

Library & Information Service in Rural Libraries of Alangulam Taluk from the Users Point of View: A Survey

R. Arulraj

Librarian, Einstein College of Engineering, Tirunelveli, Tamil Nadu
Email: aruleinsteinlib@yahoo.co.in

Abstract

It is analyzed Library and Information service in rural libraries of Alangulam Taluk from the users' point of view: A survey. The study revealed the awareness to the library services, distribution of rural library users according to the purpose of visit to the library, distribution of rural library users according to frequency of visit to the library, distribution of rural library users according to the attitude of library staff and distribution of rural library users according to the level of satisfaction over the library services.

KEYWORDS: *Library services, Library facility, Rural library*

Introduction

The fundamental aim of the rural library is to provide timely, pertinent, accurate and reliable information services to all the rural community. The rural library helps different sectors of the community by providing right information to the right reader at the right time. For example, it will help children to create reading habit, unemployed youths to get better jobs and farmers to improve agricultural production. Libraries of all countries are functioning for social development by extending these activities and services, sharing books, extension lectures on various topics such as child labour, epidemic diseases, reading habits and environmental protection.

Objectives of the study

1. To find out the awareness among users about various library services;
2. Assessing the frequency, purpose of library visit by the users;
3. To examine the users opinion regarding the overall collection facilities & services of library; and
4. To consider the factor that will help the library in promoting its services among users.

Methodology of the Study

For collecting the data the researcher has prepared interview schedule for the users and distributed to them. The empirical research design and random sampling technique was applied to select the sample. 100 questioners were distributed to the sample and 91 were

received back. Out of the 91 samples taken from four rural libraries in Alangulam Taluk, 25 samples were from Pettanadarpati rural library users and 24 samples were from Kasiyapuram rural library users. 26 samples were from Kaluneerkulam rural library users and 16 samples were from Kilapavoor rural library.

Awareness among users about various library services

Table 1
Awareness to the library services

S. No.	Category	Aware	Not aware
1	Reference service	66 (72.5)	25 (27.5)
2	Circulation service	88 (96.7)	3 (3.3)
3	News paper/Periodicals service	84 (92.3)	7 (7.7)
4	Reservation facility	70 (76.9)	21 (23.1)
5	Interlibrary loan	11 (12.1)	80 (87.9)

Note: * Source computed

** Entries within parenthesis denote percentage

The data in table 1 indicate the awareness to the library services. High percent of users (96.7) are aware about circulation service followed by News paper/Periodical (92.3) service, Reservation facility (76.9) and Reference service (72.5). However, 87.9 percent of users are not aware about the inter library loan service.

Main purpose of visit to the library

Table 2
Distribution of rural library users according to the purpose of visit to the library

S. No	Main purpose	Response	Percentage
1	Growth of knowledge	25	27.5
2	Subject knowledge	20	22.0
3	News paper/Periodical read	18	19.8
4	Borrow Books	23	25.2
5	Entertainment/Time pass	5	5.5
	Total	91	100

Note: * Source computed

The data in table 2 indicate the distribution of rural library users according to the purpose of visit to the library. Out of all the total respondents 27.5 percent of users visit the library for Growth of knowledge followed by 25.2 percent of users to borrow books, 22.0 percent of users visit the library for the purpose of subject knowledge and 19.8 percent of users visit the library for the purpose of reading News paper and periodicals. Analysis also shows that very less number of users (5.5) are visiting the library for entertainment/ time pass purpose.

Table 3

Distribution of rural library users according to the frequency of visit to the library

S.No	Frequency	Response	Percentage
1	Daily	10	10.9
2	Twice or thrice per week	26	28.6
3	Once in a week	35	38.5
4	Very rarely	20	22.0
5	Never	Nil	Nil
	Total	91	100

Note: * Source computed

The analysis of the data showed that 10.9 percent of the users used the rural library 'daily' and 28.6 percent claimed that they visited at least 'twice or thrice per week'. For the category 'once in a week' the frequency was 38.5 percent. The other category 'very rarely' was expressed by just 22.0 percent. It is significant that the last category viz 'never' was not indicated by any of the respondents.

View about the library staff

Table 4

Distribution of rural library users according to the attitude of library staff

S.No	Attitude of library staff	Response	Percentage
1	Very friendly	56	61.5
2	Friendly	24	26.4
3	Neutral	11	12.1
4	Indifferent	0	0.0
5	Total indifferent	0	0.0
	Total	91	100

Note: * Source computed

Staff member is regarded as most important part of any type of library. The success of the library also depends upon the efficient staff member.

