Chapter 1

INTRODUCTION

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1.1. INTRODUCTION

Women empowerment has become the focus of considerable discussion and attention all over the world and it is associated with research in many educational disciplines including adult education. In an attempt to bridge the gender disparity in the developing world different agencies are trying to elevate the status of women so that they become increasingly visible in various roles such as socio economic, political and civil leadership. Over two decades of the women movement across India, paved the way for an increasing emphasis on the promotion of organisations for women development and discussions on women status and empowerment.

In India women are more in number than men. Majority of the women facing some critical issues in their day to day life like gender discrimination in family, society, workplace etc. Government has implemented several empowerment programmes to develop or empower the women. But they have not made any remarkable improvement in their family and living conditions. It may be due to the non-availability of education and knowledge on information about the emerging technologies. Educated women influence all the family members with whom they deal with and it helps to eradicate the poverty thereby triggering development.

It is a well established fact that educated women contribute towards demographic improvement by reducing fertility, by influencing the age of marriage, improvement in child health care and nutrition, improving preschool abilities of children and improvement of the economic status of the family by participating in income earning activities and thereby increasing household earnings (Ravikumar, 2006).

The society has established and maintained different kinds of public and private institutions to meet the needs of women. Libraries are the only agency
to the community for collecting, preserving, transmitting and securing the widest and most effective use of the records of civilization by the society of which it is a part. Public library has emerged as a vital place in society since it provide various services to the common and ordinary people. It occupies an important place in modern society as an agent of educational information. Public library is considered to be an integral part of the society as it plays a very important role in the diffusion of ideas, the creative use of leisure time, preservation of national heritage, social, cultural and educational development of the society (Satpute, 2008). Public library is a local centre and open to all the public and has a key role in collecting, organizing and exploiting information readily available to its users. Hence public library is one of the social institution which looks after the educational, cultural, recreational and informational needs of the society.

People require information for their self development, it plays an important role in the economic, social and the political development. Information is an essential component of each and every human activity. It is one of the fundamental resources indispensable for development in all the vital spheres of the life of civilized society. It helps women to understand the economic and political dimension of the problem both National and International. Information assist women to make decisions and meet their needs relating to Health care, Employment, Housing, Transportation and to empower them in their day to day life. In technological era, information is essential for each and every women who participates in decision making process. Therefore this study aims to evaluate the different activities of the public library on women empowerment.
1.2. LIBRARY

Library is a social institution and it act as social service agency offering various information to its users. It is described as the mind of society and which reflects its influence in moulding the life of the community. Libraries have always played a vital role in promoting education and research, developing reading habits and dissemination of knowledge and information. (Bhuvaneshwari and Vivek, 2013). Libraries particularly rural libraries may provide extension service to rural people in their areas offering various types of documents and service to the local people of the village. (Gautam and Sunil Kumar, 2004)

Library may be categorised as National, Academic, Public and Special libraries. The National Knowledge Commission of India which constituted in June 2005 described library as gateway of knowledge and continued that library is not a building stacked with books – it is a repository and source of information and idea, a place for learning and inquiring and for the generation of thought and creation of new knowledge. Public library in particular has the potential bridge between the information poor and information rich (NKC, 2005). Libraries are functioning for the people to support education and social development. They are the partners in socio-economic and cultural advancement, self development, lifelong education and literacy promotion.

1.3. PUBLIC LIBRARY

Public Library is defined as a library which is accessible to the public and generally funded from public source and may be operated by civil servant (Anil Kumar Dhiman and Yasoda Rani, 2011). Public library, as its name suggests, it is for the people, by the people and of the people. It exists from civilization of mankind and act as the important custodian of human culture, knowledge and social customs (Kaliya Perumal and Bahskarn, 2010).
UNESCO define public library as the local gateway to knowledge which provides a basic condition for lifelong learning, independent decision making in cultural development and social group.

The UNESCO manifesto also state that it should be an institution established under the clear mandate of law maintained fully from public fund, offering all its service free of cost and open for free and equal use by all members of the community irrespective of their age, sex, religion, language and structural level of education. The origin of the public library service vests in antiquity with the first recording of the human thought in the concept of a system or an institution which could preserve thought for future use which gradually came to be referred by the term library. Ever since the essential functions of all libraries remained the same collection, preservation and dissemination of knowledge (UNESCO manifesto, 2005).

Public library is a welfare centre which provides useful services to the community by fostering education, promoting culture, providing scope for healthy recreation and disseminates information to all section of the society. (Laila T Abraham, 2010). Public libraries are the community education centre with traditional style in a wider canvas, it provides socio-culture recreation and disseminating information to all section of the society. which often provide community information through the use of Information Communication Technology (ICT). Public library provides relevant information sources and service which can support economic and social development. It has a crucial role in supporting educational institution in our society.

Government of India Advisory Committee on libraries with K P Sinha as the Chairman has defined Public Library as s Library :-

- Which is financed for most part out of public funds.
• Which is intended as auxiliary educational institutions providing a means of self-education which is endless.
• Which houses learning materials giving reliable information freely and without partially or prejudice on as wide a variety of subject as will satisfy the interest of the readers.

1.3.1. Objectives of Public Library

The basic objective of a public library is to provide information to the general public to satisfy their informative, educational and recreational needs. The explosive growth of knowledge and the direct relation of information to development in all walks of human life have elevated public libraries as important centres which can undertake the vast and varied functions for development.

