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# USE OF INTERNET FACILITY BY THE USERS OF DISTRICT CENTRAL LIBRARIES IN RAYALASEEMA REGION OF A.P., INDIA- A STUDY.

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## ABSTRACT

*Abraham Lincoln's proverbial remark concerning the definition and meaning of democracy, is equally applicable in the context of public library-it is an institution 'for the people, by the people and of the people. The District Central Libraries are an important component of the public library system in Andhra Pradesh (A.P). Being located in the district headquarters they stand as models to be emulated by other public libraries in the districts. In this era of information technology, people are quick to gather information using the internet. Therefore, there is a need to study the internet facilities of the District Central Libraries in Rayalaseema Region of Andhra Pradesh state. Because of the importance of the subject matter, the article is titled as, "Use of Internet facility by the users of District Central Libraries in Rayalaseema Region of A.P.,India-A Study." The target group of this study includes library users of the central libraries in the 4 districts in Rayalaseema Region of A.P. The respondents selected as samples suggested that many aspects of the library environment are changing due to the improved technology. Data were collected by using questionnaire from 4 District Central Libraries in Rayalaseema Region of A.P. A structured questionnaire was distributed among 612 users, of whom 525 (85.78%) responded. Based on the analysis of the data collected through a structured questionnaire, inferences have been made.*

**Keywords:** Public library, District Central Libraries, Internet, Rayalaseema Region, Study.

## INTRODUCTION

Library is a community organization existing with the most desirable meaning of providing information to the unaware and the knowledgeable alike. The major purpose of a library is the gathering and conservation of knowledge for its distribution to all. Its preservation for posterity is also a significant responsibility of a library. Library plays a predominant role in the modern social system and has become an integral part and indispensable agency for imparting knowledge to the society. It makes available full and free use of books and other graphic

materials; disseminates information and promotes a maximum use of them. Service is the chief motto of libraries. Library service as an investment in human resources plays an important role among the factors which contribute to the economic growth.

## **1.PURPOSE OF THE PUBLIC LIBRARY**

The primary purposes of the public library are to provide resources and services in a variety of media to meet the needs of individuals and groups for education, information and personal development including recreation and leisure. They have an important role in the development and maintenance of a democratic society by giving the individual access to a wide and varied range of knowledge, ideas and opinions.

### **1.1 Education**

*‘Supporting both individual and self conducted education as well as formal education at all levels’.*

The need for an agency available to all, which provides access to knowledge in printed and other formats to support formal and informal education, has been the reason for the foundation and maintenance of most public libraries and remains a core purpose for the public library. Throughout their lives people require education either at formal institutions like schools, colleges and universities, or in a less formal context related to their employment and daily life. Learning does not end with the completion of formal education but is, for most people, a lifelong activity. In an increasingly complex society, people will need to acquire new skills at various stages of their life. The public library has an important role in assisting this process.

### **1.2 Information**

*‘The public library is the local centre of information making all kinds of knowledge and information readily available to its users’.*

It is a basic human right to be able to have access to and an understanding of information, and there is now more information available than ever before in the world’s history. As a public service open to all, the public library has a key role in collecting, organizing and exploiting information, as well as providing access to a wide range of information sources. The public library has a particular responsibility to collect local information and make it readily available. It also acts as a memory of the past by collecting, conserving and providing access to material relating to the history of the community and of individuals. In providing a wide range of information the public library assists the community in informed debate and decision-making on key issues. In collecting and providing information, the public library should, wherever possible, co-operate with other agencies to make the best use of available resources.

The rapid growth in the volume of available information and the continuing technological changes, which have radically affected the way information is accessed, have already made a significant effect on public libraries and their services. Information is very important to the development of the individual and of society, and information technology gives considerable power to those who are able to access and use it. Despite its rapid growth it is not available to the majority of the world's population, and the gap between the information rich and the information poor continues to widen. A vital role for the public library is to bridge that gap by providing public access to the Internet as well as providing information in traditional formats. Public libraries should recognize and exploit the opportunities provided by the exciting developments in information and communications technology. They have the opportunity to become the electronic gateway to the information world.

