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Editors:
Dr. Shivaram B. S
Dr. Thandava Gowda T. N

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VOLUME - 2

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A HISTORICAL AND THEMATIC ANALYSIS OF THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF PADMA SHRI AWARDEES TO LIBRARY DEVELOPMENT IN INDIA

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Abstract

Libraries underpin education, research, literacy and social development, yet the individuals who shaped Indian library development are seldom examined together. This historical and documentary study examines the contributions of Padma Shri awardees: S. R. Ranganathan (1957), B. S. Kesavan (1960), Iyyanki Venkata Ramanayya (1972), Syed Bashiruddin (1976), P. N. Kaula (2004), Palam Kalyanasundaram (2023) and Anke Gowda M. (2026). The study draws on official Padma Awards records, institutional profiles, scholarly articles, legislation and press reports. Information was extracted, cross-checked and grouped through thematic analysis. Four themes emerge: knowledge organisation and bibliographic control, public libraries and access to knowledge, library education and professional scholarship, and social responsibility. The seven contributions prove complementary: theoretical foundations, national bibliographic infrastructure, mass library mobilisation, formal professional training, scholarly communication, and philanthropic and community-based access. Two awardees were recognised in the field of social work, which separates their library service from their wider social contribution. The findings imply that public library services, information discovery, access, professional education and preservation remain central to library development. The study is limited by its dependence on available documentary evidence.

Keywords: Indian librarianship; Library development; Library education; Library pioneers; Padma Shri; Public libraries.

1. Introduction

Libraries support education, research, literacy, the dissemination of knowledge and social development. The IFLA–UNESCO Public Library Manifesto describes the public library as a living force for education, culture and information (International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions [IFLA], 2022). In India, these functions advanced through a long sequence of institution-building rather than through any single reform.

Librarianship in India developed through regional library movements, university library reform, legislation, national bibliographic services and professional education. The Andhra Desa Library

Association was chiefly responsible for organising an All-India Public Library Conference at Madras in November 1919, and the Madras Public Libraries Act of 1948 is recorded as the first library bill passed in free India (Vashishth, 2018). The Delivery of Books Act of 1954 later required publishers to deliver copies of new books to the National Library at Calcutta (Delivery of Books and Newspapers (Public Libraries) Act, 1954). These developments depended on professional librarians, teachers of library science, scholars and key advocates of public libraries. Some worked inside institutions; others built associations, journals and community collections outside the library.

The Padma Shri is the fourth-highest civilian award in India. Instituted by the Government of India in 1954, it recognises distinguished service in fields such as art, education, literature, science, medicine, social work, public affairs, sports, trade and industry. Recipients receive a certificate signed by the President and a medallion bearing an embossed lotus flower, with the word "Padma" in Devanagari script above it and "Shri" below. Several thousand people have received the award since its institution. Documenting the achievements of awardees whose work touched libraries or education is worthwhile for two reasons. Official recognition gives a verifiable starting point for historical enquiry, and a consolidated record preserves institutional memory while showing that library development advanced through education and social service as well as through professional practice (Government of India, 2021).

This article studies seven significant personalities: S. R. Ranganathan, B. S. Kesavan, Iyyanki Venkata Ramanayya, Syed Bashiruddin, P. N. Kaula, Palam Kalyanasundaram and Anke Gowda M. Their work spans library science, bibliographic control, the public library movement, library education, professional scholarship, philanthropy and free access to books. The purpose of the article is to examine their contributions and to understand their significance for Indian librarianship.

2. Review of Literature

2.1 Pioneers of Indian Librarianship

Ranganathan is the most extensively documented figure in the group. A special issue of the *Annals of Library and Information Studies* marked the centenary of his entry into the profession, and its opening essay by Satija and Gupta (2024) addresses the making of the man and his method. Shorter summaries consistently identify the Five Laws of Library Science (1931) and the Colon Classification (1933) as his main legacies (INFLIBNET Centre, n.d.-a; Raman, 2012). For Iyyanki Venkata Ramanayya, the principal accessible source located was Vashishth's (2018) chapter in the INFLIBNET e-PG Pathshala course on public libraries, which records his work in library conferences, library pilgrimages and adult education and places him among other pioneers, legislators and associations.

