



## **MANUSCRIPTS RESOURCE AND CONSERVATION CENTRES IN INDIA: A STUDY**

**Dr. Sangita R. Chore**

Bar. S. Wankhede College of Arts and  
Commerce, Khaperkheda  
Email Id - sangitachore13@gmail.com  
Mob. No. - 9763189155

**Dr. Rajendra H.Chore**

Central Institute of Business Management &  
Research Institute, Nagpur  
Email Id - rajchore1972@gmail.com  
Mob. No. - 8087148824

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### **Abstract :**

*Manuscripts are the historical handwritten documents that are of scientific, literary, and religious value s in nature and are of great importance for cultural heritage and research value, and is a great source of much pride for a wide range of audience. A Manuscript Resource Centre classically refers to a facility, institution, or organization that emphasizes on the collection, conservation, dissemination and cataloging of manuscripts. The paper discusses some earlier efforts to preserve them. The paper discloses the initiatives taken by Indian government in accordance with the special efforts taken by the National Mission for Manuscripts (NMM) in India, its MRCs, MCC and its output. It has been also noted the collection received by these centers.*

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### **Introduction :**

India has the significance of having one of the most ancient, valuable, richest and largest collections of manuscripts in the world. These manuscripts which are available in different forms, languages, scripts cover a huge range of subjects that are a powerful source for the preservation of Indian cultural heritage. But the preservation of these manuscripts is a serious issue for the custodians of manuscripts because of the humid and hot climate of the country. The present paper proposes an account of the admirable efforts taken by the National Mission for Manuscripts by establishing and strengthening manuscript resource centers, conservation centers and developing a National Database of Manuscripts. It also discusses the present status of digitization of manuscripts starting from its collection to the development of a Digital Manuscript Library for worldwide access.

### **Manuscript Resource And Conservation Centers :**

Manuscript Resource Centers organize and catalog manuscripts, creating detailed records that describe the content, origin, and historical context of each manuscript. This aids researchers in locating and studying specific materials. In modern times, many Manuscript Resource Centers engage in digitization efforts to make manuscripts accessible to a broader audience. Digital copies can facilitate research, reduce physical handling of fragile manuscripts, and help preserve the content in case of disasters. Manuscript Resource Centers often engage in educational activities to raise awareness about the importance of manuscripts and to promote scholarly interest. This may include workshops, seminars, and exhibitions. Manuscript Resource Centres often collaborate with other institutions, both nationally and internationally, to enhance their collections and share resources. This collaboration can lead to a more comprehensive understanding of the cultural and historical significance of the manuscripts. The Mission has selected 80 Manuscript Resource Centers (MRC) and 85 MCCs in the country for coordinating its activities pertaining to survey and documentation of manuscripts.

**Objectives Of The Study :**

The objectives of the present study are given below:

- To illustrate the growth of Manuscript Resource Centers (MRCs) and Manuscript Conservation Centers (MCCs).
- To show the Growth of Different Types of MRCs and MCCs under NMM
- To illustrate the zone wise distribution of MRCs and Manuscript Conservation Centres
- To identify Year wise contribution of Data Received by MRCs

**Methodology :**

In the present study, type of Research Methodology used is “Descriptive”. The research technique used is “Survey”. The requisite information have been composed from the website www.namami.org and Annual Reports Published by the mission and the Data have been transferred in to tables, figures and finally analyzed to get the results.

**Observation And Analysis :**

**Growth of MRCs and MCCs:**

The National Mission for Manuscripts is responsible for creation of National bibliographic database of Indian manuscripts (Kritisampada); facilitating conservation, preservation and digitization of the country’s valuable manuscripts. There are 80 Manuscript Resource Centres (MRCs), 85 Manuscript Conservation Centres (MCCs), working under this mission.