1.3.11. Personality Development

Individuals can become more powerful in their vocations and professions utilising the information stored in public libraries. Public libraries supply the right information to the right reader at the right time for their users keeping pace with the tremendous changes in all walk of life. People need develop their individual knowledge by reading, exploring and studying materials on their own choice to base their own thinking as preface and supplement to competent discussion. Here lies the various importance of public libraries in promoting personality development activities.

1.3.12. Human Adjustment

The impact of science and technology is effecting changes in all spheres of human life and assigns to public library role that it only can play. Today the personal life styles are changing, the existing social order, crumbling and in a fantastic new way in day to day life. Public libraries is the
only institution which can help to adjust with the current trends to the majority of the population.

1.3.13. Spread of education

   Educational role of a library can hardly be overemphasised, both as complementary in formal education and as the provider of informal education, which are essential for the development of people. Public library service is necessary for the presentation of universal literacy. Public library provides the following method to spread education.

   - To help the lifelong education on and all to furnish up to date facts and information to one and all.

   - To distribute in an unbiased and balanced way all shades of recorded views and thoughts to one and as a help in the discharge of their political functions in respect of Local, National and International affairs.

   - To contribute the productivity by informing top management about the latest trends in diverse enterprises by pleasing back the minds of researchers, scientists and technicians.

   - To preserve the literacy remains of humanity for posterity, as vehicles of culture and as a source material for research to work for all the continued social well being as the agency in charge of all socialised recorded thoughts.

   - To assist people to contribute to the growth of knowledge that such use of knowledge as will promote personal and social well-being.
• To develop their creative and spiritual capabilities to make them more capable in their daily occupations to discharge political and social obligations and to become better members of home and community.

• To keep pace with progress in all fields of knowledge and education.

1.3.14. Self development

Public Library provides the information to the common people quickly and in-depth. This information can help the present day world where invention and discoveries are flooding every day impelling them to have continues education for professional maturity. Public library has an most important role to play in social education and to prepare people for social adjustment.

1.3.15. Economic development

Public library has to offer materials and services to the people to understand social phenomenon and thus live successful social life avoiding social evils. It provides opportunities to the people to understand social evils and methods to control them. (Kaliya Perumal and Baskaran, 2010).

1.3.16. Science and Technology

Economic growth is depended on the application of science and technological advances and the spectrum of skill required at each stage of production. Public library make the domestic and International trade successful by supplying the manufacturer with information regarding the sources and nature of raw-material, means of transport, methods of management, costs of production market and agent distribution.
1.3.17. Culture and leisure

Public Library helps cultural development in more than one way. It can promote a keener participation, enjoyment and appreciation of arts. It can act as cultural centre in collecting and preserving the cultural heritage of the locality and make it readily available to the people to enrich their cultural awareness.

1.3.2 Functions of public library

Libraries are fulfilling the reading requirements of the each and every citizen to the fullest extent without making any discrimination on the basis of membership and thus it is considered as people's University. It focuses on providing knowledge on all matters including academic and non–academic. Now–a–days Public Libraries are functioning as mobile–channels in providing knowledge to the people of rural and urban areas.

Public libraries are constantly serving community functions and are performing various important roles in educational, economic, political, social and cultural development of the country. Information, as the most important instrument that lead to explosive growth of knowledge and the direct relation of information to developments in all walks of human life have elevated the role of Public libraries in our society.

1.3.21. Centre for cultures

Public library, being a part of a centre of education and information, is required to serve as a centre to promote local or regional culture. For this the Public library have to acquire all materials of mankind depicting this excellence in prose, poetry, drama, music, painting, dance and sculpture.
1.3.22. Centre for information

All human being needs information, either individual or collective, and it is information transfer and information revolution through which culture change, and socio economic development of Nation is possible. Public Libraries are the local gateway to knowledge and it should provide information suiting needs of individual and groups. A country like India has rich human resources, which need to be made productive. Lack of Information and lack of free flow of information from the knowing to the unknowing are impending this effort public. Therefore libraries should provide information which suit the needs of door steps and in a language that can be understood easily.

1.3.23. Centre for education

Education is a critical facts, its determining the peace and direction to development. Education is for complete living of man, so bread and butter aim is an inevitable aspect- hence the importance of vocation. It can play vital role to educate citizen by providing access to their collection in different formats and various service and to supplements formal education and support the informal education and continuing self education. In emerging country, public library is an education centre. It will promote education at all levels primary, secondary, higher, non-formal, adults, distant, vocational and so on. It has to serve as a centre for informal self education and opens its doors to all types of the people in a community without any consideration. Education is very important and essential commodity for all peoples.
1.4. WOMEN EDUCATION

Education means the harmonious development of all aspects of person-Physical, Social, Intellectual, Aesthetic and Spiritual. Education has been constructed as a tool for empowerment of women. It has two aspect namely Individual and Social. From the point of view of the individual aspects, it helps man to make a deliberate and conscious effort to live comfortably and happily in his physical and social environment. The social aspect is concerned with an appropriate social environment to develop physically, mentally and emotionally and to fill their social obligations and has paid attention to the basic issues of women's equality. The National Education System will pay a positive, intervention role in the empowerment of women, it will foster development of new values through redesigned curricula, text books, training and orientation of teachers, decision making and administration.