2.2 Library Institutions and Professional Development

Kesavan's work is documented mainly in institutional sources. The Central Reference Library (n.d.) records that a committee headed by him planned the Indian National Bibliography, and M. Ranganathan (2020) traces his tenure at the National Library and his editorship of a national bibliography of Indian literature. Bashiruddin's contribution to formal education appears in the history of the Department of Library and Information Science at Aligarh Muslim University (Department of Library and Information Science, Aligarh Muslim University [AMU DLIS], 2026) and in the University of Delhi's awardee profiles (Department of Library and Information Science, University of Delhi [DU DLIS], n.d.-a). On Kaula, Jeevan (2013) analysed 867 abstracts of papers from *Herald of Library Science* (1969–2006) indexed in LISA, while the INFLIBNET LIB-VAHINI

profile lists his offices, editorships and publications (INFLIBNET Centre, n.d.-b). The University of Delhi's department history links the start of formal library science teaching there in 1946 to Ranganathan and S. Das Gupta (DU DLIS, n.d.-b), and the Sahitya Akademi (n.d.) catalogue lists the national bibliography of Indian literature that Kesavan edited.

2.3 Public Access and Social Contributions

For Palam Kalyanasundaram, the official source is the Press Information Bureau's list of Padma Awards 2023 (Ministry of Home Affairs, 2023), supplemented by journalistic profiles such as Pareek (2014). For Anke Gowda M. and his Pustaka Mane, the sources located were press reports from 2026 (ETV Bharat, 2026; Raj, 2026; TNM Staff, 2026). Peer-reviewed analysis of these two awardees was not found in the sources consulted, so their documentation rests on official records and news reporting. Taken together, the sources cover institutional histories, award records, one bibliometric study and journalism, but offer little critical analysis of long-term outcomes.

Overall, the literature is rich on individual pioneers, especially Ranganathan, and thinner on the two social-service awardees. The sources consulted did not include a study placing all seven awardees within one comparative framework. This study aims to supply that framework, without claiming that no such work exists.

2.4 Research Gap

The documented contributions of these awardees are scattered across official lists, institutional histories, journal articles and news reports. This article brings them together to examine different dimensions of library development, namely knowledge organisation, bibliographic control, public access, education, scholarship and social responsibility, within one comparative framework. The gap is stated only in relation to the literature reviewed in Section 2.

3. Objectives of the Study

1. To identify and document the contributions of Padma Shri awardees to library development in India.
2. To classify their contributions into major thematic areas of librarianship.
3. To examine their roles in library science, bibliographic development, public libraries, library education and access to knowledge.
4. To discuss the continuing relevance of their contributions to contemporary libraries.

4. Research Methodology

The study is a historical and qualitative documentary study. It reconstructs and compares documented contributions and does not collect primary data from living persons.

Sources of information were the Padma Awards portal and Press Information Bureau lists (Ministry of Home Affairs, n.d., 2023), institutional biographies (University of Delhi, Aligarh Muslim University, INFLIBNET), scholarly articles, books and library histories, legislation, and professional publications. Where official or scholarly sources were unavailable, press reports were used and are identified as such.

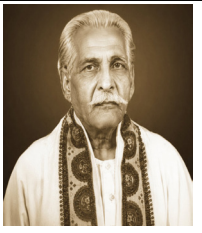
In the present study, seven Padma Shri awardees were considered because each one's library-related or education-related work is documented in at least one institutional, scholarly or official source.

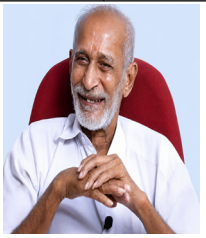
Four (Ranganathan, Kesavan, Bashiruddin and Kaula) appear in the University of Delhi's list of library science awardees (DU DLIS, n.d.-a). Ramanayya was identified through the INFLIBNET pioneers chapter (Vashishth, 2018), and Kalyanasundaram and Gowda through the official award lists and press coverage. The selection is not claimed to be exhaustive.

For each individual, information on professional roles, achievements, institutions, publications, initiatives and documented outcomes was extracted into a structured template. The extracted information was then coded and grouped into common categories of library development, which became the themes of Section 6 of the conference. Award years and key dates were cross-checked against at least two sources wherever possible. Ramanayya's award year rests on one source (Vashishth, 2018) and should be confirmed against the portal. The official award field was verified where possible. It is confirmed for Kalyanasundaram (Ministry of Home Affairs, 2023) and Kaula (Outlook India, n.d.). For Anke Gowda, one report lists Social Work (TNM Staff, 2026), while a Literature and Education list for 2026 does not include his name (Sundararajan, 2026), so the field should be confirmed on the portal. The study is limited to the selected individuals and the documentary evidence available.

