

**IMPACT OF VAYANASALAS IN THE SOCIO-CULTURAL
MILIEU OF KERALA: WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO
EDAYAR GRAMEENA VAYANASALA**

*Dissertation Submitted to the Mahatma Gandhi University in partial fulfilment of
the requirements of the Degree of the Master of Arts in History*

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CERTIFICATE

*I hereby certify that the dissertation titled, **‘Impact of Vayanasalas in the Socio-Cultural Milieu of Kerala: With Special Reference to Edayar Grameena Vayanasala’** submitted to the M.G University is a record of independent research work carried out by Abin Jose under my guidance and supervision. This has not been previously submitted elsewhere for the award of any other degree.*

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DECLARATION

*I hereby declare that the project entitled **‘Impact of Vayanasalas in the Socio-Cultural Milieu of Kerala: With Special Reference to Edayar Grameena Vayanasala’** is a bonafide work done by me under the supervision of Dr. Nisha Joseph, Assistant Professor Post Graduate Department of History, Henry Baker College and no part of this project has been presented before for any degree, diploma, associateship, fellowship or other similar title or recognition of any university or institution of higher learning and has undergone plagiarism checking.*

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CHAPTER 1

INTROUCTION

Kerala is one of the smallest states of India constituting only about one percent of the total area of the country. It is isolate from the Indian interior by the mountainous belt of the Western Ghats. Kerala has been exposed to many foreign influences via its long coastline consequently the state has developed a unique culture within the subcontinent.

The state of Kerala was formed in 1st November 1956 on the basis of languages and with integration of the princely states of Malabar, Travancore and Cochin. In accordance with the Census Report of India 2011, 33406061 people are live in the state.¹ Among the India states, Kerala has the highest literacy rate, with 94 percentages of people are literate.² Amartya Sen, Indian economist thinks that in certain respects the development and quality of life in Kerala compares favourably even with that of China. And it had the lowest child mortality rate, highest life expectancy, high level women's literacy and education, much better health standards etc. Kerala is acknowledged even by international bodies like UNDP and World Bank for this high standard of living.³

The society of Kerala is based on the caste system. The 19th century witnessed the British colonialists initiating waste changes in the Indian subcontinent. The economic, political and ideological interventions of the colonial agent radically altered the caste-based social system of Kerala from early 19th century on wards.

The British introduced western model of education in India by the middle of the 19th century.⁴ The aim of the English education in India was the creation of a class of people with Indian in blood and colour but English in taste. The preliminary aim of English education was the creation of British subordinate for their administrative work.

¹ Census Report of India,2011, <https://censusindia.gov.in>

² Ibid.

³ R. Raman Nair, *People's Library Movement*, concept publishing company, New Delhi,2003, p. 105

⁴ Sekhar Bandyopadhyay, *From Plassey to Partition: A History of Modern India*, Orient Black Swan Prvt. Ltd, Noida, 2013. P. 141

The British government entrusted the local rulers to establishing educational institutions and public libraries in their country. The first library in Kerala was established by Swati Tirunal at Trivandram on 1829 known as Trivandram public Library.⁵

The British government entrusted the local rulers to establishing educational institutions and public libraries in their country. The first library in Kerala was established by Swati Tirunal at Trivandram on 1829 known as Trivandram public library.⁶

The significance of the study

The present study deals with the role of public library system for the transformation of the Kerala society. The study tries to find out the exact changes that happened in the traditional socio-cultural scenario of the Kerala society after the middle of the 18th century. The present study exclusively focuses on the socio-cultural as well as political changes happened in the Kerala society after the introduction of public libraries in Kerala. And the study also touches on the relationship between Kerala Models of d Development and public library system of Kerala.

Limitations of the study

The records of Edayar Grameena Vayanasala were not fully utilized due to this pandemic situation.

Review of literature

R Raman Nair's *People's Library Movement* is a comprehensive evaluation of the people's library movement in Kerala. The work describes about the beginning, organizational movement, the objectives and programmes of the Kerala Grandhasala Sanghom, and its administrative set up. In this work the author also examines the various public library legislations.

"Testing Concepts about Print, Newspapers, and Politics: Kerala, India, 1800-2009", article written by Robin Jeffrey, describes the Kerala Model of Development, and

⁵ Library Guide, Taluk Library Council Muvattupuzha, Muvattupuzha, 2001, p .4.

⁶ *Ibid.*, p.4

the higher standard of living of Keralite. And also describes about the creation of public sphere and role of print culture.

A Pasilithil in his work *Public Libraries in Kerala* describes about the Public Library Movement in Kerala. This work also focuses on the pre and post Grandhasala Sanghom period. The study then goes through the role of public libraries in the origin and development of the mass movement and its contribution in socio-cultural fields. Thus, the work gives a glimpse on the political, social and economic impact of the libraries in people's life.

"Public Library System in Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala: An investigation" is a research article by N P Ajithakumari and A T Francis evaluating the role of Kerala State Library Council in the overall development of public libraries.

K Gopalankutty's *Radical Movements in Twentieth Century Malabar from Perspectives on Kerala History* describes the role of public libraries in the radical social movements in Malabar. He describes that the congress and socialist members opening public libraries in villages. Then it became the centre for the dissemination of political ideas and also the venue of meetings of workers, peasants and students.

Hypothesis

- The colonial administration changes the prevailed social condition of the society.
- The formation of public libraries helped to create a class of literate people.
- Kerala Model of Development is ultimately depended upon the public library system of Kerala.
- After the formation of Kerala state, regular state Governments highly supported for the formation of public libraries.
- Public libraries acted as hub of awareness on the need for independent state and anti-colonial movements.

Aims and Objectives of the study

- To analyse the factors that lead to the establishment of library system in Kerala.
- To understand the role of Edayar Grameena Vayanasala on Scio-cultural development of its society.
- To find out the relation between Kerala model of Development and public libraries.
- To understand the recent attitude of people at Edayar towards the use of vayanasala.
- To study the use Edayar Grameena vayanasala at the time of lockdown.

Methodology

The present work follows an analytical and interpretive methodology based on the primary and secondary sources. Primary sources include library records, Census Report, autobiography etc. An interview with Ex Librarian cum secretary of Edayar Grameena Vayanasala was also incurred in it. Secondary sources like thesis, articles from popular magazines, journals and various internet sources are also used for this study. Certain key concepts utilized in the study are significant for the interpretations and conclusions in specific contexts. They are given as follows:-

Kerala model of development

The concept of Kerala Model of Development was put forward by the Nobile prize winner Dr Amartya Sen. According to him the state has India's longest life expectancy, lowest infant mortality, lowest birth rate and highest literacy rate and is the only major unit of the Indian union where women outnumber men.⁷

⁷ Robin Jeffrey, *Testing Concepts about Print Newspapers and Politics: Kerala India 1800-2009*, The journal of Asian studies, vol68 no 2 may2009, p 468

Public Sphere

The idea of public sphere was put forward by the German sociologist Jurgen Habermas. He defines public sphere may be conceived above all as the sphere of private people come together as public; they soon claimed the public sphere regulated from the above against the public authorities themselves, to engage them in a debate over the general rules governing relations in the basically privatized but publicly relevant sphere of commodity exchange and social labour. The medium of this political confrontation was peculiar and without historical precedent: people's public use of their reasons.⁸

Modern Education

Education is the process of acquisition of knowledge, skills, values, beliefs and habits. British East India Company was not concurred with the development of education system because their prime motive was trading and profit making. To rule in India they planned to educate a small section of peoples, they came to be known as Middle class. The preliminary aim behind Western Education was the creation of subordinate people for the purpose of British administration.

Design of the Study

This study is divided into six chapters. The first chapter deals with introduction, aims objectives, significance of the study, hypothesis, limitations of the study review of literature and methodology of the study.

The second chapter entitle 'Formation and Development of Vayanasalas in Kerala' describes the establishment and the growth of public library network in the entire Kerala.

