



ISSN 2278 – 0211 (Online)

Roles of Public Libraries for Socio Economic Developments with Special Reference to Periyar E.V.R. District Central Library of Vellore

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Abstract:

The contribution of public libraries for social and economic developments of the society are much appreciated. Their roles are to be recognised by the society as they are known as temple of learning and part and parcel of the social system. This study is focussing on these roles played by the Periyar E.V.R district central library of Vellore. The results of the study indicate that the information dissemination of the library towards the social and economic developments are much opined by the library users as well as the study concludes that the digital resources on competitive examinations are need to be brought to the library.

1. Introduction

The public libraries are aptly called as 'common man university' and the institutions that are preserving and promoting historical, and cultural values of human beings. And as per Audit Commission report (Audit Commission, 1997), of UK, the public libraries have the following responsibilities and duties which are summarised and presented hereunder:

- Recreational and cultural roles
- Promoting self learning among the readers who are pursuing informal education
- Promoting social welfare, social rights and responsibilities
- Economic development by the ways disseminating the information on employment and entrepreneurship.

The common man university 'public library' is contributing much to the socio economic development of a country by providing access to various information almost at free of cost in India. Nevertheless to say that they are the backbone in disseminating information to at the gross root level of the society. For instance, a poor educated youth may seek employment opportunities in the public library since he may not be able to buy or subscribe the required publication for this purpose. Simultaneously, lot of information products like news papers, magazines and periodicals on agriculture, small scale industries are acquired or subscribed by the public libraries which may highly useful for the farmers and small entrepreneurs of the rural environment. No doubt, certainly the public libraries are the information centres that are contributing for the socio economic developments for the rural communities as well as urban elites.

2. Need for the Study

The Public libraries are driving force for the socio-economic and cultural development of the country. In this context, this study made an attempt to study the contribution of the Periyar E.V.R District central Library of Vellore for the socio-economic development of the community for which it serves from the point view of the users of the library so as to suggest to improve the working nature of the library for better performance.

3. Profiles of the Library

Vellore District has a total of 67 branch libraries, 69 village libraries and 42 part-time libraries. One district central library, named after the great rationalist E.V.R who is an instrumental in Dravidian movement in the country as Thanthai Periyar E.V.R. District Central Library was opened on 22nd November 1959, in Infantry Road, Vellore. The library consists of following sections

- Reference Section
- Periodical Section
- Women and Children Section

- Book lending Section
- Reprographic Section
- New book collection and distribution section
- Computer Section
- Civil Service and Competitive Examination
- Browsing Section
- Binding Section

The timings of the library is 8.am to 8 p.m and it has a collection of more than 1.57 lakh books and 26,622 registered members and 286 patrons. The collection consists of Tamil, Telugu, Urdu, Hindu and English books across different subjects and subscribe to 186 periodicals and 18 newspapers. It has a excellent facilities in its differently abled section for persons with disabilities along with five to six wheelchairs. It also has very good collections for competitive and for civil services aspirants. At present, reference books at a cost of Rs. 64 lakh were added to this section. Television, DVD facility and computers are also available and a separate section for children with internet facility along with Braille books for visual impaired.

4. Objectives of the Study

The following objectives are framed for the purpose of the study

- To study the user visit the library to seek agriculture related issues
- To study the information dissemination of the library from the point of view of the user on social welfare, social rights and political issues
- To study its roles for Economic development by the ways of disseminating the information on employment and entrepreneurship and creating awareness on General Knowledge to its user.

5. Methodology

Judgement sampling technique has been employed to select a sample of hundred respondents from the user group of the library. A well structured questionnaire has been administered among the respondents of 100. Thus, the collected data has been analysed and interpreted as follows:

6. Data Analysis and Interpretations

S. No.	Age	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	15-30	46	46
2	31-44	41	41
3	45-59	2	2
4	60-70	1	1

Table 1: Age of the respondents

It is seen from the table no – 1 that majority of the respondents that is 46 percent fall in the age group of 15 to 30. And a minimum of 1 percent of respondents belongs to 60 to 70 age group. This phenomenon can be interpreted that the participation of young users are higher in the survey rather than the higher age group peoples. It is observed during the data collection that the young age group people are actively and intensively using the Library

S. No.	Sex	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1.	Male	78	78
2.	Female	22	22

Table 2: Sex wise distribution of the respondents

It is seen from the above table that many of the respondents of the study belongs to male category, they constituted into 78 percent. From this results it is understand that the male users are more in number in using the library.

S. No.	Students	Farmers	Teachers	Labour	Business	Total
1	41	11	20	8	20	100
2	41%	11%	20%	8%	20%	100%

Table 3: Occupational status of the respondents

The data related to category of respondents have been presented in the table no. 3 It is seen from the table that a majority of the respondents of the survey belongs to the academic community students and teachers. Altogether they constituted into 61 percent. The presented data is also reveals that 11 percent of farmers are also participated in the survey. The other type of respondents constituted

to teachers and businessman in equal percentage of 20 and labour was the lowest percentage of 8 participated. Altogether, they survey covers different kind of users those who are visiting the library for their day to day information needs.

S.No.	Educational Qualifications	No. of respondents	Percentage of respondents
1	SSLC and below than that	20	20
2	HSC	16	16
3	UG	22	22
4	PG	30	30
5	Diploma	12	12
Total		100	100

Table 4: Educational status of the respondents

It is seen from the table no – 4 that a majority of the respondents i.e.52 percent belongs to Post graduates and Under graduates. The respondents of 36 percent who possess both secondary and higher level education are also participated in the survey and the diploma holder constituted into 12 percent.

