

A STUDY ON UTILISATION OF PUBLIC LIBRARIES AND ITS CORRELATES

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Abstract

The aim of this paper is to analyse the correlates of public library use in Madurai district. The study also analyses the preference of books of public library users. The study consists of 30 respondents from Madurai district of Tamil Nadu. The respondents were selected randomly and interviewed with a semi-structured interview schedule. The correlates of library use such as age, gender, educational qualification, and employment are analysed. The study found that the gender, age, educational qualification and employment are largely influencing the use of public libraries.

Keywords: Public libraries, Reading habit, Socio-economic correlates, Preferences.

Introduction

A public library is an association set up, upheld and financed by the people, either through local, provincial or public government or through some other type of local area association. It gives admittance to information, data, deep rooted learning, and works of the creative mind through a scope of assets and benefits and is similarly accessible to all individuals from the local area paying little heed to race, identity, age, sex, religion, language, handicap, monetary and business status and instructive fulfillment. The main role of the public library is to give assets and administrations in an assortment of media to address the issues of people and gatherings for training, data and self-awareness including entertainment and recreation. They have a significant job in the turn of events and support of a popularity-based society by giving the individual admittance to a wide and changed scope of information, thoughts and suppositions.

The estimation of public libraries is, in one way, subject to how well they play out their job, as such, how well open library administrations address the issues of their networks and what they and the mean for they make are esteemed by the residents and the networks they serve. The reason for public libraries is still to additional vote-based system, equity and social equity, increment admittance to data, scatter culture and information, add to a significant and educational relaxation time, and go about as a mutual organization and a social gathering place. To satisfy this reason today, notwithstanding, there is a need to rethink the public libraries' job by focusing on the

difficulties of the advanced society (Svanhild Aabø, 2005). This study intends to analyse the factors that influence the library use.

Objectives of the Study

1. To study the correlated factors for library use among people.
2. To identify the preference of resources in the library.

Methodology

The study largely based on primary data which were collected from 30 public library users in Madurai district of Tamil Nadu. The respondents were selected randomly and interviewed with a semi-structured interview schedule. The major variables that influence the library use are identified as age, gender, educational qualification and occupation. The simple percentage and graphical methods are used to analyse and represent the data.

Results and Discussions

Gender is an important variable in a given India social situation which is variably respected by any social or economic phenomenon. Today, gender gap in education has been reducing through the promotion of female education. Table 1 shows the gender of the respondents.

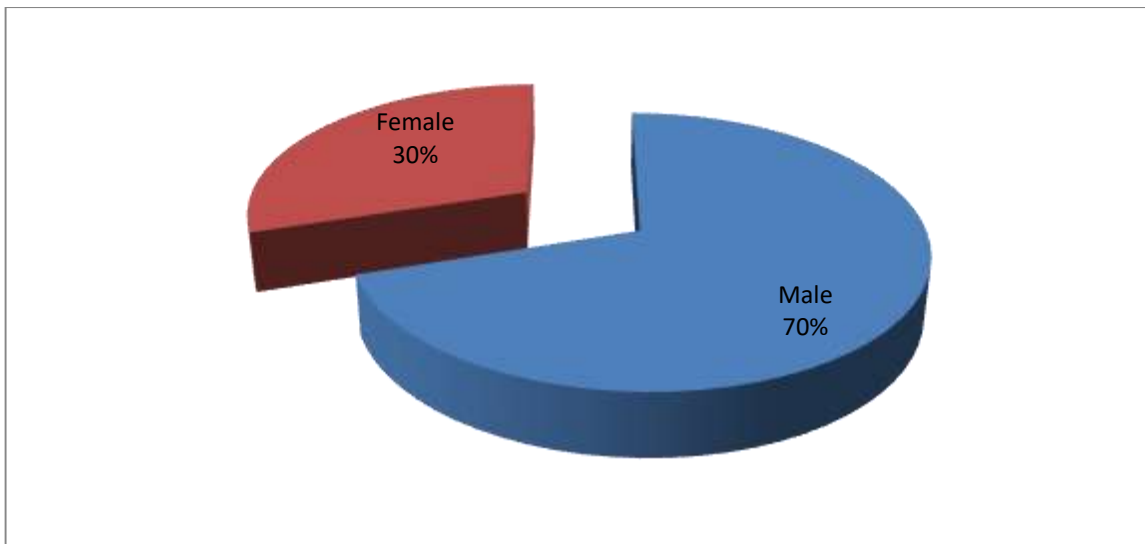
Table 1 Gender of the respondents

Gender	No of the Respondents	Percentage
Male	21	70.0
Female	9	30.0
Total	30	100.0

Source: Primary data.

