

## AI USAGE AND AWARENESS OF PUBLIC LIBRARY SERVICES: AN EXCLUSIVE STUDY ON RURAL WOMEN

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### Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to study the usage and awareness of public library services to know the purpose for which women visit to the library, their feeling about services, facilities, purpose of reading, library collection, assistance from the library staff in the use of resources and services to meet necessary help to users their information requirements and what are the factors motivate them to make best use of the library. So, the library resources and services it offers should mirror to the Public, and meet the information needs of these women's. For the purpose of data collection the structured questionnaires were distributed to 250 rural women respondents and 216 responses representing 86.4% were received.

**Keywords:** Public Library, Women, Socio- Economic factors.

### Introduction

Public library is a social institution which is based on the concept of democracy and it is an institution for the people, by the people and of the people. S.R.Ranganathan defined it as a library owned and maintained by the public of its area for the socialization of its books and kindred materials for free service to the people of the area. Librarians Glossary defines public library as a library provided wholly or partly from public funds, and the use of which is not restricted to any class of persons in the community but is freely available to all. Encyclopedia of Library and Information Science defines that Public Library is a public institution, supported by taxation, one that opens its collections, facilities and services, with distinction to all students. It always strives to meet the informational, educational and

recreational needs of the community by providing collection and services. Maximum utilization of library resources and services by the users is the main motive of a public library.

### **Women**

Women are important in our society. Every woman has her own job or duty in this modern society in which men are still the 'stronger gender'. The role of women in society has been greatly overseen in the last few decades but now it is coming to a more positive perspective. In the early days women were seen only as wives who were intended to cook, clean, and take care of the kids. The worth of a civilization can be judged from the position that it gives to women. Of the several factors that justify the greatness of India's ancient culture, one of the greatest is the honored place ascribed to women. Women who openly display their power, knowledge, and skill definitely they must be receiving public recognition and honor.

### **Review of Literature**

Scott (1996) defined literacy as a “lack of reading habit especially in capable readers who choose not to read.” In fact, in the study by Lesley, Watson, and Elliott (2007) researchers expressed concern not just over the reading habits of preserves teachers but their behaviors that were more characteristic of “struggling” readers. While one might argue the demands of teaching and personal life have caused teachers to abandon personal reading, one need only consider research conducted with preserves teachers to realize that there is little evidence of strong enthusiasm for reading among those preparing for a teaching career and that teachers as a group do not have firmly engrained reading habits (Nathanson, Pruslow & Levitt, 2008). A study by McKool and Gespass (2009) reveals that only about half of the teachers surveyed read for more than ten minutes a day in their free time. While these teachers advise parents of their students to read daily to their children, to allow their children to see them enjoy reading, and to talk about books with their children, it becomes apparent that many teachers do not take their own advice. There seems to be disconnect between their “preaching” and their practice. Asokan and Dhanavandan (2013) discussed about the reading habits of engineering professionals among engineering colleges in Chennai. Nearly 414 filled in questionnaires were obtained from the respondents and maximum of the respondents (79.43%) were mentioned their first choice is Dailythanthi.

### **Objective of the Study**

The framed objectives are

1. To identify the age wise distribution of the rural women
2. To assess the time spent in public libraries by the users
3. To examine the purposes of women to visit the rural library
4. To be identified the sources of the information

5. To ascertain Users' Satisfaction Level about Library Services
6. To know the impact of reading habits in life style changes

### Scope of the Study

The scope of present study is to identify the usage and awareness of public library services among Rural Women in Athoor block, Dindigul District. This study is only focusing on rural women and selected villages in Athoor Block in Dindigul District other areas are not considered.

### Methodology

This is an attempt to make usage perception and awareness of public library services among rural women. It is to identify their reading attitudes, their feeling about services, facilities, purpose of reading, library collection, assistance from the library staff in the use of resources and services preferences & tastes in the rural libraries of the various villages. The 250 well tested Questionnaires were constructed by the authors to collect the relevant data from the rural women in public libraries and to know the changes of socio-economic level of the rural women the data collected from 216 respondents. The data collected was analyzed and use of statistical techniques like simple percentages and averages.