1.5. WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

The concept of Women Empowerment was generated from the Third World Countries with several important critiques and debates. Empowerment has been identified as the right determination and also to influence the direction of changes to secure ability to control over material and non-material resource. Indian women do not have access to acquire property rights. This dearth makes women even more vulnerable to poverty. The rights confer direct economic benefits as a source of income, status, nutrition and collateral for credit, but women may not fully participate in these benefits as members of a household. The Constitution not only grants equality to women, but also empowers the State to adopt women empowerment programme for positive discrimination for women. Non-Government Organisations (NGO) which have strong grass-roots presence and deep insight into women's concerns have contributed in inspiring initiatives for the empowerment of women.
Chapter I

Introduction

Majority of the women are living in bad condition and suffering the informal, unorganized sectors – to education, health and productive resources, among others is inadequate. Therefore, they remain largely marginalized, poor and socially excluded Women's issues and concerns as a result will specially be addressed and reflected in all concerned laws, sectoral policies, plans and programmers of action. (www.ilo.org, 2001). Women play an important role in national development, hence the need for awakening them has been repeatedly understood. The transformation has to give changes in the ideological system, in access to resources and institutions and structures at several level, such as the family and household, the village and the community, the state and the market.

Empowerment is a multi-dimensional process of awareness and capacity building leading to greater participation, decision-making power, control and to transformative action which enable to realize their full identity. Women empowerment can be viewed as continues of several inter related and mutually reinforcing components. It strengthens one's innate ability to acquiring knowledge power and experience. It is multidimensional because it occurs within sociological, psychological and economic dimensions at various levels, such as individual, group and community. (Singh, 2007).

1.5.1. Need for Women Empowerment

According to Manu Smriti, She is protected by father in her childhood, by husband in adulthood and by son in her old age. Empowerment is a process to develop self control and confidence to fight to their own fears, feelings of inadequacy. Empowering women are able to increase their self reliance, to assist their independence right to make choice and also to control resources. Women empowerment as individual and or group participation in various activities to redistribution of power. Empowerment of women is a
method of strengthening women and establishing equal opportunities and quality between different gender and social classes with the following.

- It discuss the discrimination of Women in giving political rights.
- It offer equal rights to participate in various activities with individual or group.
- It support poor Women to gain access to control both material and informal resources.
- It reduces Women's burden of work especially with in home and provides economically independent and self-reliance.
- Unpaid households work of Women's is usually not considered and are mostly found in low paid.
- Women are suffering with double work and it reduces their social and political participation.
- Lack of income and inequality have an adverse effect on women's self esteem and their status.
- It reduces suffering hunger and poverty in great number and to greater degree than man (Reji, 2011).

1.5.2. Component of Women Empowerment.

Women Empowerment as the programme of both personal strengthening and enhancement of life and participations in efforts to achieve, equality of opportunity in social classes and groups. Empowering Women results in increased well being, self confidence and respect their personal as well as social life with various component of empowerment. The major components of women empowerment are as follows;

- Women's sense of self-worth.
- Women have the right to determine choices.
- Women have the right to access opportunities and resources.
Women have the right to access power to control their own lives, both within and outside the home.

Women have the ability to influence the direction of social change to create a more just social and economic order, Nationally and Internationally.

1.5.3. Goals of Women Empowerment

Women empowerment is fundamentally connected to the human rights and self determination of women. It is a structure and institutions that reinforces and perpetuate gender discrimination and social inequality to enable poor women to gain access to control both material and informal resources.

- Maximize the life satisfactions
- Maximize the social interactions with family and friends
- Have a positive self evaluation.
- Creating an environment through economic and social policies for the development of women to enable them to realise them.
- The enjoyment of all human rights and fundamental freedom by women on legal bases with men in all spheres—political, economical, social, cultural and civil.
- Equal access to women in health care, quality education at all levels, career and vocational guidance, employment, equal remuneration occupational health, safety and social security.
- Strengthening legal systems aimed at elimination of all forms of discrimination against women.
- Mainstreaming a gender perspective in the development process.
- Elimination and discrimination of all forms of violence against women.
- Building and strengthening partnership with society, particularly women organization.
• Provides accurate information quickly and sufficiently to the women for their interest.
• The scope of information service is extended to included with other socio-economic needs of the Women society.
• Employment opportunities gives economic status to women, and raise the way for social status. The economic and social status are essential for a woman to succeed and survive in the dynamic society.

1.5.4. Programmes of women empowerment

Most of the components in empowerment can be used to personal, political and economical empowerment of women. Components are made to economic, socio political participation and decision making process. It also focus on encourage women to self reliability and self employment.

1.5.41. Education

Education is vital for producing brain bestowed knowledge to give innovative ideas. It is land mark of Women empowerment because it enables them to respond to opportunities, to challenge their traditional roles and to change their lives. It is understood as an ongoing process of learning and empowerment which transcends mere literacy. Women education is particularly important to bring societal transformation, including small family, higher education and better healthcare for children (Abdul Kalam A P J, 2004). Education is an important indicator of women’s empowerment, it is closely linked with their status. Education has become necessary for a women not only for marriage but also for economic independence. Even though women are the majority of the students and large number of women are employed in education, not many women make careers or get top positions in the field of education or research (Usha Sharma, 2003).
1.5.42. **Health**

Health status is one of the crucial elements in the assessment of quality of life. Women health status is determined by many socio economic factors, and it is one of the main determinants of health. Women health status affects their proportion in the population, working hours, income, and their overall contribution in the work place. (Suguna and Sandhya Rani, 2008). Enjoyment of high standard of health is one of the fundamental rights of every human being. Improvement in health translate to substantial gains in economic performance and overall well being of the women. To utilize the health resources in a better manner ensuring development of all family members and subsequently a better quality of family life.