### **1.3 Personal development**

*'Providing opportunities for personal creative development'.*

The opportunity to develop personal creativity and pursue new interests is important to human development. To achieve this, people need access to knowledge and works of the imagination. The public library can provide access, in a variety of different media, to a rich and varied store of knowledge and creative achievement, which individuals cannot acquire on their own. Providing access to major collections of the world's literature and knowledge, including the community's own literature, has been a unique contribution of the public library and is still its vitally important function. Access to works of the imagination and knowledge is an important contribution to personal education and meaningful recreational activity.

The public library can also make a fundamental contribution to daily survival and social and economic development by being directly involved in providing information to people in developing communities; for example, basic life skills, adult basic education and AIDS awareness programmes. In communities with a high illiteracy rate the public library should provide services for non-literates and interpret and translate information wherever necessary. It should also provide basic user education.

### **1.4 Children and young people**

*'Creating and strengthening reading habits in children from an early age'.*

The public library should attempt to meet the needs of all groups in the community regardless of age and physical, economic or social circumstances. However, it has a special responsibility to meet the needs of children and young people. If children can be inspired by the excitement of knowledge and by works of the imagination at an early age, they are likely to benefit from these vital elements of personal development throughout their lives, both enriching

them and enhancing their contribution to society. Children can also encourage parents and other adults to make use of the library.

### **1.5 Public libraries and cultural development**

An important role of the public library is providing a focus for cultural and artistic development in the community and helping to shape and support the cultural identity of the community. This can be achieved by working in partnership with appropriate local and regional organizations, by providing space for cultural activity, organizing cultural programmes and by ensuring that cultural interests are represented in the library's materials. The library's contribution should reflect the variety of cultures represented in the community. It should provide materials in the languages spoken and read in the local community and support cultural traditions.

## **2. NEED AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY**

In this age of information technology, people are gathering information very quickly using the internet. Traditional libraries have been transformed into digital libraries. All functions and automated libraries for quick retrieval. In fact, the library professionals are expected to follow Dr.S.R.RANGANATHAN'S fourth law of library science ie, "save the time of the reader". Hence, the need has arisen to study about internet facilities in the District Central Libraries in Rayalaseema Region of A.P.

### **3. SCOPE OF THE STUDY**

The target group of this study includes library users of the 4 District Central Libraries in Rayalaseema Region of Andhra Pradesh State. The details of four District Central Libraries are:

1. District Central Library, Ananthapuramu (ATP)
2. District Central Library, Chittoor (CTR)
3. District Central Library, Kurnool (KNL)
4. District Central Library, Kadapa (KDP)

### **4.SAMPLING TECHNIQUE USED**

For the present study convenient random sampling method was followed. The investigator distributed 612 questionnaires and received responses from 525 respondents (85.78%).

### **5.OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY**

It is widely acknowledged that public libraries are established on democratic principle and are well versed to the community being an agent of information in the knowledge society.

Any kind of public libraries, big or small, have to ascertain some guiding principles to serve the community and to provide best information services. District Central Libraries in Rayalaseema Region falling under the category of public libraries, have also been serving the society for the past more than sixty five years. By acknowledging this kind of services undertaken by public libraries, the present study has formulated the following objectives:

1. To know the opinion on availability and usefulness of internet facility in the District Central Libraries.
2. To identify the reasons for dissatisfaction with the internet facility in the libraries.
3. To identify the reasons mentioned for obtaining information from the internet by the users in the libraries.
4. To know the opinion on need for special training in using the internet by the users in the libraries.

## 6. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

**Buragohain (2017)** written about the status of public libraries in some districts of Assam, namely, Dibrugarh, Golghat, Jorhat and Shivsagar District. In his study the author stated that Assam's public libraries were not fully automated. Due to lack of effective IT infrastructure and insufficient library staff. So that public libraries cannot satisfy their customers.

**Brown and Menemy (2013)** studied the implementation of internet filtering in Scottish public libraries. A total of 31 of the 32 public library services operating within the 32 Scottish local authorities utilized some form of filtering software to control internet access. The main justifications cited for this were to prevent access to illegal or inappropriate materials; however it was found that in majority of the cases, the decision to implement the software was not made by the management of the library but by external IT staff. This raises major issues related to the historical role of the librarian as selector of content for their community.

