



Role Of Rural Library In Social Justice And Equity

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Abstract: Libraries provide services for everyone, despite their social or economic background, so that the users have a non-discriminatory nature while providing services in the library. Social enclosure through libraries for society is a new move that is expected to be able to promote community social-economic development and widen people's insights, especially in rural people that are far from access to information. Every library offers its patrons the basic services they need, but libraries that serve tiny, rural populations have the opportunity to do more than just give its users access to information; they can also help those communities grow. The rural library is revitalised with original and creative programmes in which anyone can take part. Libraries, as institutions that offer information services, also serve as centres for promoting literacy, which is intended to help improve social and economic conditions and reduce overall poverty by encouraging creative and innovative ideas.

Key Words : Rural Library, Rural Society, Social Justice and Equity

1. INTRODUCTION

A rural library is a public library that serves the community's needs and is situated in a rural region. The rural library also serves the community by providing a place where they can access a variety of free collections to suit their information needs. It is believed that the rural library would aid the community in overcoming informational gaps in a variety of areas, including education, health, the economy, and even culture. It is generally accepted that rural libraries play a significant role in enhancing literacy rates and contributing to community well-being by organizing empowerment activities. Access to information is the keystone of democracy. It was made compulsory to keep the **Indian Constitution** in all rural libraries. The rural library offers a variety of reading materials. To support the library's function as a learning centre, collection resources are accessible in accordance with community needs.

2. Purpose of the study

The main objective of this paper is to analyse and evaluate the rural libraries that are social community information centres. It aims to consider the various factors like the Role of rural libraries in social justice, it aims to provide timely, accurate, up-to-date and trustworthy information about rural people and also act as cultural and communication recreation, Knowledge, Resource centres.

Dent at Abu et al., (2011) explains that there are several general reasons for establishing rural libraries:

- a) assist children and adults in rural areas to maintain the knowledge acquired through their education;
- b) to assist rural communities in understanding the social, political, economic, and nation-building efforts of the country;
- c) Promoting healthy family life by distributing information on social, economic, and health care development; and
- d) Encourage locals to use books, read them, access knowledge, and take advantage of all the library's resources for learning and entertainment.

3. Related work

Akanwa et al. (2019) explained that rural libraries, which are a subset of public libraries, play a significant role in promoting development by acquiring, preserving, and making available to the general public information resources that are pertinent to the expansion of their environmental knowledge. To implement changes in their daily social and economic spheres, this intellectual body serves as the foundation. Jawahar Lal (2018) examines the generally recognised conceptualization of information for the development of social and cultural activities in people living in rural areas by delivering the information at all the levels necessary for it. In turn, it makes connections between public library use in India's rural areas and community empowerment. Damayani et al., (2017) observed that the rural library can enhance and contribute to the community's skills to investigate superior local products that are regarded as regional specialties, which helps to add to and broaden the community's knowledge and understanding. Lamani (2016) tries to explore the issues and future of the public library system in the state of Karnataka, paying particular attention to the Uttar Kannada region. The study's main goals are to understand the current organisation of Karnataka's public library system in general and the district of Uttara Kannada in particular. It also seeks to understand DCL's annual revenue and expenses, its resource collection, the establishment of branch libraries at taluka and grama panchayat libraries in the district, as well as the challenges that face the district's public library system. Intekhab Alam (2015) investigates, Public libraries are social institutions that have an effect on the communities they serve, and the value of public libraries is determined by evaluating how well they meet those requirements. The advantages that library users experience can be measured in terms of knowledge acquired, improved information literacy, increased academic and professional achievement, improved personal well-being, and social inclusion. Behera & Parida (2014) observed that rural libraries are helpful in meeting the information demands of various communities in their day-to-day lives. They also explored the impact of rural libraries in accomplishing their socioeconomic development. Lamani, Talawar, and Kumbar (2014) explore the current situation of the District Central Library in Dharwad and the function of this public library as a Community Information Centre in aiding in the development of the local community by meeting informational needs. They discovered that the District Central Library, Dharwad, failed to provide local residents with community information services since this centre's resources are insufficient to meet the needs and specifications of the many community organisations. As stated by the Indonesian Ministry of Education and Culture (2013), the rural library is a tool for encouraging people to read by making a variety of sources available, including books, magazines, tabloids, newspapers, comic books, and other multimedia materials. It also has spaces for reading, discussing, reviewing, writing, and other literacy activities, and the manager acts as a motivator.

The rural library is not only a building to read, with many available information sources that are coinciding with the needs of the society, it is also likely to be a place to find enough of information, as a learning hub and develop the community's skills. In addition, visitors to the library can utilize it as a recreation place where they can acquire something new while relaxing.

4. Role of Rural Library in Social Justice

The rural library fulfils a number of functions, including information collection, a centre for informal learning, a platform for cultural preservation, and educational entertainment. Meanwhile, the rural library's specialised responsibilities include :

- i. serving as a middleman to convey all information through resources in the library in order to improve communication between patrons and library managers,
- ii. Through reading collections, it has the potential to encourage an interest of reading, promote the culture of the ability to read and fulfil the information needs of the community.
- iii. Assist those who want to learn more by acting as a motivator, facilitator, or mediator.
- iv. Through the functions and services offered by the library, people can influence changes.