The data in table 4 indicate the distribution of rural library users according to the attitude of library staff. Out of all the total respondents, majority of the respondents (61.5) express as very friendly about the attitude of library staff and few users indicate friendly (26.4) and Neutral (12.1). No one is responding Indifferent and Total indifferent. It is also clear seen from the above analysis that high percentage of users indicate very friendly and no one specify indifferent and total indifferent about the attitude of library staff.

Satisfaction with overall functions of library

Table-5

Distribution of rural library users according to the level of satisfaction over the library services

Library services	Level of satisfaction over the library services		
	Very good	Good	Poor
Book issue service	53 (58.2)	15 (16.5)	23 (25.3)
Reference service	67 (73.6)	19 (20.9)	5 (5.5)
Periodical service	35 (38.5)	55 (60.4)	1 (1.1)
Current awareness service	37 (40.6)	28 (30.8)	26 (28.6)
Extension service	11 (12.0)	39 (42.9)	41 (45.1)

Note: * Source computed

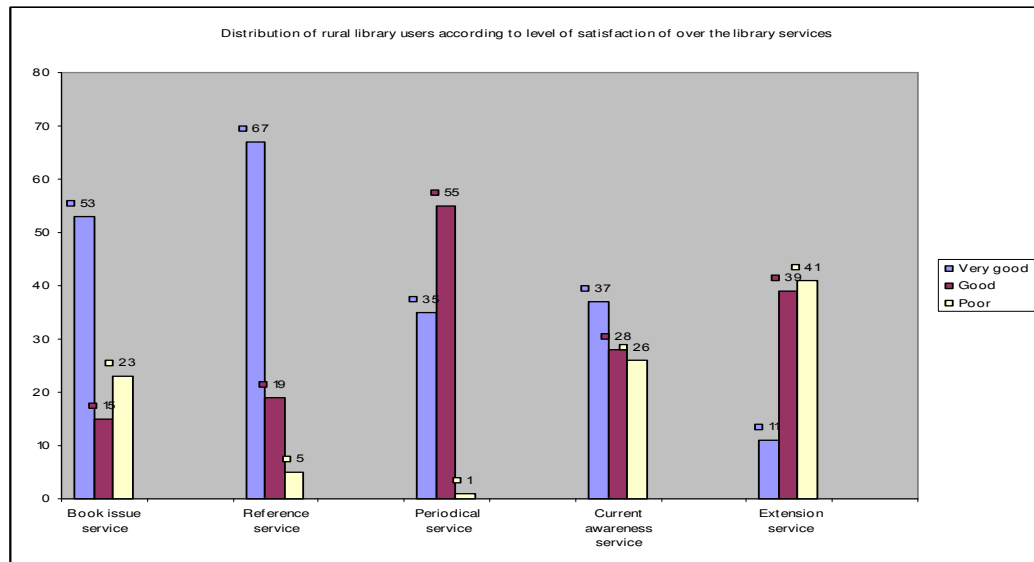
** Entries within parenthesis denote percentage

It is evident from the analysis that 73.6 percent of users expressed about level of satisfaction over the Reference service that it is “very good” while 5.5 percent says that this service is poor.

More than half of the users (58.2) expressed about the level of satisfaction over the Book issue service is “very good” while low percent of user’s i.e 25.3 percent says that this service is “poor”.

The majority of the users (60.4) have indicated as “good” about the level of satisfaction over the Periodical service and more users (40.6) have specified as “Very good” about the level of satisfaction over the current awareness service while 28.6 says that this service is “poor”.

Most of the users (45.1), have expressed “Poor” about level of satisfaction over the Extension service while 42.9 percent of users say that this service is “Good.”



Suggestions

1. Library should establish network facility so that users will be able to browse the catalogue of Rural library without physically visiting there.
2. Library circulation, catalogue and other services must be computerized to meet the users need quickly and promptly;
3. Circulation section and Reference book section must be strengthened by additional copies of books;
4. It is observed that periodicals section is not fulfilling users' research requirements. Hence periodicals collection calls for serious attention by the authorities;
5. Users studies should be conducted to know the users information requirements;
6. The library should start an awareness service among the users by conduction programmes such as initiation/extension lectures, library festival etc.
7. Reservation system for books should be started in a way that every user who wants any specific book should able to get it in time.
8. The library authority should encourage and sponsor library professionals to participate in training programmes; and
9. Library working hours may be framed according to the convenience of users.

Conclusion

From the study, the investigators observed that very few users on the whole make reasonable visit to the rural library. Most of the users visit the library for borrow books and develop subject knowledge. The rural library users are satisfied reference and

Periodical services. More than half of the users specify the librarian as very friendly about the attitude in the rural libraries.

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