The third chapter titled 'The Idea of Public Sphere and Vayanasala' describes the idea of public sphere with special reference to print culture. Also this chapter analyzes the educational activities undertaken by Vayanasalas. The chapter also describes the relation of vayanasala with the national movements.

⁸ Jurgen Habermas *The structural Transformation of the public sphere An inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois society* Thomas Burger, Fredrick Lawrence (trans.), Cambridge, 1991, p. 27.

‘Edayar Grameena Vayanasala’, the fourth chapter describes the formation and growth of Edayar Grameena Vayanasala. This chapter deals about the role of Edayar Grameena Vayanasala within the society.

The fifth chapter, ‘Edayar Grameena Vayanasala Last Two Decades’ discusses about the recent activities undertaken by the Vayanasala an also analyzes the participation of the people with statistical tools. This chapter tries to point out the effect of covid 19 pandemic within the usage of the library.

The sixth chapter is the concluding chapter which is the sum of the whole study.

CHAPTER 2

FORMATION AND DEVELOPMENT OF VAYANASALAS IN KERALA

Kerala the southernmost state of India was formed in 1st November 1956 on the basis of languages and with integration of the princely states Malabar Travancore and Cochin. In accordance with census report of India 2011 the literacy percentage of Kerala is 94% and this confers it the foremost position among Indian states.¹ In 2013 there is 7526 number of libraries affiliate in Kerala². Majority of the libraries of Kerala are established with the initiative of the local people of the villages of Kerala.

By the end of 18th century and 19th century Kerala society witnessed tremendous changes in all spheres of life. This was mainly the result of western education and philosophy socio-reform movements played as important role for the prevailing social scenario.

The colonialists and under their direction the rulers of the princely states showed interest in establishing educational institutions including libraries. The colonialist aimed for the establishment of the western education as to create the government servants for their suitable administration.

Before the establishment of the public libraries in Kerala there were existed a number of private libraries. These libraries kept written documents for their own purpose and did not allow the public to make use of them. A public library is capable of extending its services to all groups and it helps to share the opinions in the community, irrespective of age, religion, profession, sex, political conviction and economical level³.

Public Libraries in Travancore State

The colonialist advised the local rulers for the importance about the establishment of public libraries in their country. Swati Tirunal the ruler of Travancore took the initial action for the formation of public libraries in Kerala. Swati Tirunal was the one of the important ruler, he

¹ Census Report of India, 2011, <http://censusindia.gov.in>

² V P Ajithakumari et.al., *Public Library System in Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala: An investigation*, Vol. 52(6), SRELS Journal of Information Management, December, 2015.p.1

³ A Paslithil, *Public Library Movement Kerala*, Kalpaz Publications, Delhi, 2006.p38

believed in the enlighten idea of liberalism. The first public library in Kerala, The Trivandram Public Library was established in the region of Swati Tirunal in 1829⁴. The Public Library of Travancore was started in 1829 by the British Resident col. Edward Carogan, the grandson of Sir Hans Salane, the founder of British museum⁵. The Maharaja and the British take an active interest in the affairs of the library. Maharaja and British Resident as the patron and president of the library respectively. Maharaja Swati Tirunal provided grant for functioning of the public library⁶. The grant provided by the king focusing the interest in the smooth functioning of the library.

Basically library was set up for the British citizens. Later it is used by native peoples. British aims at the establishments of libraries for the smooth functions of their political agenda. The initial stage of the establishment of the library British officers used the library later the door was opened for the natives. The natives were allowed to read books in the library by paying Rs.1/- as monthly subscription. The public of Trivandram could not easily afford it at that time⁷.

By 1882 a new public library was established at Kottayam, it was followed by new public libraries established at Vanchiyar in 1894 and Neyyattinkara in 1990⁸. The formation of public libraries resulting the usage of public libraries in Kerala. The liberal policy of the Travancore government will stand for the development of the people of the state. In 1911 a new library established in Ochira.⁹The established libraries are much popularized and all the people take the benefit from these public libraries.

Public Libraries in Cochin State

In the case of Cochin the formation and growth of public libraries are more popularized like Travancore. Government of Cochin made alliance with the British that helped for the development of the public libraries in the state. The government of Cochin made alliance with the British that helped for the development of public libraries in various parts of the state. The government of Cochin gave more attention for the establishment of public libraries in the state.

⁴ Library Guide, Taluk Library Council Muvattupuzha, Muvattupuzha 2001, p.4

⁵ A Paslithil, Op.cit., p. 25

⁶ *Ibid.*, p.26

⁷ *Ibid.*, p.26

⁸ Library Guide, *op.cit.*, p.4

⁹ *Ibid.*, p.4

The first Public library of Cochin was established in 1861 at Ernakulam named Ernakulam Public Library. The Divan of Cochin Sangunni Meon takes great effort for establishment of the Ernakulam public library.¹⁰

The other important public library in Cochin State was Trichur Public Library formed in 1873. After the formation of this Iranjalikuda Victoria jubilee library and reading room started functioning in 1889.¹¹ There are many new institutions came into existence in Cochin by 1889. The establishment of Cherai Public Library in 1914, and Kodugallur Public Library in 1912¹² are another important public libraries. The caste organizations were started their own libraries as the part of socio-reform movements. The Arayas (Hindu fisherman) of the Kerala formed an association in 1908 for their social and educational development. They started a library called Vinjana Sandayani Library at Cheriyazhikkal as a part of their social development programs. Through the sanghom disappear after two years of library survived and is still in existence.¹³

Public Libraries in Malabar State

As compared with Cochin and Travancore, the formation of public libraries in the Malabar was entirely different. In case of Malabar state the formation of public libraries are based on the part of national and peasant movements. The Tellichery public library was formed in 1901.¹⁴ It was the earliest public library from the Malabar region. After the establishment of the Tellichery public library two more public library was established at Engandiyoor on 1914 and Sreenarayanan Vilasom library and reading room at Panagod on 1919.¹⁵ The socio-reform movements were also started the public libraries. The socio-reformer Vaghbandanandan and his Athma Vidya sanghom had also started many rural libraries during that period.¹⁶

By 1927 a new public library was established at Kannur and it was followed by a new public library founded at Kozhikode on 1927. The public libraries of Malabar regions were based on the peasant and national movement. There are several public libraries were

¹⁰ K Sivadasan Pillai, (ed) *Kerala Grandhasala Sangham*, Kerala Grandhasala Sangham, Trivanram, 1981, p.55

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p.55

¹² P S Velayudhan (ed) *Kerala Charitram* (mal), Voi.1, Kerala history association, Cochin, 1973, p. 46

¹³ K Sivadasan Pillai, *Op.cit.*, p.55

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p. 55

¹⁵ P Udhayabhanu, *Prasthanathinte Adiverukal*, Kerala Granhasala Sangam, Trivanrum, 1982, P 31

¹⁶ A Paslithi, *Op.cit.*, p.38

established in thousand of villages of Malabar. These new libraries were worked at the grass root level of the society. As this case the popularity and the participation of the rural people was increased. Most of the libraries of Malabar were popular front in nature, although the state also established their own public libraries with in the territory.

The progressive and socio-cultural movements and the political movements were tell me the need for the establishment and use of public libraries that causes for the establishment of several public libraries at different parts of the Kerala region. The rulers also happy to providing the grants for to the public libraries. Accordingly thirty seven well organized reading rooms and libraries were entitled to receive grant-in-aid during 1917-18. Krishnavilasam Mahila vayanasaala functioned during that period at Balaramapuram, Trivandram. This library too received grant from the government.¹⁷

By the 20th century Malabar witnessed several conflicts between rural people and the British authorities. A powerful expression of this conflict was the repeated uprings of the Mappila peasantry against land lords and colonialists. The early uprings were of isolated nature with limited participants, but subsequent uprings gained momentum and it culminated in the massive show of 1921.¹⁸ After Mappila revolt of 1921 many individuals and voluntary organizations rendered their service for re-habitation of the people. Devadar Malabar Reconstruction Trust (DMRT) under the leadership of G.K. Devadar was one important voluntary organization of that kind. According to them lack of education was mainly responsible for revolt. In order to spread literacy they started many libraries in the present Malappuram district.¹⁹

Thus during the period the public libraries were started to function in almost all parts of Kerala. Social and Political support are helped for the smooth functions and development of the library movement. Libraries enhance the socio-cultural progress of the society.