5. Contributions of Padma Shri Awardees to Library Development

Table 1: Padma Shri awardees, award years and major contributions to the field

S. No.	Awardee	Year of Padma Shri	Major Contributions
1	 S. R. Ranganathan (1892–1972)	1957	Library science; knowledge organisation
2	 B. S. Kesavan (1909–2000)	1960	Bibliographic control
3	 I. V. Ramanayya (1890–1979)	1972	Public library movement

S. No.	Awardee	Year of Padma Shri	Major Contributions
4	 S. Bashiruddin (1902–1984)	1976	Library education
5	 P. N. Kaula (1924–2009)	2004	LIS scholarship
6	 P. Kalyanasundaram (b. 1940)	2023	Social service
7	 Anke Gowda M. (b. 1940)	2026	Free access to books

5.1 Dr. S. R. Ranganathan: Foundations of Library Science

Shiyali Ramamrita Ranganathan (1892–1972) trained as a mathematician before becoming librarian of the University of Madras in 1924 (Raman, 2012; Vashishth, 2018). He received the Padma Shri in 1957, which the University of Delhi's department regards as the first Padma Shri in library science (DU DLIS, n.d.-b).

His Five Laws of Library Science (1931) and Colon Classification (1933) are the best-known legacies (Raman, 2012; S. R. Ranganathan, 1931, 1933). The Colon Classification replaced linear schemes

with a faceted structure that joins concepts through a colon (INFLIBNET Centre, n.d.-a), and his *Classified Catalogue Code* (S. R. Ranganathan, 1934) applied analytical method to cataloguing. In administration, he introduced door delivery to teachers of affiliated colleges in 1928 and open access in 1929, served as founder secretary of the Madras Library Association, and prepared a Model Library Bill (Vashishth, 2018).

He helped to establish the Department of Library Science at the University of Delhi in 1946 (DU DLIS, n.d.-b), founded the Documentation Research and Training Centre at the Indian Statistical Institute, Bangalore, in 1962, and became National Research Professor in Library Science in 1965 (Raman, 2012; Vashishth, 2018). His work gave Indian librarianship a theory, a classification method and a training model.

5.2 Prof. B. S. Kesavan: National Bibliography and Bibliographic Development

Bellary Shamanna Kesavan (1909–2000) was the first Librarian of the National Library of India, serving from 1947 to 1962, and received the Padma Shri in 1960 (DU DLIS, n.d.-a). At the National Library he reorganised the collection with separate sections for each major Indian language and wrote an institutional history published in 1961 (M. Ranganathan, 2020). He is credited with drafting the Delivery of Books Act of 1954 (DU DLIS, n.d.-a), under which publishers deliver a copy of each book to the National Library at Calcutta and three other designated libraries (Delivery of Books and Newspapers (Public Libraries) Act, 1954).

In 1955 the Ministry of Education appointed a seven-member committee headed by Kesavan to plan a national bibliography, and the Indian National Bibliography unit began work at the National Library in August 1955 (Central Reference Library, n.d.). The bibliography began publication in 1958 (DU DLIS, n.d.-a) to record publications received under copyright legislation (M. Ranganathan, 2020). He also edited the Sahitya Akademi's *National Bibliography of Indian Literature, 1901–1953,* issued in four volumes between 1962 and 1974 (M. Ranganathan, 2020; Sahitya Akademi, n.d.). These efforts linked legal deposit, bibliographic control and scholarship.

5.3 Sri Iyyanki Venkata Ramanayya: Public Library Movement

Iyyanki Venkata Ramanayya (1890–1979) left formal schooling after 1903 because of his involvement in the freedom movement. The Government of India awarded him the Padma Shri in 1972 (Vashishth, 2018).

He regarded illiteracy as the root of India's social and economic problems and saw libraries as being as powerful as educational institutions in tackling it. He joined the Ram Mohun Library as Secretary in 1911 and served as Secretary of the Andhra Desa Library Association from 1914 to 1939, conducting twenty-five library conferences. In 1923 he was elected General Secretary of the All-India Public Library Association and organised library pilgrimages that stirred rural enthusiasm (Vashishth, 2018).

