CHAPTER V

Findings and Suggestions

5.1 Findings

The present investigation is to study the development of Public libraries in Kanyakumari District. There are 127 public libraries in Kanyakumari District. Among them questionnaire have been collected from mainly from public libraries. The data collected from the study of one District Library, 13 Branch Libraries and 111 Village libraries.

Among the surveyed libraries, majority of libraries are six to ten year old and very few are above twenty five year old.

Most of the Public libraries in Kanyakumari district are functioning in concrete buildings and few are thatched sheds with tiles roofing.

Majority of the public libraries in Kanyakumari district are functioning in own buildings while only a negligible percentage of libraries are functioning in rented buildings. This shows the philanthropist nature of the people of Kanyakumari district thereby attesting the first hypothesis.

The central library at Nagercoil is the biggest one with the seating capacity of 110 while Majority of the libraries have the seating capacity of 11 to 20 and the average seating capacity in public libraries is 11 to 30.
The public libraries are run by public funds and government grants which are limited to cater all the facilities i.e toilet facility, whereas the lighting facilities and seating are very good.

Majority of the public libraries in Kanyakumari district are managed by village librarians and the rest of them are managed by librarians on daily wages or 3rd grade librarians.

Most of Librarians of Public libraries in Kanyakumari District are with UG and B.L.I.S or UG with C.L.I.S. and a very few librarians are with higher secondary course. Nearly one fifth of the Librarians are having PG degree and B.L.I.S or M.L.I.S

The nominal collection in public libraries of Kanyakumari District is more than 4000 volumes.

The addition to the library ranges below 1000 volumes to more than 2001 volumes. There are only two libraries that have the new additions collection more than 2000 volumes.

The public library system is established to cater to the information needs of the general public and organized into various sections such as story book section, reference section, rare book collection, distance education collection, Technical, General knowledge and children section. Nearly 50 per cent of the libraries have other language section and 74.4% of the libraries have reference section. Only a few libraries have rare book section (38.4%) and Distance education section (33.6%).
All the libraries have story books as their prime collection. This shows that public libraries are mainly used for spending the leisure time.

Mostly used volumes in public library of KK District are stories books, new additions, GK and Periodicals. The reference books used only by one fourth of the people.

There is a general opinion that the collections have to be improved in various levels such as Children’s collection, Reference collection and Women’s collection.

The average book issue per day is 20 to 30. Only a few libraries have more than 30 books issued or less than 10 books issued per day.

Nearly three fourth of the libraries have an average of 11-30 periodicals subscription. Only a few libraries have more than 30 periodicals or less than 10 periodicals subscribed. The ideal number of news papers subscribed by a library is 5 to 8.

The number of members in a moderate public library is 200 to 400 and the ideal number of members in a big public library is more than 600. The average number of visitors to the public libraries in Kanyakumari District is below 30 and most of them are interested people, those who want personal development and partly learned people. The other major categories of visitors include labours, time passers and a few farmers.

There is no change in the functioning of the public libraries due to the impact of new information technology.
Reading circles are usually conducted on Saturdays and Sundays. Other extension activities include celebration of Library day, Independence day, Pongal, Republic Day and essay competitions. Only a few libraries conduct talks or celebrate book publishing.

The public libraries in Kanyakumari District are run mainly by government funds and the books supplied by the Government from the State Central library.

There is no quality assessment committees for assessing the quality of the services and collection in public libraries in Kanyakumari District. Majority of the Librarians feel the inadequacy of book racks and almirahs and insufficient library building. Public libraries in Kanyakumari District are lagging behind in computerization and Government support(93.6%). There is also discrepancy in proper pay for Librarians. Also computer and internet facility is lacking in the libraries.

It is understood that the usage of books in public libraries of Kanyakumari District is good. Learned/Educated people and farmers form the major portion of the clientele of the public libraries in Kanyakumari District. Only a few tourists visit the public libraries in Kanyakumari District. Farmers form nearly one third of the clientele. Business people, Mill/Govt. Servants and tourists form only a negligible percentage.

Among the 111 village libraries in Kanyakumari district taken for study, comparatively, the buildings with concrete type are more among the branch libraries while it is less among the village libraries. In village libraries nearly one fourth of the buildings are tiles roof.
In Kanyakumari District, more village libraries are housed in free buildings (80.18 per cent) while the branch libraries which are housed in own buildings are less in number and is equal to 53.85 per cent. This is evidence that philanthropists are more in villages in Kanyakumari District and they have given the buildings for the village libraries.