It is evident that 70.0 per cent of the respondents are male while 30.0 per cent of the respondents are female in the study. The majority of the library users are male. Thus, it is to say that gender is an important factor that influences the library use.

Figure 1: Gender of the respondents



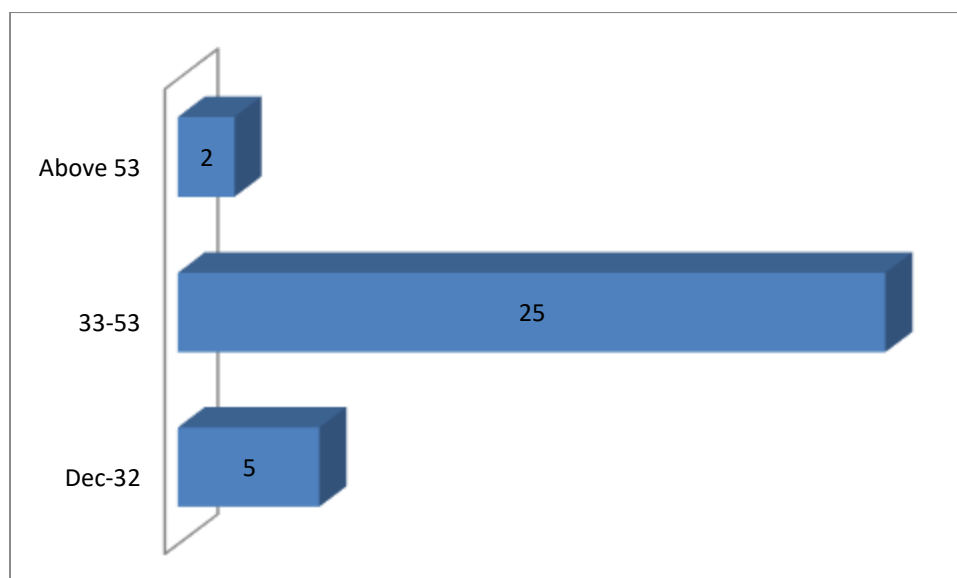
Age is another influential factor of library use. The researcher has made an attempt to analyse the sample respondents' age to know the influence of age on library use. The result is presented in the table 2.

Table: 2 Age of the respondents

Age of the respondents	No of the respondents	Percentage
12-32	5	6.7
33-53	25	83.3
Above 53	2	10.0
Total	30	100.0

Source: Primary data

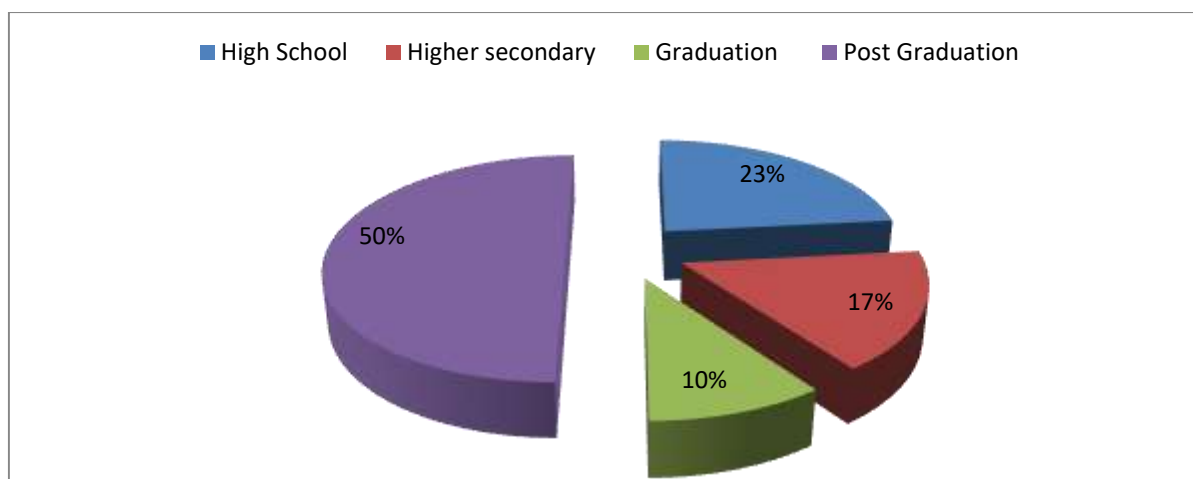
It is inferred from the table 2 that about 8 per cent of the respondents are in the age group of 12-32 years, the majority of the respondents (83.3 per cent) are in the age of 33-53 years and 10.0 per cent are above 53 years. The percentage of aged respondents using public library (above 60) found to be very less.