**Hartwig (2013)** discussed the management of internet access in the public library. The article stressed how important professional access management is, addressed practical and ethical challenges and dilemmas with regard to managing access, highlighted management strategies and emphasized the librarian's enduring ethical principles in the "internet age". First, there is not necessarily a difference between managing internet access and traditional stock selection. Second, managing internet access must not be understood as synonymous with limiting the information that is accessible through it. Third, the librarian must be aware of the risks that filters and other "technological fixes" pose to the library and the librarian's principles. Fourth, a number

of strategies exist which protect these principles and allow information literacy and user independence to develop.

**Thanuskodi (2012)** carried out a study to evaluate the effectiveness of District Central Libraries in Tamil Nadu State, India with the help of questionnaire. It is found that the major users of the public libraries were youth and adults; who visited library on daily basis for the purpose of borrowing books. Public libraries are found to be lagging behind, particularly, in providing user specific information.

**Thomas (2001)** mentioned that the application status of IT in the Public Library field in India, their future plans and issues have been studied and they are facing in the process. The study found that 8% of computerized libraries are two state central libraries, two district libraries and a voluntary organization library. Updating databases and optimizing is one of the most important issues facing the library entries.

**Garnsey (2000)** showed that more and more libraries are offering electronic mail reference services; little information about these services has been reported. The author conducted an exploratory survey to examine public library e-mail reference services and the patrons who use them. Data collection techniques included a questionnaire mailed to participating libraries and a Web based questionnaire completed by library patrons. The data gathered included: (1) information on the provision and administration of e-mail reference services provided by public libraries across the United States; (2) characteristics of public library e-mail reference patrons and their satisfaction with the service they received; and (3) classification of e-mail reference questions received by public libraries. Characteristics of the e-mail reference services varied considerably, but the patrons, citing ease and convenience as the major reasons for using such services, were mostly satisfied with what they received.

**Raju (1999)** presented a picture of the development of public libraries and the impact of electronic revolution. The author discussed the evolution of information technology, computer-based message systems, application of information technology in libraries and the impact of communication technologies. The author described the social mission of public libraries, needs of common man and their expectations from public libraries. The author also examined the public library system in India with particular reference to Andhra Pradesh and Maharashtra. Projects automation, networking of public libraries and interconnection of mandal libraries through telecommunications accessibility in rural India and the need of adequate funds for this development.

## 7. DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

The present study was conducted on the “*Use of Internet facility by the users of District Central Libraries in Rayalaseema Region of A.P., India-A Study*”. The collected data are organized and tabulated by using statistical methods, tables and percentages.

**Table-1 Classification of respondents-gender wise**

S.No	District Central Library (DCL)	Male	Female	Total
1	ATP	118 (90.76)	12 (9.23)	<b>130 (100)</b>
2	CTR	106 (88.33)	14 (11.66)	<b>120 (100)</b>
3	KNL	118 (87.40)	17 (12.59)	<b>135 (100)</b>
4	KDP	129 (92.14)	11 (7.87)	<b>140 (100)</b>
	<b>Total</b>	<b>471 (89.71)</b>	<b>59 (11.23)</b>	<b>525 (100)</b>

**Note:** Figures in parentheses indicate percentages

Table-1 was analyzed in respect of library users by gender and it was revealed that, there are more male members than female. The male users are up to 92.14% in DCL, Kadapa and least 87.40% in DCL, Kurnool. In the case of female, the highest percentage 12.59% was in District Central Library, Kurnool and only 7.87% in District Central Library, Kadapa.