The study shows that branch libraries have more seating facility than village libraries.

More than 90 per cent of the village libraries do not have toilet facilities. But more than half of the branch libraries have toilet facilities. This shows that the village libraries in Kanyakumari district do not have proper basic amenities and thus the third hypothesis is proved.

The village libraries in Kanyakumari District are manned mainly by Village Librarians and nearly 40 per cent of the village libraries are maintained by librarians on daily wages. Similarly Branch libraries in Kanyakumari District are manned by 3rd grade librarians and village librarians. Only 10 per cent of the village libraries are run by 3rd grade librarians.

The qualifications of village and branch librarians are of varied in nature starting from +2 to a maximum of PG with M.L.I.Sc. In general the required qualification of Village librarian is C.L.I.Sc. Majority of the Branch librarians and village librarians have higher qualifications.

Nearly equal per cent of village and branch libraries in Kanyakumari District have collection less than 2000. Collections above 5000 are more in
branch libraries than village libraries. The additions to the village libraries are less than the additions in the branch libraries.

All the village libraries and branch libraries have story book, General knowledge and children’s sections. Village libraries in Kanyakumari District are better equipped than the branch libraries.

Story book collection is stronger in branch libraries (92.31%) than village libraries. Village libraries have Tamil subject books while branch libraries do not have Tamil subject books.

Almost all the village libraries in Kanyakumari district have maximum usage of story books while it is less in branch libraries. Similarly the other books like technical, GK and reference are used more in village libraries than Branch libraries. Periodicals usage is more in branch libraries than village libraries.

All libraries are not self sufficient. The village libraries are more satisfied with the story book collection than the branch libraries. Similarly the satisfaction is more in village libraries with respect to reference books than branch libraries.

The ideal and average number of books lent is between 11 and 20. There are village libraries that have the capacity of lending more than 40 books per day while this category do not exist in case of branch libraries.

More number of branch libraries have the average subscription to 11-20 journals and magazines. This category is less in village libraries. Village libraries have more number of magazines and journals.
There is only one village library having less than 200 members. Nearly 40 per cent of the village libraries have members ranging from 200 to 300 while this is more than 50 per cent in branch libraries. There are many village libraries having members 450-600.

There are two village libraries having visitor strength of more than 150 while none of the branch library is having is having such strength. The people of villages in Kanyakumari District spend their time in the libraries in their villages. As regards to the clientele, in village libraries, the unemployed persons are maximum while time pass visitors are maximum in branch libraries. Here it is interesting to note that researchers are more in village libraries than branch libraries. More number of branch and village libraries attract visitors who are interested in using the library.

Majority of the village and branch libraries conduct reading circles on every third Saturdays of the month. Some village libraries conduct reading circles on any day of the month. Library day celebrations are conducted as an extension activity in most of the village and branch libraries. The other important extension activities in village and branch libraries are essay competitions. Almost all the village and branch libraries in Kanyakumari District celebrate Independence Day as an extension activity. The other important extension activity is Republic day celebration. There are some village libraries that celebrate Librarian’s Day.

All the village and public libraries make the following suggestions

- Library Assistants
• Subject books and magazines
• Almirahs and racks
• Librarian’s pay
• Library Building
• Transport
• More Government support
• Computerisation

Through survey it is noticed, out of 127 public libraries in Kanyakumai district, 27 libraries are functioning in titles roof building. The free rent building given by the rural people is very small which do not have modern facilities. The environment of a public library should be in such a way to invite the people to go inside the library and make use of the resources. It is also noted there is no toilet facility is found in many libraries, which is a basic need for the library users. Moreover lighting and fan facility in many libraries are available as name sake only. The seating facility found in many libraries are not convenient to sit and read and only very limited seats are available in many libraries.

The number of staff allotted for the District Central library of Kanyakumari district is under satisfied condition. They are, Grade I librarian one, Grade II librarian two, Grade III librarian three, record clerk one, Binder one, Office assistant one, watchman one. There is one assistant found in one Branch library. All the remaining branch libraries have no
assistants even though they are having huge collections. To maintain a huge collection by a single librarian is very difficult. Many librarians do not have knowledge about how to operate computers.

The users are interested in reading the general books. Most of the readers are interested in reading the newspapers and weekly magazines. Their interest in reading the other kinds of books is low since because their requirement for reference books, rare books, competition exam books and subject books, quality books for women and children is not found in the collection. If the collection of books suits the needs of the readers/ modern readers then they will utilize the public library books eagerly. Library members are allowed go to the stack and select the books they needed. But there was no catalogue found in any library. So the readers find it difficult to select the required book at once. The books are classified and colon classification is in use.