1.5.43. **Nutrition**

Social neglect of women and girls are overlooked in most of the health programme. The main nutritional problems are macro nutrient deficiency, iron deficiency for delayed growth and nutrition, magnified obstetric, and reduced work capacity. Under nutrition persisting through childhood may have significant effect on cognitive development, school achievements and later health (Uma Iyer, Shruti Shah, Shonima Venugopal and Kavita Sharma, 2008). Women need the nutrition at all stages of the life cycle and its status is lower in the lowest socio-economic group.

1.5.44. **Drinking Water and Sanitation**

Special attention should be needed in the provision of safe drinking water, sewage disposal, toilet facilities and sanitation within accessible reach of households, especially in rural and urban areas.
1.5.45. Housing and Shelter

All human beings need a good shelter thus women need special attention for providing adequate and safe housing and accommodation.

1.5.46. Environment

Considering the impact of environmental factors on their livelihoods, women participation will be ensured in the conservation and preservation of the environment and control of environmental degradation.

1.5.47. Violence against women

Violence against women is a global problem that occurs from the instilling fear and insecurity in many women’s lives and it is invisible. Most of these violence’s are recognised as a violation of basic human right (Singh, 2007). Social inequality is the major cause of the violence against women it cut across all racial, cultural, economic, political and religious spectrum.

1.5.48. Science and technology

Women in the field of Science and technology remain significantly lower than man and to access Information Communication Technology. Empowerment is an active, multi-dimensional process to greater participation in decision-making with science and technology. To empower the women is to make multi-dimensional policy approaches through the education with science and technology.

1.5.49. Mass media

Mass media plays vital role in empowering women. Development of mass media shortened the world to the global village. This growth of mass media has reduce and satisfy the basic needs of women from the developed and undeveloped countries. The developed country provides equal rights and
freedom to the women. But women are still fighting to get the equal rights and liberty. Indian women are considered as a weaker section in the society.

1.6. LIBRARY AND WOMEN

Public library may be transformed as a community centre with all types of services the society demands. Since these are the centre where the public can have easy access the facilities can be made available through Government funding. Libraries provide various kinds of information sources and services to enhance women. Libraries also play a vital role in decision making process by enriching women with proper information for taking right decision at right time. Education and training of women is considered in every developmental and educational plan. The essential means of stimulating economic and social developments are changing knowledge, to make the women educate and civilized, and as such the society requires an effective educational system and a good library.

1.7. ROLE OF LIBRARY ON WOMEN EMPOWERMENT

Role of library on Women Empowerment was not so much vigorous during earlier days but today. It is highly dynamic in nature because of the development of science and technology in society. The economic and social developments are changing, to make the women educate and civilized and as such the society requires an effective educational system and a good library. Without libraries there can be no good school, college, university and there can be life-long education of adults. An informal education begins and a life-long learning process is continued only with the help of adequate and proper library services. Public Library responded to the challenge to give exciting opportunity to empower the women.
1.7.1. Usage of library

While analysing the present scenario of literacy rate of women it is found that both literacy rate and the rate of entering into jobs in private and public sectors are increasing. Women are demanding more information in all the fields. This is mainly because of their empowerment which has enlightened the knowledge from the libraries.

1.7.2. Usage of periodicals

Periodicals are published in a continuous series at regular periods, and they are displayed prominently to the women readers and renewed when new issues are received. Periodicals are one of the major sources to supply the latest information to the women and also some periodicals which have been published are concentrating on different matters regarding women.

1.7.3. Usage of Newspapers

The Newspapers contain the various news in different areas in World, Nation, State and Local, and also provide feature articles and entertainment items. It is one of the information source to women at a cheaper rate and help to develop the knowledge. It provide current information in time without delay and bringing to achieve aims and objectives of women and colored supplements in order to attract more number of readers.

1.7.4. Usage of communication technology

Communication technology accelerate the process of development and changes in the country as well as the women. In India threshold of new communication revolution of which satellite, computer, television and video are major manifestation. The whole country is technically knit together through satellite and television and can have women experience of joy, grief, information to women.
1.7.5. Improvement of Culture

Libraries promote keen participation in reading and support in all the arts and promotion of culture. Library conduct the extension activities like lectures, seminars, symposium, book exhibition and cultural gathering for their readers.

1.7.6. Promotion of Recreation

Library encouraging the positive of leisure and providing and conducting extension activities for change and relaxation of their users. The library materials including Books, Magazine and Newspaper are facilities recreational reading to women, and also provides Audio visual material in performing arts which may also be organised in the library to make them real community centre.

1.7.7. Promote the Desire of Books

Library promote the reading habit of women to satisfy them and also promote the desire for books. Library made an attention to their women users to provide the books for their demands and making books available.

1.7.8. Decision Making Process

Decision making is the important process on women empowerment and the library play a very important role in the women empowerment with socio-economic, culture and educational development of women. The process of decision making is by which the women take their family matters of education, occupation, dress and also including the marriage life of the their child.
1.7.9. Controlling Bad Habits

Being a Social institution public libraries are conducted the various classes in various subject including health and mental problems and also motivate their users to become a good men without bad habit.

