

PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEM AND SERVICES IN TAMIL NADU

: PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL

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초 록

이 논문에서는 인도의 최대주인 Tamil Nadu의 공공도서관시스템의 조직구조에 대해 개관하고 공공도서관의 성장과정에 대해 구체적으로 분석하였다. 아울러 1975년부터 2006년에 걸친 기간을 대상으로 하여 기존자료에 대한 통계데이터와 연차보고서를 바탕으로 공공도서관시스템의 성과를 평가하고 개선점을 제시하였다.

주제어: 도서관평가 공공도서관 인도, 공공도서관 조직구조

ABSTRACT

This paper presents the organization structure of the Public Library System in Tamil Nadu, the first state in the Indian Republic, and brings out the growth of public libraries in Tamil Nadu after the approval of the library reorganization committee recommendations. Appraises the performance of the Public Library System in Tamil Nadu from 1975 to 2006. An analysis has been made about the nature and adequacy of the existing resources in the public library system in the state of Tamil Nadu, based on the analysis of the statistical data relating to public libraries and their use collected from the annual administration reports of the Directorate of Public Libraries, Government of Tamil Nadu. Based on the analysis and observations a few suggestions are given for the development of public library system and services in India general and Tamil Nadu in particular.

Key Words: Library Performance Appraisal - Public Library - India,
Public Library System - Organization Structure, Library Act - India

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I. INTRODUCTION

The development of libraries in India has been determined by literacy, cultural and socio-political development. The library system in India has been rightly attributed by as “There are big, medium and small size libraries. Some are efficiently managed and others are badly run; some have enough finances while the rest have inadequate finances. An overwhelming large number of libraries have no trained librarians. They are mostly managed by poorly paid clerks working quite often on a part-time basis. The book stock of many libraries is insufficient. Books are neither properly selected nor purchased in any sufficient number. They are not classified and catalogued Generally, books of fiction form of hub of the library collection and those on science and technology are rarely stocked. Most of the libraries are housed in unsuitable buildings with poor lighting and other arrangements. Most of them are subscription libraries taking deposits and collecting fines from defaulting readers. Many of these libraries do not provide free and open access to the members”¹⁾

As far as public library services in India is concerned, it is possible to group the Indian states into three broad categories,²⁾

- States that have legislation based public library services;
- States that do not have public library legislation, but nevertheless have provision for public libraries; and
- States almost without any provision for public library services.

II. PUBLIC LIBRARY SYSTEM IN TAMIL NADU

Tamil Nadu is the first State in India, which enacted the Public Libraries Act in 1948. It has also passed “Compulsory Education Bill,” which has been sent to the Central Government for assent. Total literacy campaign has been carried out in all districts, which led to demand for better library services.

1) Gopalrao Ekbote. *Public Libraries System* (Hyderabad: Ekbote Brothers, 1987), p.23.

2) K. S. Raghavan. *Public Library Services in India: Problems and Prospects*. In: Ramesh Babu, B, et al, ed. *Knowledge Management: Today and Tomorrow*. (New Delhi: Ess Ess Publications, 2003), p.290.

1. Organisation Structure of Public Library System in Tamil Nadu

The public library movement in Tamil Nadu has been flourishing before enactment of the Act. Subsequently with the passing of the Library Legislation in 1948, the then Madras Government created a separate Department of Public Libraries with effect from 1st August 1972. A Library Reorganisation Committee headed by Shri. V. N. Subbarayan had made some valuable recommendations for the improvement of Public Library system in October 1974. From December 1976, a separate professional District Library Officer for each Local Library Authority has been sanctioned to effectively administrate the public libraries in each District. In November 1978, an official committee headed by Shri. S. Srinivasan(I.A.S. retired) reviewed the recommendations of the Subbarayan Committee and evolved certain norms for the number and category of technical and non-technical posts required for each library. From 1.4.1982, the Government of Tamil Nadu has provincialised all the staff members of the Department of Public Libraries, and the salary, allowances, pension etc., of the library staff are directly paid by the Government from the Treasury. The structure of the public library system corresponds to the structure suggested by the Advisory Committee for the Libraries set up by the Government of India.

The schematic structure of the Public Library System in Tamil Nadu is as follows,³⁾

2. Growth of Public Libraries in Tamil Nadu during 1975-2006

The growth of purpose libraries in Tamil Nadu since 1975 to 2006 is presented in Table 1 which reveals a spectacular development,⁴⁾

3) B. Ramesh Babu, *Public library systems in Tamil Nadu: Emergence of circle libraries*. In: Vashishth, CP, et al, ed. *New Horizons in Library and Information Science*. (New Delhi: T R Publications, 1994), p.225.

4) Tamil Nadu, Department of Public Libraries, *Annual Reports 1971-2006*.

