Access To and Use of Public Library System and Services In Tamilnadu

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Abstract
Public libraries are the people's university. Public libraries should provide the service based on equality of access for all regardless of age, religion, nationality and language. Public libraries have recognized their role to satisfy the information needs of all types of people in society. The government at the state level and national level has taken initiatives to make public libraries as an important source of information for people's formal walks of life. The National Mission on libraries set up by the ministry of culture has provided recommendations for the development of libraries and information centers to make public libraries equipped with information. This article describes the development of the public library system and services in Tamilnadu. After India became independent, the first state to enact the Public Library Act was Tamil Nadu in 1948; the Act began to be effective from April 1, 1950. The Preamble of the Act clearly elaborates its objectives, as an act to arrange for the establishing of public libraries in the state of Tamil Nadu (Madras) and developing widespread rural and urban services of the Library under it. The Act has been provided with nineteen sections.
Keywords: Tamilnadu Public Library, Public Library Services, Public Library System

1. INTRODUCTION

A public library may also be referred to be a circulating library as the name suggests that it is a library meant for public use. The library is funded with the help of tax payers' money. The library is open to every individual who wishes to use its services. The civil servants sometimes manage the library. The local, state or central government looks after its functioning.

According to Dr. S.R Ranganathan the goals and functions of the public library are:
- To assist in self-education of every individual, that may continue for a long period.
- To provide updated information and knowledge on varied subjects for all to use.
- To dissimilate neutral and sane information to all maintaining the political sentiments of national as well as international standards.
- To provide relevant information to researchers so that they can develop new concepts.
- To safeguard the ancient human thoughts to be used as foundation for future researches.
- To open a venue for recreation
- To cultivate the habit of reading among individuals for social good.

2. Purpose of the study

Many recent studies on Tamilnadu public library Services. These studies looked at the issues mainly from the perspective of selected or small user groups, and very seldom included the view of the librarians on these issues. This study set out to establish the current levels of access to the services and facilities offered by the public library system in the whole of the country and to gauge the use thereof, and satisfaction with service delivery among the public library users.

3. Objectives of the study:

The objectives of the present study are furnished here under:
- To identify the awareness and accessibility of services currently offered by the public libraries;
- To establish the utilization patterns among library users;
- To examine the factors that impact on access and use of the available public library services;
- To investigate the level of satisfaction among the users concerning the public library services rendered to them and make recommendations for the improvement of delivering public library service in Tamilnadu.

3.1 Public Library Definition

Public libraries are a world-wide phenomenon taking place in all sorts of societies with different cultures at different stages of development. The library can be defined as follows:

A library is a corporation established, supported and funded by the community, either through local, regional or national government or through another sort of community organization. It provides access to knowledge, information and works of the imagination through a variety of resources and services and is equally available to all or any members of the community regardless of race, nationality, age, gender, religion, language, disability, economic and employment status and academic attainment.

3.2 Public Library the concept

The term "Library" has been defined in different senses at different times. Sometimes it has been defined as "a place where books are written" and sometimes as "a collection of books". We find that both these approach is limited although there is no mention of "reader" as an integral part of a library. The Oxford English Dictionary defined the term Library in the sense of being a place "where books were kept for reading, study, or reference" By the 19th century, the word Library defined as "a building room or set

of rooms containing a set of books for the utilization of the general public or some portion of it, or the members of a society".

IFLA and UNESCO regard Public Libraries as the local gateways to information and knowledge, helping for lifelong learning, independent decision and cultural development of the individual and social groups. They are developed out of public funds and therefore the use of those isn't restricted to any class of persons within the community. These are the local centers of information, making all types of data and information readily available to its users.

Dr. S R Ranganathan defines that a library is "an institution maintained for and by the community primarily for the social purpose of providing a simple opportunity for self-education throughout the life of every person and community".

3.3 Public Libraries in India

Public libraries in India are established throughout the country in state capital, district headquarters and village levels. Library tended to be passive and archival institutions. Perhaps there was not enough in secretive for them to become dynamic Kumar (2002).

3.4 Need for Library

The public library suggests that it is for the people by the people and of people. The UNESCO manifesto on public libraries indicates that the public library is a living force for education culture and information as an essential agent for fostering peace and understanding among nations. The UNESCO public library manifesto 1994 emphasizes that the public is responsible for local and national authorities.

