

## Dr. S.R.Ranganathan-The Father of Library Science in India

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**Abstract-** Shiyali Ramamrita Ranganathan was known for his most notable contributions to the field library science in India. He was a librarian and mathematician from India who work for library science profession development in india. Hence he is considered to be the **Father of Library science in India**. His **Five Laws of Library Science(1931)** and the development of the first major faceted classification system, the colon classification is most well known fundamental work. In India every year his birthday (August 9) is observed and celebrated as the **National Library Day**.

**“ Father of Library Science in india” –Sir Maurice Gueyer**

**Key Words- Five Laws, Library Science, Chain Indexing, Colon Classification.**

Ranganathan was born on 9<sup>th</sup> August 1892 in Shiyali in Tanjavoor District of Tamil Nadu (then part of Madras Presidency). His Father , Ramamrita Ayyar was a farmer and Mother Seethalakshmi.

Ranganathan father ramamrita Ayyer was died on 13 January 1898, when Ranganathan was only at Six Years old. Ranganathan mother survived this loss for nearly 55 years and died at delhi due to a fire accident at the home in January 1953. Ranganathan married in 1907 when he was Fifteen years old.His wife’s name was Rukmini. She was very devoted to Ranganathan and an able house hold manager

.Ranganathan married again in December 1929 to sarada; She was also devoted to Ranganathan and helped him to work the library profession. She died at the age of 78 years on 30 July 1985 in Bangalore.

### **Early life and Education:**

Ranganathan’s early education was started on Vijayadasami day in the month of October, 1897 with Aksharabyasam at ubhayavedanthapuram near shiyali Ranganathan was joined to a school in Shiyali, and was handed over to the care of subba Ayyar, a relative and a primary school teacher.

In the year 1917 he appointed as Lecturer at Government College, Mangalore. He subsequently taught at Government College, Coimbatore , in 1920 and at Presidency College,

University of Madras, in 1921 to 23.

Ranganathan began his professional life as a Mathematician and he was successively a member of the mathematics faculties at Universities in mangalore, Coimbatore and Madras. As a mathematics professor, he published a handful of papers, mostly on the history of mathematics. His career as an educator was somewhat hindered by a handicap of stammering

In 1923, the University of Madras created the post of University Librarian to oversee their poorly organized collection. Among the 900 applicants for the position, none had any formal training in librarianship and Ranganathan's handful of papers satisfied the search committee's requirement that the candidate should have a research background. His sole knowledge of librarianship came from an Encyclopedia Britannica article he read days before the interview.

In January 1924, Ranganathan left Presidency College and he was appointed as first University Librarian of the University of Madras. He left for England in September 1925, to study at University College, London, to get trained in Librarianship and completed a six month certificate course in library science. During this time, he visited many libraries and he found that the system of classification, cataloguing etc. was not scientific and there was a tremendous scope for the improvement in Library Science.

Once again he took up the job at Madras University in the year 1925 and held it until 1944. From 1945 to 1947 he served as librarian and as professor of library science at **Hindu University in Varanasi (Banaras)** and from 1947 to 1954 he taught at the University of Delhi. During 1954-57 he was engaged in research and writing in Zurich.

Few years after he returned to India and served as visiting professor at Vikram University Ujjain, till 1959. In 1962 he founded and became head of the Documentation research and training centre in Bangalore, with which he remained honored by the government with the title of national research professor in Library Science.

The doyen and messiah of the profession he worked meticulously to uplift the Indian public library system and made it an open access system for common man and enacted the first Tamil Nadu Public Library Act in the year 1948 and this paved the way for other state governments of India to follow and enact the library Act in their state.

By recognizing his noble works for the profession, he had been honored with **Padmashri Award** by the government of India in the year 1957.

**Major Contribution of Dr. Ranganathan :**

**1. Five Laws of Library Science**

There were published in 1931. The five laws are:-

Books Are For Use,  
Every Reader His Book,  
Every book Its Reader,  
Save The time of The Reader,  
Library is a Growing Organism,

**2. Colon Classification**

Ranganathan published his first major work on his new classification system, the Colon Classification. Its basic principles, however, require the analysis of a subject to determine its various aspects, called facets, and the synthesis of a class number from the numbers assigned in published schedules to different facets. Thus, Colon Classification is known as an analytico - synthetic classification system. Ranganathan was the first to fully explicate facet theory and his work has had a major impact on modern classification schemes

**3. Classified Catalogue Code**

Classified Catalogue Code is another important work by Dr.S R Ranganathan. It is published in the year 1934. In this book he maintained that, a catalogue should consist of two components. One part should be classified by subject, reflecting the library's classification system, with class number entries. The other should be a dictionary catalogue, including author, title, series, and similar identifiers, as well as alphabetized subject entries. The function of a catalogue is to intimate works so they can be found by author, title, series, and so forth. It must also allow readers to review the selection of works on a given subject.

**4. Chain Index**

To determine subject entries for the dictionary catalogue, Ranganathan developed a simple method called chain indexing. This method simply uses each facet of a subject, together with its immediately preceding facets, as an index entry. Thus, all important aspects of the subject, from the most general to the most specific, are automatically covered. Chain indexing can be adapted to other classification systems as well.