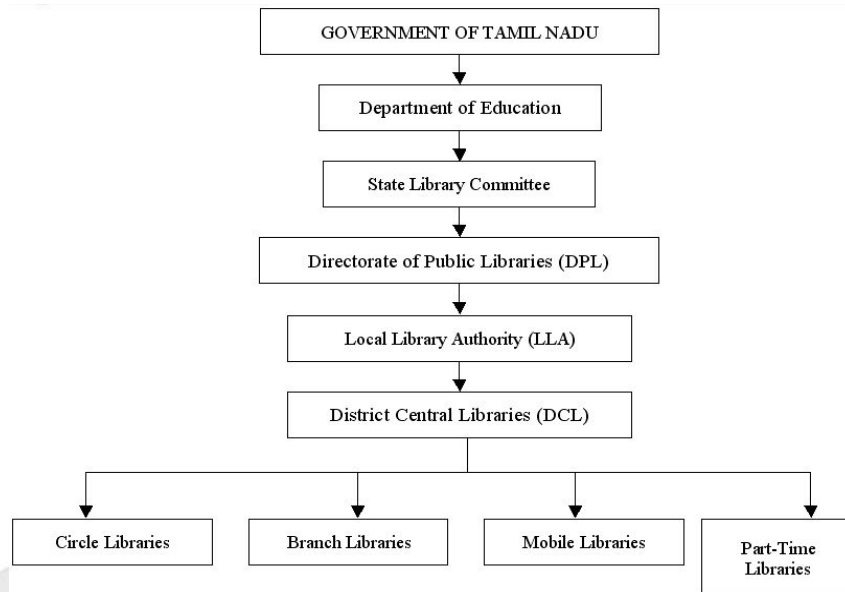


Figure 1. Structure of the Public Library System in Tamil Nadu

Table 1. Growth of Public Libraries in Tamil Nadu

S. No	Types of Libraries	1975-76	1980-81	1985-86	1990-91	1995-96	2000-01	2005-06
1	State Central Library	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
2	District Central Libraries	13	14	17	18	19	29	29
3	Mobile Libraries	-	-	-	9	9	12	12
4	Branch Libraries including Circle Libraries	1441	1440	1505	1530	1548	1568	1568
5	Part-Time Libraries	-	-	-	826	1146	649	649
6	Village Libraries	-	-	-	-	-	625	1492
TOTAL		1455	1455	1523	2384	2723	2884	3751

Source: Tamil Nadu, Department of Public Libraries. 1975-2006 Annual Reports.

3. PERFORMANCE APPRAISAL OF PUBLIC LIBRARY SERVICES IN TAMIL NADU

The establishment and maintenance of a public library system call for adequate finance to enable the provision of documentary sources of information, required manpower, necessary physical facilities such as furniture, equipment and building etc., and for the

updating, maintenance and effective operation of the library. The adequacy of these inputs should necessarily be related to the needs of the population served by the library. The performance of the District Central Libraries has been measured based on the following parameters:⁵⁾

- Circulation per member
- In-library material use per member
- Turnover rate
- Library Visits per capita
- Registration as a percentage of population

The data have been gathered by an examination of the annual reports of the Directorate of Public Libraries, Government of Tamil Nadu.

1. Circulation per Registered Member

The district - wise circulation of books per registered member is shown in Table 2.

Table 2. District Wise Circulation of Books per Registered Member

S. No.	Districts	1975-76	1980-81	1985-86	1990-91	1995-96	2000-01	2004-05
1	Chennai	11.48	5.91	20.83	8.50	8.52	7.61	4.87
2	Coimbatore	13.97	4.93	9.57	7.60	7.30	7.50	4.63
3	Cuddalur	10.05	6.86	6.46	4.06	3.03	3.05	2.86
4	Dharmapuri	7.13	0.44	5.22	3.99	4.50	3.07	3.36
5	Dindugul	*	*	*	7.07	4.57	2.73	2.75
6	Erode	*	4.93	7.11	4.83	26.94	3.36	3.51
7	Kancheepuram	10.46	6.54	7.72	8.24	5.91	4.74	4.42
8	Kanyakumari	*	*	31.92	10.27	6.28	6.62	5.40
9	Karur	*	*	*	*	*	3.07	3.34
10	Madurai	13.65	12.38	11.17	6.63	4.72	3.85	3.14
11	Nagappatinam	*	*	*	*	*	2.43	2.25
12	Namakkal	*	*	*	*	*	1.86	4.01
13	Nilgiris	7.11	7.61	6.77	3.74	5.01	2.90	2.21

5) P. Sankaralingam, and K. S. Raghavan. *Public Library Service in Tamil Nadu In. Seminar on Public Library Services and Information Networks, 4-6 January 1988, organised by MALA et al. (Chennai: Madras Library Association, 1988), pp.41-72.*

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14	Perambalur	*	*	*	*	*	4.00	3.82
15	Pudukkottai	*	*	7.71	3.63	3.67	3.92	2.27
16	Ramanathapuram	6.74	6.02	6.24	3.10	1.68	2.29	1.90
17	Salem	9.52	6.88	6.45	3.00	2.49	2.52	2.21
18	Sivagangai	*	*	*	4.29	4.73	2.52	27.29
19	Thanjavur	19.03	9.46	12.14	6.26	0.57	4.91	3.49
20	Theni	*	*	*	*	*	2.84	2.82
21	Thiruvannamalai	*	*	*	3.39	3.65	2.53	2.45
22	Tiruvallur	*	*	*	*	*	4.33	3.93
23	Thiruvarur	*	*	*	*	*	4.14	2.69
24	Tuticorin	*	*	*	4.05	5.37	6.86	4.13
25	Tiruchirappalli	10.20	8.84	8.93	4.21	3.70	3.27	3.59
26	Tirunelveli	5.96	8.96	7.77	4.52	3.54	2.74	2.66
27	Vellore	9.63	8.49	7.71	4.16	2.84	2.80	2.54
28	Villupuram	*	*	*	*	3.06	2.33	2.48
29	Virudhunagar	*	*	9.41	4.22	4.03	2.98	3.12
	Over all rate	11.19	6.97	9.30	5.38	4.50	4.00	3.93

* District not formed

The Circulation per member measures the number of books, the library circulates to the users of the community. It is an indicator of the library utilisation and extension of its services. Table 2 presents circulation per registered member of the districts. It is observed from the Table that there is a decreasing trend over the period in the circulation of books per registered member. The circulation per registered member in the state is 11.19 in 1975-76, 6.97 in 1980-81, 5.38 in 1990-91, 4.50 in 1995-96, 4.00 in 2000-01, and 3.93 in 2004-05. The Circulation per member in the state has been increased to 9.30 in 1985-86. There is a considerable variation in different districts in this regard.

2. Rate of Books used in libraries per Registered Member

The district-wise rate of books used in libraries per registered member is shown in the Table 3. In a Public Library, the use of books is one of the measures of library performance, complementing circulation count, which measures use outside the library. The Table 3 reveals that the number of books used per registered member is in declining trend from 1975-76(13.34) to 1990-91(5.93) and increasing trend from 1995-96(10.08) to 2004-05 (14.01).