The membership and the daily visitors in public libraries of kanyakumari district are not found satisfactory. Rs.50 is collected as life time membership fees. Rs.10 is collected as annual subscription fee. There is no age limit for membership. Even then every year some few are added as new members. When compared to the people available in each area, and the literacy rate of kanyakumari district, the number of members joined in the public library is very small. This show, the public libraries of kanyakumari should be transformed in such a way to attract the people.
towards the library. But all category of people like, young and old, rich and the poor, illiterate and literate, male and female, employed and unemployed are using the library.

The modern facility available in public libraries of Kanyakumari district is very pathetic. Except the district central library and 3 branch libraries, other libraries are not provided with computers and internet facility. We are living in an age of information. People in this era are interested in getting information within minutes. So the traditional public libraries have to be changed to accomplish all category people of their area.

One who donates Rs. 1000/ to the Public library is enrolled as a patron of that library. This amount is kept in the long term deposit. Only 1205 have joined as patrons in Kanyakumari district. Each public library, Periodicals have been purchased from the interest accrued by the deposit given by the patrons of that area. Since the interest amount is small, only light reading periodicals could be bought. Students and unemployed of that area could not get relevant information regarding their subject and for their further developments. All the public libraries are getting many newspapers and their usage is more in public libraries of Kanyakumari district.
5.2 Suggestions

5.2.1 More Public Libraries should be established in Kanyakumari District:

Kanyakumari District is a crowded area, next to Chennai (as per the census 2001). It has a population of 16,76,034 according to the census of 2001. Within this 13,08,322 (87.55%) are educated and 67.3% are unemployed. The reading habits of the people have improved considerably by the use of the library and public libraries have contributed considerably to the educational attainment of the rural mass. The major factors responsible for the improvement of the reading habit were book borrowing habit, sources of information provided by the libraries about the books to be read, regularity in reading newspapers and periodicals etc. But the growth of Public Libraries are not so when compared to its population. The unemployed and the low income young have to depend on libraries to get the current information and books for their further educational developments.

5.2.2 Establishment of Village Libraries

The larger population of Kanyakumari districts is spread over in its villages. But the growth of Public Libraries are not so when compared to its population. There are only 13 branch libraries and 111 village libraries were been established in kanyakumari district. There are 56 town panchyats and 99 village panchayats available in kanyakumari district. Even though it
is over populated, it has high literacy rate. Hence more village libraries have to be established in Kanyakumari District.

5.2.3 Modernisation of Public Libraries

Among Kanyakumari public libraries, except the district central library, and two branch libraries all the other libraries are document oriented. Books are the only unit of transaction as traditional libraries. But today libraries have become more information oriented rather than document oriented. Public libraries of kanyakumari district are expected to supply all types of information to fulfil the needs of different kinds of people. Moreover they are expected to Furnish up-to-date facts and information on all subjects to one and all. It is suggested that every public library must have an Audio-Video section. Fund must be allotted to procure many Audio-Video cassettes covering cultural and scientific information, educational cassettes for children, illiterates and school and college students. A regular video show may be arranged by the public library. It will definitely attract the public to come to the library and convert them into potential user to habitual user of public library. How to make the Members to spend hours together in the library? Computer terminals with internet facility will provide enough opportunities for the users to get the information they require.
5.2.4 **Encouragement of Philanthropists**

The participation of the users of public libraries of Kanyakumari district towards its development has to be improved. They can donate Books, periodicals to their public library. The awareness must be created by the librarians’ whole heartedly. The rich people should come forward as philanthropist. The land owners can come forward to donate 5 cents to construct library building. In Kanyakumari District, efforts are taken by the village panchayat and the municipality to start a public library in their area. But efforts must taken by the people of that particular area to start a public library for their use.

5.2.5 **Up gradation of Village Libraries**

Many village libraries in Kanyakumari district are in a condition to be upgraded as branch libraries. Government should not show negligence to upgrade the libraries and librarians. Then only public libraries will be developed and it will lead to upgrade the librarians too.

5.2.6 **Appointment of Qualified Staff with Good Salary**

There are many staff on daily wages working as librarians in the village libraries. Staff should be appointed with proper qualification and experience. Also they should be given proper salary.
5.2.7 Renovation of Buildings

Most of the buildings should be reconstructed to suit the modern readers. The environment of the library should be calm and beautiful. Majority public library building seems to be small. These building should be extended to accommodate the books and the users. Lack of funds seems to be the cause of development of public libraries in Kanyakumari district.