### Data Analysis and Interpretation

The collected information from the is tabulated by using statistical method are shown the following tables.

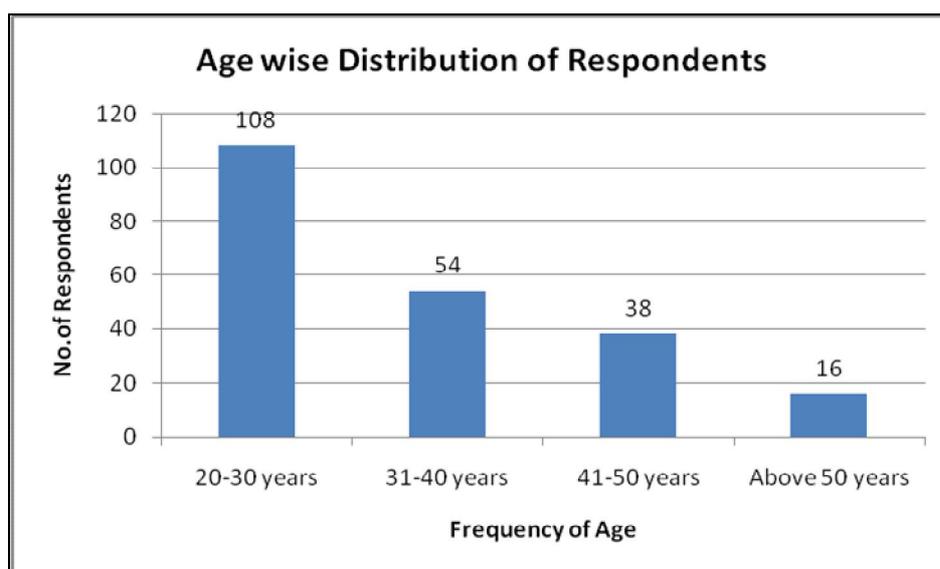
**Table 1: Area wise Distribution of Questionnaires**

Sl.No	Area wise distribution	Distributed	%	Received	%
1.	Chinnalapatty	60	24	53	21.20
2.	Chettiyapatty	30	12	23	9.20
3.	Sempatty	30	12	24	9.60
4.	Alamarathupatty	50	20	42	16.80
5.	Chithayankottai	40	16	37	14.80
6.	Dindigul	40	16	37	14.80
	<b>Total</b>	<b>250</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>216</b>	<b>86.40</b>

The table 1 shows that the area wise distribution of the respondents from rural women in public libraries in Dindigul Dt. The 250 questionnaires were distributed among rural women and 216 questionnaires were received back. Out of 250, 60 (24%) questionnaires were distributed and 53 (21.20%) were received in the Chinnalapatty and 40 questionnaires were distributed to Dindigul district library but 37 (14.80%) were replied by the respondents. It is pointed out that highest woman respondents were participated from Alamarathupatty area.

**Table 2: Age wise Distribution of Respondents**

Sl. No	Age Frequency	No. of Respondents	%
1.	20-30 years	108	50.00
2.	31-40 years	54	25.00
3.	41-50 years	38	17.59
4.	Above 50 years	16	7.41
	<b>Total</b>	216	100

**Figure: 1. Age wise Distribution of Respondents**

The table 2 shows that the age wise distribution of the respondents from rural women in public libraries in Dindigul District. It is clear from the table that a considerable number of the respondents are in the age group of 20-30 years' representing 108 (50%). The respondents between the age group of 30-40 years scoring 54 (25%) are the second largest. About 38(17.59%) of women public library users fall into the age group of 40-50 years. A very few respondents representing 16 (7.41 %) are under age group of above 50 years. It is concluded that women are under the category of 20-30 years in their age.