Table 3. Rate of Books used in Libraries per Registered Member

S. No.	Districts	1975-76	1980-81	1985-86	1990-91	1995-96	2000-01	2004-05
1	Chennai	42.88	11.62	15.86	12.64	17.95	14.17	13.18
2	Coimbatore	13.17	6.36	2.51	3.69	37.28	43.90	40.65
3	Cuddalur	3.69	2.15	2.55	2.84	0.59	2.51	5.82
4	Dharmapuri	5.34	1.02	4.44	4.13	4.72	3.68	9.67
5	Dindugul	*	*	*	4.67	3.86	27.53	11.74
6	Erode	*	4.29	3.39	2.91	198.75	17.94	5.38
7	Kancheepuram	27.86	5.85	0.00	24.69	2.54	2.43	6.74
8	Kanyakumari	*	*	12.48	2.31	4.30	3.02	21.93
9	Karur	*	*	*	*	*	8.07	9.36
10	Madurai	9.98	9.35	7.21	6.08	5.06	3.29	6.18
11	Nagappatinam	*	*	*	*	*	1.90	4.16
12	Namakkal	*	*	*	*	*	1.61	10.86
13	Nilgiris	2.46	3.19	2.19	5.38	7.19	3.94	25.90
14	Perambalur	*	*	*	*	*	5.06	9.68
15	Pudukkotai	*	*	9.06	4.47	3.08	4.22	4.42
16	Ramanathapuram	9.16	6.41	3.52	2.54	2.23	3.54	4.51
17	Salem	6.23	3.38	2.62	1.70	2.03	2.33	4.98
18	Siva Gangai	*	*	*	2.70	3.94	1.85	30.16
19	Thanjavur	11.55	10.25	8.46	4.65	3.92	6.14	6.66
20	Theni	*	*	*	*	*	2.85	7.13
21	Thiruvannamalai	*	*	*	1.14	1.94	1.88	5.47
22	Tiruvallur	*	*	*	*	*	2.29	6.25
23	Thiruvarur	*	*	*	*	*	2.49	6.30
24	Tuticorin	*	*	*	2.13	11.23	58.57	81.98
25	Tiruchirappalli	10.59	10.71	8.11	4.66	8.75	5.56	6.83
26	Tirunelveli	2.32	4.95	1.71	2.12	2.00	5.57	5.03
27	Vellore	18.34	9.22	10.25	6.47	4.85	7.00	8.74
28	Villupuram	*	*	*	*	2.73	1.65	4.05
29	Virudhunagar	*	*	4.58	2.78	10.62	2.89	6.75
	Overall rate	13.34	6.35	5.28	5.93	10.08	11.56	14.01

* District not formed

3. Turn over rate of Circulation

Turnover rate is a measure of the activity level of a library's collection. It is an indicator of the number of times each item in the library's collection would have been circulated during a year if the circulation had been evenly spread through out the collection. The districtwise turnover rate of circulation is shown in Table 4.

The data in Table 4 reveals that turnover rate of circulation in the state is in declining trend from 1.29 in 1975-76 to 1 in 1985-86, 0.64 in 1990-91 and 0.26 in 2004-05. The

turnover rate of circulation has shown increasing trend in the year 1985-86 as 1.00.

The following inferences could be drawn:

1. There is an immediate need for withdrawing obsolete books.
2. There is need to formulate policy to develop collection suited to the needs of the clientele of the respective libraries.

Table 4. Turnover Rate of Circulation Vs. Books Availability

S. No.	Districts	1975-76	1980-81	1985-86	1990-91	1995-96	2000-01	2004-05
1	Chennai	0.62	0.36	0.94	0.34	0.39	0.33	0.17
2	Coimbatore	1.70	0.49	1.05	0.90	0.95	0.80	0.39
3	Cuddalur	1.44	1.03	0.98	0.74	0.46	0.46	0.05
4	Dharmapuri	0.92	0.07	0.79	0.78	0.89	0.41	0.09
5	Dindugul	*	*	*	0.68	0.67	0.38	0.33
6	Erode	*	0.47	0.67	0.58	0.38	0.37	0.27
7	Kancheepuram	0.89	0.53	0.75	0.78	0.60	0.43	0.31
8	Kanyakumari	*	*	1.85	1.22	0.62	0.49	0.47
9	Karur	*	*	*	*	*	0.27	0.32
10	Madurai	1.51	1.16	1.01	0.60	0.44	0.34	0.17
11	Nagappatinam	*	*	*	*	*	0.29	0.30
12	Namakkal	*	*	*	*	*	0.35	0.30
13	Nilgiris	1.46	1.40	0.75	0.77	0.70	0.34	0.15
14	Perambalur	*	*	*	*	*	0.41	0.24
15	Pudukkotalai	*	*	0.89	0.44	0.45	0.38	0.20
16	Ramanathapuram	1.20	0.79	0.87	0.58	0.37	0.26	0.13
17	Salem	1.80	1.64	1.35	0.71	0.56	0.49	0.32
18	Sivagangai	*	*	*	0.63	0.73	0.32	1.85
19	Thanjavur	2.63	1.37	1.67	1.08	0.08	0.76	0.47
20	Theni	*	*	*	*	*	0.23	0.25
21	Thiruvannamalai	*	*	*	0.57	0.63	0.37	0.31
22	Tiruvallur	*	*	*	*	*	0.39	0.43
23	Thiruvarur	*	*	*	*	*	0.58	0.38
24	Tuticorin	*	*	*	0.65	0.89	0.98	0.44
25	Tiruchirappalli	0.93	0.82	0.85	0.47	0.40	0.37	0.21
26	Tirunelveli	0.76	1.00	0.93	0.62	0.44	0.36	0.20
27	Vellore	1.24	1.19	1.07	0.72	0.52	0.52	0.42
28	Villupuram	*	*	*	*	0.42	0.30	0.30
29	Virudhunagar	*	*	1.27	0.64	0.61	0.35	0.25
	Overall rate	1.29	0.80	1.00	0.64	0.52	0.43	0.26

