

Transformation of Public Libraries and the Rural Society

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***ABSTRACT:** In this work we have addressed how a public major library was formed and structured by drawing an example of a major public library in South India. We have collected extensive data and interpreted it. Based on the findings we have suggested a few improvements.*

Keywords: Libraries, Transformation, Rural Society

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1. Introduction

During the last ruling in Tamil Nadu, the Anna Centenary Library was planned, constructed, executed and made operational in 2010 commemorating the Centenary of Arignar Anna the former Chief Minister of Tamil Nadu. ACL is the state of the Art Library has 5.7 lakh books on a variety of Subjects. Periodicals section, children section, Braille section, Competitive Examination Section, Own Book reading section, Text and reference books section, Manuscripts section, rare books section and e-library. The ACL has attracted many differently able (Blind persons) persons, many students, advocates, Doctors, Professors, Research Scholars, foreign diplomats and Librarians of this country. The Former Secretary of the Dept. of State of the U.S.A Mrs. Hillary Clinton have wondered and appreciated the massive collections in A.C.L. In addition to the above many students started utilizing the new idea of Own-Book Reading section on top of that they have utilized the educational resources and many succeeded in their efforts. Presently the ACL is conducting orientation program for the students who aspire for the UPSC exams due to the initiative taken by the Education Dept. Secretary Mr.T.Udayachandran I.A.S. and the Director of Public Libraries Mr. S.Kannappan. A separate section is available with adequate resources for the preparation of UPSC exams. Own book reading section is available to create an atmosphere for the students to study in peaceful place. The above trial and error method experiment conducted at ACL have given a GRAND SUCCESS.

2. Purpose

The purpose of this paper is to share resource materials and to give professional coaching for rural students for preparing UPSC, NEET, IIT and other competitive exams. The paper tries to provide a platform (by using the Public Libraries) for the rural students to give an opportunity to access the adequate resources and in this initiative Corporate Company's Corporate Social Responsibility can be utilized for purchasing of computers and other necessary resources.

3. Mission

Transforming Public libraries to reach the unreached and to serve as a platform to provide EQUAL EDUCATIONAL OPPURTUNITY for all regardless of caste, creed, religion and location through the PUBLIC LIBRARIES by an innovative method through Government-private partnership for the empowerment of rural young adult. To Bridge the gap between the Information Poor and the Information Rich by ensuring that people from rural and urban areas across Tamil Nadu have easy access to educational resources to develop their career fulfill their aspiration by utilizing the ACL Libraries at their areas and obtain knowledge they seek.

3.1. UNESCO Public Library Manifesto 1994

As per the UNESCO Public Library Manifesto 1994 The services of the Public Library are provided on the basis of equality of access for all, regardless of age, race, sex, religion, nationality, language or social status. Freedom prosperity and the development of society and of individuals are fundamental values. They will only be attained through the ability of well informed citizens to exercise their democratic rights and to play an active role in society, constructive participation and the development of democracy depend on satisfactory education as well as on free and unlimited access to knowledge, thought, culture and information. G.MALATHI and S.PASUPATHY conducted a study on information sources required for the students utilizing the public libraries and preparing for the competitive UPSC exams, NEET, IIT and other higher studies entrance exams. A Questionnaire is circulated to 200 active library patrons in the Public libraries 190 filled the questionnaires and the data obtained from them are tabulated below.

SL.NO.	Demographic Information	Variables	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	GENDER	Male	140	73.68
		Female	50	26.32
		Total	190	100
2	AGE	Below 18 yrs	6	3.16
		18-26 yrs	110	57.89
		26-35 yrs	54	28.43
		Above 35yrs	20	10.52
		Total	190	100
3	Educational Qualification	Bachelor Degree	102	53.68
		Master Degree	40	21.06
		Professional	10	5.26
		Others	38	20
		Total	190	100

Table 1. Demographic Information Distribution of Students

The aim of the above study is to find out library patrons using public libraries requirement of educational resources for those

SL.NO	FREQUENCY	NO. OF RESPONDENTS	PERCENTAGE
1	REGULAR	110	57.90
2	OCCASIONAL	80	42.10
	Total	190	100

Table 2. Frequency wise distribution of Library Patrons using public libraries for competitive exams

SL.NO.	ORIENTATION PROGRAM BY IAS/IPS officers needed	PROGRAM NEEDED AND USEFUL	PERCENTAGE
1	Male	145	76.31
2	Female	45	23.69
	Total	190	100

Table 3. Requirement of Orientation Program in Public Libraries

who are preparing for the U.P.S.C. exams, NEET, IIT and other exams for higher studies. Hence based on the above study it is concluded that majority of the Library Patrons using Public Libraries those who are preparing for the UPSC exams and other competitive exams are in the dire necessity of educational resources, whereas they find inadequate educational resources in public Libraries, similarly they expect motivational orientation program to get their queries answered by successful persons. In order to fulfill the above necessity by the Library users a solution in the following manner are suggested. By Opening of ACL libraries in other parts of Tamil nadu and adopting the same strategy adopted in ACL Chennai can be followed. In addition to the above in other states of India ACL Libraries can be opened to cater the needs of the increased population and increased literacy rate. (In addition to State Central Library)