**Table 3: Time Spent in Public Library**

Sl. No	Time Spent	No of Respondents	%
1	Less than 30 Minutes	39	18.06
2	30 Minutes to 1 Hour	87	40.28
3	1 to 2 Hours	64	29.63
4	More than 2 hours	26	12.04
	Total	216	100

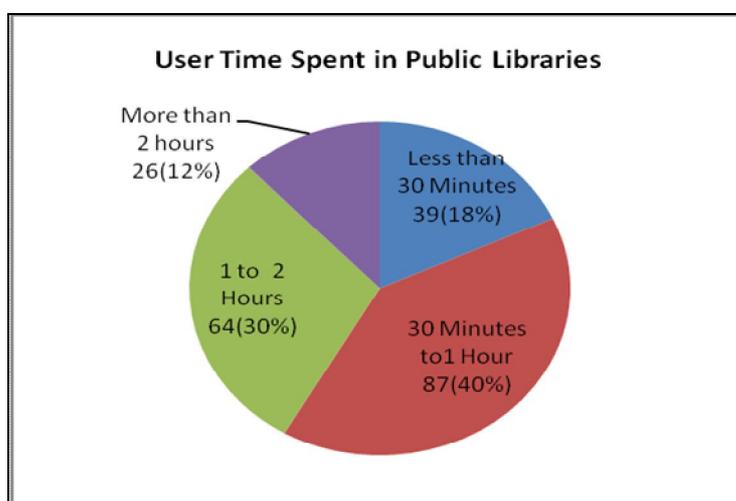
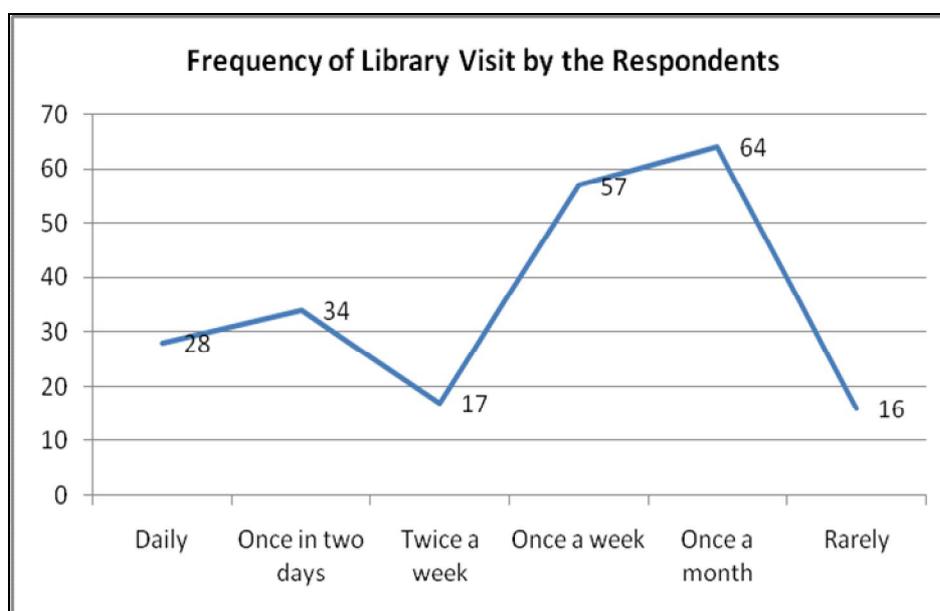
**Figure: 2. Time Spent in Public Library**

Table 3 indicates the time spent in public libraries among respondents. Out of 216, 87(40.28%) women are spent 30 minutes to 1 hour in libraries and 64(29.63%) women are spent time in public libraries between 1 to 2 hours. Further, the 26 (12.04%) users are spent more than 2 hours in the public libraries. It is concluded that the maximum women were spent 30 Minutes to I hour in public libraries for reading purposes.

