CHAPTER 7

FINDINGS, CONCLUSION AND RECOMMENDATIONS
7.1. INTRODUCTION

The main objective of this study is to design an effective information and communication system for the overall development of the tribes in Kerala. Many studies on the effect of rural libraries in the rural community, excluding the tribes for their total development were identified. To gather more information on the spot visit to tribal hamlets, rural libraries and meeting officials working in the field were done by the investigator. In addition, studies of the available government reports were also made. These studies, visits and interviews have convinced the investigator that there is very little impact of rural libraries in the rural communities as well as the tribes. The investigator started working on the aspects of how to correlate the services of the rural libraries and the community it serves, in an effective manner as they are complementary bodies. Though the relationship between a rural library and the community it serves is of great importance, the investigator has seen that they stand in isolation from each other.

The population for this study consists of tribes of Wayanad District and the rural libraries recognized by State Library Council in that area. The focus of the study was to identify the need of an information system to meet the information needs of the tribes in Wayanad and the role of rural library in their overall (socioeconomic, cultural, political and educational) development. A properly designed interview schedule is capable of yielding valuable and highly revealing data. But there was no ready-made tool available for collecting data from the tribes and rural libraries. Therefore a well-structured interview schedule was made and used for this study. The investigator approached the respondents personally to collect data from them. The collected data were consolidated for the analysis. Estimation of percentage and chi-square test was the methods employed to analyze the
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collected data. This chapter makes an attempt to summarize the major findings of the study. The findings are as follows:

1. A good number of the respondents are illiterates (34.17 per cent). The tribes stand at the centre of an educational irony. The main reason for lack of education is the particular nature of their habitat.

2. A few of them are laborers in agriculture (28.93 per cent) and engaged in general work (23.14 per cent). Their meagre income is not sufficient to meet both ends. In most of the month they experience unemployment.

3. The economic conditions of the tribal are very pathetic. The tribes face the problems such as low income and job insecurity. Due to job insecurity they are willing to do any job with low income. The majority of the tribes lives under below the poverty line. Changes in the wage level in general will not influence the tribal economy.

4. Newspapers were the most used reading material by the respondents. The purpose of reading is only for pleasure and general knowledge.

5. A few numbers of tribes (15 per cent) depend on the library as a source for reading. Respondents who have received some formal education recognized the value of a library in their village.

6. The considerable time spent on reading by tribes is, very few (8.83 per cent). The variation is possible due to many reasons like low level literacy in the tribal areas; lack of reading tradition and so on.

7. The reading habit of tribes in Wayanad district is very poor. The tribes who had reading habits of newspapers, magazines and other reading materials that they are educable. Libraries provide access to reading materials through which tribal children and tribal youths can gain and
improve their skills. Libraries help introduce the use of reading for information, pleasure, passing examinations and personal growth through lifelong learning.

8. The tribal communities needs all types of information. The major information needs of the tribal communities were related to their everyday activities.

9. Only three types of services are provided by the rural libraries in tribal areas. They are legal, medical and health related information (25), Education and training information, literacy class, continuing literacy program (47) and Career employment (38). The rural libraries did not take more effort to provide services to meet the information requirements of the tribes.

10. Changes due to reading habit are seen in the tribes, but it is only in a minority. So it is clear that Neoliterates people can be improved by providing useful, readable material. Hence the illiterates could also be approached and educated and motivated through audio visual aids which are a necessary part of a rural library.

11. Changes in attitudes are seen in the users (tribes) of the rural libraries. A good number of tribes have reading habits (38.87 percent). It is interesting to note that among the tribes who are not the users of rural libraries have shown no impact or no change. This exactly is the problem of the tribes. They are not fully aware of their social problem and they lack in their leadership quality. The roles of a rural library in creating awareness in these two aspects are noteworthy.

12. The changes in attitudes and beliefs in social practices are seen favorably among the educated group those who have reading habits
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(38.87 per cent). The majority of the respondents who are away from the rural library environment (66.54 per cent), and they are not enjoying the fruits of reading.