Figure 2: Age of the respondents**Table 3: Education qualification of the respondents**

Educational qualification	No of the respondents	Percentage
High School	7	23.3
Higher secondary	5	16.7
Graduation	3	10.0
Post Graduation	15	50.0
Total	30	100

Source: Primary data

Table 3 reveals that about half of the respondents are post-graduates, 23.3 per cent are studied upto high secondary level, 16.7 per cent studied upto higher secondary level and remaining 10 per cent studied post-graduation. It is found that more than half of the respondents have higher educational attainments. Therefore, it is to say that educational qualification is an important factor that influencing the library use.

Figure 3: Education qualification of the respondents**Table 4: Employment of the respondents**

Employment of the respondents	No of respondents	Percentage
Government employee	11	36.7
Private employee	16	53.3
Manual labour	3	10.0
Total	30	100.0

Source: Primary data

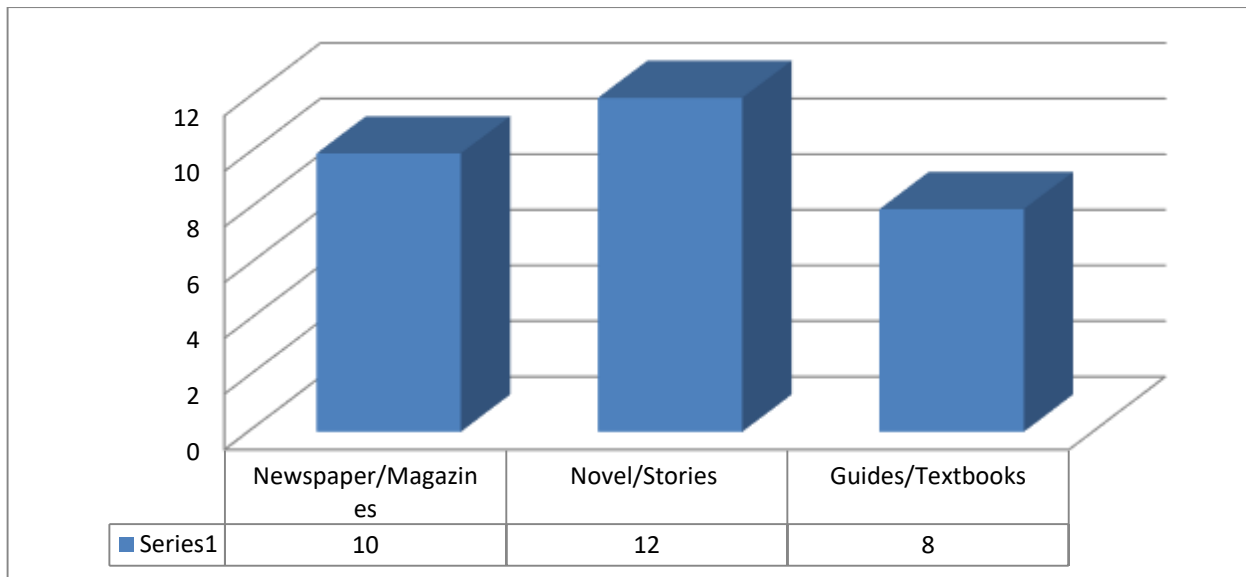
Table 4 reveals that more than half of the respondents are employed in government sector, 36.7 per cent are employed in private sector and 3.0 per cent of the respondents are manual labours. The majority of the library users are employed in private sector.

Table 5: Preference of library books/resources

Preference	No of respondents	Percentage
Newspaper/Magazines	10	33.3
Novel/Stories	12	40.0
Guides/Textbooks	8	26.7
Total	30	100.0

Source: Primary data

The large numbers of the respondents prefer to read novels/stories, 33.3 percent prefer newspaper/magazines and rest 26.7 percent prefer guides/textbooks from the library.

Figure 4: Preference of library books/resources

Conclusion

A library isn't a structure stacked with books – it is a vault and wellspring of data and thoughts, a spot for learning and enquiry, and for the age of thought and the formation of new information. Public libraries specifically can possibly overcome any barrier between the 'data poor' and the 'data rich' by guaranteeing that individuals from all areas and settings of society and the economy across India have simple admittance to information they look for. The investigation accentuates that the job of the library in the public arena is hampered, in any case, by the way that the libraries are very few and little. In this manner, characterizing the job by the individuals who utilize the library, overlooks the way that a great many people don't live close enough to a library to have the option to utilize what it might offer. The improving assets and adoption of ICT are the fitting method to upgrading the exhibition of public libraries in the state.

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