4. Recommendations & Suggestions

- New Anna Centenary Libraries should be opened in tier Tiruchi, Madurai, Tirunelveli, Salem and coimbatore of Tamil Nadu
- On opening of ACL in tier 2 cities, the T.N.Government will be adhering to the policies of UNESCO
- Based on the success of the Anna Centenary Library Chennai, the similar replica of ACL Chennai with same type design should be started in cities like Tiruchi, Madurai, Tirunelveli, Salem and Coimbatore.
- All the proposed Anna Centenary Libraries should be connected with ICT tools
- The Video Conferencing facilities should be provided in all the proposed ACLs
- Tab should be given to the students preparing for the competitive exams in the exclusive section allotted for them after collecting caution security deposit
- R&D Lab should be started in the ACL the IT Experts, Academic librarians and Public librarians discuss together and create innovative methods to share digital resources among the Public libraries
- Sound Proof room should be constructed for the utilization of differently abled blind persons
- Library research students and post graduate library students should be allowed to internship in the ACL libraries
- Orientation Program should be conducted with the help of IAS and IPS officers to guide the students preparing for the UPSC

exams

- Leading coaching centres lecturers should guide the students while they prepare for IIT and NEET exams
- Funds should be collected by using the Corporate Social Responsibility
- The Matching Schemes and Non Matching Schemes of the RRRLF Funds should be utilized effectively for the ACL
- Mobile Libraries can be set up and that can be taken to schools in remote villages. The reading habits will be developed.

The Anna centenary should be opened in Tiruchy, Madurai, Tirunelveli, Coimbatore and Salem. The rural students residing in the nearby areas can reach the above ACL and can have access to the resource materials. E-learning centers should be opened with all modern facilities like video conference/ smart classroom. Experts/Scholars who have produced good results from the leading coaching institutes should be hired and they can teach from ACL Chennai through video conferencing to the other proposed ACLs. The Orientation program can be conducted with the support of the District Collectors/Superintendent of Police. Video Conferencing link should be provided between Chennai ACL and other proposed ACL in various parts of Tamil Nadu. Video Conferencing facility should be available in the proposed Library. They can have a question and answer session with the professors (hired from leading coaching centers, IIT professor) who can guide from Chennai ACL through Video Conferencing.

5. Funding of Public Libraries Vs. Corporate Social Responsibility

Due to the economic slowdown, due the deficit budget and adding to the economic challenge, the funds allotted for Library is comparatively very less throughout the world in general and in India particular. It seems fundraising has been difficult nowadays. Practically it is easy if we adapt the three dimensional technique once when we start using the CSR. As per rule, (the enactment of Companies act 2013) the MNCs have to compulsorily spent 2% of the average net profit of the previous three years for the development poor in the name of CORPORATE SOCIAL RESPONSIBILITY. The total prescribed CSR of 305 companies amounted to Rs.954.18crores and the actual CSR spent was 707.87 crore, the total unspent CSR was rounded off to 26% while actual CSR spent was 74%. According the analysis Education and skilling were the area where most CSR spending happened. Maharashtra received 1/4th of the total CSR fund. Karnataka received 11% of the CSR funds. It is pertinent to mention that one company has 100 crores, few companies have 10 – 100 crores as CSR Funds.

An Eye Opener Initiative: As per the UNESCO Public Library manifesto 1994, Specific services and materials must be provided for those users who cannot for whatever reason, use the regular services and materials for example people with disabilities, peoples in hospitals, linguistic minorities and people in prison. Normally due to the increased traffic and in the jam packed Public transport facilities it has become difficult for the differently abled blind persons to travel to ACL to utilize the Braille section. The BRAILLE section annex services should be extended to Poonamalle where there is a School for the Blind. Sound proof room should be constructed for them, hence they can hear the audio of educational resources in the pin drop silence atmosphere. (DAISY) Digital Braille conversion software and the latest software should be provided for them. All the latest facilities of braille studies available in the advanced countries should be provided there. Due to that will be an advantage for the Visually Impaired persons once when the Braille services were opened near their blind school.

Marrakesh Visually Impaired Persons Treaty: According to the World Blind Union of the million books published each year in the world, less than 5 percent are made available in formats accessible to VIPs. The adoption of a new Marrakesh VIP Treaty improved the international availability of accessible formats for VIPs and permit exchange of these formats across borders. The Marrakesh Treaty to Facilitate Access to Published works by Visually Impaired Persons and Persons with Print Disabilities is a treaty on copyright adopted in Marrakesh, Morocco on 28th June 2013. The treaty allows for copyright exceptions to facilitate the creation of accessible versions of books and other copyrighted works for Visually Impaired Persons. The treaty sets a norm for countries ratifying the treaty to have a domestic copyright exception these activities and allowing for the import and export of such materials.

The Lyon Declaration on Access to Information & Development: We the UN countries believe that increasing access to information and knowledge across society assisted by the availability of ICT supports sustainable development and improve people lives. We therefore call upon the member states of UN to make an international commitment to use the post 2015 development agenda to ensure that everyone has access to, and is able to understand use and share the information that

is necessary to promote sustainable development and democratic societies. 604 library associations around the world have agreed for the Lyon Declaration.

Findings: The review suggests that the students require a place of gathering where they can fulfill their dreams there by bridging the gap between urban and rural students and developing the rural youth and reducing the social problem by way of opening of new ACLs in other parts of Tamil Nadu.

Value: This paper identifies the several gaps in the society and points the need for more state of the art Public Libraries like ACL type in other parts of Tamil Nadu to develop the rural youth of Tamil Nadu. The ACL will help the students in conquering the fear of competitive exams conducted and make them successful on all India basis provided the students should have genuine interest in studies. Finally the Aim is to ensure the Public Libraries have the resources and capacity they need to improve lives in their communities.

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