3.5 History of Public Library in Tamilnadu

Tamilnadu Government has enacted The Library Act in 1948. Under this act, a committee named Local Library Authority was set up at Coimbatore in the month of August, 1950 under the chairmanship of Thiru C.M.Rama Chandran. The District Central Library, Coimbatore commenced rendering its service to the general public in June, 1952 at the "Victoria Town Hall" Building. It has been shifted to Gandhi Memorial Library Building at V.O.C Park Coimbatore in the middle of the year 1956 as an act of expansion.
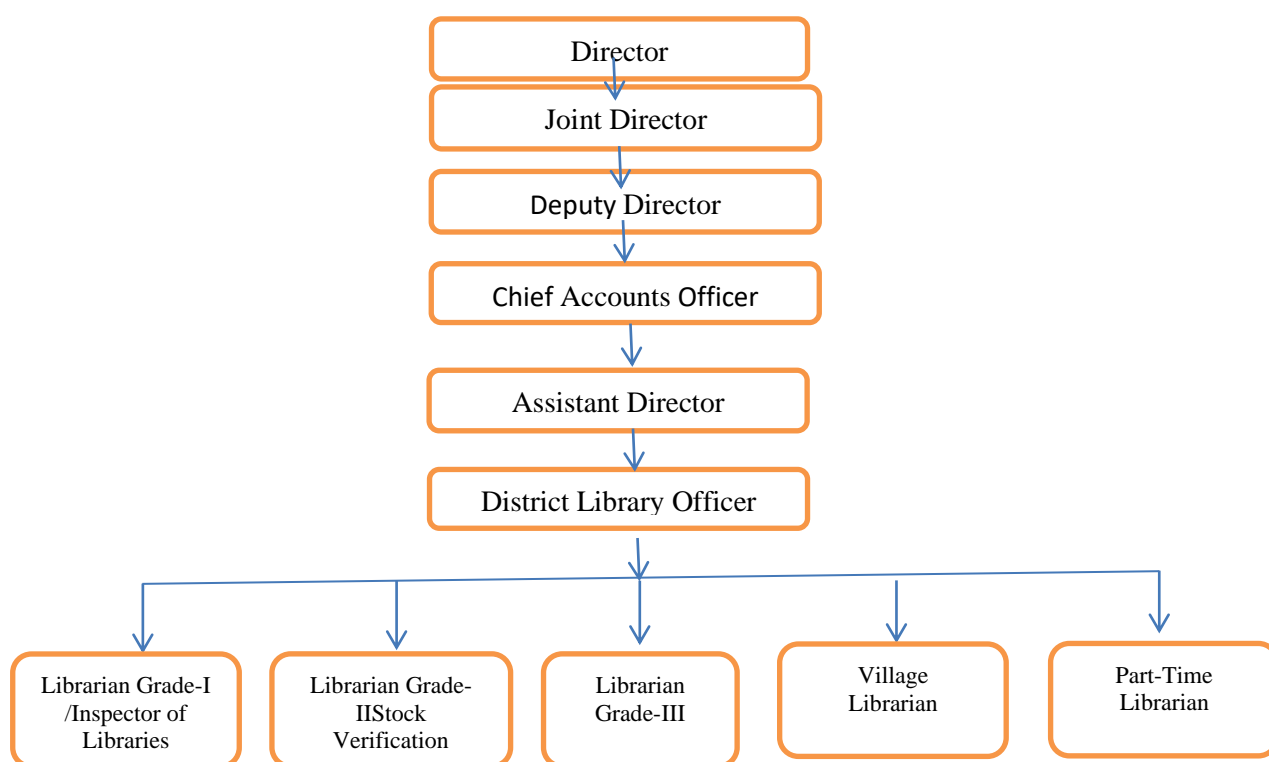
The Library was subsequently shifted to the present multistoried building with a carpet area of nearly 21453 square feet located at No.50 Cowley Brown Road, R.S.Puram Coimbatore. The Library is surrounded by AvinashLingam Deemed University, Agricultural University, Government College of Technology, Law College, Forest College and Bharathiyar University. The present new building was opened on 6th, June, 1987. It serves the overall Public of all walks of life. The Library is designed to facilitate the optimum utilization of resources by the readers so as to increase reading habits. The Directorate of Public Libraries was established in 1972 aiming to enhance the library services.

The following libraries are functioning within the State under the control of the Directorate of Public Libraries.