**Table-2 Classification of respondents-occupation wise**

S.No	DCL	Students	Employees	Un-employed	Others	Total
1	ATP	16 (12.30)	30 (23.07)	46 (35.38)	38 (29.23)	130 (100)
2	CTR	17 (14.16)	31 (25.83)	47 (39.16)	25 (20.83)	120 (100)
3	KNL	25 (18.51)	34 (25.18)	40 (29.62)	26 (19.25)	135 (100)
4	KDP	24 (17.14)	27 (19.28)	42 (30.00)	47 (33.57)	140 (100)
	<b>Total</b>	<b>82 (15.61)</b>	<b>122 (23.23)</b>	<b>175 (33.33)</b>	<b>136 (25.90)</b>	<b>525 (100)</b>

**Note:** Figures in parentheses indicate percentages

District Central Libraries fall under the public library, which are established for all categories of the society. Occupation of a society cannot be the same since they are engaged on different works and the society is always a composition of heterogeneous groups. Therefore, data



has been analyzed on the basis of occupation, which is divided into four categories, viz., Students, Employees, Un-employed and Others.

Table-2 explains that by occupation, out of the 525 respondents, 33.33% are un-employed, 25.90% belonging to others followed by 23.33% are employees and 15.61% are students.

**Table-3 Classification of respondents-location wise**

S.No	Location	District Central Library				Total
		ATP	CTR	KNL	KDP	
1	Urban	73 (56.15)	66 (55.00)	70 (51.85)	86 (61.42)	295 (56.19)
2	Rural	57 (43.84)	54 (45.00)	65 (48.14)	54 (38.57)	230 (43.80)
	<b>Total</b>	<b>130</b> <b>(100)</b>	<b>120</b> <b>(100)</b>	<b>135</b> <b>(100)</b>	<b>140</b> <b>(100)</b>	<b>525</b> <b>(100)</b>

**Note:** Figures in parentheses indicate percentages

Table-3 depicts the user's geographical background. It reveals that 295 (56.19%) respondents belong to urban area; whereas 230 (43.80%) respondents belong to rural area.

**Table-4 Internet facility available in the library**

Opinion	ATP	CTR	KNL	KDP	Total
Yes	123 (94.61)	111 (92.50)	121 (89.62)	125 (89.28)	480 (91.42)
No	7 (5.38)	9 (7.50)	14 (10.37)	15 (10.71)	45 (8.57)
<b>Total</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>525</b>
<b>D.F</b>	<b>3</b>				
$\chi^2$	<b>3.2383</b>				
<b>P-value</b>	<b>0.3563 (p&gt;0.05 No significance)</b>				

**Note:** Figures in parentheses indicate percentages

It is obvious from Table-4 that most of the respondents of ATP (94.61%) mentioned that their library is providing internet facility in the library, followed by CTR (92.50%), KNL (89.62%) and KDP (89.28%) respondents in this regard.

There is no significant difference between the respondents with regard to internet facility availability in their libraries. It is also evident from chi-square test of significance.

**Table-5 Usefulness of Internet facility in the library**

<b>Opinion</b>	<b>ATP</b>	<b>CTR</b>	<b>KNL</b>	<b>KDP</b>	<b>Total</b>
Yes	121 (98.37)	106 (95.49)	114 (94.21)	116 (92.80)	457 (95.20)
No	2 (1.62)	5 (4.50)	7 (5.78)	9 (7.20)	23 (4.79)
<b>Total</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>480</b>
<b>D.F</b>	<b>3</b>				
$\chi^2$	<b>4.5729</b>				
<b>P-value</b>	<b>0.2058 (p&gt;0.05 No significance)</b>				

**Note:** Figures in parentheses indicate percentages

It is apparent from Table-5 that most of the respondents ATP (98.37%) mentioned that their library provides internet facility in the library which is very useful, followed by CTR (95.49%), KNL (94.21%) and KDP (92.80%).

There is no significant difference between the respondents with regard to usefulness of internet facility in their libraries. It is also evident from chi-square test of significance.