* District not formed

4. Frequency of Library Visits Vs Registered Members

Table 5. Frequency of Library Visits Vs. Registered Members

S. No.	Districts	1975-76	1980-81	1985-86	1990-91	1995-96	2000-01	2004-05
1	Chennai	73.84	43.83	45.45	41.97	37.12	33.22	19.14
2	Coimbatore	44.16	30.46	22.75	18.83	14.89	16.64	10.93
3	Cuddalur	46.79	32.01	23.01	30.85	15.03	15.55	12.50
4	Dharmapuri	55.14	8.29	29.73	19.78	22.92	27.86	17.09
5	Dindugul	*	*	*	20.84	11.56	8.82	10.91
6	Erode	*	26.17	20.50	16.91	103.37	12.71	6.18
7	Kancheepuram	38.73	34.40	26.80	26.24	19.78	16.84	8.73
8	Kanyakumari	*	*	94.39	24.59	15.15	19.96	24.43
9	Karur	*	*	*	*	*	15.71	15.29
10	Madurai	31.66	33.35	28.85	20.95	14.60	11.24	8.79
11	Nagappatinam	*	*	*	*	*	10.87	8.19
12	Namakkal	*	*	*	*	*	7.25	13.88
13	Nilgiris	23.92	18.26	20.86	10.38	13.66	11.28	9.36
14	Perambalur	*	*	*	*	*	18.03	18.71
15	Pudukkottai	*	*	30.23	19.34	13.49	12.43	12.92
16	Ramanathapuram	54.83	37.24	23.78	17.47	9.22	10.90	8.87
17	Salem	39.84	24.09	15.84	10.46	9.05	9.46	5.94
18	Sivagangai	*	*	*	19.09	16.34	11.48	12.19
19	Thanjavur	46.24	27.24	27.68	17.22	17.76	16.92	11.15
20	Theni	*	*	*	*	*	12.76	14.01
21	Thiruvannamalai	*	*	*	21.04	14.01	14.36	15.51
22	Tiruvallur	*	*	*	*	*	16.11	30.77
23	Thiruvarur	*	*	*	*	*	13.93	19.08
24	Tuticorin	*	*	*	27.09	27.20	23.77	15.23
25	Tiruchirappalli	78.17	51.38	34.56	28.71	18.97	14.26	14.22
26	Tirunelveli	20.45	36.30	29.14	26.63	14.23	12.71	14.79
27	Vellore	62.79	48.26	36.45	20.53	14.85	16.23	12.01
28	Villupuram	*	*	*	*	15.60	13.78	13.73
29	Virudhunagar	*	*	26.52	23.25	20.93	14.00	17.39
	Overall rate	45.81	31.26	27.31	21.78	17.70	15.61	13.16

* District not formed

The use of library by registered members is another measure to evaluate a library performance. The Table 5 reveals that the frequency of library visits is in declining trend from 45.81 in 1975-76 to 13.16 in 2004-2005. Further it reveals that there is a considerable variation in different districts.

Table 6. Frequency of Library Visits per Capita

S. No.	Districts	Number of Books		
		1980-81	1990-91	2000-01
1	Chennai	0.80	1.42	1.54
2	Coimbatore	0.76	0.89	1.17
3	Cuddalur	0.37	0.64	0.64
4	Dharmapuri	0.39	0.47	1.03
5	Dindugul	*	0.55	0.50
6	Erode	0.61	0.74	0.61
7	Kancheepuram	0.63	0.82	0.67
8	Kanyakumari	0.00	0.14	0.25
9	Karur	*	*	0.56
10	Madurai	0.69	0.78	0.51
11	Nagappatinam	*	*	0.42
12	Namakkal	*	*	0.57
13	Nilgiris	0.90	1.02	1.28
14	Perambalur	*	*	0.53
15	Pudukkottai	0.00	0.37	0.39
16	Ramanathapuram	0.82	0.68	0.60
17	Salem	0.63	0.57	0.55
18	Sivagangai	*	0.71	0.68
19	Thanjavur	0.57	0.55	0.78
20	Theni	*	0.00	0.91
21	Thiruvannamalai	*	0.48	0.55
22	Tiruvallur	*	*	0.58
23	Thiruvarur	*	*	0.61
24	Tuticorin	*	*	1.20
25	Tiruchirappalli	0.67	0.65	0.55
26	Tirunelveli	0.67	0.90	0.66
27	Vellore	0.60	0.58	0.73
28	Villupuram	*	*	0.30
29	Virudhunagar	*	0.95	0.82
Average Rate		0.60	0.72	0.73

* District not formed

The Table 6 reveals that the frequency of library visits is in increasing trend from 0.60 in 1980-81 to 0.73 in 2000-2001.

5. Growth of Library Service Units

Proximity and accessibility to a public library are two factors that are known to have effects on the use of the library. The data in table 7 reveals the number of service units

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available in each district. There are 3751 service units (including State Central Library Circle libraries and other libraries) established to provide library services to the people of Tamil Nadu. As per the provisions of Tamil Nadu Public Library Act there is a need for establishing a public library service unit for every population of 5000. This means that there should be as many as 10, 400 service units for the State of Tamil Nadu. However, it is seen from Table 7 that there is an increasing rate of growth of service units since 1975 onwards. There were 1454 service units during 1975-76 and on 2004-05 the total numbers of service units were 3751. It is an encouraging sign in the Public Library System of Tamil Nadu.

Table 7. Growth of Library Service Units

S. No.	Districts	1975-76	1980-81	1985-86	1990-91	1995-96	2000-01	2004-05
1	Chennai	120	114	128	136	140	151	151
2	Coimbatore	192	99	101	105	105	216	296
3	Cuddalur	112	113	116	116	59	102	122
4	Dharmapuri	35	35	38	41	41	127	197
5	Dindugul	*	*	*	52	52	97	154
6	Erode	*	98	101	95	98	188	231
7	Kancheepuram	117	117	120	121	122	102	132
8	Kanyakumari	*	1	6	9	9	39	92
9	Karur	*	*	*	*	*	47	77
10	Madurai	159	158	162	113	113	112	146
11	Nagappatinam	*	*	*	*	*	65	88
12	Namakkal	*	*	*	*	*	105	136
13	Nilgiris	35	36	39	41	41	77	78
14	Perambalur	*	*	*	*	*	44	54
15	Pudukkottai	*	*	28	31	31	55	73
16	Ramanathapuram	178	177	93	47	47	71	75
17	Salem	79	80	86	91	92	100	157
18	Sivagangai	*	*	*	46	46	104	110
19	Thanjavur	107	107	104	106	106	72	97
20	Theni	*	*	*	*	*	96	109
21	Thiruvannamalai	*	*	*	37	37	96	134
22	Tiruvallur	*	*	*	*	*	100	122
23	Thiruvarur	*	*	*	*	*	40	74
24	Tuticorin	*	*	*	44	44	84	108
25	Tiruchirappalli	107	107	94	96	96	83	109
26	Tirunelveli	125	125	131	91	91	141	179
27	Vellore	88	88	91	55	55	123	154
28	Villupuram	*	*	*	*	57	113	138
29	Virudhunagar	*	*	84	84	85	133	157
Average		1454	1455	1522	1558	1567	2883	3750

* District not formed

6. Library Visits per Service Unit

The efficiency of any library will be judged by its patronage. Higher the number of library visits greater the service effectiveness of the library. Table 8 presents the data with regard to the library visits per service unit calculated at five-year interval.