1	Connemara Public Library	1
2	Anna Centenary Library	1
3	District Central Libraries	32

4	Branch Libraries	1926
5	Mobile Libraries	14
6	Village Libraries	1915
7	Part-Time Libraries	745
	Total	**4634**

3.6 The Organizational structure of Public Library in Tamil Nadu

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                    ┌──────────────┐
                    │   Director   │
                    └──────┬───────┘
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                    │ Joint Director│
                    └──────┬───────┘
                    ┌──────▼───────┐
                    │Deputy Director│
                    └──────┬───────┘
                    ┌──────▼───────────┐
                    │Chief Accounts Officer│
                    └──────┬───────────┘
                    ┌──────▼───────────┐
                    │Assistant Director│
                    └──────┬───────────┘
                    ┌──────▼───────────────┐
                    │District Library Officer│
                    └──────┬───────────────┘
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Librarian Grade-I /Inspector of Libraries	Librarian Grade-IIStock Verification	Librarian Grade-III	Village Librarian	Part-Time Librarian

3.6.1 Main activities:

1. Providing reading materials
2. Popularizing to public library movement
3. Resource building and mobilization of funds
4. Providing adequate infrastructural facilities

3.7 Dr. S. R. Ranganathan's Role in Public Library Legislation.

The credit for proposing the Model Public Library Bill (1930) and the struggle for the enactment of the first public library act in India in 1948 goes to none other than the doyen of Library and Information Science in India, Dr. S.R. Ranganathan. The occasion for drafting the first Model Libraries Act came only in 1930, while Dr. S.R. Ranganathan was engaged in writing his documented classic "Five

Laws of Library Science". His second law "Every reader his/her book" stresses the need for legislation. At the same time, Prof. P. Seshadri of Banaras Hindu University asked him to be the secretary of the Library Service Section of the "First All Asia Educational Conference" held in Banaras in 1930. This provided an opportunity to have the Draft Model Act discussed at the conference. This Model Act is the seed out of which Library Legislation grew in India.

3.8 Present Condition of Libraries in Tamil Nadu

The Tamilnadu public library Act, 1948 provides the creation of the department of public libraries and local library authorities. The following libraries are functioning in the state at present:

Sl. No.	District	State Central Library	District Central Library	Branch Library	Mobile Library	Village Library	Part Time Library	Total
1	Ariyalur	-	1	21	-	19	22	63
2	Chennai	-	1	139	-	-	19	159
3	Coimbatore	-	1	90	1	100	53	245
4	Cuddalore	-	1	71	-	47	22	141
5	Dharmapuri	-	1	37	1	69	31	139
6	Dindigul	-	1	62	-	90	27	180
7	Erode	-	1	86	1	100	30	218
8	Kancheepuram	-	1	73	1	59	39	173
9	Kanyakumari	-	1	21	-	109	3	134
10	Karur	-	1	34	-	57	9	101
11	Madurai	-	1	67	1	65	27	161
12	Nagapattinam	-	1	48	-	49	3	101
13	Namakkal	-	1	52	1	69	25	148
14	Nilgiris	-	1	53	-	29	19	102
15	Perambalur	-	1	19	-	24	41	85
16	Pudukottai	-	1	40	-	40	9	90
17	Ramanathapuram	-	1	57	-	22	8	88
18	Salem	-	1	65	1	78	34	179

19	Sivagangai	-	1	58	-	53	10	122
20	Tanjavur	-	1	58	1	48	3	111
21	Theni	-	1	70	-	51	38	160
22	Thiruvannamalai	-	1	49	-	73	14	137
23	Thiruvallur	-	1	73	1	51	19	145
24	Tiruvarur	-	1	35	-	50	11	97
25	Thuthukudi	-	1	53	-	57	19	130
26	Tiruchirapalli	-	1	64	1	65	12	143
27	Tirunelveli	-	1	104	1	85	9	200
28	Vellore	-	1	67	1	72	40	181
29	Villupuram		1	69	1	74	64	209
30	Virudhunagar	-	1	101	-	55	6	163
31	Krishnagiri	-	1	33	-	69	40	143
32	Tripur	-	1	57	1	77	17	153
33	Connemara Public Library	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
34	A.C.L.	1	-	-	-	-	-	1
	Total	2	32	1926	14	1906	723	4603

Source: Directorate of Public Libraries - Annual Report 2016-2017

4. PUBLIC LIBRARY SERVICES
4.1 Collections

- Fiction and non-fiction for Children, adults and adolescents
- Reference works (Yearbook, Handbook & Maps)
- Access to databases
- Periodicals (Journals and Magazines)
- Study materials.(Books for TNPSC and other Competition Examinations)
- Local, regional and national newspapers
- Community information
- Government information including local administrations
- Business information
- Local historical resources
- Genealogical resources
- Resources in the primary language of the community
- Resources in minority languages in the community
- Resources in other languages
- Computer games

- Games and puzzles

4.2 Services and Programmes

- Lending service
- Reference Service
- Audio Video Service
- Reprographic Service
- Current Awareness Service
- Newspaper Clipping Services (TNPSC & Competitive Examinations)

4.3 Educational Service

The Library supports both individual and self-conducted education as well as formal education at all levels. It provides access to knowledge in print and other formats to support formal and informal education. The people require education throughout their lives either at formal institutions, schools, colleges and universities, or in a less formal context related to their employment and daily life.