**Table-6 Reasons for dissatisfaction with the internet facility  
(More than one answer)**

<b>Reasons</b>	<b>ATP</b>	<b>CTR</b>	<b>KNL</b>	<b>KDP</b>	<b>Total</b>
Membership charge is very high	16 (6.80)	11 (5.39)	21 (11.47)	19 (8.71)	67 (7.97)
Printout facility is not available	14 (5.95)	19 (9.31)	11 (6.01)	27 (12.38)	71 (8.45)
Floppy discs/ pen drives not allowed	21 (8.93)	41 (20.09)	32 (17.48)	38 (17.43)	132 (15.71)
Time slot are not satisfied	19 (8.08)	18 (8.82)	10 (5.46)	11 (5.04)	58 (6.90)
Limited hours of service	18 (7.69)	13 (6.37)	17 (9.28)	18 (8.25)	66 (7.85)
Furniture arrangement is not comfortable	32 (13.61)	21 (10.29)	14 (7.65)	23 (10.55)	90 (10.71)
Number of terminals are not sufficient	61 (25.95)	42 (20.58)	37 (20.21)	39 (17.88)	179 (21.30)
Connection speed is very slow	54 (22.97)	39 (19.11)	41 (22.40)	43 (19.72)	177 (21.07)
<b>Total</b>	<b>235</b>	<b>204</b>	<b>183</b>	<b>218</b>	<b>840</b>
<b>D.F</b>	<b>21</b>				
$\chi^2$	<b>35.045</b>				
<b>P-value</b>	<b>0.02791 (p&lt;0.05 Significance)</b>				

**Note:** Figures in parentheses indicate percentages

It is evident from Table-6 that majority of the respondents (21.30%) mentioned that number of terminals are not sufficient and that is the main reason for the dissatisfaction with the internet facility in the library, followed by the complaint that connection speed is slow (21.07%), floppy discs/pen drives are not allowed (15.71%), furniture arrangement is not comfortable (10.71%) and printout facility is not available (8.45%). These are the reasons for dissatisfaction with regard to internet facility in the library.

There is significant difference between the respondents with regard to reasons for dissatisfaction with the internet facility. It is also evident from chi-square test of significance. The chi-square value is significant at 0.05 level with 21 degrees of freedom.

**Table-7 Use of the internet browser**

<b>Browser</b>	<b>ATP</b>	<b>CTR</b>	<b>KNL</b>	<b>KDP</b>	<b>Total</b>
Internet Explorer	22 (17.88)	12 (10.81)	15 (12.39)	11 (8.80)	60 (12.50)
Mozilla Firefox	32 (26.01)	56 (50.45)	55 (44.45)	45 (36.00)	188 (39.16)
Opera	17 (13.82)	4 (3.60)	16 (13.22)	12 (9.60)	49 (10.20)
Google Chrome	52 (42.27)	39 (35.13)	35 (28.92)	57 (45.60)	183 (38.12)
<b>Total</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>480</b>
<b>D.F</b>	<b>9</b>				
$\chi^2$	<b>27.832</b>				
<b>P-value</b>	<b>0.0010175 (p&lt;0.05 Significance)</b>				

**Note:** Figures in parentheses indicate percentages

It is clear from Table-7 that 188 (39.16%) respondents use the Mozilla Firefox. About 183 (38.12%) respondents use the Google Chrome and about 60 (12.50%) respondents use the Internet Explorer. Using the Opera search engine is relatively with lesser preference.

There is significant difference between the respondents with regard to use of the internet browser. It is also evident from chi-square test of significance. The chi-square value is significant at 0.05 level with 9 degrees of freedom.

**Table-8 Difficulties faced in obtaining information from the internet**

<b>S.No</b>	<b>Opinion</b>	<b>ATP</b>	<b>CTR</b>	<b>KNL</b>	<b>KDP</b>	<b>Total</b>
1	Yes	92 (74.79)	71 (63.96)	91 (75.20)	89 (71.20)	343 (71.45)
2	No	31 (25.20)	40 (36.03)	30 (24.79)	36 (28.80)	137 (28.54)
	<b>Total</b>	<b>123</b>	<b>111</b>	<b>121</b>	<b>125</b>	<b>480</b>

**Note:** Figures in parentheses indicate percentages.

Table-8 shows that majority of the respondents of KNL (75.20%) mentioned that they face difficulties while obtaining information from the internet, followed by ATP (74.79%), KDP (71.20%) and CTR (63.96%).