8. PUBLIC LIBRARY MOVEMENT IN KERALA

The concept and development of library in India, as in any other country has been determined by the literacy, cultural and socio-political development. Indian literature originated with the compilation of religious works such as Mahabharata Vedas and Ramayana. In 1808 Government of Bombay proposed to register libraries which are to be given copies of books published from the funds for encouragement of literature. According to Sinha committee this was the significant date from which public library development began in India. In 1903 the Calcutta Public library was opened by the British for common man (Sudha Azhikoden, 2010). After Independence the name Imperial library was changed by an Act of Parliament known as Imperial Library (change of name )Act of 1948, later it was developed into the National Library of India. Baroda developed a network of Public Library to serve the entire princely state. It is considered as the golden period of Indian history for its educational, literacy and library activities. During the period, a number of libraries were set up such as Andrews library in Surat and Connemara Library in Madras (Bhuvaneshwari Ravi and Gayathri Vivek, 2013). Connemara public library in Madras 1896, become the state central library in 1950 under the provision of Madras public library Act in 1948. Deb Roy Mhasaya, founder of the Bengal library association made a draft for a Bengal Library Act, Asa Don Dickinson, who organised the first training course in India in librarianship and Dr. S R Ranganathan, who introduced the concept of establishing public library system in India.
In Kerala a large number of Public Libraries established in the middle of the Nineteenth century. Kerala emerged as 14th state consequent on the re-organization of Indian State on linguistic basis in 1956 November I. The teaching and learning methods followed in ancient Kerala were similar, the southern most state of India has been blessed with many peculiar features, is well known for its high level literacy. Public Library movement in Kerala is unique among the overall development of the society, particularly with regard to education, literacy, political, social and cultural development of the state. The message of Five Laws of library Science is extremely relevant to the present socio-political, economic environment of Kerala. The birth of Public Libraries in the state can be traced as early in 1882. The three constituent parts of Kerala- Travancore, Cochin and Malabar have different streams of public library movements.

1.8.1. Development of Public Libraries in Travancore

The Public Library movement in Travancore started with the establishment of Trivandrum Public Library in 1829. This library was started by the British residents and a few English speaking natives in the city. In 1850s a number of libraries emerged in the state. The establishment of Kottayam public library in 1858 was one of the landmarks in the history of library movement in Travancore state.

During the initial years of 20th century, various types of libraries such as, grand in aid libraries, village libraries and school libraries were established. A number of associations and societies were also established and conducted meetings and seminars for promoting library movement during this period.
1.8.2. Development of Public Libraries in Cochin

The public library movement in Kochi was started with the establishment of the Ernakulum public library in 1869. The Trichur public library and other important public libraries in this state, were established in 1873. These two libraries were the landmarks of public library movement in Kochi state. In 1926, the government of Kochi started to establish village libraries as part of its educational extension activities. The government of Kochi has organized separate department of public libraries and appointed a director as the head. The government conducted number of conference and meetings to library professionals and started one quarterly journal. Unfortunately this attempt couldn’t survive more than one year.

The organized attempts in library movement in Kochi include a number of conferences and meetings of library workers and publication of one quarterly journal. But, unfortunately these attempts could not survive more than one year.

1.8.3. Development of Public Libraries in Malabar.

Unlike Travancore and Kochi, Malabar was one of the provinces Madras state. The National movement and peasant struggle in Malabar gave birth to the public library movement Malabar area. Consequently, rural public libraries and reading rooms started to appear in this area. They functioned as the centers of rural mass for reading dailies and periodicals. Thus the rural mass got motivated to fight against imperial and colonial force. The ever first library in the Malabar region was the Kozhikode Public Library which was formed in 1890. Thalassery Victoria memorial library was the other the other important library, formed in 1901 by Christian missionaries. Presently this library is known as Azad memorial library. The Kannur public library was formed in 1927.
In 1937, the first Malabar Vayanasala sammelanam was conducted at Calicut under the chairmanship of K Kelappan. The meeting gave birth ‘the Malabar Vayanasala Sanghom’. In 1952, the Local Library Authority (LLA) was formed for the Malabar district as per the provision of the Madras Public Libraries Act, 1948 and Kozhikode public library with its 7000 volumes was converted into the District Central Library under the authority.

1.8.4. Kerala Granda Sala Sanghom & its contributions

The year 1945 is a milestone in the history of library movement in Kerala. It was in that year when the representatives of 47 libraries in the erstwhile Travancore met together in the PKM memorial library Alapuzha at the initiative of P N Panikar, who was the founder secretary of the library and formed ‘All Travancore Granda Sala Sanghom’. The sanghom was renamed as ‘Tiru-kochi Granda sala Sanghom in 1949 with the integration of Travancore and Cochin states.

As on 1949, there were about 350 libraries affiliated to the Sanghom. This included the libraries already existed in Travancore, the grant-in-aid libraries, Pachayath libraries and new libraries organized by the Sanghom. By 1951, the rural school libraries and the village uplifted libraries in Travancore area were also taken by the Sanghom. In Kochi area, apart from starting the new libraries and affiliating the already existing libraries, the Sanghom also succeeded in making all the government libraries as its members.

In 1956, when the state of Kerala was formed, the Sanghom extended its activities to Malabar also and renamed as ‘Kerala Grandha Sala Sanghom’. About 500 libraries, that had not been getting any grant from the local library authorities in Malabar area, immediately became the members of the Sanghom.
1.8.5. The Kerala Public Libraries Act, 1989

The state of Kerala was formed on November First in 1956 by integrating three regions Travancore, Cochin and Malabar of Kerala. There has been a long aborted history of attempts made at public library legislation in Kerala. Unfortunately, none of them were successful until 1989 when Kerala public libraries act was passed. The abortive attempts for library legislation for the state of Kerala can be traced since 1948, when Dr. S.R Ranganathan drafted a bill for Travancore state at the request of Sir C P Rama Swami Ayer, the divan of the state. Another draft bill again by Dr. Ranganathan for Kochi state was prepared at the request of the then Educational Minister Panambally Govinda Menon. After the formation of Kerala state, Ranganathan drafted a bill along with thirty year development plan at the request of the then chief minister E.M.S Nambudiripad. But unfortunately all these attempts were aborted. After the four decades of endeavors, Kerala has been provided a legal basis for public library service with the enactment of Kerala Public Libraries Act of 1989.