The public library should provide resources to support formal and informal learning processes. It should also help the readers to make use of these learning resources effectively. The Public Libraries should co-operate with other educational organizations in teaching the utilization of information resources. The library users are in need of easy access to the appropriate reading materials for improving their skills.

4.4 Service Provision

Public libraries provide a variety of services within both the library and the community to satisfy their users' needs. The following services should be easily accessible to the users.

- Loan of books and other media
- Provision of books, Journals, Magazines and other materials for use in the library
- Information services using print and electronic media
- Readers' advisory services including reservation services
- Community information services
- User education including support for literacy programs
- Programming and events.

4.5 Services to Children

The public libraries provide a chance for children to experience the enjoyment of reading and therefore the excitement of discovering knowledge and works of the imagination through a good range of materials and activities. Children and their parents should be educated the way to make the best use of a library including print and electronic media to develop their skills.

The public libraries have a special responsibility to support the method of promoting reading habits through print and other media among children and other library users. The library must encourage the children by organizing special programmes like storytelling and other activities related to the library services and resources aiming to instill the reading habits in an early age so that they would become regular library users throughout their life time. The print and audiovisual materials for children should be available in mother tongue.

4.6 Services for Young adults

The adolescents develop as individual members of society. The Public Libraries take the role of shaping them as responsible citizens by understanding their needs and providing services to satisfy them.

Both conventional and electronic resources that meet their needs and interests should be available in the library including popular novels, books, television series, music, videotapes, magazines and computer games. There must be a separate special section for children with all infrastructures in larger libraries. This would make them feel the library is for them.

4.7 Services for Adults

Adults have different requirements of information and library service in accordance with various situations they encounter in their studies, employment and private life. These requirements should be analyzed and accordingly library services should be made available aiming to meet their information needs. The Library services must be facilitating the following things for its adult users:

- Lifelong learning
- Leisure time interests
- Information needs
- Community activities
- Cultural activity
- Recreational reading.

4.8 Information Services

The rapid development of information technology has brought a huge amount of information to be accessible to all through electronic media. Providing Information has always been a key role of the library and the ways of collecting, accessing and presenting information have changed radically in recent years. The public library plays an important role in ensuring the following services:

- Providing access to information at all levels
- Collecting information about the local community and making it readily accessible, often in co-operation with other organizations
- Training people of all ages in the use of information and the associated technology
- Guiding users to the appropriate information sources
- Providing opportunities for disabled people to have independent access to information
- Acting as a gateway to the information world by making it accessible to all, thus helping to bridge the gap between 'the information rich' and 'the information poor'.

The drastic development of the Internet has been largely unstructured and uncontrolled. The vast amount of information that can be accessed via the Internet is of variable quality and accuracy and a key role of the librarian is to guide the users to have accurate information sources they exactly require.

4.9 Services to Community groups

The public library takes responsibility of influencing and taking part of every activity of the community. Therefore, library is in need of working with other groups and organizations within the community including departments of central government and state government, the business community and voluntary organizations. The information needs of these bodies should be explored so as to provide required the services. This would not only help the organizations involved but also demonstrate pragmatically.

4.10 Services to Special User groups

Potential users who, for whatever reason, are unable to use the regular services of the library have a right to equal access to library services. The library should, therefore, establish ways of creating library material and services accessible to those users employing the following modes: special transport, example mobile libraries, book-boats and other forms of transport to serve those living in isolated areas

- Services at the home of those people who are housebound
- Services at factories and industrial premises for employees
- Services for those confined in institutions, example, prisons and hospitals
- Special equipment and reading materials for those with physical and sensory disabilities, example, hearing impaired and visually impaired people
- Special materials for people with learning difficulties, example, easy-to-read materials and cassettes
- Services for immigrants and new citizens to help them find their way within a different society and provide access to media of their native culture
- Electronic communication, example, Internet catalogs.

4.11 Functions of Public library

- Useful in basic education.
- Use of leisure period of time.
- Collection and preservation of knowledge.
- Assistance in research work.
- Helpful in self-study.
- Help in perfect personality Development.

5. CONCLUSION:-

It is highly essential to adopt national Library & information policy, establish an efficient administrative structure and provide adequate resources for library services. To provide proper public library service to the remote library user, libraries have to modernize their facilities through networking so that they can render better service and resources sharing facilities to the user for all time. It is a must to provide computers, different electronic equipments and surplus fund along with library software packages to the different categories of public libraries.

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