The data in Table 8 reveals that there is an increasing trend of library visits over a period of time from 1975-76 to 1995-96. On the other hand it declines from 2000-01(15740) to 2004-05(12316). Further it is observed that the frequency of visits is greater in Chennai district(Urban district), and it is lower in Villupuram District(Rural district).

Table 8. Library Visits per Service Unit

S. No.	Districts	Number of Library Visits						
		1975-76	1980-81	1985-86	1990-91	1995-96	2000-01	2004-05
1	Chennai	29316	22948	31540	39998	43519	42866	26833
2	Coimbatore	22785	23613	24717	29646	35294	22931	13797
3	Cuddalur	13002	13935	13830	26949	18013	14257	10879
4	Dharmapuri	22019	22189	28093	27546	47348	23081	11252
5	Dindugul	*	*	*	18758	18458	9919	8879
6	Erode	*	12873	14251	18063	16219	8353	5545
7	Kancheepuram	16396	19527	22229	31370	29918	18767	9258
8	Kanyakumari	*	3000	22875	24763	20672	10680	12687
9	Karur	*	*	*	*	*	11092	9528
10	Madurai	15047	19819	22834	23742	20741	11718	8943
11	Nagappatinam	*	*	*	*	*	9580	8293
12	Namakkal	*	*	*	*	*	8053	8157
13	Nilgiris	14072	15766	16775	17685	22570	12731	11862
14	Perambalur	*	*	*	*	*	14232	14950
15	Pudukkottai	*	*	19286	15969	16592	10215	9531
16	Ramanathapuram	18903	15415	14593	16615	13976	10026	8777
17	Salem	23202	27105	25355	24284	25858	16399	6837
18	Sivagangai	*	*	*	16736	19981	7502	9041
19	Thanjavur	26566	21474	26793	23590	29419	23811	13930
20	Theni	*	*	*	*	*	10401	12068
21	Thiruvannamalai	*	*	*	26252	25817	12425	11128
22	Tiruvallur	*	*	*	*	*	16001	32966
23	Thiruvarur	*	*	*	*	*	17674	16838
24	Tuticorin	*	*	*	27655	41780	22350	13160
25	Tiruchirappalli	23475	22662	22014	27972	22379	15903	16991
26	Tirunelveli	9302	19157	21105	24765	17661	13047	13240
27	Vellore	26704	30106	29135	31875	31633	20627	13148
28	Villupuram	*	*	*	*	14280	7758	8905
29	Virudhunagar	*	*	14694	17752	21220	10822	13463
Average		19914	20080	21935	25708	26134	15740	12316

* District not formed

7. Library Visits Vs. Circulation

Table 9. Library Visits Vs. Circulation

S. No.	Districts	1975-76	1980-81	1985-86	1990-91	1995-96	2000-01	2004-05
1	Chennai	15.55	13.48	45.83	20.25	22.94	21.95	25.47
2	Coimbatore	30.63	16.18	42.08	40.38	49.04	45.07	42.39
3	Cuddalur	21.48	21.43	28.09	13.16	20.15	18.75	22.90
4	Dharmapuri	12.93	5.37	17.57	20.18	19.63	11.02	19.64
5	Dindugul	*	*	*	33.94	39.56	28.71	25.17
6	Erode	*	18.85	34.67	25.58	26.06	35.86	56.69
7	Kancheepuram	27.01	19.00	28.79	31.41	29.88	28.17	50.69
8	Kanyakumari	*	0.00	33.82	41.76	41.46	34.61	22.10
9	Karur	*	*	*	*	*	18.15	21.87
10	Madurai	43.11	37.12	38.72	31.66	32.32	34.22	35.69
11	Nagappatinam	*	*	*	*	*	22.39	27.46
12	Namakkal	*	*	*	*	*	25.70	28.87
13	Nilgiris	29.73	41.69	32.46	36.04	36.63	26.15	23.59
14	Perambalur	*	*	*	*	*	20.82	20.40
15	Pudukkottai	*	*	25.49	18.75	27.23	29.89	17.60
16	Ramanathapuram	12.29	16.17	26.23	17.72	18.19	20.26	21.47
17	Salem	23.91	28.56	40.71	28.68	27.52	26.61	37.20
18	Sivagangai	*	*	*	22.46	28.95	21.08	23.94
19	Thanjavur	41.16	34.73	43.86	36.37	3.22	28.00	31.28
20	Theni	*	*	*	*	*	22.27	20.15
21	Thiruvannamalai	*	*	*	16.13	26.06	16.56	15.82
22	Tiruvallur	*	*	*	*	*	26.89	12.78
23	Thiruvarur	*	*	*	*	*	29.28	14.09
24	Tuticorin	*	*	*	14.94	19.74	28.86	27.14
25	Tiruchirapalli	13.05	17.20	25.85	14.67	19.49	22.93	25.22
26	Tirunelveli	29.13	24.69	26.67	16.97	24.87	21.38	17.98
27	Vellore	15.34	17.59	21.15	20.26	19.13	16.31	21.16
28	Villupuram	*	*	*	*	19.64	16.89	18.06
29	Virudhunagar	*	*	35.47	18.15	19.24	20.57	17.94
	Overall rate	24.43	22.29	34.06	24.72	25.44	25.57	29.86

* District not formed

An attempt has been made to relate library visits to circulation data and in-library book use with a view to obtain a general idea of the purpose with which people visit public libraries. The Tables 9 and 10 shows that consultation of books in all the libraries is higher than the circulation.