¹⁷ A Paslithi ,*op.cit.*, p.38

¹⁸ P Udhayabhanu ,*op.cit.*,p.32

LIBRARY CONFERENCES

Before the middle of the 20th century a trend emerged for the establishment of well organized library organizations, with the amalgamation of the autonomous libraries from the Travancore, Cochin and Malabar region. There are several conferences conducted for the purpose of the formation of the well established library organization.

NEYYATTINKARA CONFERENCE

The Neyyantinkara conference on 1926 was first attempt for the formation of library organization of Kerala. It was held under the presidential ship of Professor C V Chandrashekar. The representatives of the different libraries ha attended this conference. The conference passed following resolutions.²⁰

1. Government should provide the grant-in-aid to the member libraries passed by this conference.
2. Government should provide free land to libraries.
3. Government should give their own publications without any cost.

THIRUVANATHAPURAM CONFERENCE

The second library conference was held at Thiruvananthapuram under the auspices of Sree Chithira Thirunal Library on 25 July 1934. The conference was presided over by P K Narayana Pillai one of the great literary men of Travancore inaugurates by Sir C P Ramaswamy Iyyer the Constitutional Adviser of the Maharaja who later became the Diwan of Travancore.²¹The Second library conference passed the following resolutions.²²

1. To start more libraries throughout the state as a part of library movement.
2. To increase the grant-in-aid of the libraries.
3. To supply the Government publications to all libraries.

²⁰ Mathurbhumi. Newspaper, 18| JUNE |2020

²¹ *Ibid.*,

²² A Paslithi ,*op.cit.*, p.49

4. To request the Government to supply the library furniture free of cost and to meet the expenses of the library (expenses incurred by its setting up and the purchase of land for the purpose).

NEYYUR CONFERENCE

Neyyur Library conference was held on 1938 at Diwan Nanupillai memorial library Neyyur. The conference was presided over by Mallur Govinhapillai.²³ This conference takes several solutions for the smooth functioning of libraries.

These conference were taken the measures for the establishment of well organized library organization but it was failed for the established the library organization of Kerala.

The Thrissur conference of 1931 established a new association named Samasta Kerala Pustakalaya Samiti.²⁴ But activities of the association did not continue after the foundation.

In the case of Malabar public library movement was popular front in nature. K. Kelappan known as the 'Kerala Gandhi' who as one of the famous freedom fighter from India. In 1937 a new association formed in Malabar, Malabar Vayanasala Sangham under the leadership of K. Kelappan. By 1943 Malabar Vayanasala sangh reformed as Kerala Gradasala Sangham.²⁵ But this was failure to join together the public libraries of Kerala, with in the unique model of functioning. The participation of K. Kelappan indicating the nature of national movement of public libraries.

By 1945 the public library movement was changing the face with the establishment of Akhila Thiruvithakur Grandasala Sangam. Sangam was formed in a conference that held in P.K memorial library at Ambalapuzha on 16th september 1945. The conference was inaugurated by C Diwan C.P Ramaswami Iyyar with the presence of the representatives of 47 numbers of libraries. K.M kesavan and P.N Panikkar elected as the president and secretary respectively.²⁶ P.N Panikkar the secretary of the grandasala sangam played an important role in the formation and development of public libraries of Kerala. All Travancore grandasala sang registered in

²³ Mathurbhumi.*op.cit.*,

²⁴ *Ibid.*,

²⁵ Library Guide,*op.cit.*, 5

²⁶ Mathurbhumi.*op.cit.*,

1947²⁷ and worked for the development of public libraries. They take action for the formation of new public libraries and provide support for the unproductive libraries. The government advanced grants 250/- for grandasala sangam from 1946²⁸.

By 1949 the two princely states Travancore and Cochin merged together and came to be known as Thiru-Kochi. Thiruvithamkur grandasala sangam renamed to Thiru-Kochi. Grandasala sangam after the integration of Travancore and Cochin, during that period around 1500 libraries were under the sangam, around 30 numbers of libraries are from the taluk of Muvattupuzha. The Grameena Vayanasala Edayar established in 1924 was oldest one from the taluk of Muvattupuzha.²⁹

With the formation of the Kerala the Thiru-cochin grandasala sangam renamed as Kerala Grandasala sangam in 1958. The government allowed grants for the members of libraries.³⁰

The growth and development of Kerala Grandasala Sangam was the result of the works of P.N Panikkar, the secretary of the sangam. P.N Panikkar leads the sangam by 32 years as the secretary of the sangam. He played an important role for the development of the grandasala prasthanam of Kerala.

With the ordinance of the government of Kerala on 1977 a control board took the authority of the grandasala sangam with the chairmanship of the minister of education. The KSLC is an autonomous body under the higher education department of the Government of Kerala formed as per the Kerala Public Libraries (Kerala GrandhasalaSangham) Act, 1989. The act was passed by the LDF government of Kerala provided a democratic face to public libraries. The organization of Public Libraries in Kerala has a three tier system, viz, State Library Council, District Library Council, and Taluk Library council and they are classified into six grades from A to F.³¹ The following figure shows the periodical structure of the governing body of public library department in accordance with act of 1989.

²⁷ Library Guide,*op.cit.*, p. 5

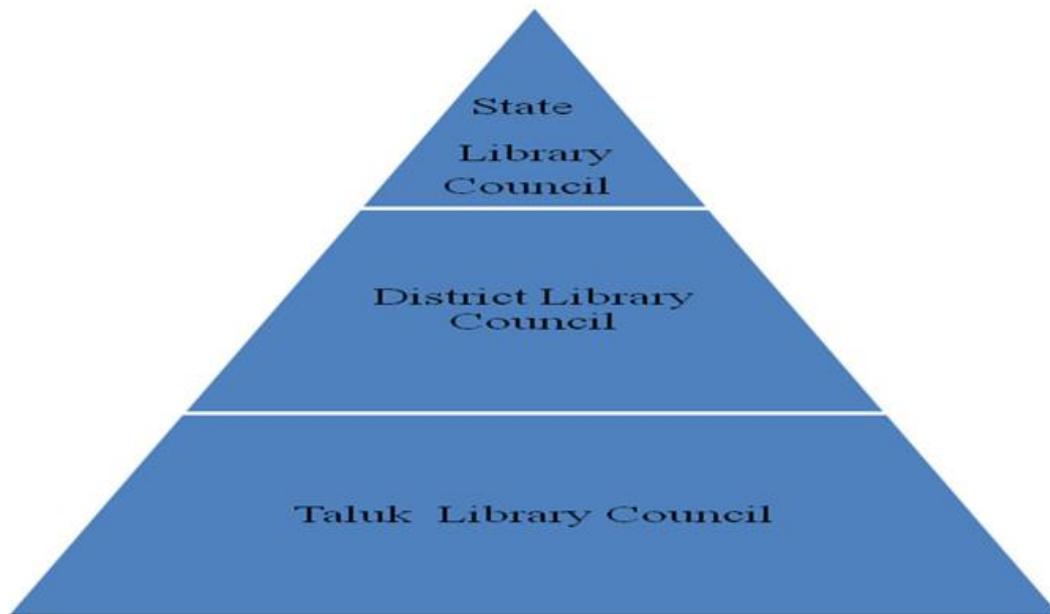
²⁸ Mathurbhumi.*op.cit.*,

²⁵ Library Guide,*op.cit.*, p.6

³⁰ *Ibid.*,p.6

³¹ V P Ajithakumari.et.al.,*op.cit.*,

Figure1. Three tier system envisaged in the Kerala Public Libraries Act, 1989



Three tier system envisaged in the Kerala Public Libraries Act, 1989

In 20th April of 1994 library council of Kerala take over the custodianship of public library department with the chairmanship of Kadammanitta Ramakrishnan.³² This was ended the authority of control board and changing a new face for the development of public libraries.