5.2.8 Improvement of Library Services

Public libraries should be an information centre for the rural population. By providing equal opportunity to all in accessing information, libraries promote democracy and equality as well. The public libraries must provide all types of information to all type of users and it should be a source of information to all its citizens. But Kanyakumari village libraries are not in a position to meet all the information requirement of its people. They must also give modern technological services through computers and internet and photocopying.

5.2.9 Development of Public Library Networks

Networking of public libraries should be done soon. The public libraries have not only to promote freedom of expression but also the freedom to access information that may be available any where in the World. In order to do so public libraries will have to be technologically
advanced so that they have access to Internet and international databases and networks. Rural communities have a higher poverty rate and have less access to health services. They also suggested that effort should be made by RRRLF to establish a Library and Information network programme to interlink all state Central Libraries in the country. Once all the State Central Libraries are connected to RRRLF networking programme, it is the responsibility of the concerned State Government to extend its services to their district, subdivision and rural libraries.

When a networked information society is fully developed, it should be possible for a person from the poorest of the villages in the world to access information resources in the richest of the cities of the world. No library network in the country can be established without the availability of sufficient finance. Finance has to be provided by the Central and State Governments. This is possible if the state and central governments consider information as a commodity in the changing world and give it much priority as they give to the purchase and distribution of essential goods. Once all the State Central Libraries are connected to RRRLF networking programme, it is the responsibility of the concerned State Government to extend its services to their district, subdivision and rural libraries.

This is the time that the State Central Library should be equipped to face the challenges posed by the information age and to establish the
networks to modernise the library system. The quality of Public Library service should be improved. Public Library is the only place for the common person to know the latest technology. Information is available in different forms. Therefore, a well-equipped public library can provide information in all forms.

5.2.10 Strengthening of Library Collection

The overall progress of a nation largely depends on the total literacy of its citizens. Also the educated people have to update their knowledge in their fields of interest. In order to attract all classes of people to public libraries, the present role played by libraries should be made more effective and innovative. The public libraries have to accommodate the interest of the present day youngsters and job seeking youths who wish to read a lot of literature related to personality development and leadership training. If more materials on personality development are made available in the library, more youngsters will use the library for their career development. The Kanyakumari public libraries have to focus its attention on the emerging fields of interest of the under-graduates and job seeking youngsters today.

Efforts should be made to strengthen the existing libraries rather than establishing new libraries. In Western countries, children’s department of Public Libraries provide day-long service to babies by story-telling, baby-
sitting etc. Leaving the child at library develops the habit of reading which will have a life long impact. It is found that the number of lending book per day is very low while compare with the books available and people living in that area. This shows the laziness and the unawareness of the people to use the public library which is available in their area. The book requirement of the users should be matched with the collections found in the library. Selection of books should be consulted with the requirement of users of the public library too.

The extension services conducted in Kanyakumari public libraries has to be improved in order to create library awareness among the people. Readers Forum should be organised for each and every library and the participating members must be free to give their suggestion for the development of the public libraries.

Majority of the users of the library are youngsters, unemployed and lower income groups. So the activities of the public library should be suitable to their tastes. Public library users should be motivated properly in orders to increase the extent of their participation and thus a spirit of involvement can be created. Concretization should be stressed so that the rural population may aware of the benefit of the public library.

Whole hearted service should be given by the authorities of the public library so that more people may be attracted to the institution. The
location of the public library should be easily accessible to the rural population. Many village libraries in Kanyakumari district are in a condition to be upgraded as branch libraries. Government should not show negligence to upgrade the libraries and librarians. Then only public libraries will be developed and it will lead to upgrade the librarians too.

5.3 Conclusion

The mission of public is to serve the unique needs of their local communities. Library services are often constrained by the availability of resources and the support and backing of government and community leaders. Library administrators must advocate not only for their organizational needs, but for the needs of a diverse and increasingly multifaceted citizenry. Public libraries have always been the door to learning for a great majority of the populations that they serve. They are knowledge centres and contribute to lifelong learning. For India, there are bumps in the road that leads to the goal of having an institution to serve the masses, which is even more imperative in the present information society, in a nation where 40 percent of the population is living below the poverty line. Hence a massive investment in public libraries is needed to make them true information resource centres for the layman.