He linked libraries with adult education through book exhibitions, cultural festivals and public lectures, promoted rural libraries, brought out the Telugu library journal *Grandhalaya Sarvaswamu,* and edited the *Indian Library Journal* from 1924 to 1936 (Vashishth, 2018). His career shows that public library development rested on associations, periodicals and community mobilisation as much as on buildings and collections.

5.4 Prof. S. Bashiruddin: Library Education and Professional Training

Syed Bashiruddin Ahmed (1902–1984) was University Librarian at Aligarh Muslim University (AMU) and received the Padma Shri in 1976 (DU DLIS, n.d.-a).

He is credited with strengthening the AMU library's collection and services and with laying the foundation of library science education at the university in 1951 (DU DLIS, n.d.-a). The AMU department traces its origin to a Certificate Course in Library Science introduced in 1950–51 by him as University Librarian. He later introduced the Bachelor of Library Science in 1958–59 with full-time lecturers, which the department describes as a first in the country; the Master of Library Science followed in 1970–71 (AMU DLIS, 2026).

He was also instrumental in establishing the Department of Library Science at Rajasthan University, Jaipur, where he served as Director and University Librarian, and he was associated with professional societies at national and international levels (DU DLIS, n.d.-a). His career links academic librarianship with formal education, since training programmes supply the professional staff on which university libraries depend.

5.5 Prof. P. N. Kaula: LIS Scholarship and Professional Development

Prithvi Nath Kaula (1924–2009), a disciple of Ranganathan, was a leader of Indian librarianship and received the Padma Shri in 2004 (DU DLIS, n.d.-a); the 2004 list records the field as Literature and Education (Outlook India, n.d.).

The University of Delhi profile credits him with over sixty books and four hundred research articles, and the LIB-VAHINI profile adds more than four hundred reviews and forty-three bibliographies (DU DLIS, n.d.-a; INFLIBNET Centre, n.d.-b). He founded several journals, including *Library Herald (1958), and edited Herald of Library Science and International Information, Communication and Education* (DU DLIS, n.d.-a; INFLIBNET Centre, n.d.-b). Jeevan's (2013) study documented the journal's authorship patterns, categories of papers and subject coverage across nearly four decades.

He served as president of the Indian Library Association, the Indian Public Library Association and the Indian Association of Teachers of Library and Information Science, chaired the UGC panel on library and information science, and acted as a UNESCO expert (INFLIBNET Centre, n.d.-b). Journals, bibliographies and association leadership gave the profession a medium for debate, documentation and recognition.

5.6 Sri Palam Kalyanasundaram: Librarianship and Social Service

Palam Kalyanasundaram (b. 1940) received the Padma Shri in 2023 in the field of Social Work, from Tamil Nadu (Ministry of Home Affairs, 2023). The official category matters: the state recognised his social service, not a library science achievement. Press profiles describe him as a gold medallist in library science, with a master's degree in literature and history, who worked as a librarian for over three decades and gave away his salary, a retirement pension of 10 lakh and award money to charity (Pareek, 2014). Reports put the prize money at 30 crore, a figure that rests on journalism and not on official records (Pareek, 2014). He founded an organisation called Palam that connects donors with people in need (Pareek, 2014).

These activities lie outside professional library practice, but they show how a librarian's income and public standing can serve educational and social needs. The sources reviewed do not describe his work with library collections or services in detail, so his significance for library development lies in an ethic of service rather than in professional technique.

5.7 Sri Anke Gowda: Pustaka Mane and Free Access to Books

Anke Gowda M. of Haralahalli village, Karnataka, received the Padma Shri in 2026 (ETV Bharat, 2026; Raj, 2026). The News Minute lists his category as Social Work (TNM Staff, 2026), whereas other reports describe the honour in terms of librarianship (Raj, 2026); the portal entry should settle the official field.

Gowda worked as a timekeeper at the Pandavapura Cooperative Sugar factory, sold a house site in Mysuru for 6 lakh and spent a further 5 lakh on books (Raj, 2026). The resulting collection, Pustaka Mane ("House of Books"), is reported to hold over two million books in more than twenty languages, with rare manuscripts, and is described as a free-access library that empowers learners (ETV Bharat, 2026). These figures are press estimates, and the sources consulted included no published catalogue or independent audit. If confirmed, the collection offers a community-based route to books for readers lacking institutional access, while raising questions of cataloguing, preservation and sustainability.