Public libraries of Kerala are one of the important institutions of the Kerala. The higher rate of literacy was the result of the well established library network of Kerala. Kerala grandasala sangam got the award of UNESCO named CRUPSKAYA³³ for conducting the excellent activities for the growth of literacy. Public libraries are the one of the most important public institution of Kerala. All the peoples of Kerala are takes the benefits from the public libraries. The higher level of literacy rate in Kerala is the product of public libraries. While the ridge practice of caste system public libraries act as the public sphere of the society. The growth of the number of public libraries in the Kerala society is the result of the increment of its beneficiaries. Public libraries of Kerala have its own role for the socio-cultural development of the Kerala society.

The following table and diagram are expressing the establishment of public libraries of Kerala.

³² Library Guide,*op.cit.*, p.6

³³ *Ibid.*, p.6

Table 1.1 Total number of public libraries affiliated to KSLC from 1965 to 2013 in Kerala

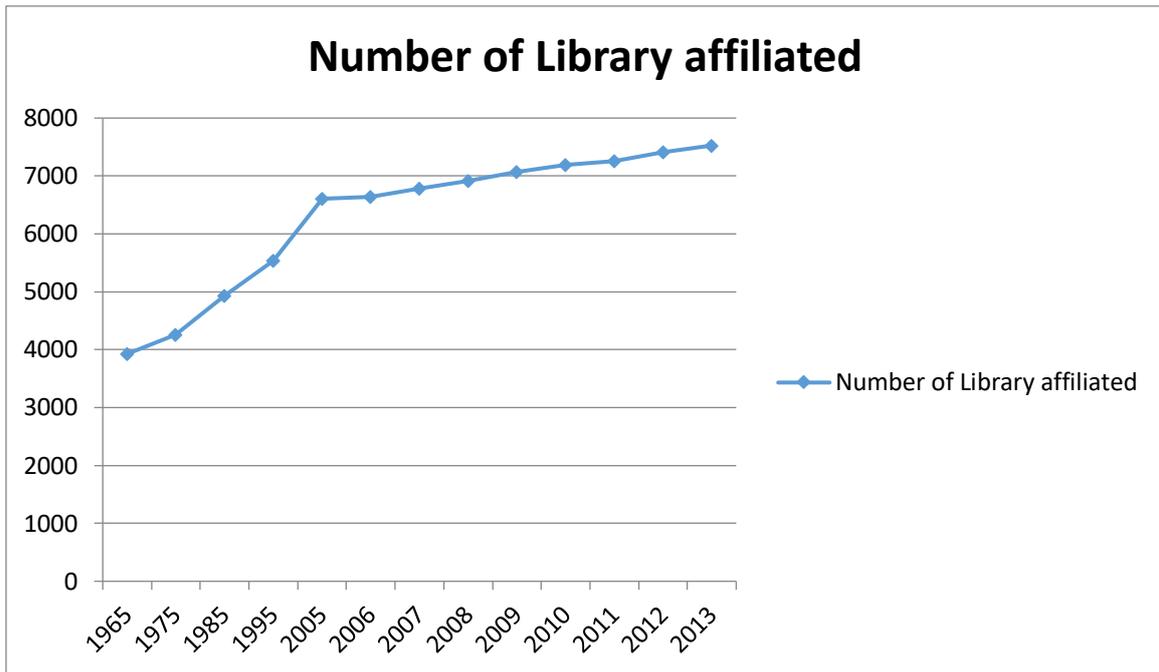
Year	Number of libraries affiliated	Number of libraries added
1965	3927	-
1975	4280	983
1985	4928	648
1995	5537	609
2005	6608	1071
2006	6640	32
2007	6786	146
2008	6913	127
2009	7075	162
2010	7191	116
2011	7252	61
2012	7410	158
2013	7526	116

Source, V P Ajithakumari AT Francis Public Library System in Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala: An investigation, *SRELS Journal of Information Management*, Vol 52(6), December 2015.

The above table shows the growth of public libraries in Kerala society. From the year of 1965 to 2013 there are 3599 new public libraries established in Kerala. Most of the libraries established in Kerala between the periods of 1995 to 2004, 1071 public libraries are established during this period. The importance of the year of 1994 for public libraries is the formation of the Kerala state library council. This indicate that the development of public libraries under Kerala State Library Council. In accordance with the available data there are 918 new public libraries are established in Kerala last eight years.

Figure

Figure 1.2 Development of the establishment of public Libraries of Kerala



Above the diagram shows the diagrammatic explanation of the establishment of public libraries of Kerala between the periods of 1965 to 2013. This is expressing the increase in the number of libraries affiliate with Kerala State Library Council.

The public library system was the idea of British. The first public library in Kerala, Trivandram Public Library was established for the British officials; gradually its doors opened for natives. The government of the princely states helps for the development of public libraries. For the smooth functioning of the library government advanced grant-in-aid. The support from the local peoples also helps for the development of public libraries. The peasant movements and national movements also helped for the growth of libraries. Public library conferences provide a systematic structure for the entire library system in Kerala. Today public libraries in Kerala are a well established network of public libraries under the control of Kerala State Library Council.

CHAPTER 3

IDEA OF PUBLIC SPHERE AND VAYANASALAS

The idea of public sphere was put forward by the German sociologist Jurgen Habermas. He defines public sphere may be conceived above all as the sphere of private people come together as public; they soon claimed the public sphere regulated from the above against the public authorities themselves, to engage them in a debate over the general rules governing relations in the basically privatized but publicly relevant sphere of commodity exchange and social labour. The medium of this political confrontation was peculiar and without historical precedent: people's public use of their reasons.¹

Citizens act as a public when they deal with the matters of general interest without being subject to coercion; thus with the guarantee that they may assemble and unite freely, and express and publicize their opinion freely. This is necessary in a public body where knowledge is imparting and receiving through a reciprocal process. It is facilitated through Medias, like Newspapers and magazines, radio and television. Benedict Anderson emphasized to make a public sphere, print media is highly essential as it prepares the ground for rational debates..² The development of public libraries helps to create a public sphere from libraries.

During the middle of the 19th century British introduced English education in India.³ That changed the existing indigenous system of education. Up to the second half of 19th century children belonging to lower class and middle class were not allowed to get educated and education was the monopoly of the upper class people. Through English education the people of both lower and middle class get educated. The public libraries helped to increase the reading habit of the people. Libraries considered as the treasure house of the knowledge. Essential functions of all public libraries are collection, organization, preservation and dissemination of knowledge to all individuals in a country.⁴

¹ Jurgen Habermas *The structural Transformation of the public sphere An inquiry into a Category of Bourgeois society* Thomas Burger, Fredrick Lawrence (trans.), Cambridge, 1991, p. 27.

² Robin Jeffrey, *Testing Concepts about Print Newspapers and Politics: Kerala India 1800 - 2009*, The journal of Asian studies, Vol.68, No. 2, May 2009, p 468

³ L.P Sharma, *History of Modern India*, Konark publications Pvt. Ltd., Delhi, 1994 p 271

⁴ V P Ajithakumari et.al., *Public Library System in Thiruvananthapuram, Kerala: An investigation*, SRELS Journal of Information Management, Vol. 52(6), December, 2015.p.1

The Centre of Community Life

The idea of centre of community life indicating the nature of public sphere within the libraries of Kerala. The rural libraries in Kerala besides collecting and distributing books and periodicals, conducted evening and night classes for the spread of literacy. They also organise group of talented villagers for performing arts. Many libraries have had separate corners devoted to children, women and such specialised groups. Many libraries also have sections devoted to agriculture. The libraries also started nursery schools for children from weak sections of the society. Since nursery schools and kindergartens are often very costly outfits to cater to the needs of the elite and upper sections of society, the library nursery schools, then called Balakairali were a boon to the education of poorer sections. Thus public libraries became a centre of knowledge sharing by various communities of the society, which gradually developed as a centre of community life

Instead of Centre of Community life, the public libraries became the centre of socio-cultural development of the society. The establishment of nursery schools for children from weaker sections was a social-welfare policy of the libraries. Specialized programmes for women supported the promotion of the women empowerment. As a public institution, libraries stood for the socio-cultural and political development of society.

