

# A Study on the Extension Activities of the District Central Library, Tirunelveli, Tamil Nadu

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**Abstract** – A Public library can play an important role in helping different sectors of the community. It can also help farmers to improve production. It can enable business men to improve business projects. A public library can help the Children, a love for reading, which can lead to formation of reading habits at an early age. Hence the topic “A study on the extension activities of the District Central Library, Tirunelveli” has been chosen for special study. The study is based on both primary and secondary data. Simple statistical tools such as averages, percentages, tables and diagrams have been used for analysis and interpretation of the data collected. Photo copies of the working of the district central library and the mobile library are also included for easy understanding of the working of the library. The outcomes of the study have been reported through five chapters.

**Keywords:** Case Study, Extension Activities, Projects, Topography

## I. INTRODUCTION

A public library serves the public in so many ways. A Public library is expected to perform the functions of providing for recreation, information, inspiration and education. The clientele to be served includes students, teachers, research scholars, business men, professionals, house wives, retired persons, and neo-literates. A Public Library can play an important role in helping different sectors of the community. It can also help farmers to improve production. It can enable business men to improve business projects. A Public library can create in children, a love for reading which can lead to formation of reading habits at an early age. Because of the yeomen service rendered by the district central library, the researcher is interested in doing a deep study of the subject.

## II. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The following are the major objectives of the study.

1. To analyse and understand the topography of District Central Library, Tirunelveli.

2. To study the different sources of information available with the District Central Library.
3. To collect information regarding the different extension activities provided by the District Central Library.
4. To collect information, analyse and understand the general services rendered by the district library.
5. To understand the various improvements of the District Central Library during the study period.

## III. SCOPE AND METHODOLOGY

The study covers the functions of the district central library of Tirunelveli only. It does not include other libraries functioning in the district of Tirunelveli.

The study covers an active period of four years from 2008-2009 to 2011- 2012. For the present study, case study method has been followed as the district central library of Tirunelveli is the only organization selected for study. All information collected are only about the District Central Library of Tirunelveli.

The required information on has been collected both from primary and secondary sources. Primary source consisted of the library staff and users of library. The Secondary source consisted mainly of books, un published project reports and internet of the central library, Tirunelveli.

To collect first hand information, interview technique and informal talk methods have been used as basic tools for the collection of data. Secondary data has been collected from the registers and records of the district central library.

Simple statistical tools such as averages, percentages, tables and diagrams have been used for analysis and interpretation of the data collected. Photo-copies of the working of the district central library and the mobile library are also included for easy understanding of the working of the library.

IV. LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

Since the study is about a single district library the area covered is also limited to one district. The study is also mostly depends on the secondary data. Hence, the outcomes of the study are applicable only to the district library of Tirunelveli. The paper is devoted to deal with the importance of library in general and the district general library in particular. The aim of the public library in developing countries is to enrich the intellectual development of the public to support public education, to promote culture in urban and rural areas and to provide different fields of knowledge. This chapter also includes the research methodology used in this study.

The paper deals with the topography of the district central library. The District library is situated in palayamkottai at Tirunelveli. Tirunelveli and palayamkottai are the twin cities located on the banks of the river Tamiraparani. The river separates the two cities. The west and northern side of the river is occupied by Tirunelveli Town. The east and southern side is palayamkottai town. Though the northern parts may appear arid, the southern parts are decked with fertile fields of paddy and plantations and are bordered with a beautiful long coastline on the east and the south.

The District Central Library, Palayamkottai was established in 1952. It functions under District Central Library Association. It covers Palayamkottai, Nellai, Thatchanallur and Melapalayam with a population of 12,24,319 men and 12,68,870 women. During the year 2000-2001, the total number of people used the library was 1,31,421. All books for this library are received from the state central library, Chennai. The library remains open from Monday to Thursday from 3 a.m to 8 p.m. It remains closed on Friday and second

Saturday and on government holidays. Sunday is also a working day. The books include on a wide range of disciplines such as Computer Science, Mathematics, Physics, Chemistry, Fine Arts, Statistics, History, Sociology, Tamil and English. There are 13 staff members who manage the library. A large number of books are available for reference for those who prepare for competitive examinations like IAS, IPS, IFS and for various bank examinations. Since open access system is followed in this library, it is possible for a reader to approach books directly and handle them personally.

The paper discusses about various sources of the District Central Library. The different sources of the District Central Library can be classified into Documentary and Non-documentary. The documentary sources include a) Text Books b) Journals and c) Periodicals both in Tamil and English languages. The non – documentary sources include a) Cassettes and b) CD Collections.

The paper is devoted to deal with the Extension Activities and other services rendered by the District Central Library. The other services include a) Reprographie service b) Current Awareness service c) Information service. The rare and valuable reference materials are not allowed to be borrowed and permitted only for reference. The library permits to take photo copy of the valuable material and return the originals.

The purpose of extension work is to establish contact between the librarian and the reader. The extension service in the library is to make the library as a living force in a lifelong education and the intelligent use of the leisure. The extension activities provided by the district library include clippings, Mobile library, Village library, Part time library, Training for librarians, Extension talk, Conferences, Study circle and Publications.

TABLE I WORK IMPROVEMENT OF THE DISTRICT CENTRAL LIBRARY

Year	Working Days	No.of Readers	Book Lending	No. of Books Reference	Membership	No.of Books in the Library
2008-09	279	1,61,709	75,810	37,426	20,525	93,901
2009-10	286	1,48,345	83,766	43,604	21,352	95,612
2010-11	286	1,67,684	95,669	79,442	22,138	96,923
2011-12	282	1,31,421	72,011	46,806	23,086	98,062
Average	284	1,52,290	81,814	51,820	21,775	96,125

Source: Primary Data

## V. FINDINGS AND SUGGESTIONS

The major findings of the study have been summarized in Table I. During 2008 - 2009, the number of working days were 276 and about 1,61,709 readers used the library. About 75810 books were lend and above 37,426 books were referred. During this period the total membership was 20,523 and the total collection of books was 93901. The work improvement of the district central library from 2008 to 2012 has been shown in Table I.

- a. During the year 2009-10 the number of working days were 286 and 1,48,345 readers used the library. The books lent during the period was 83,766 and the book referred were 43,604. During 2011-12, the number of working days were 282 and about 1,31,421 readers used the library. As an average during the study period of four years, 96125 books were in the district library.
- b. The library worked in an average 284 days per year.
- c. About 1,52,290 readers per year used the library
- d. About 81,814 books as an average were issued/lent to the members per year.
- e. The study showed that the number of books lent during 2011-12 reduced when compared with other years.
- f. Number of books referred by the members went on increasing during the study period. During 2008-09, it was only 37,426 which raised to 79,442 during 2010-11 and fall during 2011-12 to 46,806.
- g. The membership has not increased very much during the Study period. The membership went on reducing during the first three years and increased only during the last year by 1000 members.

The following are some of the suggestions made:

- a. The layout of the library building must be attractive.
- b. Convenient seating arrangements will attract even aged people who can remain in the library more hours and read.
- c. To cater to the needs of children, recreation activities are to be introduced.
- d. During annual day functions more events are to be included so that men, women and Children will take part in the annual day function.
- e. Membership is to be increased by increasing the number of News papers and Children's books.

## VI. CONCLUSION

The Extension activities are perfectly planned and carried out. The mobile service is also functioning admirably well. The village libraries are also offering the best service to uneducated mass. The training sessions for librarians also serve as a better tool in improving their skills. The public library is performing its role in the society effectively and efficiently.

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