

User Awareness Program in the Rural Libraries of Dibrugarh and Sivasagar: A Study

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Abstract

The aim of the study is to find out the user awareness programs that are being organized by the rural libraries of the selected districts of Assam. The result shows that the rural libraries are in the miniature stage regarding user awareness program due to the poor financial condition.

Keywords: Library Service, User Awareness Program, Rural library

Introduction

Library and Information Centers play a pivotal role in the furnishing of data and information that breeds to knowledge. The knowledge when processed and heightened, redefine itself as wisdom. This propagation aids a person to be wise and thus imbue the knowledge to the society where (s) hedwells in. Users' awareness about the services provided by the library is essential for effective use of its collection of resources. Regular users of library know the role and resourcefulness of the libraries and its services and how to exploit the resources of the library. The library professional or library staff may take up the creation of awareness among the users. The library professional may attract the people to the library and appraise them about the role and services of the library. Once users have made aware of the library as a prime source of information then they must be oriented by library facilities.

Objectives of the Study

The main objectives of this study can be stated as follows-

- i. To know the status of user registered in the selected rural libraries
- ii. To know the various awareness programs conducted by the rural libraries
- iii. To understand the cause and identify the basic problems that hindering the rural libraries for organizing the awareness programs.

Methodology

The study is conducted in the two districts of Assam namely Dibrugarh and Sivasagar. Six rural libraries from each district were selected randomly for the study. The study is descriptive in nature which is based on the data collected by survey. Keeping in view of

the objective of the study a structured questionnaire has been prepared which is the main instrument of the data collection. To prove the accuracy of the collected data simple statistical techniques have been used.

Scope and Coverage of the study

The scope of the current study covers only the following rural libraries of the Dibrugarh and Sivasagar districts of Assam:

- i.** Lepetkata Arunudoy Sangha & Library,(LASL),Dibrugarh
- ii.** Naba jivan Kendra & Library,(NJKL),Dibrugarh
- iii.** Pradeep Sangha & Library,(PSL),Dibrugarh
- iv.** Puberun Samuhik Kendra & Library,(PSKL),Dibrugarh
- v.** Tarun Sangha & Library,(TSL),Dibrugarh
- vi.** Young Blue Club & Library ,(YBCL),Dibrugarh
- vii.** Borbam Navajyoti Library, (BNL),Sivasagar
- viii.** Dhundormukh Yuvok Sangha & Library,(DYSL),Sivasagar
- ix.** Gyanudoy Library,(GL),Sivasagar
- x.** Lakhimi Rural Library, (LRL),Sivasagar
- xi.** Palengi Samaj Kalyan Ranghar & Library,(PSKRL)Sivasagar
- xii.** Surujmukhi Rural Library,(SRL),Sivasagar

Review of Literature

Vavrek (1995) studies the various factors that affect rural and small libraries to effectively providing information services towards the users in USA. Handique (2012) studies on the importance of rural libraries in the holistic development of rural women in Assam. Gogoi (2013) in her study stress on the improvement of funds for smooth functioning of the rural libraries of Assam. Sultana (2014) in her study states that information poverty is the main reason of the underdevelopment of the rural masses. Ayub (2015) in his study describe that lack of adaptability in latest technology hampers rural libraries to provide information services effectively. Nwokocha and Chimah (2016) studies the role of public libraries on community development, especially they emphasized on sustainable rural development.

Analysis and Findings

Table 1: Total Number of registered users of the rural Libraries

S.N	Name of the Library	Types of users						$\sum f_i$
		Student	Teacher	Resear cher	Senior citizen	House wives	Other	
i	LASL	60	10	0	15	17	50	126
ii	NJKL	67	10	2	15	12	27	133
iii	PSL	100	20	0	30	20	70	240
iv	PSKL	50	4	0	12	7	30	130
v	TSL	70	6	0	10	7	30	123
vi	YBCL	55	4	0	20	7	23	109
vii	BNL	100	5	2	13	15	30	165
viii	DYSL	90	2	0	25	12	40	169
ix	GL	50	5	0	12	6	10	71
x	LRL	105	20	0	40	12	40	217
xi	PSKRL	69	10	0	10	12	35	136
xii	SRL	710	12	0	20	25	2	769
All the libraries		1526	108	4	222	152	387	$\sum f_{ixi}=2388$
PERCENTAGE		63.90%	4.52%	0.16%	9.29%	6.36%	16.20%	

(Source: Survey Data)

Users: The above table reveals that majority of the users of the selected libraries are students. Whereas, others (layman etc.) consist of the second largest user group followed by senior citizen. House wives are the third largest registered users followed by Teacher and Researcher.

Table 2: Different types of awareness programs conducted by surveyed Public Libraries

SL. NO.	Name of the Library	Library Awareness Programme	Health Awareness Programme	Awareness program on Environment	Awareness programme on Govt. Information	Awareness programme on culture
i	LASL	N	Y	Y	Y	N
ii	NJKL	Y	N	N	N	N
iii	PSL	Y	Y	N	Y	Y
iv	PSKL	N	N	Y	N	N
v	TSL	N	Y	Y	N	Y
vi	YBCL	N	N	N	N	Y
vii	BNL	N	Y	Y	Y	N
viii	DYSL	N	N	Y	N	N
ix	GL	N	N	Y	N	N
x	LRL	N	N	Y	N	N
xi	PSKRL	N	Y	Y	Y	N
xii	SRL	N	N	N	N	N

(Source: Survey Data) (Y=YES & N=NO)

Awareness Program: From the above table it can be said that rural libraries organize minimum number of awareness program for the users. It is seen that rural libraries organize different awareness program on various topics like health, environment, cultural etc.

Table 3:Challenges in organizing user awareness program in the selected rural libraries

Challenges: There are certain challenges that the librarians of rural libraries are currently facing off. Various factors like lack of finance, lack of trained personnel etc. hamper the librarians to conduct the user awareness programs. Among these problems all the respondents marked financial need as the top priority for organizing modern ICT enabled awareness program, which as tabulated below:

Level of priority	0-1	1-2	2-3	3-4	4-5
No. of librarians	0	0	0	5	7

In the above frequency distribution table, it is found that the modal class is 4-5 with a maximum frequency of 7.

Therefore the mode is,

$$\Rightarrow Mo = 3 + \{(7-5) \div (2 \times 7 - 5 - 0)\} \times 1 = 3.2$$

Conclusion and Recommendation

There is an urgent need for library legislation in Assam to ensure effective financial support to rural & public libraries, so that they can serve people properly. Rural libraries may organize user awareness program to create awareness among the rural masses. Information Communication Technologies (ICT) should be applied to give modern services like, CAS, SDI, and User awareness programs.

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