8. Library Visits Vs. Books Consulted

Table 10. Library Visits Vs. Books Consulted

S. No.	Districts	1975-76	1980-81	1985-86	1990-91	1995-96	2000-01	2004-05
1	Chennai	58.08	26.51	34.89	30.11	48.35	40.83	68.85
2	Coimbatore	29.82	20.89	11.04	19.57	250.32	263.77	372.01
3	Cuddalur	7.89	6.73	11.07	9.21	3.93	15.42	46.55
4	Dharmapuri	9.68	12.27	14.94	20.85	20.58	13.22	56.59
5	Dindugul	*	*	*	22.39	33.36	289.42	107.62
6	Erode	*	16.39	16.52	17.21	192.27	191.77	86.97
7	Kancheepuram	71.93	17.00	14.74	94.10	12.82	14.41	77.16
8	Kanyakumari	*	30.77	13.22	9.38	28.38	15.79	89.78
9	Karur	*	*	*	*	*	47.65	61.24
10	Madurai	31.52	28.04	25.00	29.02	34.65	29.27	70.29
11	Nagappatinam	*	*	*	*	*	17.45	50.80
12	Namakkal	*	*	*	*	*	22.20	78.20
13	Nilgiris	10.29	17.47	10.52	51.88	52.59	35.53	276.81
14	Perambalur	*	*	*	*	*	26.35	51.75
15	Pudukkottai	*	*	29.98	23.11	22.85	32.16	34.23
16	Ramanathapuram	16.70	17.20	14.81	14.55	24.18	31.34	50.90
17	Salem	15.63	14.03	16.52	16.29	22.42	24.64	83.72
18	Sivagangai	*	*	*	14.14	24.09	15.49	247.44
19	Thanjavur	24.99	37.62	30.75	27.02	22.09	35.02	59.70
20	Theni	*	*	*	*	*	22.35	50.92
21	Thiruvannamalai	*	*	*	5.43	13.83	12.31	35.30
22	Tiruvallur	*	*	*	*	*	14.22	20.32
23	Thiruvarur	*	*	*	*	*	17.61	33.03
24	Tuticorin	*	*	*	7.88	41.30	246.39	538.22
25	Tiruchirappalli	13.55	20.85	23.47	16.24	46.11	38.96	48.01
26	Tirunelveli	11.35	13.65	5.87	7.95	14.04	43.51	34.04
27	Vellore	29.20	19.10	28.13	31.52	32.69	40.83	72.82
28	Villupuram	*	*	*	*	17.53	11.96	29.50
29	Virudhunagar	*	*	17.26	11.98	50.74	19.97	38.80
	Overall Rate	29.12	20.31	20.51	27.21	56.93	73.86	106.49

* District not formed

9. Quantum of Books Availability per Registered Member

Table 11. Quantum of Books Availability Per Registered Member

S. No.	Districts	1975-76	1980-81	1985-86	1990-91	1995-96	2000-01	2004-05
1	Chennai	18.65	16.31	22.19	25.26	21.83	22.92	28.92
2	Coimbatore	8.2	9.99	9.12	8.49	7.67	9.36	11.81
3	Cuddalur	6.98	6.65	6.57	5.51	6.54	6.68	6.94
4	Dharmapuri	7.79	6.38	6.62	5.15	5.04	7.5	15.95
5	Dindugul	*	*	*	10.46	6.79	7.13	8.42
6	Erode	*	10.5	10.61	8.31	7.04	9.18	12.79
7	Kancheepuram	11.73	12.25	10.31	10.56	9.85	11.11	14.17
8	Kanyakumari	*	*	17.29	8.4	10.14	13.52	11.46
9	Karur	*	*	*	*	*	11.27	10.53
10	Madurai	9.03	10.63	11.05	10.97	10.72	11.31	18.75
11	Nagappatinam	*	*	*	*	*	8.4	7.6
12	Namakkal	*	*	*	*	*	5.27	13.57
13	Nilgiris	4.86	5.45	9.02	4.86	7.17	8.57	14.43
14	Perambalur	*	*	*	*	*	9.73	16.04
15	Pudukkotai	*	*	8.67	8.32	8.12	10.44	11.49
16	Ramanathapuram	5.6	7.62	7.17	5.31	4.49	8.84	14.11
17	Salem	5.28	4.18	4.79	4.22	4.45	5.13	6.91
18	Sivagangai	*	*	*	6.82	6.47	7.91	14.76
19	Thanjavur	7.24	6.92	7.25	5.8	7.01	6.48	7.48
20	Theni	*	*	*	*	*	12.51	11.4
21	Thiruvannamalai	*	*	*	5.97	5.75	6.9	7.79
22	Tiruvallur	*	*	*	*	*	11.2	9.08
23	Thiruvarur	*	*	*	*	*	7.16	7.06
24	Tuticorin	*	*	*	6.23	6.05	6.97	9.47
25	Tiruchirappalli	10.98	10.81	10.53	8.88	9.26	8.92	17.05
26	Tirunelveli	7.82	8.95	8.35	7.27	8.04	7.59	13.06
27	Vellore	7.74	7.12	7.2	5.74	5.45	5.42	6.04
28	Villupuram	*	*	*	*	7.26	7.67	8.34
29	Virudhunagar	*	*	7.42	6.58	6.65	8.53	12.53
	Overall Rate	8.71	8.74	9.33	8.47	8.12	9.22	14.86

* District not formed

The provision of books and other reading materials to the public is the major activity of any public library. The Table 11 reveals the quantum of books availability per registered member. The over all rate of books availability per registered member is in fluctuation over a period of time. It was 8.71 in 1975-76, 8.47 in 1990-91 and 14.86 in 2004-05. The urban district Chennai has recorded the highest rate of books availability when compared to other

districts. There is a difference among various districts in this regard.

