

Gandhi Memorial Museum Library Madurai: A Study

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Abstract : *This paper presents an overview of Gandhi Memorial Museum Library Madurai, Tamilnadu and its historical importance. This paper also gives a brief knowledge of library management system of Gandhi Memorial Museum Library. The main purpose of this study is to find out the present status of Gandhi Memorial Museum Library. This paper may be useful the research scholars in getting the knowledge about Gandhi Memorial Museum Library. This paper also helpful in improving its services and status in this Information age.*

Keyword : *Museum, Tamilnadu, Library, Information Age.*

Introduction

Historical records, Traditional, Cultural and objects conservative need of time. Museums play a very important role in this field and now the museum today is not merely a repository of objects. It is concerned with the acquisition of the object as an integral part of specific programme of scientific research, education, conservation and demonstration of national and cultural heritage.

Museums are among the most successful educational and entertainment institution of our time, if constant increase in attendance and in number of new museums being established is a reliable measure of success.

Use of the word “museum” during the 19th and most of the 20th century represented a collection of cultural material to which the public had access. Later, the museum has been changed to represent the historic and artistic collection, open for public interest. With the invent use of ICT application, the museum is now being digitized.

The Importance of Museums

Museums provide a unique interactive experience of getting up close to things we usually only see in books, newspapers or on the television. Seeing the Mona Lisa for example, is a totally different experience to seeing one of the millions of printed versions; the perception you get of something from a second-hand source is often completely different to the one you get when you see something with your own eyes. Cities all over the world have museums dedicated to preserve the history through paintings, sculptures and elements of our history. But how important are museums to people living in the 21th century?

Some people claim that museums use up money which would be better spent on other thing. Keeping museums in perfect conditions as the time goes by has a really high cost and the price it is earned by the tickets is not as high as the money invested .

However, other people believe that if we understand how things happened in the past, we would be able to understand why we are today and lead better our own steps to get a future of we will not regret. The importance of make them a accessible to all ages people is seem as a good advantage instead of a lost of money. This is because Museums are a tourism motor and that money which is said to be wasted on Museums is in fact recover through the tourism.

To sum up, it seems to me that Museums are a firm base of our education as well as a great ways to make researches that could increase our culture. They are not only incredible building to visit and delighting painting to look at but historical pieces of our own self as a countries and as a human beings without those we were incomplete and lost.

Definition of Museum

Museum, as we see it today, is the result of a growth of several centuries. Originally the term 'Museum' was applied to a place sacred to the 'Muses' with whom glorious events of the past, folk art, music and poetry, gaiety and harmony were associated. These 'Muses', nine in number, are the goddesses or inspirers of all learning and art.'

'UNESCO' in its publication 'Regional Seminar on the Educational Role of Museums' has defined museum thus : "A museum is a permanent establishment, administered in the general interest, for the purpose of preserving, studying enhancing by various means and in particular, of exhibiting to the public for its delegation and instructive groups of objects and specimens of cultural value; artistic, historical, scientific and technological collections, botanical and zoological gardens and aquarium etc."

According to ICOM (International Council Of Museums) considering this antiquity and this omnipresence, it is odd that the word "Museum" has been so hard to define. But there are so many different kinds of museums (like private and public) and they offer so many different kinds of services, that discovery of a single statement as a common denominator to describe all organizations that call themselves "museums" has proved nearly impossible.

According to AAM, "Museum is an organized and permanent non-profit institution essentially educational or aesthetic in purpose.

Introduction

Gandhi Memorial Museum established in 1959, is a memorial museum for Gandhi. located in the city of Madurai in Tamil Nadu, India. Known as Gandhi Museum, it is now one of the five Gandhi Sanghralayas in the country. The building that houses the Gandhi Memorial Museum, Madurai is the historic Tamukkam Palace belonging to Rani Mangammal of Nayak Dynasty built about 1670 A.D. It was in 1955 the palace with about 13 acres of land was gifted by the Tamil Nadu State Government to the All India Gandhi Smarak Nidhi for the purpose of housing Gandhi Memorial Museum. Gandhi Memorial Museum in Madurai comes under the Peace Museums Worldwide selected by United Nations.



The Museum was inaugurated by Jawaharlal Nehru on 15 April 1959. Among the exhibits at the Museum is part of the blood-stained garment worn by Gandhiji when he was assassinated by Nathuram Godse. Other exhibits in the Museum include a original letter written personally by Gandhi to Shri Narayanan Sathsangi of Devakottai. A congratulatory message sent by Gandhi to freedom fighter and poet Subramania Bharati is also preserved in this Museum. Yet another interesting letter is the one, written by the Mahatma to Adolf Hitler addressing him as ‘Dear Friend’. The Museum contains a ‘Visual Biography of Bapuji’ containing photos, paintings, sculptures, manuscripts, quotations and some of the selected Photostat copies of many of the letters written by him.