**Table 4: Frequency of Library Visit by the Respondents**

Sl. No	Frequency of Visit	No. of Respondents	%
1	Daily	28	12.96
2	Once in two days	34	15.74
3	Twice a week	17	7.87
4	Once a week	57	26.39
5	Once a month	64	29.63
6	Rarely	16	7.41
	<b>Total</b>	<b>216</b>	<b>100</b>

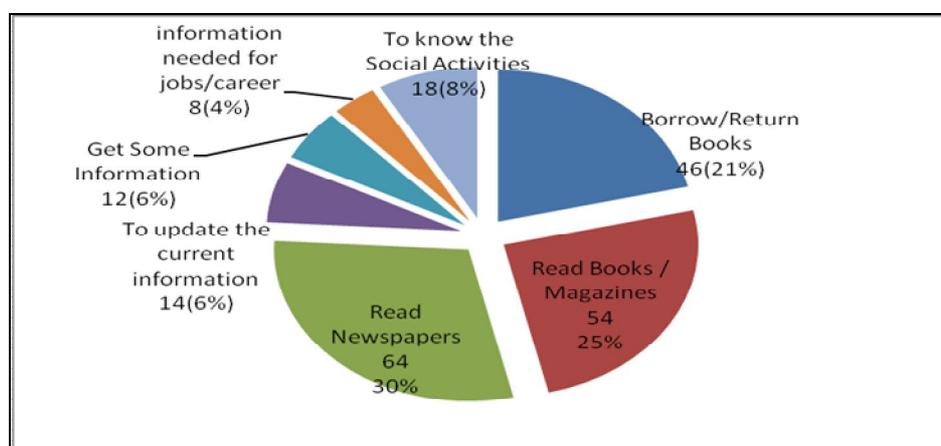


*Figure: 3. Frequency of Library Visit by the Respondents*

Frequency of visit to the library by the rural women respondents is shown in table 4. The table reveals that out of 216, 28(12.96%) respondents are visit in the library daily and 17(7.87%) respondents are visiting the library twice a week. Followed by 34(15.74%) respondents are visit public library once in two days and 57(26.39%) women users are visit library once a week. It is followed by once in a month representing by the 64 (29.63) respondents and 16(7.41%) of women respondents are visit the libraries rarely.

**Table 5: Purpose of Visiting the Library by the Respondents**

Sl. No	Various Purpose	No of Respondents	%
1	Borrow/Return Books	46	21.30
2	Read Books / Magazines	54	25
3	Read Newspapers	64	29.63
4	To update the current information	14	6.48
5	Get Some Information	12	5.56
6	Obtain information needed for jobs/career	8	3.70
7	To know the Social Activities	18	8.33
	<b>Total</b>	<b>216</b>	<b>100</b>



**Figure: 4. Frequency of Library Visit by the Respondents**

Above table 5 shows that the 64 (29.63%) rural women are visit in the libraries for purpose of read the news paper in public libraries and 54(25%) respondents was mentioned purpose to read books/ magazines in the libraries. Borrow/Return books in the public libraries was mentioned by 46 (21.30%) women users and 8 (3.70%) users are used to obtain information needed for jobs/career in public libraries. It is concluded that the very less (2.78%) respondents are used public libraries purposely to meet friend and relax their mind.

**Table 6: Users' Satisfaction Level about Library Services**

Level Not

Sl. No	Library Service	Highly Satisfied	Partially Satisfied	Satisfied	Not Satisfied	No Opinion	Total
1	Circulation Services	56 (25.93%)	64 (29.63%)	76 (35.19%)	8 (3.7%)	12 (5.56%)	216 (100%)
2	Reservation Services	46 (21.30%)	84 (38.89%)	59 (27.31%)	10 (4.63%)	17 (7.87%)	216 (100%)
3	Periodical Services	93 (43.06%)	41 (18.98%)	59 (27.31%)	9 (4.17%)	14 (6.48%)	216 (100%)
4	Current Awareness Service	40 (18.52%)	43 (19.91%)	103 (47.69%)	17 (7.87%)	13 (6.02%)	216 (100%)
5	Reprography Service	29 (13.43%)	36 (16.67%)	89 (41.2%)	14 (6.48%)	48 (22.22%)	216 (100%)
6.	New arrival books	68 (31.48%)	65 (30.09%)	58 (26.85%)	8 (3.7%)	17 (7.87%)	216 (100%)

As per the table 6 indicates the respondents level of satisfaction in public library services. Among the 216, 56(25.93%) respondents are highly satisfied, 76 (35.19%) of respondent are satisfied and 64 (29.63%) of respondent are highly satisfied regarding the circulation services in public libraries but only 8(3.7%) respondents are not satisfied. In the case of periodical services 93 (43.06%) users are highly satisfied but 9(4.17%) respondents are not satisfied the public libraries. And followed by the reservation services is 84(38.89%) of respondent are partially satisfied. In Reprography service most of them has no opinion about the level of satisfaction so the public libraries will improve the reprography services to the user's community.

