

Role of community center libraries during covid 19 pandemic in jaffna district

Sinnarajah.M and Varmila.N

sinnarajah1952@gmail.com, varmi1986@gmail.com

Abstract

It has revealed that the community library played an important role in reading activities during Covid 19 Pandemic. This study was conducted to analyze the impact of community center library on reading service of people in the Jaffna division during Covid 19. A structured questionnaire was distributed through social media among the librarian for data collection. Response rate was 98%. The finding of the study revealed that, the community center library plays positive roles on student learning activities in the travel band time. According to the study number of users in the community library increased by 67% during travel band period and the highest percentage (33%) of them was students. Students struggle more for study place during lockdown. Study individually is the main reason for using the library which is for preparing short notes and practicing past paper questions. Textbooks, past and model papers for general examination are the most frequently used library materials. There also increase the number of readers because of two reasons. First to read about Covid 19 daily update news and next band for travelling far increase emergent readers. To enhance independent learning, develop skill for reading and taking notes, create a new idea for a particular topic in various subjects, and access relevant materials for understanding the subject are the major role of community center library during lock down period. This time library face challenges in poor space and collection to satisfy readers. By upgrading the library resources and services in local community center libraries the government authority needs to allocate more funds for improving the library infra structures, collection and acquiring new technology for handling library functions.

Key words; Community center libraries, Covid 19, Library service

Introduction

Literacy levels affect the information behavior of the community. Libraries play major role for the social and economic development of the community through its provision of information on library service. Community center libraries considered as the heart of the rural area because they contribute to the improvement of the literacy level of the life of the rural people. There are 907 community centers in Jaffna and the 80 centers associated with Libraries. The goal of these libraries is to provide facilities to cater to the rural population in order to send their leisure time usefully and function as reader center for new paper and magazines. There are 100 to 1000 numbers of books which are classified according to the subject title. The collections of these libraries are story books, novels, lesson book, past paper book and magazines. Mainly they used for news reading. Main objective of these types of Libraries are aid generally in the encroachment of knowledge and use the leisure e duty of these libraries to attract them by providing suitable material for reading and help them in gaining knowledge for lifelong education. During Covid 19 pandemic normal situation have been changed. People avoid travelling increase leisure time increases the use of community center libraries.

Covid 19 crisis

World never face this type of crisis due to Covid 19 virus. It imposes to close all the organizations including schools and libraries. It has been confirmed that the virus is communicable can transfer from one person to other while speaking, coughing or sneezing. Libraries noted as special place of public contact highly expose to infection in general. Initially the spreading and death is low compare to other country then from the July end it increases drastically cause severe death. Government of Sri Lank introduces various sequential measures to improve social distance such as work from home, reduce public gathering, travel bans and curfew. Although the community center libraries are serve for rural and create awareness among the people even in critical situation. Academic and other libraries strategic to new normal situation the user of community center libraries increases.

Impact of Covid 19 in Libraries

Due to unannounced indefinite lockdown all the libraries were shut down but local libraries maintain the hygiene and cleanness of the library. Later even other libraries closed, the fist and most library service provide by community center libraries. Initially they issue books and news paper to people help to create awareness among rural society and send leisure time effectively. It is possible to exchange the books with in their community because of small distance. They follow mobile services to readers with home. In the stage of travelling limitation, the number of users increases dramatically. It favors to do the service with maintaining social distance and health issues. Small libraries serve people as usual and fulfill the readers.

Objective of this study

- To explore the library service by community center library during lock down and travel ban period.
- To enhance reading and combine studying
- To be prepare these libraries in new normal life

Material and Methods

Survey method was employed for carrying out the study. Structured questionnaire were mailed to the Librarians of the University libraries under study through e-mail as well as through social media The collected data were scrutinized tabulated and analyzed using MS-Excel spreadsheet.

Data analysis and Results**Facilitate to student education and literacy**

During Covid 19 students compose the largest and most helpless section of suffers. Schools and education institution are closed. Homes are noise with family members. They are difficult to get knowledge and information. So students depend on libraries which are close to their residence. In that way community center library serve well with required books issued at their library pass paper books for further reading. In addition

most of the students use library for self learning maintaining social distance. Under this unwelcome scenario, the librarians has very crucial role to play with satisfying information and students education.

