libraries are currently experiencing the network-based era as they have



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connected to a huge sea of knowledge online. Indian academic libraries have been brought on par with those worldwide by the use of ICTs. The UGC established the INFLIBNET in 1991 as an independent inter-university center, and it turned out to be a watershed moment in connecting academic libraries. It connects university libraries throughout India to a high-speed data network that spans the entire nation and is also helping to update these facilities. The INFLIBNET aims to promote library automation, establish standards, create union catalogs of serials, theses, books, monographs, and non-book materials, provide access to bibliographical information resources, build databases of projects, institutions, and experts, and arrange training programs, among other things. INFLIBNET membership is held by nearly all university libraries, and by many academic libraries in general. Additionally, the center created 'Software for University Libraries,' a library automation system known by its more popular moniker, SOUL. There have been a number of additional national and library networks developed in addition to INFLIBNET. Notable are the Network of the National Informatic Centre (NICNET), INDONET, ERNET, CALIBNET, DELNET, MALIBNET, and others. Users' access to information was increased, and resource sharing was facilitated by these networks.

The development of consortia was made possible by the growing expense of periodicals, the devaluation of the Indian currency, and the financial difficulties that libraries were experiencing. Most of the time, the consortium's goal is to satisfy the information requirements of stakeholders who belong to a homogeneous group. India's consortium model started in 1982 with the establishment of the Forum for Resource Sharing in Astronomy and Astrophysics (FORSA). This was established to facilitate the exchange of resources among the country's astronomy libraries. However, since it shared common interests in advancing the goals and activities of FORSA, its membership was expanded in 2004 to include mathematics and physics libraries. To give all Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs), the Indian Institute of Science (IISc), and other institutions, such as NITs, ISM, IIMs, NITTTRs, etc. access to electronic resources, The Ministry of Human Resource Development of the Indian government created the Indian Digital Library in Engineering Science and Technology (INDEST). The INDEST headquarters are located at IIT Delhi. In 2009, the National Knowledge Resource Consortium (NKRC) was founded. It consists of a network of libraries and information centers from 39 National Laboratories, the Council of Scientific and Industrial Research's institutes, and the Department of Science and Technology's 24 institutes. With the goal of raising the standard of instruction and research in Karnataka's health sciences universities through improved access to high-quality medical information, the Health Science Library and Information Network (HELINET) was established in March 2003. Members and institutions may use the consortium to gain access to 600 peer-reviewed biomedical journals from major publishers. Agricultural colleges, veterinary colleges, and Indian Council of Agricultural Research (ICAR) institutions have access to more than 3,000 journals covering the whole range of agricultural sciences through the Consortium for e-Resources in Agriculture (CeRA).

His Excellency Dr. APJ Abdul Kalam, then President of India, established the UGC-INFONET Digital Library Consortium at Vidya Bhawan on December 28, 2003, the last day of the UGC's Golden Jubilee festivities. The consortium provides current and historical access to over 7,500 core and peer-reviewed electronic publications, as well as 10 bibliographic databases from renowned publishers, academic organizations, and aggregators. The consortium was put into effect gradually.



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In the first phase, 50 institutions with Internet access through the UGC-INFONET networking program were given access to electronic resources. After that, the UGC allowed the consortium access to 209 universities.

National Knowledge Commission

On June 13, 2005, the Indian government established the National Knowledge Commission (NKC), the first commission of its kind in the world, with a three-year tenure, running from October 2, 2005, to October 2, 2008. The National Knowledge Commission is a high-level advisory body to the Prime Minister of India with a mandate to guide policy and direct reforms, with a focus on important sectors like education, science and technology, agriculture, industry, e-governance, and more. The commission's primary interests include easy access to information, the establishment and maintenance of information systems, the dissemination of information, and improved information services. By absorbing core issues such as establishing a national commission on libraries, conducting a national census of all libraries, revamping LIS education, training, and research facilities, re-assessing library staffing, establishing a central library fund, modernizing library management, fostering more community participation in library management, promoting information communication technology applications in all libraries, facilitating the donation and maintenance of private collections, and promoting public-private partnerships in LIS development.

Modern Issues and Shifts

As the library industry in India continues to change in the digital age, library professionals are now facing unprecedented challenges and opportunities.

- **Digital library projects:** Millions of documents have been made freely available online thanks to initiatives like the Digital Library of India.
- **Institutional Repositories:** Academic libraries are increasingly managing digital repositories of research output.
- **Library Automation:** Academic and big public libraries have adopted integrated library systems as the norm.
- **Resource Sharing Networks:** Organizations like INFLIBNET and DELNET facilitate the coordinated acquisition and sharing of resources.

These advancements necessitate that librarians acquire technical skills in areas such database administration, digital preservation, and metadata knowledge, which go beyond the scope of conventional library abilities.

Future course for Indian librarianship

The profession of librarianship is at a turning point as India establishes itself as a global knowledge economy. Several emerging trends point towards possible directions for the future.

Increased Social Roles: Indian librarians are increasingly accepting greater social duties that go beyond the conventional delivery of information.



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- **Advancing Information literacy:** Assisting various communities in navigating the complicated information environment.
- **Digital inclusion:** Giving underserved communities access points and training.
- **Protection of cultural heritage:** digitizing and making available distinctive cultural resources.
- **Community involvement:** Establishing libraries as bustling neighborhood hubs.

Conclusion

In conclusion, India's library system has advanced significantly. The growth of India's library system has been greatly aided by the various communities. However, attention must still be paid to the establishment of libraries in the outlying, underserved areas of society. The central and state governments should implement the Library legislation effectively and improve the library services they offer to the general public. India once held the title of "Vishva Guru" and has a distinguished academic history. India needs to promote and support library services for all areas of society if it wants to reclaim the splendor of the Nalanda and Taxshila era. To close the digital gap and provide information resources to rural areas, underserved communities, and people with lower socioeconomic status, particular programs must be implemented. Specific programs must be put in place in order to bridge the digital divide and offer information resources to rural areas, underprivileged communities, and individuals with lower socioeconomic standing. The library system's efficiency can be increased by fostering library networking and encouraging resource sharing. India may establish a knowledge-driven society by making sure libraries function as vibrant centers of education, research, and lifelong learning for all citizens, drawing inspiration from renowned ancient centers of learning like Nalanda University and Takshashila University.

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