**Table 7: To Provide Infrastructure Facilities in Public Libraries**

Sl. No	Infrastructure facilities	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion	Total
1	Arrange the separate room for reading	40 (18.52%)	103 (47.69%)	43 (19.91%)	17 (7.87%)	13 (6.02%)	216 (100%)
2	Browse the internet	93 (43.06%)	41 (18.98%)	59 (27.31%)	9 (4.17%)	14 (6.48%)	216 (100%)
3	Increase the book through the book bank	68 (31.48%)	65 (30.09%)	58 (26.85%)	8 (3.7%)	17 (7.87%)	216 (100%)
4	Proper drinking water and rest room facilities	29 (13.43%)	36 (16.67%)	89 (41.2%)	14 (6.48%)	48 (22.22%)	216 (100%)
5	Proper reference services	87 (40.28%)	38 (17.59%)	36 (16.67%)	12 (5.56%)	43 (19.91%)	216 (100%)

The table 7 shows Public library will provides infrastructure facilities stated by the user community rural areas. Out of 216, 103(47.69%) respondents of them are agree to arrange the separate room for reading and the internet facilities must provide to the user stated by 93 (43.06%) respondents. Further, 68(31.48%) of the respondent strongly agree to increase the book through the book bank and 89 (41.2%) of the respondent disagree the proper drinking water and rest room facilities, It is concluded that the 87(40.28%)of the respondent are strongly agree, and 43 (19.91%) of the respondent has no opinion about the proper reference services in the public libraries.

**Table.8 Impact of Reading habits the Changes in Life Style**

Sl. No.	Life Style Changes	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree	No Opinion	Total
1	Improved family Relations after reading habit	112 (51.85%)	76 (35.19%)	8 (3.7%)	7 (3.24%)	13 (6.02%)	216 (100%)
2	Problems in House hold activities	25 (11.57%)	19 (8.8%)	94 (43.52%)	55 (25.46%)	23 (10.65%)	216 (100%)
2	Influenced good food habits	86 (39.81%)	79 (36.57%)	14 (6.48%)	7 (3.24%)	30 (13.89%)	216 (100%)
3	Good relation with neighbours	134 (62.04%)	57 (26.39%)	8 (3.7%)	4 (1.85%)	13 (6.02%)	216 (100%)
4	Improve the Sociability	154 (71.3%)	48 (22.22%)	2 (0.93%)	3 (1.39%)	9 (4.17%)	216 (100%)
5	Help to our Children's Education	56 (25.93%)	86 (39.81%)	16 (7.41%)	27 (12.5%)	31 (14.35%)	216 (100%)
6.	Know the Government orders/new scheme	112 (51.85%)	76 (35.19%)	8 (3.7%)	7 (3.24%)	13 (6.02%)	216 (100%)

The table 8 indicates the impact of reading habits what are the changes in life style by the public libraries. Among the 216, 112(51.85%) of the respondent are strongly agree and 76(35.19%) of them are agree the reading habits helps to improved family relations. And 94 (43.52%) of the respondent disagree problems in house hold activities and , 134 (62.04%) of the respondent strongly agree it makes good relation with neighbors, And followed by 157 (71.3%) of the respondent are strongly agree the reading habits will make to improve the sociability and 86 (39.81%) of the respondent agree through the public libraries are help to our children's education, It is pointed out that the very minimum no. of users has no opinion about the changes in life styles by the impact of reading habits.

## Conclusion

Present days the rural women play a vital role not only the family but building the nation. This study is very useful to know the public, how to improve public libraries and what are the facilities are available in the public libraries. The government has spent more amounts to develop the public libraries particularly in rural areas. In this situation, the rural libraries create the reading habits and it is a wonderful activity among rural women being in the world. Definitely it will help to the improve society particularly in life style changes among rural women.

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