10. Quantum of Book Availability per Service Unit

Table 12. Quantum of Book Availability per Service Unit

S. No.	Districts	Number of Books						
		1975-76	1980-81	1985-86	1990-91	1995-96	2000-01	2004-05
1	Chennai	7403.16	8539.51	15396.66	24076.5	25594.1	28321.4	40550.93
2	Coimbatore	4232.79	7741.79	9914.24	13367.1	18178.1	12903.42	14913.73
3	Cuddalur	1940.3	2894.5	3948.16	4812.37	7838.8	5846.75	53909.39
4	Dharmapuri	3110.03	17077.49	6256.5	7165.61	10413.6	6211.91	23664.4
5	Dindugul	*	*	*	9414.67	10851.4	7439.23	6851.14
6	Erode	*	5166.82	7374.67	8881.48	11049.1	8190.64	11464.45
7	Kancheepuram	4966.33	6957.29	8555.13	12631.69	14899.9	12382.53	15031.08
8	Kanyakumari	*	10952	4190.83	8458.44	13838.9	7546.46	5950.01
9	Karur	*	*	*	*	*	7381.85	6560.06
10	Madurai	4290.74	6315.78	8748.23	12431.93	15225.4	11785.61	19084.29
11	Nagappatinam	*	*	*	*	*	7400.52	7691.73
12	Namakkal	*	*	*	*	*	5851.3	7975.04
13	Nilgiris	2860.69	4707.06	7238.56	8276.9	11838.6	9833.03	18296.54
14	Perambalur	*	*	*	*	*	7212.68	12818.06
15	Pudukkottai	*	*	5528.25	6867.58	9990.71	8130.13	8480.63
16	Ramanathapuram	1929.66	3153.41	4397.09	5054.47	6808.43	7853.23	13966.2
17	Salem	3077.09	4707.71	7660.43	9808.49	12714.3	8895.37	7953.11
18	Sivagangai	*	*	*	5982.8	7904.17	4960.7	10950.53
19	Thanjavur	4112.2	5451.71	7020.26	7952.7	11607.2	8804.67	9347.35
20	Theni	*	*	*	*	*	10196.76	9825.1
21	Thiruvannamalai	*	*	*	7453.7	10599.5	5615.65	5589.61
22	Tiruvallur	*	*	*	*	*	11125.94	9729.81
23	Thiruvarur	*	*	*	*	*	8956.8	6228.66
24	Tuticorin	*	*	*	6360.32	9300.64	6557.44	8179.68
25	Tiruchirappalli	3295.88	4766.93	6707.37	8647.59	10918.5	9941.05	20380.88
26	Tirunelveli	3556.76	4721.02	6044.02	6758.46	9984.87	7733.48	11692.32
27	Vellore	3290.33	4443.89	5753.77	8917.15	11601.6	6517.1	6611.72
28	Villupuram	*	*	*	*	6650.33	4316.7	5408.66
29	Virudhunagar	*	*	4110.57	5023.39	6745.46	6376.38	9702.13
Average Rate		3785.44	5616.96 48.38%	7495.22 33.43%	10010.57 33.56%	12711.4 26.98%	9275.53 -27.02%	13910.29 49.97%

* District not formed

The quantum of books available per service unit is shown in Table 12, which reveals variation over a period of time. The average rate of books availability per service unit is in

increasing trend, except in 2000-2001. The reason being in that particular year, more number of service units were established(2883), where as it was 1567 in 1995-96(Table 7).

11. Books Availability per Capita

The quantum of books available per capita is shown in Table 13, which reveals that variation over a period of time. The average rate of book availability per capita is in decreasing trend, i.e. 5.92 in 1981, 3.58 in 1991 and 2.32 in 2001.

Table 13. Books Availability per Capita

S. No.	Districts	Number of Books		
		1980-81	1990-91	2000-01
1	Chennai	3.37	1.17	0.99
2	Coimbatore	3.99	2.50	1.52
3	Cuddalur	12.85	8.74	3.82
4	Dharmapuri	3.34	8.27	3.59
5	Dindugul	*	3.60	2.66
6	Erode	4.09	2.75	1.67
7	Kancheepuram	4.44	3.04	2.27
8	Kanyakumari	29.97	21.02	5.67
9	Karur	*	*	2.69
10	Madurai	4.55	2.46	1.94
11	Nagappatinam	*	*	3.09
12	Namakkal	*	*	2.43
13	Nilgiris	3.72	2.09	1.01
14	Perambalur	*	*	3.72
15	Pudukkotai	*	6.23	3.25
16	Ramanathapuram	5.98	4.82	2.12
17	Salem	9.14	4.37	3.36
18	Sivagangai	*	3.92	2.23
19	Thanjavur	6.97	5.38	3.48
20	Theni	*	*	1.12
21	Thiruvannamalai	*	7.41	4.05
22	Tiruvallur	*	*	2.46
23	Thiruvarur	*	*	3.25
24	Tuticorin	*	0.00	2.84
25	Tiruchirappalli	7.08	4.98	2.90
26	Tirunelveli	6.06	4.07	2.57
27	Vellore	11.29	6.17	4.35
28	Villupuram	*	*	6.04
29	Virudhunagar	*	3.71	2.07
Average Rate		5.92	3.58	2.32

* District not formed

IV. SUGGESTIONS

In view of the findings and observations made in the foregoing sections, a few suggestions are put forward for the development of the Public Library System in India in general and Tamil Nadu state in particular.

1. Establishment of Public Technical Libraries(PTL)

Though the Public Library System in Tamil Nadu is providing services to the cross section of the society at large with its limited scope, yet the needs of medium and small-scale industries are not thoroughly met by the existing system. It may be pointed out that, small and medium scale industries contribute 30% to 50% of the Gross National Product(GNP). In this connection, it is appropriate to mention that the Government of Karnataka, has established Public Technical Libraries at the industrial estates as a part of public library system. The Tamil Nadu State Technical Information Centre, at Guindy Industrial Estate, Chennai is functioning on sound lines. The experiences of these information centres may be utilised for the development of industrial growth by establishing public technical libraries at industrial areas in the state.

2. Establishment of Rural Information Centres(RIC)

In view of the information support for rural areas it is suggested to establish RIC at Taluk level, which will focus information on various aspects relevant to the public at large such as Agricultural trade and marketing; alternative farming system; aquaculture; horticulture etc. These are in focus on greater interest to the public will be provided with basic communication facilities and technical information specialist will operate the proposed RIC. These RICs would play a potential role in providing information to aid rural areas and assist the government for implementing rural information programmes.