- v. Rural libraries, which provide non-formal education, help people improve their knowledge and abilities via self-directed study.
- vi. The manager of a rural library might serve as a counsellor or guide for library patrons and convey the value of science.
- vii. Maintaining a variety of reading collections, including books, magazines, newspapers, and others.

4.1 It aims to provide timely, accurate, up-to-date, and trustworthy information

Although the information requirements of different users may vary from person to person, rural libraries should do their best to meet users' needs for information. A community information service is often organised by a Rural Library in addition to its reference and information services, depending on the circumstances in the area. Social, cultural, economic, educational, racial, employment possibilities, and religious distinctions, among others, may be taken into account while planning a community information service because they differ from one community to the other within the area.

4.2 Cultural and Communication Centre

A Rural library serves as the social and cultural hub of the community. It facilitates and focuses on cultural and artistic development in the community and aids in building and maintaining the community's cultural identity. Through its services, the rural library encourages knowledge of cultural history, appreciation of the arts, and scientific advancements while compiling all resources pertaining to various cultural fields. The local community's interest can be ensured by organising cultural programmes and working together with other organisations to participate at the local, national, or international level.

4.3 Recreation Center

By providing books for leisure reading that will help local young adults and children develop personally and spiritually during their free time, public libraries act as recreation centres that promote creativity within the area. In order to face the challenges of society, children and young adults in general require specific attention in the development of their personalities. The library should be aware of its patrons' information demands and build a strong collection of books for leisure reading, such as biographies, books on sports and games, travel and religion, magazines, audio-visual materials, and popular fiction, as well as electronic information sources.

4.4 Knowledge Centre for Society's Disadvantaged

Every member of society should have equitable access to library resources in order to advance their education in a certain manner. Prisoners, hospital patients, blind people, residents of rehabilitation facilities, and others should all have free access to information in their appropriate locations. Extensions service may assist improve accessibility. To provide such opportunities to individuals who are less fortunate, bookmobiles and mobile libraries, audio-visual programmes, concerts, or extension lending services may be used. The physically disabled may also receive specialised training in information and communication technologies for the purpose of rehabilitation.

4.5 Community Resource Center

The rural library is the ideal place in society to learn and share information. It acts as a clearinghouse for information and knowledge as well as a tool for educating and empowering others to contribute responsibly and creatively to society. The rural library as a community information center has a responsibility to provide community information to those who help individuals with everyday problems. The local community can advance intellectually by reading, watching films, going to seminars and workshops, listening to lectures, and engaging in other library activities.

As it offers information that is necessary for the community's advancement, it has become recognised as a crucial component in the lives of community members. It provides for necessities including food, water to drink, housing, clothing, and health. It satisfies the local population's informational needs in the areas of economics, education, society, and culture; it combats illiteracy by offering audiovisual and illustrated reading materials; it provides information about government policies, such as voter registration lists and welfare programmes for those living below the poverty line. It offers information on crops, fertilisers, pesticides, seeds, weather forecasts, agricultural equipment available on credit from agricultural societies, soil testing, water supply, and irrigation. It offers details on dairying, fishing, and animal husbandry. Provide details on housing, business, and other funding organisations.

4.6 Bridging the Digital Divide of Local Community

An important concept in capacity building is the use of public libraries as a resource for people to learn information technology (IT) skills. By offering training programmes for lifelong learning, the Rural Library encourages information literacy. The development of the e-library, e-commerce, e-governance, and e-health industries is facilitated by training the general public in the use and application of information technology.

By providing free ICT services to the community, rural libraries are able to close the digital gap. Only a rural library can offer everyone in society a fair chance to get the information they need using the most recent technology without paying a fee. The local community can have the same chance and their exclusivity may be lessened by having access to knowledge through rural library services.

4.5 Development and empowerment of local communities

Particularly in a rural and underserved region, the rural library has long been seen as a key player in the process of local community empowerment. It informs the gram panchayat members of the many initiatives offered by various industries, as well as information on job opportunities for students. Local experts, including doctors, lawyers, engineers, educators, artisans, etc., guide, counsel, and direct the public on all topics related to cleanliness, family planning, the law, etc. It offers data from the census, such as population, literacy rate, ratio of men to women, etc.

4.6 Overview of the nation and the state

Addresses of renowned people, groups, and organisations; information about court cases, vaccination campaigns, astrology, events and fairs at meetings; information pertaining to the gap between the services given and the users' actual needs, etc.

To inform the workers about wage rates, welfare organisations, welfare funds, children's education, housing programmes, social security, insurance, medical services, disease prevention, labour laws, etc. To analyse the village community and its main component groups with their distinctive characteristics and behaviour; Addresses of significant individuals, institutions, and organisations, as well as infrastructure and tourist attractions in the area, to give rural women the necessary information. There should be a system in place that allows women to easily access and obtain the information they require in rural areas. To give senior citizens with information on topics like social security, legal recourse for protection against harassment by adult children, national policies on senior citizens, old age homes, etc.

Conclusion

The community has been able to actively engage in learning and expanding their knowledge because of local government's ownership, enthusiasm, and responsiveness. The facility's primary purpose is to serve as a community learning centre. Second, as a location to find knowledge sources, whether they are books or other collection items, of course as needed. Third, it offers a variety of collections that can be used as a research location. Fourth, it can be consulted as a source of information. As a venue for amusement or recreation that can advance knowledge, comes the last. Another viewpoint on the rural library holds that it is the primary tool for implementing the community's or government's concept of lifelong learning.

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