

SUMMARY

AN ANALYSIS OF ADMINISTRATIVE AND CURATORIAL PROBLEMS OF GOVERNMENT MUSEUMS IN GUJARAT.

Museums are symbol of organization representing civilization like other institutions of knowledge and culture. A good museum acts as a dynamic agency in the cultural, educational and revolutionary life of the people. The museum is define by ICOM as a non-profit making, permanent institution, in the service of society and of its development, and opens to the public which acquires, conserves, research, communicates & exhibits, for the purpose of study, education, and enjoyment, material evidence of man and his environment.

Hence museums are very important institution devoted to preservation of cultural material and technological object. It serves vital tools for education, research both formal and non-formal. Museums have much responsibility in this direction which can be vital significances to changing society by serving a platform for interaction between the generations and also by acting as a bridge between past and present. In this way museums are part of the response to the needs of human life. They impost the sense of aesthetic beauty, curiosity and of the chronological development to the society

Gujarat possesses rich cultural history. So the land inspires many people to visit this magnificent land with diversity of customs and rituals. Gujarat is recognized for its industries and growing economy. Another jewel in its crown is the tourism industry. The various cities in the state attract huge number of tourists from different parts of the country as well as the world. Gujarat has a long history of struggle and turbulence and one witnesses it and feels it when he visits the museums located at different places in Gujarat.

Gujarat earns prestige in the country for its growth, development and cultural richness. The state has museums too in good numbers. There are more than 80 museums in the state out of them some fifteen museums are government and government manages them. Some of the museums like Museum and Picture Gallery, Vadodara; Darbar Hall Museum, Junagarh; Kutch Museum Bhuj; Watson Museum, Rajkot are well reputed for their collections at international level.

The present research work is an attempt to study the Government Museums in Gujarat. As the title indicates, the present study aims basically at focusing at administrative and curatorial problems that are perceived in the management of the government museums. By the word 'problem', we do not mean to criticize or highlight blunders or lacking on part of the system, but to recognize issues that possibly add to its perplexity adversely affecting its efficiency level. The intension in its pure and honest sense is to appreciate the venture of the government in the interest of enhancing the understanding of the Gujarati culture and to share a concern how such issues be resolved to enhance the impact of the museums through sensible performance. The research conducts its study through a scheme of chapters as detailed below. It concludes the study with a few words of suggestion that may be considered in the interest of better performance and positive impact recognizing the value of the government museums.

First chapter focuses on the development of museums in Gujarat and various aspects of the museum management.

- A. Administration: Museum staff and expertise in various skills, human comfort, public facilities
- B. Budget and Finance: Carrying or managing finance, optimum utilization of finance.
- C. Structural and infrastructural issues related to technical and non-technical establishment

- D. Organization: Collection, Display, lighting, documentation, maintenance.
- E. Conservation and Restoration.
- F. Educational Activities and Extension Services
- G. Research activities.

Second chapter entitle 'Research Design Focusing on Current Scenario of Government Museums' attempts to focus on the current state of conditions at the government museums in Gujarat. It is planned to collect relevant data and opinions by adopting conventional research

- A. Questionnaire method.
- B. Personal discussion with museum experts and staff within the system.
- C. Opinions of experts outside the system.

The observations are worked out through interviews and subjective questionnaire comprising some 116 questions on different aspects of the museum management.

Third chapter 'Analysis and Interpretation: Administrative Problems' seeks to review the conditions of administration, finance, staff positions and infrastructure in terms of the adequacy in the light of the demands of the time. The focus of the chapter is laid chiefly on the management aspects of the museums. Further, finance being the most sensitive issue, special attention is paid at the discussion of finance management and the cost effective utilization of the available resources. It may also look in to the rationale of the staff management, the functionaries and safety measures.

The curatorial side of museum management acquires lot of significance in view of the end results of the museum activities. The forth chapter deals with an analysis and interpretation: curatorial problems. It pertains to aspects like collection, conservation, preservation and technical care of

objects, documentation, display presentation, arrangement of exhibits, educational aspects, visitors' response, publications, community extension programs, exchange arrangements, sponsorship and the like. It calls for adequate know-how, awareness, effective supervision, periodical inspection and cost effective methods of display, light arrangements, safety measures and security arrangements on the part of the management in operation. The objective is it leads the activity to its valuable utilization with all its dynamism and versatility for the benefit of community in general and students and researchers in specific. In the light of rapidly changing currents in the present world of high technology and information technology the value of information as effective tool of power makes the curatorial aspect a highly sensitive area of research.

Fifth chapter 'Discussion, Suggestions and Conclusions' reviews how potency and dynamism of museums may be utilized for academic and cultural advancement. The purpose of this exercise is to find out a way to remove hurdles and impediments that affect the work at government museums. It may also explore the ways to increase efficiency at management of museums.

With the advent of the electronic media, the role of museums becomes crucial to provide virtual platform to students to interact with the past. What students read in books of history they may see at museums as live performances through electronic applications. In this light, the chapter will also review how in the present time museums may serve as corridor to academic advancement and growth. Further, it will also explain with reference to a case of Gujarat how museums came to be government responsibility in the post independence era specifically in the form of educational campaign.