S. no	Visit The Library To Seek Agricultural Related Issues/Information	Yes	%	No	%
1.	Agriculture procedures	22	22	78	78
2.	Agriculture loan details	30	30	70	70
3.	Horticulture related information	28	28	72	72
4.	Details on Money crops	20	20	80	80
5.	Agricultural concessions	24	24	76	76
6.	Details on Natural manure	30	30	70	70
7.	New technical innovations under the Agriculture.	28	28	72	72
8.	Irrigation facilities	20	20	80	80
9.	Government Agriculture programs	22	22	78	78
10.	Agricultural loans	16	16	84	84

Table 5: To seek agricultural related issues/information

Agriculture is the backbone of the Indian economy, the library under study is disseminating agricultural related information to its user in the form of magazine, newspapers, central and state government publications, publications of financial and other institutions that are related to agricultural developments. An enquiry has been made through the questionnaire of the study. The resulted data has been presented in the table no – 5. It is seen from the table that minimum percent of the respondents are visiting the library to seek information related to agricultural issues as presented in the table. However, it can be said that minimum no. of the farmers participated in the survey that is the reason less percent of respondents opined these aspects, but it is proved in the results that all the farmers who are visiting the library for seeking agricultural developments related issues and information.

S.No	Particulars	Yes	%	No	%
1	Employment opportunities(Govt.)	92	92	8	8
2	Employment opportunities(Private sector)	76	76	24	24
4	Self employment	54	54	46	46
5	Job qualifications	78	78	22	22
6	Overseas employment opportunities	38	38	62	62
7	Entrepreneur loans	54	54	46	46
8	Other jobs related information	26	26	74	74

Table 6: To seek information on employment opportunities

The Table 6 shows that the majority of the respondents i.e. 92 percent visit the library to get the information on govt. employment opportunities followed by the employment opportunities in private sector i.e. 76 percent. The reader visiting the library for getting information on overseas employment opportunities are minimum in percent . 54 percent of respondents stated that they visit the library to seek information on self employment, the same percent of the respondents are also opined that they visiting the library for getting information on entrepreneur loans.

S.No	Particulars	Yes	%	No	%
1	To seek information on untouchability	38	38	62	62
2	To seek information on women development	28	28	72	72
3	To seek information on religious movements	42	42	58	58
4	To seek information on AIDS	22	22	78	78
5	To seek information on rural development	54	54	46	46
6	To seek information on health and family welfare	38	38	62	62
7	To seek information on current of social problems and issues	66	66	34	34
8	To seek information on current events/news	82	82	18	18

Table 7: To seek information on Social awareness and developments

It is seen from the table that 66 percent of the respondents visit the library to seek current social problems and issues along with to know the current news of the society by 82 percent of the respondents. Apart from this, 54 percent of the respondents visit the library to seek information on rural development schemes and so on. And less than 50 percent of the respondents stated that they visit the library to seek information on women development, health and family welfare religious movements and information on untouchabilities.

S.No	Particulars	Yes	%	No	%
1	State and central government news	100	100	-	-
2	World news	100	100	-	-
3	News on Political parties	96	96	4	4
4	Information on Financial position of central & state govt.	88	88	12	12
5	Union development activities	76	76	24	24
6	Finance allocation (agriculture, industrial service departments)	94	94	6	6
7	Ministers duties and powers	42	42	58	58
8	Awareness of particular politician	34	34	66	66
9	Central and State Government information	100	100	-	-

Table 8: To seek information on political developments

The table no – 8 shows that the majority of the respondents visit the library to read the information on state and central governments political developments, financial positions and schemes allocation to the various sectors ranging from agriculture to industries and so on.

S.N.	Particulars	Yes	%	No	%
1.	Awareness on science and technology	82	82	18	18
2	Awareness on computers and digital technology	58	58	42	42
3	Awareness on archaeological and historical aspects	64	64	36	36
4	Awareness on the natural resources and environment	46	46	54	54
5	Awareness on earth and space	86	86	14	14
6	Awareness on legal issues	62	62	38	38
7	Awareness of economic developments and conditions	48	48	52	52
8	Awareness on world news and health related issues	100	100	-	-
9	Awareness about sports and Guinness news	78	78	22	22
10	Awareness on film sector	58	58	42	42

Table 9: Awareness of general knowledge by the respondents

Every day many of the user visit the library to get awareness on General Knowledge in different aspects. As such the results given in the table no – 9 indicates that almost all the respondents of the study visit the library to get general knowledge on science and technology, health related issues, earth and space related issues

S.No.	User Opinions about the library	Yes	%	No	%
1.	Library facilities are more adequate	62	62	38	38
2.	Books and news papers are adequate	58	58	42	42
3.	Library timings are adequate	86	86	14	14
4.	Positive about library functioning	76	76	24	24
5.	Expectation about all facilities are adequate	66	66	34	34

Table 10: User opinions about the library

It is seen from the table no – 10 the majority respondents of the study are opined that they felt available resources and facilities of the library are adequate except the adequacy of the news papers as positively opined by 58 percent of the respondents

7. Summery and Conclusion

The study found out that the contribution of the library for the social and economic developments of the society as opined by many of the respondents of the study. Though it disseminate various information on many issues ranging from agricultural related issues to employment opportunities and educational aspects as proved by the results of the study, it needs much improvement in terms of its collections especially improvements in terms of digital resources towards competitive examinations since many aspirants are crowded in the competitive examination cell o f the library

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