Amartya Sen's opines that in certain respects, the development and quality of life in Kerala compares favourably even with that in China. Kerala has the highest literacy rate in India, the lowest child mortality rate, highest life expectancy, high level women's literacy and education, much better health standards etc. This fact of high quality of life in Kerala in India and perhaps in the third world is acknowledged even by international bodies like UNDP and World Bank. ⁵

Robin Jeffery tried to prove the connection of public sphere and development of Kerala. Kerala, India's most literate region, situated on its south-western coast, provides a lively laboratory in which to examine how print arrives, spreads, and affects people's lives. It elected a communist government in 1957 has shows the best example of the influence of print media in the life of common people. The spread of printing and the growth of news papers in Kerala suggest a three stage typology for the development of

⁵ R. Raman Nair, *People's Library Movement*, concept publishing company, New Delhi, 2003, p. 105

print, such as typology forces us to look more closely at the political economy of printing and news papers and highlights inadequacies in the ways in which public sphere, print capitalism and public action.⁶

Public sphere was the result of the print culture. The public libraries of Kerala based on reading habit of people. The people came into libraries for reading. The illiterate people also came along with the literate and accruing knowledge through their literate friends. There are several literacy programmes conducted by the public libraries of Kerala

The Cochin government, as a part of their Adult Education Programme, established rural libraries in different parts of the state as experimental measures since 1926.⁷The emergence of public library movement lead to the establishment of public libraries in the nook and corner of the state and doors of these libraries were opened to all irrespective of their caste, creed, sex or religion.

Adult Education Programme and Kerala Model of Development Kerala appear to be a place where quality of life has improved relatively peacefully and without massive disruption. Through the story should not be romanticized Kerala nevertheless suggests a tantalizing social equation for those who seek to improve the material lives of poor people in agrarian societies.⁸The Kerala model of development was based on the living standard of the people. The educated people try to maintain better living standard in all the sphere of their life as health, family planning, wealth etc. In short Kerala model of development is directly related with level of education.

Public libraries of Kerala played an important role in the field of education. They conducted adult schools, other educational programmes, nursery schools, children, women education programmes etc. Through the educational practices the public libraries creates the mob or the public sphere. The people come together and sharing their ideas, made discussions on public problems, programmes and common goals.

Through the public sphere people share their ideas. During the period of national movements public sphere played an important role for the development of national movements. The idea was circulated through the public sphere during the time of national movements. The idea about the freedom and anti colonial sentiments was circulated through the public spheres. The print media as one of the essential factor of public sphere.

⁶ Robin Jeffery *op.cit.*, p.468

⁷ A Paslithi, *Public Library Movement Kerala*, Kalpaz Publications, Delhi, 2006, p.46

⁸ Robin Jeffery *op.cit.*, p.469

Public sphere how it emerged changed and contorted and the role of print and press in the making of a public sphere often fit with the experience of Kerala. In short the public sphere works only with print and regular publications.⁹

The public libraries played a virtual role in the field of national movements. After the civil- disobedience movement(1931) the library movement gathered momentum in Kerala. The youth who came out of jails, decided to strengthen the freedom movement by the organising the agriculturists and labourers. They were the leftists in the congress party, and later they formed a socialist group in the party itself. The pioneers of them were P Krishna Pillai, EMS Namboodiripad, A K Gopalan, K P R Gopalan and K A Keraleean who opened a number of libraries in different parts of Malabar.¹⁰ The emergence of the public libraries of the Malabar is based on the national and present movements. It was entirely different from the origin of public libraries in Cochin and Travancore

Most of the leaders of new socialist party, who were the workers of library movement in the 1930s and later they became the prominent leaders of the communist party of India. In those days libraries received one or more news papers and somebody would read it aloud and others, especially illiterates, listened to it.¹¹The people also discussed about what the reader read and made their own ideas and interpretations on it. Most of the people gathered in reading room, leaders would comment on the news in the newspaper. Doubts would be raised and cleared; it would sometimes lead political discussions.¹² These libraries attracted labours, agriculturalists and educated men. They used these institutions as centres for the social and political activities of that place. ¹³

As a result of this, the idea of library movement began to spread in every nook and corner of Malabar. The leftists in the Indian national congress had started a new library called Sree Harshan Library at Mangattu in Kannur District.¹⁴After the establishment of Sree Harshan Library these are many libraries established in the Malabar region. This libraries conducted adult education programmes and night classes for the working classes. ¹⁵

⁹ Robin Jeffery *op.cit.*, p.468

¹⁰ A Paslithi ,*op.cit.*, p 46

¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 46

¹² K Nayanar . My Struggle : An Autobiography, Vikas Private House,New Delhi, 1982 p.9

¹³ A Paslithi ,*op.cit.*, p 46

¹⁴ *Ibid.*, p 46

¹⁵ *Ibid.*, p.47

Trough the modern education a group of people accruing western knowledge they came to be known as middle class. They utilized libraries for reading purpose. Illiterate people also came to libraries for listing news from educate. Gradually public libraries act as a public sphere, peoples comes and sharing their ideas an made discussions on public matters. The creation of public sphere helps for the development of national movements as well as educated society.

CHAPTER 4

GRAMEENA VAYANASALA, EDAYAR

Edayar is a small village in Koothattukulam Municipal Corporation in Ernakulam district of Kerala and located at a distance of 5 km from Koothattukulam town and 6 km from Piravom in Kerala, India. The etymology of the name *Edayar* came from two words in Malayalam. 'Eda' and 'Aar'. The word 'Eda' means in-between and the word 'Aar' means a small river. A small stream which is part of a tributary to Periyar River is passing through this village. This water stream was the life line of this small village. The water from this stream was used for agriculture and all other domestic uses by the villagers.

The main occupation of the people is agriculture. Rubber, vegetables, Coconut, Pineapple and Paddy are the main crops cultivated in the village. Meat Products of India (MPI) is the only public-sector organisation situated in this village.

The village has a primary school (L.P.S. Edayar) which is run by the State Government of Kerala, and an upper primary school (Jawahar U.P.S.), under private ownership are the only educational institutions in the village. The villagers depend on St. Johns High School, Vadakara and Govt. High School Namakuzhy situated at a distance of about 3 km from the village for their children's high school education. Most of the people in this village are literate. Perhaps every house in the village can proudly say that there is at least one graduate in every family.

The majority of people of the village consist of two communities namely Jacobite Syrian Christians and Ezhavas a prominent community of Hindus. St. Mary's Jacobite Syrian Orthodox Church, Kunnathu Mahadeva temple and Siva temple are situated in the village.

Edayar Grameena Vayanasala is the one of the public institutions in the smallest agricultural village. And it is one of the "Grade A" public libraries in Kerala, which situates at the heart of the village. It is affiliated to Kerala State Library Council and has a huge collection book on various subjects. The Vayanasala plays an important role among the social, cultural, well as political spheres of the village.