3. Establishment of Public Information KISOKS

In view of successful functioning of "Public Information KISOKS" in Andhra Pradesh,

Pondicherry (Currently known as Puducherry) and Maharashtra States which function as Information Centre and Communication Centre, it is suggested to establish such kiosks and may be attached to District Central Libraries. The experiences of those states may be considered while planning in Tamil Nadu.⁶⁾

4. Establishment of Children Libraries:

In view of proverb "Today Children's are tomorrow citizens" and to see that the future generation of children shall learn to behave, equip manners and etiquette and respect for each other's beliefs and religions, children library should open that would pave the way for their well-being. The school libraries and children libraries should work co-operatively on building the programmes for children education and personality development. Efforts should be made to appoint qualified staff to work with the children. It is necessary to do more study and research and to think about the future programmes to meet their needs, which include specialised service to young people on a large scale.

5. Development of Rural Information Services

It is estimated that the existing Public Library System in Tamil Nadu has covered 1/3 rd of population. Yet the library service is to reach about 9000 villages. There is a wide gap between the urban and rural library services. While the urban library service has achieved a comparatively remarkable progress covering 96% of the literate population, the rural library service could cover only 32% of the population. The authorities should give a priority for the adequate provision of information for rural development. As a part of rural library services, CIS may be extended in all the rural libraries.

There is an immediate need for the public library system in Tamil Nadu to consider community based planning process to identify and provide for library and information service. It is worthwhile to attempt a close examination of the effectiveness of legislation based public library service. It might be a useful idea to consider the need for allocating

6) B. Ramesh Babu. *Towards Better Public Library Service in Andhra Pradesh: A Proposal*. In: *Public Libraries at crossroads: 36th Andhra Pradesh Library Conference Proceedings* (Vijayawada: Andhra Pradesh Library Association, 1992), Paper no.7

a certain proportion of the education budget for providing public library service. This is all the more necessary in view of the current thinking that a public library should serve as a community information center, and the increasing responsibility of the public library in meeting the needs of the student rolled in the distant education programmes in particular, adult learners, neo-literates, etc.,

The public library system should adopt a well-defined policy in respect of opening new service units. Such a policy should be formulated taking into consideration the size of the population, physical area, and international norms in this regard.

6. Community Information Service(CIS)

CIS is a service that assists individuals and groups with day to day problem solving and with participation in the democratic process. It is an assistance to those in lower socio-economic groups to act individually or collectively on their problems in the fields of housing, employment, family matters and personal issues, education, welfare rights etc., Such services are very much expected from the public libraries in the modern days. Since the present setup of Public Library System has not gone beyond the provision of traditional services. It is imperative that the public libraries in Tamil Nadu to spread a message and encourage the community about the availability of CIS within the scope of their functioning. Career Guidance Information Centres can also be set up as a separate wing in District Central Libraries in the State. Of course, this may be an additional burden on the Directorate of Public Libraries, yet, in view of the possible benefits this may be thought of.

7. Revision of Tamil Nadu Public Libraries Act

The Tamil Nadu Public Libraries Act has not been revised since its implementation. It is already five decades ever since the enactment of the Act, 1948; the Act has not been revised so far except a few amendments incorporated. Only in 1997, the Government of Tamil Nadu has appointed Tamil Nadu Public Libraries Act Amendment Committee headed by Thiru V.N. Sivagnanam and the committee submitted its report. It is learnt that the Committee's recommendations are under active consideration of the Government. There is urgent need to revise the Tamil Nadu Public Library Act by constituting a review

committee. Such a committee may be entrusted with the tasks to study the other Library Acts and the Model Public Library Act proposed by Dr. Velga Venkatappaiah for the improvement of the present system.⁷⁾

8. Role of Raja Rammohun Roy Library Foundation(RRRLF)

The prime objective of RRRLF is to promote public library services in the country. The Directorate of Public Libraries of Tamil Nadu can approach RRRLF with a feasible and functional plan to develop Circle Libraries in Chennai.⁸⁾

The recent experiences of Andhra Pradesh where a few public libraries have been automated and Information Technology has been applied to provide effective library services at the rural level with the help of RRRLF are effective and encouraging.

9. Application of Information Technology

The application of information Technology has a greater potential and impact in the services of public libraries in the state. The existing system has to be strengthened and revitalised with the new innovations in the field of information technology. The introduction of computers and automation of library operations, the use of electronic media gadgets, better reprographic and forming consortia,⁹⁾

etc, would pave the way for a functional and sound public library system in Tamil Nadu.

V. CONCLUSION

The legislation based public library service has been in existence in Tamil Nadu for nearly six decades. The growth and expansion of the public library system during the last

7) V. Venkatappaiah. *Model Library Legislation* (New Delhi: Concept Publishing Company, 1994).

8) B. Ramesh Babu. *Role of Circle Libraries in the Information Age*. In: *National Seminar on New Public Library in the Information Age, 12-13 June 2003*, edited by B. Ramesh Babu, A. Vijay Kiran and S. Gopalakrishnan, Chennai: Foundation for Information and Communication, 2003, pp.18-25.

9) B. Ramesh Babu and S. K. Asok Kumar, *Public Library Consortia in India In: Library Consortia: Seminar Papers and Proceedings, National Seminar on Library Consortia 22-23 March 2004* edited by N Laxman Rao, et al Hyderabad: IATLIS. 2004, pp.259-266.

six decades reveals a spectacular development is an essential input in the future planning of public library services not only in the state of Tamil Nadu, but also in other states, and it has become all the more relevant in view of the changing situation. To mention a few major changes that has taken place in the recent past are:

- Increasing adoption of Information and Communication Technology for storage and dissemination of information.
- Introduction of Right to Information Bill emphasised in equipping the Public Libraries.

Reorganisation of public library services in Tamil Nadu on the lines suggested above will certainly go a long way in making the public library an important centre for education, information, recreation and research. The standards for public libraries available both at national and international level make abundantly, clear the role of public libraries in the life of the community. It is emphasised that the state of Tamil Nadu needs a restructuring of libraries and their development at all levels. To achieve this, the government should take up the task of revitalisation and coordination of existing public library system in the state on one hand and the creation of Network of Public Libraries on the other hand.