1.9. PROFILE OF THE PUBLIC LIBRARY UNDER STUDY

1.9.1. Trivandrum Public Library

The State Central Library is one of the oldest library in India. It was established in the year 1829 A.D during the reign of His Highness Sree Swathi Thirunal Maharaja of Travancore. The work of starting and organizing the library was entrusted to Col. Edward Cadogan, Hans Sloan, the founder of the British Museum was the first president of the Trivandrum Public Library committee. The successors of His Highness Sree Swathi Thirunal and Col. Cadogan took active interest in the advancement and progress of the Library. The Library was known as “Trivandrum People’s Library”. In the year 1898 it was opened to the public. It is situated in the heart of the
Thiruvanathapuram city. His Highness Sree Moolam Thirunal took a special interest in the development of this library and ordered to construct a beautiful building for library in 1900 AD. The present building of architectural beauty in the Gothic style was put up in Trivandrum City in commemoration of the Diamond Jubilee of Her Majesty Queen Victoria. In the year 1938 A.D the administration of the Trivandrum Public Library was handed over to University of Travancore. In 1948 the State Government was directed to take over the administration of the Library from the University. Trivandrum Public Library was declared as ‘State Central Library’ in the year 1958. Subsequently in the year 1988 the library was given the status of a minor department under the administrative control of Higher Education Department with the State Librarian as Head of the Department. In the year 1992 Government declared Malayalam as the official language of this department.

On normal working days the library operate form 8 AM to 8 PM, it remains closed on all public holidays except Sunday and Second Saturdays, this days a user can utilize the library facilities from 8Am to 2 PM. Library offers individual membership which is open to all permanent residence of Kerala, with four categories in 'A' class 'B' class 'C' class and 'D' class are given in deposit amount library has not collect monthly fees and also providing 'E' Class membership to the Central Government Employees who do not have permanent address in Kerala with the fee of rupees 1500. (www.statelibrary.kerala.gov.in).

1.9.2. Kottayam Public Library

Kottayam Public Library was established in 1882 and has completed 130 years of valuable service to the public of Kottayam town and surrounding areas. The main Library and Administrative office at Shastri Road, reading rooms in the heart of the town near the Gandhi Statue at Thirunakkara and the
Children’s Library & Jawahar Balbhavan west of Thirunakkara Temple. The primary aim of the Kottayam Public library is to cater general information requirements of public communities especially in parts of Kerala. Kottayam Public Library has the distinction of being the first Library to be established and run by the Public in Kerala and also of being the second largest public Library in Kerala, the largest being Trivandrum Public Library owned by the Government.

The library is kept open on all working days except public holidays from 8AM to 8 PM and 10AM to 8 PM on holidays. The book lending and reference unit on Shastri road is functioning from 9.30AM to 2 PM and 2.30 PM to 7 PM except Sunday and Second Saturday. Library offer Membership in different categories such as Life members, Ordinary members, Subscribers and Patron Members, besides six Institution Members.

In order to empower women library provide women special reading room. Kottayam Public library is offering a variety of extension service to welfare of their readers and it included K P S Menon Auditorium and a Cultural society to empower women. Children’s library is working with Bala Bhavans society of India. The library maintain a well equipped orchestra with the banner of K P L Music club and qualified musician conducted musical activities in every Saturday. An exclusive centre focusing on special studies of Kerala is functioning the library under the head of Kerala Padana Kendram, Public library conducted discussion on the third Saturday under the Readres Forum. The library has taken steps to cope with the changes taking places in various fields for their user communities, conducting Prakriti Jeevanam Samity for promoting Prakriti Jeevanam.

Library provides bounded copy of newspaper in Malayala Manorama and Hindu dailies for reference service and library provides Internet
browsing centre at the minimum cost for the users. (www.kottayam public library.org).

1.9.3. Ernakulam Public Library

On Friday, October 8, 1869 a meeting was held at the school building in the premises now occupied by the Maharaja’s College, Ernakulum to consider the question of establishing a Public Library and Reading Room at Ernakulam. The meeting was well attended, the Dewan, the Judges and the principal officers of the Sarkar and a considerable number of the inhabitants being present, says the first minutes prepared in the handwriting of Shri. A.F. Sealy, President of that meeting. The first resolution of that meeting proposed by Shri. A. Sankariah, and seconded by Shri. Krishna Rao, to establish a Reading room. Ernakulam public library established in the year 1869 as Public Library and Reading Room for the benefit of the community. Thus was born, this institution celebrating one hundred and twenty five years of glorious existences.

The working time of the library was from 10.00 AM to 7.00 PM and on Sundays 9.30 Am to 5.00 PM and the reading room working from 8.00 AM to 8.00 PM. Library offer Institutional, Life member,’ A’ class, ‘B’ class and ‘C’ class membership. The library has collection in different languages such as English, Malayalam, Hindi, and Tamil in various disciplines and subscribes 23dailies and 123 journals including foreign journals Newspapers and Magazines in English and Malayalam, Kerala Gazette, Employment News are available in the library.