**Table-9 Reasons mentioned for obtaining information from the internet**

**(More than one answer)**

<b>Reasons</b>	<b>ATP</b>	<b>CTR</b>	<b>KNL</b>	<b>KDP</b>	<b>Total</b>
Lack of online help	28 (19.04)	25 (17.98)	26 (17.70)	31 (23.84)	110 (19.57)
Un familiarity with the search methods	22 (14.96)	27 (19.42)	28 (19.17)	37 (28.46)	114 (20.28)
Too much information available	49 (33.33)	28 (20.14)	22 (15.06)	21 (16.15)	120 (35.58)
Lack of time required to search for information	19 (12.92)	16 (11.51)	25 (17.12)	14 (10.76)	74 (13.16)
speed of access is low	15 (10.20)	29 (20.86)	19 (13.03)	16 (12.30)	79 (14.05)
Browsing cost is high	14 (9.52)	14 (10.07)	26 (17.80)	11 (8.46)	65 (11.56)
<b>Total</b>	<b>147</b>	<b>139</b>	<b>146</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>562</b>
<b>D.F</b>	<b>15</b>				
$\chi^2$	<b>38.37</b>				
<b>P-value</b>	<b>0.00079535 (p&lt;0.05 Significance)</b>				

**Note:** Figures in parentheses indicate percentages

Table-9 indicates that majority of the respondents (35.58%) mentioned that availability of too much information is the main difficulty in obtaining information from the Internet. Less than one fourth of the respondents (20.28%) mentioned that unfamiliarity with the search methods, lack of online help and being (19.57%) are the difficulties while obtaining information from the Internet.

The results of chi-square analysis are found to be statistically highly significant at 5% level with 15 degrees of freedom, which indicated that there is highly significant difference

among the respondents with regard to reasons mentioned for obtaining information from the internet.

**Table-10 Need for special training in using the internet**

S.No	Opinion	ATP	CTR	KNL	KDP	Total
1	Yes	113 (86.92)	94 (78.33)	92 (68.14)	96 (68.57)	395 (75.23)
2	No	17 (13.07)	26 (21.66)	43 (31.85)	44 (31.42)	130 (24.76)
	<b>Total</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>120</b>	<b>135</b>	<b>140</b>	<b>525</b>

**Note:** Figures in parentheses indicate percentages.

Table-10 depicts that most of the respondents of ATP (86.92%) mentioned that they need special training in using the internet, followed by CTR (78.33%), KDP (68.57%) and KNL (68.14%).

## 8. FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The following are a few of the major findings of the study:

1. Majority of the respondents (89.71%) are males.
2. One third of the respondents (33.33%) are un-employees.
3. Majority of the respondents (56.19%) belong to urban area.
4. Majority of the respondents (91.42%) mentioned that their libraries are providing internet facility in the libraries.
5. Majority of the respondents (95.20%) mentioned that internet facility is useful in the libraries.
6. Less than one third of the respondents (21.30%) mentioned that number of terminals are not sufficient which is the main reason for the dissatisfaction with the internet facility in the library.
7. Less than half of the respondents (39.16%) mentioned that they frequently use the Mozilla Firefox search engine in the library.
8. Majority of the respondents (71.45%) mentioned that that they face difficulties while obtaining information from the internet.

9. Less number of respondents mentioned that browsing cost being high (11.56%), speed of access being low (14.05%) and lack of time required to search for information (13.16%) are the difficulties in obtaining information from the Internet.
10. Majority of the respondents (75.23%) mentioned that they require special training in using the internet.

## **9. CONCLUSION**

Public libraries are the expression of human culture and civilization. Every man in the community needs the public library. Public Libraries are in the active process of building a successful nation by connecting the public to knowledge and inspiration. Public library service has made an essential contribution to the social, educational, cultural and economic well-being of local communities throughout the country, by serving the users across a wide socioeconomic spectrum. There seems to be greater scope for further improvements in terms of equipment, technology and facilities. The style and system of functioning of the District Central Libraries are to be enhanced more both qualitatively and quantitatively. Majority of the respondents mentioned that the number of terminals is not sufficient which is the main reason for the dissatisfaction with the internet facility in the library. The management of these libraries should provide additional terminals as per the user demands with high-speed band width, so that they may access their information needs easily. Majority of the users also demand special training for using the internet. Hence the management should conduct awareness programmes for successful and meaningful utilization of those services.

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