Table-1: Growth of Different Types of MRCs and MCCs under NMM

Types of Centres	2003-2004	2004-2005	2005-2006	2006-2007	2007-2008	2009-2010	2010-2011	2011-2012	Total
MRCs	24 (8.11)	27 (9.12)	41 (14.19)	46 (15.54)	--	46 (15.54)	54 (18.24)	57 (19.26)	296
MCCs	15 (6.73)	20 (8.97)	26 (11.66)	30 (13.45)	--	33 (14.80)	49 (21.97)	50 (22.42)	223

Note: Figures in bracket denotes percentage

(Source: National Mission for Manuscripts, 2010-2011)

**Zone wise distribution of Manuscripts :**

**Distribution of MRCs across various Zones :**

Zone wise distribution of manuscripts indicated that total 80 Manuscripts Resource Centres are found in various zones, i.e. North, South, East, West and Central. Table-2 shows that highest number of MRCs are available in south zone that are 23 (28.75%), whereas second highest number of MRCs are available in north zone that are 22 (27.5 %), then third highest number of MRCs are in east zone i.e. 19 (23.75%), then the MRCs available in west zone are 12 (15%) and lastly the lowest number of MRCs in central zone i.e. 04 (5%).

**Table-2: Distribution of MRCs across various Zones**

Zones	No. of MRCs	% of MRCs
North	22	27.5
South	23	28.75
East	19	23.75
West	12	15
Central	04	5
<b>Total</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>100.00</b>

**Distribution of MCCs across various Zones :**

It has been observed from Table- 3 that Zone wise distribution of manuscripts indicated that total 85 Manuscripts Conservation Centers are found. Table-3 shows that South and East zones have highest MCCs in India i.e. 24 (28.24%), followed by North Zone with 22 (25.87%), West zone covered 12 (14.12%) MCCs and lastly the lowest number of MRCs in central zone i.e. 03 (3.53%).

**Table-3: Distribution of MCCs across various Zones**

Zones	No. of MCCs	% of MCCs
North	22	25.87
South	24	28.24
East	24	28.24
West	12	14.12
Central	03	3.53
<b>Total</b>	<b>85</b>	<b>100.00</b>

**Year wise Data Received by MRCs :**

It is observed that, Manuscript Resource Centers (MRCs) and Manuscript Conservation Centers (MCCs) together covered under NMM in the beginning 2003-2004, there has been a steady growth of the centers and ultimately it reaches to 80 in the year 2017 – 2018. Table -4 depicts the details of year wise data received by MRCs.

**Table-4: Year wise Data Received by MRCs**

Sr. No.	Year	Data contribution of MRCs	Total Data Received
01	2003-2004	5222	5222
02	2004-2005	44172	49394

03	2005-2006	10383	59777
04	2006-2007	618760	678537
05	2007-2008	667116	1345653
06	2008-2009	546498	1892151
07	2009-2010	340721	2232872
08	2010-2011	174866	2407738
09	2011-2012	259727	2667465
10	2012-2013	176457	2843922
11	2013-2014	165788	3009710
12	2014-2015	177845	3187555
13	2015-2016	139450	3327005
14	2016-2017	144977	3471982
15	2017-2018	082858	3554840
<b>Total</b>			<b>3554840</b>

*NMM Report of the Fifteenth Year 2017-2018*

### Conclusions :

These centers play a crucial role in preserving cultural heritage, advancing scholarship, and making historical documents accessible for research and education. This paper discusses about the growth of Manuscript Resource Centers (MRCs) and Manuscript Conservation Centers (MCCs). It was observed that there were 85 MRCs which were covered under NMM in the first year of its establishment. highest number of MRCs are available in south zone that are 23 (28.75%), whereas second highest number of MRCs are available in north zone that are 22 (27.5 %), then third highest number of MRCs are in east zone i.e. 19 (23.75%), then the MRCs available in west zone are 12 (15%) and lastly the lowest number of MRCs in central zone i.e. 04 (5%).

The paper also covered South and East zones have highest MCCs in India i.e. 24 (28.24%), followed by North Zone with 22 (25.87%), West zone covered 12 (3.53%) MCCs and lastly the lowest number of MRCs in central zone i.e. 03 (3.53%).

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