The total purchase of books in the starting of the library were 1358. The books were in English, and as the number of persons conversant with English could not have been very large, this represented quite an adequate collection. From the inception, the Government of Cochin extended
very generous patronage, contributing an amount equal to the amount raised as subscription and donation. Library automated with Visual Basic (VB) software and the Malayalam collection as classified with special characters including alphabets A to Z. Library offer the Members reading room and women children’s section and also allow to selected periodicals will be issued for five days. The library also conduct the various activities in Inter School Elocution competition, Film festival, Environment day programme and Documentary Screening. (www.ernakulampubliclibrary.com).

1.9.4. Trichur Public Library

Trichur public library is one of the oldest and first fully computerized library in the state. It was started in 1873 and the library shifted to Town Hall building in 1923. The library has 12 staff including one Librarian, the major source of funds from the Kerala Grandhasala Sangam and Raja Ram Mohan Roy Foundation. The library is working in double stored building in the heart of the Trichur city. The library gives membership in the following class:- Patron, First class, Second class, Third class and General Membership, lifetime membership and student membership. The library has collection of documents in different languages such as English, Malayalam, Hindi, and includes subject books, fictions, reference books and books for children, Library has a reference collection including civil service question papers and children's reference books and subscribes 24 dailies and 190 periodicals.

Trichur Public Library is providing different service to their women users to empower them, like Mobile library, this service where women volunteers are engaged to deliver books to the house wives by visiting their home once in a week on nominal charges which will be given as payment of the volunteer. Mobile libraries are collections of books arranged in vehicles to provide a library service being directed to communities, which are often though not exclusively in rural. This Mobile library provides books to their
users in home, mostly used by the women users. This Mobile library has played a notable part in the development of rural communities where there is only a largely village library centre with limited books and untrained volunteer librarian. The Mobile library provided trained women and largest collection in the smallest remote community.

Trichur Public Library operate a separate section for the Carrier guidance and reference section to empower the user by giving proper guidance about the various opportunity and guidance to apply for different jobs and also provide reference to the user for success in the competitive examination in the various fields. This section is very important to the women user as it helps them to seek opportunity and to eradicate the poverty and empower them. (www.thrichurpubliclibrary.org).

1.9.5. Kozhikode Public Library

Kozhikode Public library is situated in the heart of the Calicut city. It is functioning as the central library in Kozhikode District and it is registered as charitable society with the District Collector as Chairman. The library is functioning at newly constructed five storied building from 26th March 1996. The objective of Public library is to function as the central library of Kozhikode District, Publish books and periodicals, to empower the member of the society and also under take scientific research in social science.

On normal working days the library operates from 8 AM to 8 PM, on normal working days, it remains closed on all public holidays except Sunday and second Saturday, on Sunday, the user can utilize the library facilities from 8AM to 2 PM. The library provides membership in five categories as Patron membership, Life time membership, Ordinary and Student membership. Library has a reference section, Malayalam section, Reprographic section and Children section.
Kozhikode Public Library is running Readers Forum with discussions and talks in every month. The eminent people participated in the talk. Library also maintained career guidance section which is not functioning now due to the lack of problem, Carrier guidance section empower the user by giving proper guidance about the various opportunity and guidance applying for different jobs and also provide reference to the user for success the competitive examination in the various fields. This section is very important to the women users it helps them to seek opportunity and to eradicate the poverty and empower them. Library using Dewey Decimal Classification scheme for classify the books. Library does not provide Internet connection and it is moving to digital library. (www.calicutpubliclibrary.com).

1.9.6. Cannanore Public Library

Cannanore public library was established in 1929 and has completed 86 year valuable service to the public of Kannur town and surrounding areas. It is functioning in the heart of the Kannur town with double stored building. The library provide membership in two categories as life and ordinary membership. The library has give concession to the subscription of the students who are submit the certificate from their institutions. It has collection of documents in different languages as Malayalam, English, Hindi and includes fiction, general books, reference books and collection for Children and Women. The library has a good reference section and subscribes 17 news papers and 65 periodicals both in English and Malayalam. Library has general reading room for the users and separate reading room for women and children.

On normal working days the library operate 9.00 am to 1.00 pm and 2.30 pm to 6.00 pm, it remain closed on Monday and all public days except Second Saturday and Sunday, the user can utilize the library facilities. The
library conducted various activities like seminars, Quiz competitions and has conducted Readers Forum with discussion and talk in every month. The library has conducted a study class in ‘Malayalam Basha Study.’ This class was conducted in two times in a week at 4.00 pm to 6.00 pm, it was handled by expert teacher without any remuneration. Cannanore public library operate a separate section for career guidance and reference section to empower the women users by giving proper guidance about the various job opportunity and helping them apply for different job. The library has keeping old classification scheme and now the library tries to automate with help of KOHA software.(WWW. facebook/the cannonore public library).

1.10. NEED AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Women play significant role in the national development. Women empowerment is directly linked with the overall development of the country. Various studies have been conducted to women empowerment on different aspects. However, the reorganisation of the centrality of education in the struggle to achieve women's equality and empowerment, the study considering the close connection between education and development, the need to take a holistic view of the issue for convergence of literacy and education of women as well as other related services of the public library. Because if a women was taught by good lessons she will hand over this information to her child and from there to the society and the society may get changed. For this proper and adequate information and awareness programmes should be given to them at right time to empower and bring them forward them. This should be possible only through the provision of effective library services to them. In developed countries, the public library have been particularly active and they provide various kinds of information sources and services to enhance women awareness. Libraries also play a vital role in decision making process by enriching women with proper information for
taking right decision at right time. So women should be informed about the impact of library on women empowerment.