Formation and Growth

Edayar Grameena Vayanasala as established earlier in 1924 as Martha Mariyam Vayanasala in St. Mary's Jacobite Syriac Orthodox Church.¹The library was start with good collection of books and that opened for all the public. This expressing the friendly relations among the various religious communities in the village. During the period of 1947-48 the ownership of the library were under taken by the young men of the village as well as church. The young men of the village named N I Abraham, C Mathew John, K V Scariya Kunnummel, Thomas Vattapillil, Johny Chelaparambath and Joseph Vettikkaparambil are worked for to give more public face for Martha Mariyam Vayanasala.²

By the 1948 Vayanasala start to working at Vattappilli Pedika with the blessings of the church vicar. K V Scariya Kunnummel and N I Abraham elected as the president and secretary respectively.³The new atmosphere granted more popular face to vayanasala an came to be known as Grameena Vayanasala Edayar.

During the period of Chinnan Chinnamathil vayanasala shifted from Vattappilli Pedika to the building owner by Johny Chelaparambath. After few years with the support of the people in Edayar Vayanasala owned about half acres of land at Peedikappadi.⁴ By 1964 Vayanasala built a building at Peedikappadi and shifted from old building to new building.

After the shifting, library constructed new building with memorial hall reading and circulation rooms and independent office. A vast play ground with an open air auditorium serve several cultural events happen through many years in this life.⁵ Today Edayar Grameena Vayanasala is one of the A Grade vayanasala of Kerala State Library Council.

¹ Project Gutenberg Self Publishing Press, <http://www.gutenberg.us>
Interview with P K Sahadevan, Ex-librarian cum Secretary of Edayar Grameena Vayanasala,
12/05/2021

² *Ibid.*

³ *Ibid.*

⁴ Project Gutenberg, *Op.cit.*

⁵ *Ibid.*

Administration of the Vayanasala

In addition to receiving revenues from the members, Edayar Grameena Vayanasala also receives government grant from the Kerala State Government. The grant suffices for purchasing a fair amount of new books and for organizing varied library activities. Various government sources and local governmental body also provide grants to the library. Every year about 500 new books are added to the collection.⁶

Election of the Governing Body

Administration Committee of Edayar Grameena Vayanasala comprises 10 members who serve for a period of 3 years and are elected by the members of the library from its members. The president and secretary are belonging to two political domains as Left Democratic Front and Unite Democratic Front. The election procedures follow the basic model of Indian election.⁷

Activities of the Vayanasala

Edayar Vayanasala conducted several programmes for the welfare of the society within its own limitations. The following programmes are conducted by Vayanasala;

Saksharatha Kendram

Vayanasala organized an adult education programme for illiterate people. From the establishment Vayanasala it worked for the educational programmes. Now the participants of the programmes are very less.⁸

Nursery School for Infants

Vayanasala started a nursery school for kids. Mainly it was focused on the lower sections of the society. Government also gives supports for this programme. Today the

⁶ Project Gutenberg, *Op.cit.*

⁷ Interview, *Op.cit.*

⁸ Library Record, EdayarGrameenaVayanasala.

number of students is very minor although it was smoothly functioned. The local women worked as the teachers as the institution. Today it was under Government programme⁹.

Other Programmes

Vayanasala conducted several programmes that are sponsored and none sponsored programmes. Women empowerment programmes integrated with *Kudhasree*, career guidance classless, seminars etc. The students of Edayar schools both LPS and UPS are the most beneficiaries of these programmes. Local government also held programmes in association with library. The local peoples also support and give economic supports for these programmes.¹⁰ These programmes indicate the social welfare policy of Edayar Grameena Vayanasala.

Celebrations of the Major Events

Vayanasala celebrated all the events with its own people. Majority of the people of Eayar participate all the celebrations conducted by Vayanasala. Republic day, Environmental day, National reading day, Indian Independence day, Gandhijayathi and the Children's day etc, are the important celebrations of vayanasala. On these days vayanasala conducted several programmes like easy competition quiz competition reading competition other educational cultural programmes. Save nature programmes are undertakes on Environmental day and Gandhijayathi.¹¹

Onam

Onam as the important programme celebrate by vayanasala. On that ay vayanasala organises several programmes. Vayanasala organizes several games for kids to adults and giving prizes to the winners. Onam celebration as the most popularised programme undertaken by Vayanasala. While the closing section of the Onam celebration Vayanasala

⁹ Interview, *Op.cit.*

¹⁰ *Ibid.*

¹¹ *Ibid.*

Library records, *Op.cit.*

gives the cash awards and trophies for educational achievements like top mark scorer from Edayar schools and SSLC plus two winners.¹²

Grameena Vayanasala Edayar plays an important in the village. Majority of the people are uses vayanasala for their needs. The participation of the people indicated popularity of the vayanasala among the villagers. The educational programmes conducted by vayanasala very fruitful for the students of village. The programmes held by vayanasala expressing the welfare policy of the vayanasala. Above these Eayar Grameena Vayanasala has its own role for the development of Eayar region.

¹² Interview, *Op.cit.*

CHAPTER 5

EDAYAR GRAMEENA VAYANASALA LAST TWO DECADES

Edayar Grameena Vayanasala celebrates its 97th year of its establishment this year. This chapter discusses about the last twenty years of Vayanasala. From the establishment, Edayar Grameena Vayanasala plays an important role in the development of Edayar society. The present life style impels man to keep distance from the habit of reading. The massive use of social medias was eliminated the habit of reading among the people. However, the vayanasala brings new initiatives by ensuring the participation of the people. The following are the recent programmes conducted by vayanasala.

Mobile Library

Recently the Vayanasala started a new programme named Mobile Library. Aim of this programme is to make books available to all kinds of readers at home and there by retain the habit of reading. For the elderly people it is difficult to come to the library and collect books.¹This programme was much effective and useful during the period of lock downs.

Monthly Meeting of Elderly People

Vayanasala conduct a new programme for the elderly people as a gathering once in a month.²The old generation is the regular users of vayanasala and they take the efforts for the development present vayanasala. The programme is for sharing their experiences and memories. This programme also aims at the welfare of the elderly people. The participation of the people is favourable for its first meeting. Due to the spread of covid 19 vayanasala failed to continue this programme regularly.

¹Interview with P K Sahadevan, Ex-Librarian um Secretary of Edayar Grameena Vayanasala, 12/05/2021

²Ibid.,
Library Record, Edayar Grameena Vayanasala.

Formation of Arts and Sports Club

Vayanasala recently established a new club named Edayar Grameena Vayanasala Arts and Sports Club. This aims to ensure the better participation of youth in the activities of vayanasala.

Kung Fu Training Centre

Vayanasala started a Kung Fu training centre for the people in the area. It was attended by people from different age groups. Children are the major participants of this programme, although women and men also take the benefits from this programme.³ This is an example for the social cultural developmental programmes conducted by Edayar vayanasala.

Youngsters of Edayar

Youth considered as the asset of the state. In this study already mentioned the role played by the youth of Edayar for the development of Edayar Grameena Vayanasala. With the coming of new social Medias, the younger generation is backward for the use of vayanasala. The youth comes every evening for playing cricket, football, chess, caroms, and badminton etc. The participation of the youth in the case of public activities is very high, but in the case of library use it is at the lowest proportion.

PSC Training Centre

Vayanasala established a PSC training centre for enabling candidates to appear for competitive examinations. It was very successful in the beginning but later it became a failure as the representation of the people decreased. PSC training centre ceased its operations with the effect of covid 19 pandemic.⁴

Vayanasala during the Lockdown Period

At the time of lockdown period library face many difficulties for the smooth functioning. During this period the number of participants was very less compared to the pre-covid period. Furthermore use of public libraries was much reduced in fear of

³Project Gutenberg Self Publishing Press, <http://www.gutenberg.us>

⁴Interview,op.cit.

covid 19 pandemics.⁵Vayanasala organized to give kit for sixty families and advanced fun to CM covid care.

Mass Participation of Vayanasala Last Two Decades

In the present society people are more far from the reading habit. They mostly concentrate on online social Medias. People can spend huge amount of time for using social media. Decreased reading habits significantly reduced the use of vayanasala. The following table shows the participation of the people in vayanasala.