13. Five programs are conducted by the library. They are film shows, documentaries; special programmes connected with literacy, family planning programmes, and health awareness programmes. It is noted that the library does not conduct dramas and any agricultural programs. Adrama is a mental improved instrument to convey any nodal idea for change. Agricultural programmes are more important to convey information on agriculture and related topics for the tribes because some of them are cultivators (Kurichias) and agricultural laborers.

14. The statements given by the tribes clearly show that they are aware of the need for improvement in general and in particular relating to their problems. The methods suggested by educated tribes are:

- Providing facilities for socioeconomic, cultural, educational and moral development of tribes
- Encouraging the reading habits among the tribes, especially newspapers, to get relevant and up to date information
- Arranging informative talks and seminars relating to the needs and problems of the tribes
- Conducting film shows, dramas and other cultural programs based on education and recreation to encourage the arts
- Formulating programs for adult education
- Starting night and other study centres
- Continuing the adult literacy programmes so that this may not slacken in their progress
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15. Students and general people are common users in all libraries (132). Tribes are members in 31 libraries.

16. Libraries in the tribal areas of Wayanad have newspaper section and General book section. No separate section for tribal collection, except two libraries that exist in Mananthavadytaluk.

17. All the libraries (132) are subscribed Mathrubhoomi, Malayala Manorama, Mangalam, Keralakaumudi, Deshabhimani, Madhyamam. Some of the libraries are subscribed all the Malayalam dailies. Most of the libraries understand the importance of newspapers and they are subscribing the leading dailies in Malayalam for their users.

18. Most used English dailies are Times of India and The Indian Express.

19. The popular magazines and periodicals in Malayalam language are subscribed by 92 libraries.

20. The most subscribed English magazine is ‘The Week ‘followed by India today.

21. Most subscribing career publications are Mathrubhoomi Thozhilvartha (67).

22. The lion’s share in the library is claimed by fiction and nonfiction. All the libraries (132) have collected novels, short stories and dramas and followed by children’s literature, miscellaneous, biographies, science and technologies, religion and philosophy. The library collection, mostly meets the recreational functions and do not meet the information needs of the tribal community. The collection is just like any other public library in the State and not oriented towards the tribal community.
23. The lists of programmes conducted by the rural libraries in the tribal areas are Film shows, Documentaries, Debates, Special programmes connected with Literacy, Family planning programmes, and Health awareness programmes.

24. The rural librarians suggested that the rural library can be considered as an agency in the tribal community to improve the people socially, economically, culturally, educationally and politically.

7.2. FULFILLMENT OF THE OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study was conducted with the objective to design an information and communication system for the tribal development in Kerala. The study examined the characteristics and problems of tribal communities, the importance of the information and its needs in their daily life, status of the rural libraries in tribal areas and the roles played by rural libraries to meet the information needs of the tribes. The study made an assessment of the sources, services and the programmes of 132 rural libraries existing in the tribal areas of Wayanad district. Data was collected among the rural library staff and the 6 tribal communities in Wayanad using an unstructured interview schedule.

The study observed that the rural libraries are far away the tribal communities. The limited numbers of educated tribes are using the library facilities. The existing facilities and services are not adequate to meet the information requirements of the tribal communities in the study areas. Based on the findings, the study succeeded in designing an informationsystem to overcome the communication barriers of the development of the tribes. The proposal, if implemented the rural libraries can be act as a communication link between the government and the tribal communities to disseminate the right information at the right time, which will lead to improve the
socioeconomic, educational, political and cultural development of the tribal communities in Kerala.

7.3. TENABILITY OF HYPOTHESES

On the basis of the findings drawn out of the study, the tenability of hypotheses formulated for the study is tested and presented below:

The first hypothesis formulated for the study was ‘the rural libraries have no prominent role in the socioeconomic, political, cultural and educational settings of the rural communities’. An analysis of the collected data, it was found that, most of the libraries are established near to the tribal areas and they play the traditional roles as well as the recreational functions. Due to the illiteracy of the tribal communities, the present rural library collections and services are not adequate to meet the information requirements of the tribes. On the basis of the findings No.1, 7, 8, 11, 17 to 23, it can be concluded that the rural libraries had no prominent role in the socioeconomic, educational, cultural and political development of the tribal communities. Hence the hypothesis is fully substantiated.