A few suggestions mentioned at the end of the study will hopefully address to the possibility of improvement in the present status of the government museums. They pertain to different functions of the museum management.

A. Administration and Curatorial Management

1. The Director of the Department of Museums should have at least two Deputy/ Assistant directors to assist him in the two major functions: administration and technical or curatorial management. He may be allowed to delegate his authority to and share his responsibility with his assistants for better management.
2. The administrative structure of the organization may be revised to allow the pyramid type structure of the hierarchy of the officers. This structure will help smooth functioning of the institutions.
3. Enough staff may be ensured at all museums. The condition of understaffing or inappropriate staffing may be avoided. Timely recruitments of new staff may be ensured to fill vacant positions. Advance planning may be done to ensure appointments on time. In case of an employee's death or accident, appointments may be done on priority basis to ensure timely replacements.
4. The security department is a sensitive function at a museum that stores exquisite and invaluable articles of high cultural and historical significance. It should be provided with a staff of minimum five persons to include the security officer and two assistants under him for internal and external security and minimum at least two guards to keep a watch at the gate and other sensitive spots in a museum.
5. Appropriate efforts should be made to avoid any kind of procedural delay. Promptness in implementation of decisions is a key to productivity and profitability.

6. With ample finance made available from the central and the state governments what is required is the productive and efficient use of that money. For the purpose, a review committee may be set up to review expenditures incurred from time to time and ensure that they go in conformity with the policy decisions and in view of realistic requirements at the museums.
7. The government spends good money on the infrastructure. New buildings are constructed and renovations are done with the old structures. While doing it, current expectations and demands should be considered to ensure due realization of the public money. It is high time that small museums should have assurance of premises with due safety measures and inspection facilities.
8. The communication system should be updated employing modern facilities and technology. The office system has to allow the voice of common employees to reach up to the top management. The interpersonal communication needs improvements. Unnecessary hurdles procedural barricades should be avoided as far as possible.
9. The curatorial department has to employ innovative methods at the curatorial function adopting creative and imaginative ideas by those involved in the work. The employees at even lower level should be allowed to speak and suggest changes in frank and free environment and their suggestions should duly accepted for implementation in the interest of better performance.

B. Educational and Community Extension Services

10. To ensure meaning contribution, the museums should go beyond its stereotypical methods of programs and think out new ways to ensure better involvement on the part of students, researches and academicians to reap more imaginative results.

11. A committee with members representing schools, colleges and universities and other voluntary organizations in the area to allow live touch with teachers and scholars for useful feedback.
12. The programs devised at the museums should have direct bearing on the expectations and requirements in education and research.
13. The technology of audio-visual devices and 2G, 3G and 4G technologies should be appropriately employed to claim leading space in education and research activities.
14. The liaison has to be set up between the museums and schools and colleges in the area to ensure optimum use of the museum facility. A guidance cell should be set up at each museum to provide a platform to students and researchers to interact on queries in the area of their subject. It may be attached to the reception or the liaison unit at a museum.
15. Students in rural areas and remote places should be put in touch with a museum in their area and elsewhere through arrangement of different exchange and exposure programs, seminars, exhibitions, interactions and lectures.
16. The museum department has to take an initiative to approach and researchers and even common people by contact sessions organized on public ground.
17. The print media and the electronic media and the internet should be put to optimum use for wide information network and to prepare promos, advertisement, reports and programs related to museum activities.
18. Quiz and other discursive programs should be organized periodically for school and college students and the winners should be honoured with certificates and prizes. Such competition may go up to state and national levels and they may work effectively to invite active participation from the students of different levels.
19. A system has to be evolved to collect feedback from visitors in the form of a response sheet. Suggestion boxes may also be installed at prime spots to collect visitors' responses. The responses received should be presented to the Response Appraisal Cell for further

improvements. This will ensure to bridge the public voice with the museum management. People's contribution will surely work in the direction of significant improvement in the present status of the government museums in Gujarat.

At the end conclusions are drawn to improve the situations of the government museums in the state. Day by day museums are losing man power and therefore, authority has to take certain steps to improve functioning of museums in the state are discussed. It is urgent that the government of Gujarat has to look into this problem with utmost seriousness to find out solutions for problems. Economy cannot be interpreted in the sense that cultural heritage has to sacrifice. If no correct attention is paid towards this object, we are going to lose the invaluable heritage and it will be a great loss. No one on the part of the government tries to understand this problem. It has to start actually from the Chief Minister; Minister, Culture Department; Concerned Officer from Finance department and Secretary of Culture Department. These people have to meet and deliberate to give enough thought to this problem. They have to make efforts to save invaluable cultural heritage. First they should decide to fill up all the vacant posts with duly qualified persons. For the purpose they should form a committee consisting of expert museologists and some of the government officers to make a special drive for recruitment of museum personnel for all government museums in the state. If cultural heritage is to be saved this can be one of the immediate solutions. The government has to think crucially about the situation so that valuable collection of objects at the museums are conserved and preserved with due care and they are put to optimum use and value in the interest of the enhancement of our cultural treasure that we have inherited from our ancestors.