Table 5.1 details about the members of vayanasala.

Year	Members of vayanasala
2000	1182
2005	1053
2010	884
2015	672
2020	331

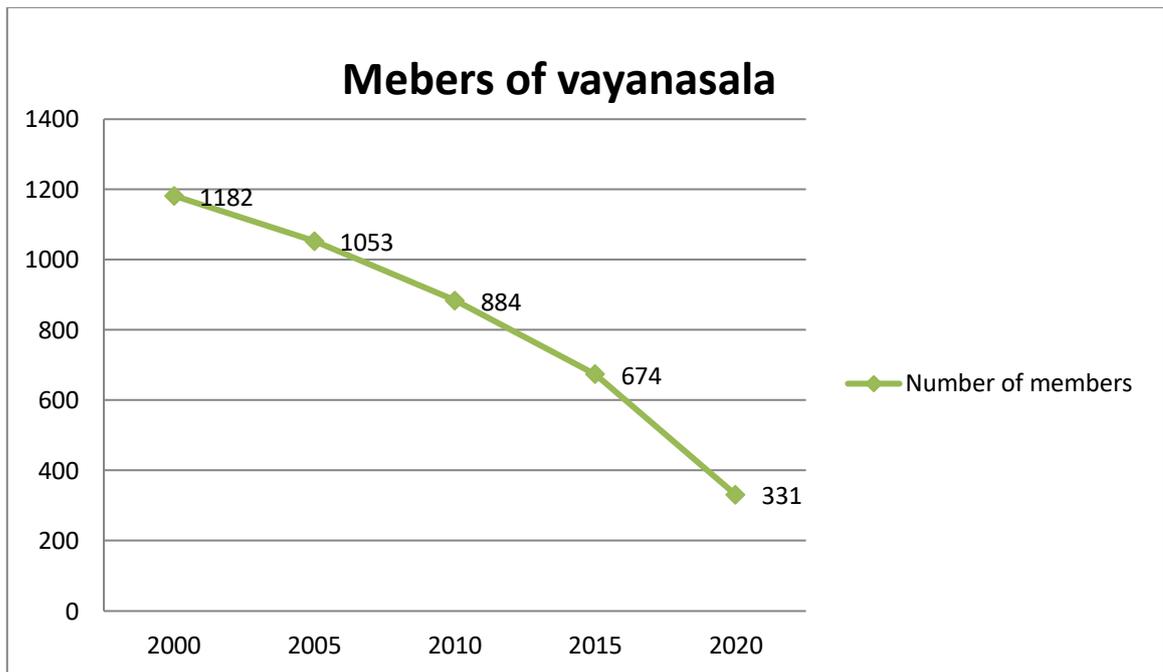
Source: Library Record of Edayar Grameena Vayanasala

The table shows the decreasing tendency of its members. There are 1182 members in year of 2000 and 2020 it was only 331 members. This gives a clear picture about the attitude towards members.

The following diagram illustrates the diagrammatic explanation about the members of Edayar Grameena Vayanasala

⁵Interview,op.cit.

Figure 5.1 Members of Edayar Grameena Vayanasala



Above diagram shows the number of the members of vayanasala. The diagram expressing that 851 members are cancelled their library membership within the last twenty years. There are 341 members' cancelled their membership within last five years. This figure shows the decreasing tendency of reading habit among the village people. This shows that people changed their attitude towards reading or they focused on another area.

Classification of the Library Members on the basis of gender

Kerala has the first place among the Indian states in the case of sex ratio it is 1084 women for 1000 men.⁶ The following table shows the gender wise classification of vayanasala members during period 2000 to 2020.

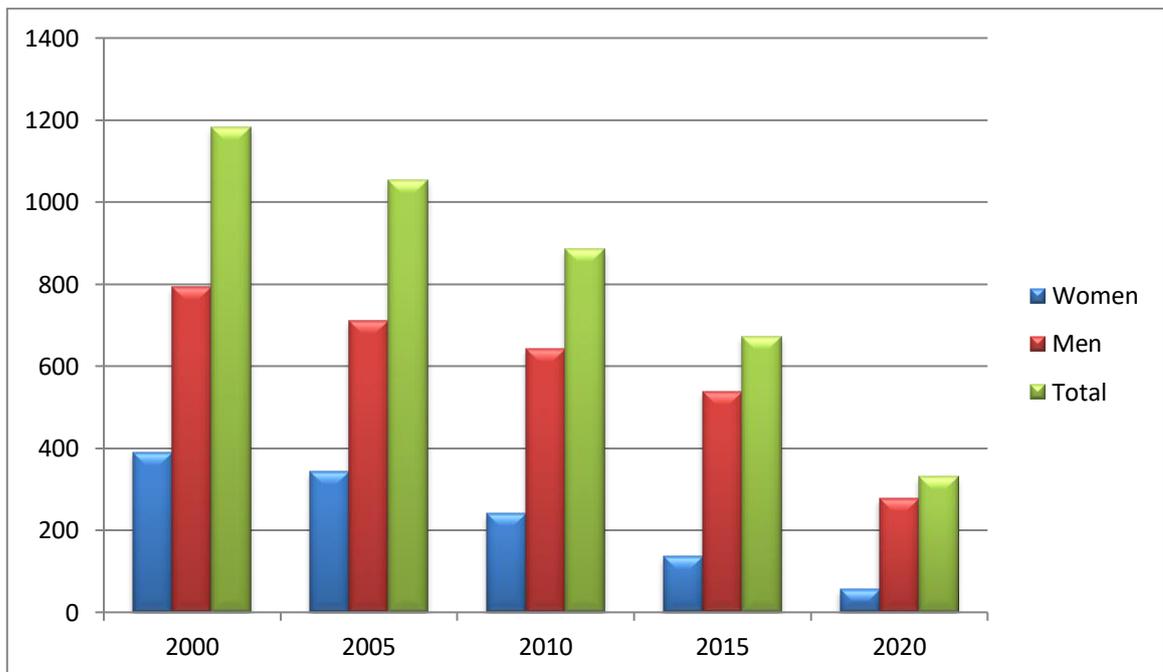
⁶ Census Report of India 2011 www.censusindia.gov.in

Table 5.2 Classification of the members on the basis of gender.

Year	Women	Men	Total
2000	390	792	1182
2005	343	710	1053
2010	241	643	884
2015	135	537	672
2020	54	277	331

Source Library record of Edayar Grameena Vayanasala

Figure 5.2 Classification of the members on the basis of gender



This diagram shows the gender wise classification of the library members. By the year 2000 there are 390 women are the members of vayanasala that was the 33% of its total members. By the year 2020 women is only 17 % of its total members this indicate that the participation women will reduced around 50%. This diagram shows that male participation in 2000 was just 67% of its total number by 2020 it is increased from 67 to 84% of its total members.