The second hypothesis is that ‘there is a lack of an effective communication medium to disseminate the information from government level to tribal communities’. The existing information services and sources are inadequate to provide need based services to the tribal communities in Kerala. The analysis has proved that according to findings No.3 and 15 the tribal communities have various types of information needs. The policy planners and local authorities are unaware of the exact conditions of the tribal communities. It is also found that the existing governmental infrastructure is not adequate to find solutions to the problems faced by the tribal communities today. And there is no participation of the tribal communities in the planning and policy making. To overcome the communication barriers between the
government and tribal communities the proposed information and communication system is a nodal point in the overall development of the tribal communities in Kerala. Hence this hypothesis are substantiated.

7.4. SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Future rural library services initiatives should have flexible programmes to meet the information needs of the tribal communities in Kerala. The following suggestions are not absolute, they can be modified to see the information needs of that community.

1. Incorporating oral tradition, the transmission of information in tribal areas is necessary, since the majority of the population is illiterates. The rural libraries should incorporate both oral and print based modes of information transmission. Special types of library services designed for tribal communities. Consideration should be given to the format of delivery of information services. For example: print materials should be available for those who can read and these same materials should be translated orally for those who cannot read. Oral transmission can take the form of group discussions, workshops, person-to-person interaction, and other forms of learning through drama, poetry and song.

2. Advanced communication technologies are required to meet the information needs of the tribal communities. Communication technologies like radio and television can be used to provide relevant information on agriculture or health related information. Agricultural information is very relevant most of the tribes are agricultural laborers. Serious health problems are found in tribal areas. Infant death is very common in most of the tribal areas. To make awareness of this critical
situation the rural libraries should provide adequate information through the visual aids.

3. Existing libraries can set goals that take into account the needs of tribal communities. The rural libraries take keen interest in conducting workshops on various subjects related to the tribes and conduct skill development programmes.

4. There is urgent need to train and educate the rural librarians in the provision of information to tribal communities. A librarian knowledgeable in tribal problems and their culture can make decisions about the needs of tribal communities and effective format to use. Librarians can collaborate with ST promoters, elders, community leaders and government officials, researchers to organize workshops, meetings and seminars where the relevant information can be passed.

5. The rural librarians in tribal areas need to address the problem of low use of libraries. The role of libraries has not always been explained to tribal communities. There is a need to market library services to tribal communities through the media. The problem of low use will continue until tribal communities realize the connection between the rural libraries and community development.

6. The lack of materials in tribal language hampers the transmission of information. So there is a need to publish materials in tribal languages to meet the information needs of tribal communities are able to read and write in other languages. To achieve this, government should focus on producing materials in the tribal languages for those who can read and write; and the activities based on the oral tradition can be designed for those who are unable to read and write.
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7. Preservation of indigenous knowledge and documentation of oral literature and local technology (farming, traditional medical practices, crafts, house building techniques,) is necessary because most of the knowledge and skills are being lost through the death of elders and the community chiefs (Mooppan). This can be achieved through the collaboration of existing rural libraries, museums and Governments.

7.5. SUGGESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

The following are suggestions derived from the study for conducting further research.

1. Designing curriculum for training the librarians to work in the tribal areas.

2. A study on use of school/College libraries by schedule tribe students

3. Marketing Library services to the tribal population in Kerala

4. A comparative study on public library services in tribal areas of Kerala and to those of other states in India.

5. A study of utilization of communication channels and information seeking behavior by the tribes for improving their living standards.

6. A study on socioeconomic background and its influence on information use by tribal communities in Kerala.

7.6. CONCLUSION

The tribal communities have been historically marginalised and oppressed by various developmental factors and forces. The policies and schemes implemented by the Central and State governments have further worsened the situation. The tribal communities suffer from an acute low productivity, social and economic retrogression due mainly to ignorance.
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which also results from total absence of information dissemination. The results from the research indicated that a need exists for an information and communication system that can provide services to improve the life of the tribal communities. The implementation of the proposed Tribal Information and Communication System (TICS) to fill the gap of information needs and will help to access the livelihood resources and assets such as financial credit, education and capacity building, electrification, roads and other basic services that can improve their standards, sustain their escape from poverty and eventually make them self-dependent.