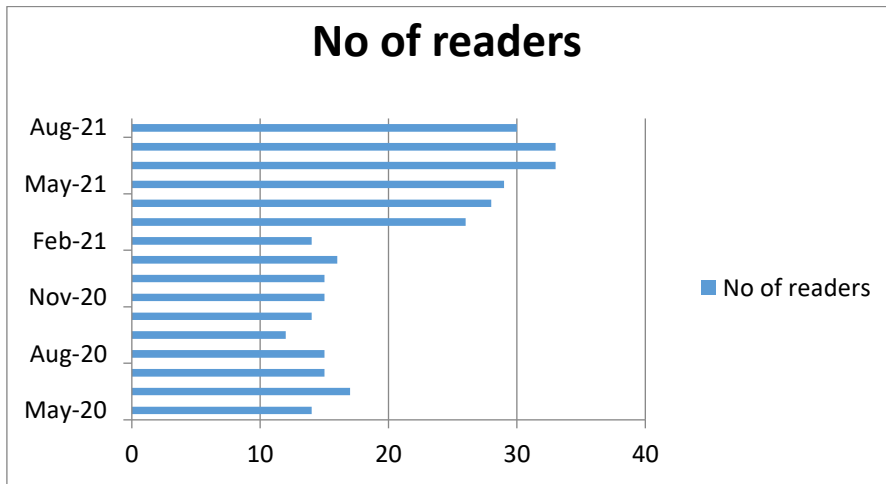


Figure 1: Average number of readers in community center library

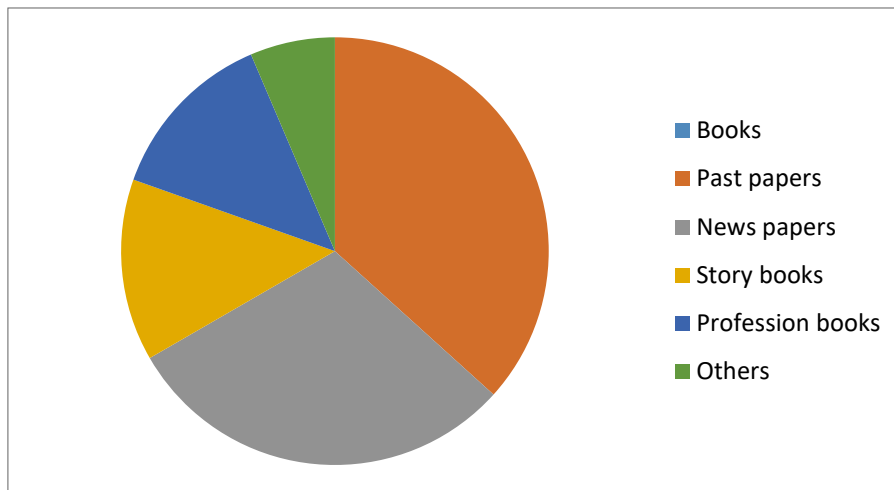


Figure 2: Collection read by readers

Social role

In addition to work normal service, libraries contributing in the community disease control prevention awareness programmes. Notices news paper and leaf lets use to create awareness among rural people. They provide information to people about prevention measure changes in spread out of Covid 19.

Satisfying news reader

The main goal of the library is flat for news readers because of curfew people are accumulating in home create family problem within members. It is better to read interesting book send leisure time effectively. Due to that community center library issue reading books from home to home and open part time for book exchange. This help to satisfy readers in time which in time which has no other way to spend.

Challenges in providing library service during Covid 19

In this critical situation all the libraries closed and then think for alternative online way to provide service. All the time community center libraries continue their service better. Travel ban increase the library users but the library building not enough to serve for all. Readers from different age group expect variety of books. It is not available in local libraries. Poor collection of books is major drawback in these libraries.

Conclusion

From the above results it was found that community center local libraries serve to readers continuously in direct way. It is in the rural places, help to study news reading and leisure time for area people. It is also challenge to satisfy readers with poor collection and low space. It is important to establish and develop with collection. Government has considered about the local libraries to do better service in restriction period.

Reference

- Ali, M. Y., & Gatiti, P. (2020). The COVID-19 (Coronavirus) pandemic: Reflections on the roles of librarians and information professionals. *Health Information & Libraries Journal*, 37(2), 158–162. <https://doi.org/10.1111/hir.12307>
- Baloch, S., Baloch, M. A., Zheng, T., & Pei, X. (2020). The Coronavirus Disease 2019 (COVID-19) Pandemic. *The Tohoku Journal of Experimental Medicine*, 250(4), 271–278. <https://doi.org/10.1620/tjem.250.271>
- Habibzadeh, P., & Stoneman, E. K. (2020). The Novel Coronavirus: A Bird’s Eye View. *The International Journal of Occupational and Environmental Medicine*, 11(2), 65–71. --- <https://doi.org/10.15171/ijoem.2020.1921>
- Hollander, J. E., & Carr, B. G. (2020). Virtually Perfect? Telemedicine for Covid-19. *New England Journal of Medicine*, 382(18), 1679–1681. <https://doi.org/10.1056/NEJMp2003539>
- IFLA -- COVID-19 and the Global Library Field.* (n.d.). Retrieved 18 May 2020, from <https://www.ifla.org/covid-19-and-libraries>
- Ladan, A., Haruna, B., & Madu, A. U. (2020). *COVID-19 Pandemic and Social Media News in Nigeria: The Role of Libraries and Library Associations in Information Dissemination.* 7(2), 9.
- Online library use soars during lockdown as bookworms go digital | Blog Preston.* (n.d.). Retrieved 18 May 2020, from <https://www.blogpreston.co.uk/2020/05/online-library-use-soars-during-lockdown-as-bookworms-go-digital/>
- Paik, C. (n.d.). *User Oriented Service in Pandemic Situation in Graduate College in West Bengal | Purakala with ISSN 0971-2143 is an UGC CARE Journal.* Retrieved 18 May 2020, from <https://www.purakala.com/index.php/0971-2143/article/view/252>
- Read all about it: Library services continue despite lockdown | City Of Wolverhampton Council.* (n.d.). Retrieved 18 May 2020, from <https://www.wolverhampton.gov.uk/news/read-all-about-it-library-services-continue-despite-lockdown>