6. Thematic Analysis and Discussion

6.1 Knowledge Organisation and Bibliographic Control

Evidence. Ranganathan's Colon Classification arranged knowledge by facets within a library (INFLIBNET Centre, n.d.-a), whereas Kesavan's Indian National Bibliography recorded what the country published, drawing on legal deposit (Central Reference Library, n.d.; M. Ranganathan, 2020). *Interpretation.* The two efforts work at different scales, the shelf and catalogue on one side and the nation on the other, but both treat organisation as a precondition for retrieval and preservation. Collections that are not arranged cannot be found, and printed output that is not recorded cannot be systematically preserved. The national bibliography of Indian literature shows the same logic at work: language experts compiled each section to a common plan set by a general editor (M. Ranganathan, 2020).

6.2 Public Libraries and Access to Knowledge

Evidence. Ramanayya built associations, conferences and rural library activity (Vashishth, 2018), whereas Gowda assembled a freely accessible collection largely from personal resources (ETV Bharat, 2026; Raj, 2026). *Interpretation.* The first approach was collective and institutional, the second individual and self-funded, yet both widened reading opportunities beyond formal institutions. Ramanayya's example suggests that access needs organisation and advocacy; Gowda's suggests that it can also begin with a single determined collector. A resource that depends on one person is vulnerable, and the sources reviewed say little about governance.

6.3 Library Education and Professional Scholarship

Evidence. Bashiruddin introduced formal courses at AMU (AMU DLIS, 2026), while Kaula's books, articles and journal editorships are recorded in the profiles and in Jeevan (2013). *Interpretation.* Education forms practitioners, whereas scholarship and journals circulate ideas and set standards. A profession needs both, and both rest on the institutional base that Ranganathan helped create at Delhi and Bangalore. Kaula's description as Ranganathan's disciple (DU DLIS, n.d.-a) suggests how teaching, research and publishing reinforced one another across generations.

6.4 Social Responsibility and Community Development

Evidence. Kalyanasundaram's recognition was in social work (Ministry of Home Affairs, 2023), and Gowda's has been reported in the same category (TNM Staff, 2026). *Interpretation.* Their cases

differ from the other five, whose recognised work lies mainly within library and information science. They show that library professionals and library-related initiatives can contribute to education and welfare beyond the library walls. However, the library-specific outcomes of Kalyanasundaram's philanthropy are not documented in the sources reviewed, and Gowda's collection is documented mainly through press reports, so library and social contributions should be assessed separately.

6.5 Lessons for Contemporary Libraries

The following recommendations are interpretations drawn from the record, not historical findings.

- Strengthening public library services requires sustained associations, advocacy and rural outreach, as in the Andhra movement, alongside buildings and collections.
- Improving organisation and discovery calls for the analytical, faceted thinking found in Ranganathan's work, applied to metadata and discovery systems.
- Expanding access to books can combine public library networks with community collections, provided those collections are catalogued and supported.
- Supporting LIS education and continuing professional development means sustaining formal courses, journals and professional associations.
- Preserving published and cultural resources depends on legal deposit, national bibliography and preservation plans for community collections.
- Developing inclusive, community-oriented services means linking libraries with literacy, adult education and welfare initiatives.

7. Conclusion

This study examined the contributions of seven Padma Shri awardees to Indian library development. Drawing on official records, institutional profiles, scholarly literature and press reports, it documented their work and compared it under four themes. The principal contributions were Ranganathan's laws, classification and training institutions; Kesavan's legal deposit provisions and national bibliography; Ramanayya's public library movement; Bashiruddin's formal library education; Kaula's scholarship and professional journals; Kalyanasundaram's philanthropy; and Gowda's free-access collection. Their careers show that library development was built by institutions, associations and individuals working alone. Together they represent different dimensions of Indian library development: intellectual foundations, national infrastructure, public access, professional formation, scholarly communication and social responsibility.

The analysis underlines the importance of library science, bibliographic control, professional education, public libraries and access to knowledge. It also shows that official categories matter. Kalyanasundaram's award was in social work and Gowda's has been reported in that category, so their library-related and social contributions should be distinguished.

For contemporary librarianship, the record suggests that organising information, widening access, educating professionals and preserving resources are connected tasks, and that community-based initiatives deserve support and systematic documentation. The study has covers the seven individuals, relies on available documentary evidence, uses press reports for two awardees, and could not confirm every official field on the portal. Future research could examine other library pioneers and awardees, verify award categories against portal records, use archival sources and oral histories, and assess the long-term institutional impact of the journals, courses, bibliographies and collections these individuals created.

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