**Honors to Dr.Ranganathan's Credit: Ranganathan. They are,  
Number of honours received by Dr.S.R.**

- In 1935 and 1957, the Indian government honoured on him by the title Rao Sahib and the public service award Padmashri respectively.
- In 1948, he received an honorary Doctorate of literature from the University of Delhi.
- In 1964, he received the same degree from the University of Pittsburgh.
- In 1965, he was made a national research professor by the Indian government, and in 1970, he received the Margaret Mann Citation in Cataloguing and Classification of the American Library Association (ALA).
- After his death, the FID, in 1976, established the Ranganathan award in his memory. This certificate of merit is awarded biennially for a recent outstanding contribution in the field of classification

**Books Authored by S. R Ranganathan**

1. Colon classification
2. The five laws of library science
3. Prolegomena to library classification
4. Ramanujan, the man and the mathematician
5. Library book selection
6. Reference service
7. Classified catalogue code, with additional rules for dictionary catalogue code
8. Library manual, for library authorities, librarians, and honorary library workers
9. Library administration
10. Free book service for all; an international survey
11. A Librarian looks back : an autobiography of Dr. S.R. Ranganathan by S R Ranganathan and P N Kaula

**Books Written on Dr. S.R. Ranganathan:**

1. Ranganathan's Philosophy: Assessment, impact and relevance: Proceedings of the International conference by T.S.Rajagopalan.
2. Ranganathan, a pattern maker : a synthetic study of his contributions by A. P .Srivastava
3. Relevance of Ranganathan's contributions to library science by T S Rajagopalan

4. S.R. Ranganathan, 1892-1972 : papers given at a memorial meeting on Thursday 25th January 1973 by Edward Dudley

5. An essay in personal bibliography: Ranganathan Festschrift. A bibliography of the writings on and by S.R. Ranganathan and A.K. Das Gupta

6. S.R. Ranganathan, Pragmatic Philosopher of Information Science: A Personal Biography by Ranganathan Yogeshwar

7. Ranganathanism and Knowledge Society: Relevance of Dr. S.R. Ranganathan in the Present Day Knowledge Society and Other Essays by Satyanarayana

#### **Teaching Career:**

In 1917 Ranganathan was appointed to the Subordinate Education Service and worked as Assistant Lecturer in the Government College in Mangalore and Coimbatore between 1917 and 1921. In July 1921, he joined the Presidency College, Madras as Assistant Professor of Mathematics. At Mangalore and Coimbatore, Ranganathan taught Physics and Mathematics and at the Presidency College, he taught Algebra, Trigonometry and Statistics. He was a follower of the individual method of teaching putting discussion method into active use. The classes used to be lively, learning - active, and teaching – purposive.

Ranganathan earned an epithet born teacher. He would interpose his teaching with many anecdotes and examples from life which would keep his students engaged and attentive. Each hour of his class used to be punctuated by applause. He also adopted the technique of assigning students with new topics, to gather data from books, and learning from discussions among themselves and amidst teachers. He organised several seminars and colloquia for students. He continued the same methods with greater vigour while teaching Library Science to students.

Ranganathan was also active in extracurricular activities. From 1921 to 1923, he was Secretary of the Mathematics and Science Section of the Madras Teacher's Guild. He roused public awareness by lectures. He introduced some uniformity and standardization in compiling the question papers for various examinations.

He obtained pension facilities for private school teachers through his writings in papers and association journals. He augmented the finances of the Indian Mathematical Society. He was a popular figure in the mathematical circles and was regarded as an efficient organiser of meetings. His friends have quoted Ranganathan's attitude to work, thus: Our right is only to do the work falling to our share, never to the fruits of our work. Flirt not with fruits.

### **Towards Librarianship**

Ranganathan left Presidency College in January 1924 to take appointment as the first librarian of Madras University. It was natural for Ranganathan - who was a lively teacher and had thrilling intellectual experiences with students and faculties of the Presidency College - not to opt for the post of librarian, even though it carried a handsome salary. Ranganathan quite often narrated to us that he never wished to be a librarian. He said that Providence had made him one, for which he never regretted in his later life. In spite of his diffidence and lack of interest, his colleagues and supervisors - being keen on using his innate abilities — saw to his appointment as the Librarian of the Madras University in 1924. He took charge of the University Library at 4.00 P.M. on Thursday, 4th January 1924. But Ranganathan was back within a week at Presidency College to plead with the Principal, I have come with a specific request. I can't bear the solitary imprisonment day-after-day. No human being, except the staff. How different from the life in the college. The principal, Mr. Duncan, had to pacify him by saying: If you feel bored even after you return from England, I shall certainly take you. I shall see that your place in the college is not permanently filled up till you come back from your travel and training abroad. [Ranganathan (SR). A librarian looks back. Herald of Library Science. 2;1963;pl30].

Ranganathan left for England in September 1924 and returned in July 1925, after 9 months of study-cum-observation tour. In England, Ranganathan came in close contact with W.C. Berwick Sayers, Chief Librarian of Croydon Public Library and a lecturer in the University School of Librarianship, London. Under his guidance, Ranganathan visited a large number of libraries. He witnessed how the libraries there had become community reading centres. He also found how the libraries rendered service to various strata of the society: to children, to the working class and to women, besides other groups. This made a lasting impression on his mind; it considerably changed his outlook and he discovered a social mission in his mind; thus he discovered a social mission for the library profession and for himself. The impact of these experiences was expressively stated in 1931 by Sir P.S. Sivaswamy Aiyar, one of the enlightened statesmen of Madras Presidency at that time:

He has brought to his task extensive knowledge of literature on the subject of libraries, personal acquaintance with methods of management of libraries in Britain, trained analytical intellect and a fervid but enlightened enthusiasm for the library movement. He has been the pioneer of the library movement in the Madras Presidency and has been carrying on an energetic propaganda to spread it. He knows how to rouse and sustain the interest of the reader. [Foreword to Ranganathan (SR). Five laws of Library Science. 1931. p. xxxii].

**Conclusion:**

Ranganathan's achievement in the field of Library Science is a earmark as India is concerned. felt dissatisfied at the inability of the decimal classification, then widely prevalent, to accommodate the newly emerging subjects. He thus emerged a new species of classification "**Analytico-synthetic classification**".

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