Classification of the Library Members on the basis of age

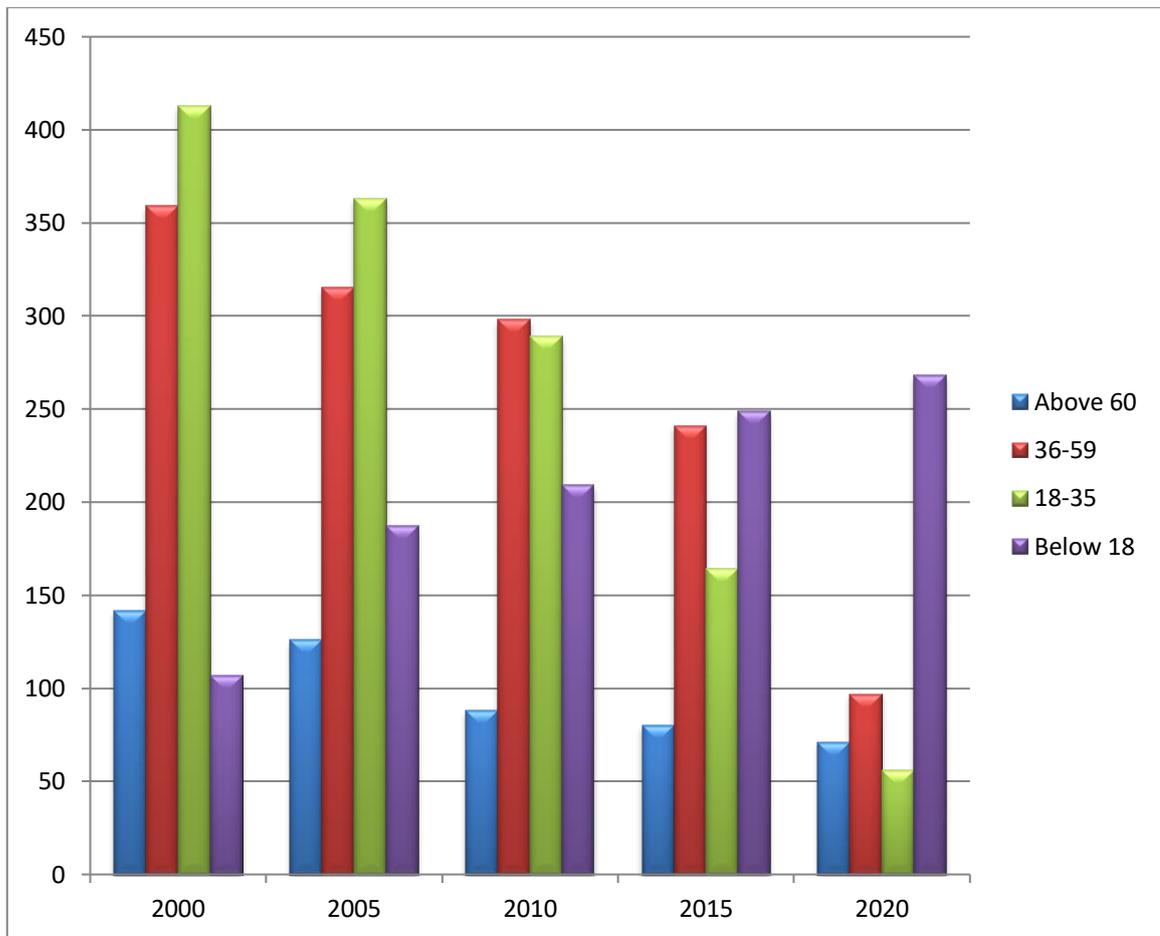
The following table and diagram expressing the age wise classification of the Library members. For the age wise classification, total members of library divided into four age groups that are, above 60 years considered as the elderly people, between the age of 36 to 59 as the Middle Ages, between 18-35 years consider as the youngsters and the students below 18 years.

Table 5.3 Classification of the Library Members on the basis of age

Different age groups	Year 2000	Year 2005	Year 2010	Year 2015	Year 2020
Above 60	142	126	88	80	71
36-59	359	315	298	241	97
18- 35	413	363	289	164	56
Below 18	268	249	209	187	107
Total	1182	1053	884	672	331

Source Library record of Edayar Grameena Vayanasala

Figure 5.3 Classification of library members on the basis of age



Above the Diagram shows the gender wise classification of the vayanasa members. With the records of Edayar Grameena Vayanasa by the year of 2000 there are 1182 members the youngsters of Edayar as the most number in members of the vayanasa during that year they belong to 35% of the total member of the vayanasa. By the year of 2015 and 2020 number of the members of youngsters group was decreased, the participation of the membership was only 24% and 17% respectively 2015 and 2020. Students of Edayar as the major group in participation in 2020 they belong to 32% of total members.

Edayar Grameena Vayanasa implements several mass-oriented programmes for gathering their attention. The vayanasa aims to more participation of the people. With the present scenario people are focusing on modern technologies. They have no time for

using vayanasala. At this juncture Edayar Grameena Vayanasala giving more popular face to the institution without concerned on reading and focusing on other activities.

CHAPTER 6

CONCLUSION

The foregoing analysis about the role of public library system for the transformation of the Kerala society tried to find out the exact changes that happened in the traditional socio-cultural scenario of the Kerala society after the middle of the 18th century. The present study exclusively focuses on the socio-cultural as well as political changes happened in the Kerala society after the introduction of public libraries in Kerala. And the study also touches on the relationship between Kerala Models of Development and public library system of Kerala.

By the end of 18th century and 19th century Kerala society witnessed tremendous changes in all spheres of life. This was mainly the result of western education and philosophy. Socio-reform movements played an important role for the development of the society. They started libraries for peoples.

Travancore Public Library, the first library of Kerala established in 1829 by maharaja Swati Tirunal. This was initially started for the British officials. Later its doors were opened for native peoples. Followed by Travancore Public Library, there are several public libraries established in Travancore State. The first public library of Cochin, Ernakulam Public Library, was established in 1861. It was followed by government established several libraries within the state. The origin and development of public libraries in the Malabar related with the national and peasant movements.

Before the establishment of the public libraries in Kerala there were existed a number of private libraries but they not provide books for peoples. Public libraries of Kerala played an important role in the field of education. They conducted adult schools, other educational programmes, nursery schools, children, women education programmes etc. Through the educational practices the public libraries creates the mob or the public sphere. The people of the village came together and sharing their ideas and made discussions on public problems, programmes and common goals.

Through the public sphere people share their ideas. During the period of national movements public sphere played an important rule for the development of national

movements. The idea was circulated through the public sphere during the time of national movements. The idea about the freedom and anti colonial sentiments was circulated through the public spheres.

The print media is one of the essential factors of public sphere. Public sphere how it emerged changed and contorted and the role of print and press in the making of a public sphere often fit with the experience of Kerala. In short the public sphere cannot happen without print and regular publications.

Libraries attracted labours, agriculturalists and educated men; they used these institutions as centres for the social and political activities of the village. As a result of this, the idea of library movement began to spread in every nook and corner of Kerala. Libraries conducted adult education programmes and night classes that helped for the literacy among the villagers.

Edayar Grameena Vayanasala is the one of the public institutions in the smallest agricultural village. And it is one of the "Grade A" public libraries in Kerala, which situates at the heart of the village. Edayar Grameena Vayanasala established as Martha Mariyam Vayanasala, by St. Marys Jacobite Syrian Orthodox Church Edayar Grameena Vayanasala Edayar plays an important in the village. Majority of the people are uses vayanasala for their needs. The participation of the people indicated popularity of the vayanasala among the villagers.

The educational programmes conducted by vayanasala very fruitful for the students of village. The programmes held by vayanasala expressing the welfare policy of the vayanasala. Above these Eayar Grameena Vayanasala has its own role for the development of Eayar region.

Edayar Grameena Vayanasala implements several mass-oriented programmes for gathering their attention. The vayanasala aims to more participation of the people. With the present scenario people are focusing on modern technologies. They have no time for using vayanasala. At this juncture Edayar Grameena Vayanasala giving more popular face to the institution without concerned on reading and focusing on other activities.

As a social institution rural libraries in Kerala were very vibrant and effective in educating and informing people. These libraries were the centres of the community's social and political life and they led the cultural and literary activities of the society. Committed library activists did their job voluntarily and selflessly. During a period when the circulation of newspapers and periodicals was limited, these libraries and reading rooms served as windows to the world of knowledge for the rural population. They were also the information centres of the village. For the oppressed and the underprivileged sections, these institutions proved to be the first step towards social emancipation. The public space created by the rural libraries was politically and socially also a liberating one.

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APPENDIX



Grameena Vayanasala Edayar



Programme conducted by Eayar Grameena Vayanasala



First shelf of Grameena Vayanasala Edayar From establishment (1924)



St. Mary's Jacobite Syrian Orthodox Church Edayar



Edayar Pallipadi



Robin Jeffrey



Jürgen Habermas,