The study aims to analyse the availability of information, use of library resources, participation in different programme of the library and availability of information and communication technology in the public libraries in Kerala. The study is expected to reveal the strength and weakness of the Public Library on Women Empowering programmes. The study also analyse the impact of library functions and services.

The economic status of women is now accepted as an indicator of a society stages of development status prefer to a position in social system. The fundamental challenge that women development is to ensure economic empowerment and self reliance for women.

The parameter of empowerment are;

- Building positive self image and self confidence.
- Developing ability to think critically.
- Building up group choosing and fostering decision making and action.
- Ensuring equal participation in the process of bringing about social changes.
- Encouraging group action in order to bring about the changes in the society.

The IFLA/UNESCO (1994) also recognise the role of public library as a living force for education, culture and information, and as an essential agent for the fostering of peace and spiritual welfare through the minds of men and women. (IFLA/UNESCO, 1994) Libraries also play a vital role in decision making process by enriching women with proper information for taking right decision at right time. So women should be informed about the impact of library on women empowerment.
1.11. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The problem under the study is entitled as “Role of Public Library on Women Empowerment in Kerala”.

1.11.1. DEFINITION OF THE KEY CONCEPT

1.11.2. Public Library

According to Dictionary for Library and Information Science, A library or library system provides unrestricted access to library resources and services free of charge to all the residents of a given community, district, or geographical region, supported wholly or part by public funds.

1.11.3. Women Empowerment

The Routledge International Encyclopedia of Women, define Empowerment is a process that aims at creating the condition for the self determination of a particular people or group. It is invoked to signify the potential for changes and has been successfully as a means to mobilize people to action. Women Empowerment includes Women awareness of their rights, self-confidence, to have a control over their lives both at home and outsides and their ability to bring a change in the society. Empowerment has many elements which depends upon and relate to each others in economic, social, political and personal. (Mariam Sohail, 2014).

1.11.4. Kerala

Kerala, the southern state of India was formed on first November 1956 with the joining of the Travancore-Cochin and Malabar with an area of 38,863 sq Km and 3.34 millions population. (www.kerala.gov.in)
1.12. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

Following are the objectives of the study:

1. To find out frequency of use of information sources by women users for empowering them.
2. To study the availability of information provided by public library on women Empowerment.
3. To study the various activities of the public libraries especially for women empowerment.
4. To investigate the extent of use of public libraries activities by women users for empowering them.
5. To study the availability of Information Communication Technology (ICT) tools and services in Public Libraries.
6. To find out how far public libraries helpful for education, socio economic development, cultural activities and political development with special reference to women users.
7. To identify whether reading is helpful for the progress of women.
8. To indentify whether women organisations co-operate with public libraries and how far they are helpful for empowering women.
9. To evaluate the physical facilities and technologies provided by the public library for the progress of women.

1.13. HYPOTHESES OF THE STUDY

1. Women users are frequently using general books, general magazines and periodicals to search information for satisfying various requirements.
2. Women users preferred public library for getting needed information for their progress.

3. Public libraries are providing various activities to women to meet their various requirements and women users have good perception about these activities.

4. Various public library activities have greatest extent of use among women users.

5. Public library helpful to women for their educational, socio-economic, cultural and political development.

6. The reading habit of women users have considerably helped for their progress.

7. The Information Communication Technology facilities provided by the public library in Kerala are adequate to meet the requirements of women users in the digital era.

8. Women organisations are co-operate with library activities and it is highly helpful to their development.

1.14. SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The present study is to explore the role of public library in women empowerment in Kerala. Progress of the Nation can be measured by the progress of Women and Child. Hence there is researchers need to know about the various activities of Public libraries in Kerala for Empowering women users. The main parameters investigated in the study include for empowerment of women users in the public library. Effort has been taken to make the study as accurate as possible, the scope of the study is limited to the Public libraries in the geographical area of the Kerala state. However
some unavoidable limitations have crept into the study and are the following limitations.

The scope of the study extends to cover six public libraries in Kerala such as State Central Library Thiruvananthapuram, District libraries of Kottayam, Ernakulam, Thrissur, Kozhikode and Cannanore.

1.15. ORGANISATION OF THE REPORT

The main body of the report is organised in five chapters. The preliminary part, bibliography and appendices are also given at appropriate places. The main body of the report is organised in the following chapter.

1.15.1. Chapter 1- Introduction

Introduction contains a brief outline of the problem, the need and significance of the study, statement of the problem, definition of key terms, objectives of the study, hypothesis, scope and limitation of the study and organisation report.

1.15.2. Chapter 2-Review of literature

This chapter comprises of reviewed literature in the areas related to the present study.

1.15.3. Chapter 3-Research Methodology

This section contains the variables used for the study, sample used, tools used for data collection, data collection procedure and data analysis techniques.

1.15.4. Chapter 4-Analysis and interpretations

This chapter includes detailed analysis of the collected data. The critical explanations of the results are also given.
1.15.5. Chapter 5- Findings, suggestions and recommendation for future study.

This chapter consists of major finding, conclusion tenability of hypothesis.

1.16. CHAPTER CONCLUSION

The present study is expected to help the library authority to adopt the suitable strategies for improving their functions and providing information to the women users for empowering them. It will assist the public libraries to fulfil the various objectives and providing better service to empowering women.
REFERENCES


