

Chapter 8

Survey on the Digital Divide in Public Libraries: An Evaluation of Public Libraries in India

S. Thanuskodi

 <https://orcid.org/0000-0001-8471-5799>

Central University of Tamil Nadu, India

ABSTRACT

In the present study, the researcher collected data through a well-structured questionnaire based on the demographic profile, library membership details, library resources, services and infrastructure facility, to identify the utilization of public library services in Madurai District. The present study reveals that more people are using the public Libraries. The result of the study threw light on public library services among its users. The respondents feel that subscription and late submission fee is very low, for providing better collections and facilities government can raise these amount. Patrons should be raised by providing special services to them. A few advanced level academic exercises like workshops, refresher courses, seminars and guest lecturers become necessary for updating knowledge and know-how to use the library services. The recent developments in the field of e-library should be made known to the public and has become essentially imperative in this dynamic branch of library services.

DOI: 10.4018/979-8-3693-5807-8.ch008

INTRODUCTION

Public Libraries are concerned not only with the education but also social and cultural activities of society. They provide opportunities for personal development. Public libraries are institutions, a living force of knowledge, meant for disseminating the knowledge in the wider part of population. A public library is for all, as it is considered as a social institution, charged with the responsibility of serving the information needs of the society without any discrimination. A Public Library is supported by public funds, which provides for self-education, free information on social, economic, cultural, and recreational needs of all members of rural and urban classes of the society. It serves the public without any discrimination of caste, creed, age or gender, status, and educational attainments. It is, therefore described as 'People's University'. It is a democratic institution of the people, by the people, and for the people.

The Main Services and programs of Public libraries are Lending Service, Reference Service, Audio Video Service, Reprographic Service, Linkage of the Schools, Conducting National Seminars/Conferences, Training programs to staff members, Opening of part time Libraries/ Village libraries in rural areas, Adding latest books to the libraries, Encouraging every educated person to become a member of the library, Providing basic amenities to libraries, Construction of new library buildings, Modernizing the libraries by introducing latest techniques.

Review of Literature

Mahesh and Kumari (2018) narrates that the distance education students were using public libraries for their academic purposes and converse the public library as an alternate for instructive or University libraries. The study found that 1309 (90.60%) distance learners used public libraries during the contact classes and 786 (54.4%) of the respondents spent maximum one hour in the library. Majority of the distance learners i.e. 941 (65.10%) responded that the public library is effective for the services of borrowing books and seeking information. Bishop Mehra and Partee (2016) observed that all rural public libraries in the Appalachian region can play a significant role in the economic development of their communities. Economic development in rural communities potentially benefitted from many of the resources and services enjoyed by users of public libraries, including free and public Internet access, space, education, question answering, and materials of business-related subjects.

Cushing (2016) in the study mentioned that the types of personal technology assistance request the staff received and how they responded to such requests in a single US state. The content was invited for a 30-minute follow-up phone interview to the library staffs in which they were asked to provide more details about their

22 more pages are available in the full version of this document, which may be purchased using the "Add to Cart" button on the publisher's webpage: www.igi-global.com/chapter/survey-on-the-digital-divide-in-public-libraries/367950

Related Content

Reference Services in Digital Environment

Wan Ab. Kadir Wan Dollahand Diljit Singh (2009). *Handbook of Research on Digital Libraries: Design, Development, and Impact* (pp. 412-420).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/reference-services-digital-environment/19905

Significance of Metadata

K. Nazeer Badhusha (2013). *Design, Development, and Management of Resources for Digital Library Services* (pp. 171-182).

www.irma-international.org/chapter/significance-metadata/72456

Redefining Virtual: Leveraging Mobile Librarians for SMS Reference

Darcy I. Gervasio (2014). *International Journal of Digital Library Systems* (pp. 44-69).

www.irma-international.org/article/redefining-virtual/141374

X-System: An Extensible Digital Library System for Flexible and Multi-Purpose Contents Management

Jian-hua Yeh, Chao-chen Chen, Shun-hong Sieand Cjien-cheng Liu (2014). *International Journal of Digital Library Systems* (pp. 25-40).

www.irma-international.org/article/x-system/105109

Nested Partitions Properties for Spatial Content Image Retrieval

Dmitry Kinoshenko, Vladimir Mashtalir, Vladislav Shlyakhovand Elena Yegorova (2010). *International Journal of Digital Library Systems* (pp. 59-89).

www.irma-international.org/article/nested-partitions-properties-spatial-content/45736