The Museum galleries are divided into three major sections, viz., “India Fights for Freedom”, “Visual Biography of Mahatma Gandhi” and “Relics and Replicas”. Also a Philatelic Gallery on Gandhi is functioning in the ground floor.

The Khadi and Village Industries Section exhibits fine South Indian village industries and handicrafts associated with Gandhiji.. The museum also displays the blood stained dhoti of Gandhiji, which he was wearing at the time of his assassination.

Museum Objectives

- To collect, preserve and display Gandhiji’s records consisting of his letters, correspondence, books cine-films, manuscripts, photographs, voice records, effects and mementos etc.
- To promote the study, diffusion and understanding of Gandhiji’s life and message through the establishment of Sangrahalayas, Libraries Auditoriums, Study Centres, Archives, Gandhi Bhavans in Universities, Gandhi Galleries, Gandhi Shelves etc. in places of public interest and through other media of communication
- To take proper and necessary steps to preserve and protect various places associated with Gandhiji’s life and work.

- To acquire by private negotiations or through the machinery of the Land Acquisition Act immovable properties wherever situated connected with Gandhiji's life for carrying out the objects mentioned above.
- To publish literature, periodicals, books, brochures, booklets to propagate ideals thoughts and teachings of Gandhiji or in the aid of the memorials and to arrange film-show etc. in furtherance of the objects.

Library Information

The Library located in the northern wing of the main building is one of the largest libraries in South India for Gandhian Studies / Peace Studies. The library was inaugurated by Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, First Prime Minister of India and opened for public on 15th May 1959. The library is having total area 3000 sq. ft. out of which 1500 sq. ft. is available for reading and 1000 sq. ft. for stack room. Library building is constructed with good ventilation, including proper arrangement of lighting also.

The library is well furnished, air conditioning. The Library is totally computerized having its own software. All the activities of library being through this software. All the library staff are aware IT services. IT awareness Programmes were organized by the library for the faculty members.

Library Services / Facilities

- Lending
- Circulation of books for the members only.
- Circulation of periodicals for the members only
- CD-DVD based services.
- Reference and information services.
- Newspaper Clipping Service.
- Reprographic Services.
- Bibliographic Service.
- Internet Service.
- Selective Dissemination of Information.
- Current Awareness Service.
- Inter library loan services.
- Indexing and abstracting services.
- Online data based services

Gandhi Memorial Museum Library



Collection

The library is belonging 28000 books, most of them are related with Gandhiji. There are about 20,000 bound volumes in the library. Photostat copies of about 2,70,000 letters of Gandhiji and 62 reels of Micro-films are the very important and valuable part of the collections in the Library. Five study alcoves have been provided in the first floor of the Library for Research Scholars. Readers forum and Book Review Meetings are held periodically in the Library. A research section is also functioning, books are also published. The books in the Library have been divided into two sections, viz. 'Gandhiana' and 'General'. The 'Gandhiana' section includes all books and journals by Gandhiji, and on Gandhiji, his philosophy and ideology, and those on the Freedom Movement in India from 1757 to 1947.

The 'General' section includes books and journals on subjects other than those covered under the 'Gandhiana'. Under the 'General Category', the Library has a wide collection of books on Religion, Philosophy, History, Political Science, Economics, Sociology, and the books under the 'Gandhiana' section are distinguished from those under the 'General' section by the symbol (-) prefixed to the Call Number. The books are kept grouped according to the subjects. The grouping has been done deriving Main Classes from Dr. S. R. Ranganathan's scheme of 'Colon Classification'. The scheme of classification has further been enlarged by assigning new numbers to the subjects specific to Gandhian and allied literature, such as the Gandhian ideology of Truth, Non-Violence, Satyagraha, Swaraj, Gram Swaraj, Sarvodaya, Bread Labour, Trusteeship, Constructive Programme, etc. As the Library has a large collection of books in the subject-fields of Autobiography, Biography, Reminiscences, Tributes and Appreciations of Mahatma Gandhi, such groups have been assigned separate Class Numbers. Biographies of leaders such as Jawaharlal Nehru, Rajendra Prasad, Vallabhbhai Patel, B. R. Ambedkar, Jinnah and others, are kept along with their own writings or 'works' so that a visitor may find material for the study of the whole personality at one place.

Mahatma Gandhi Papers

About 25,000 manuscript documents (photo-copies) are available in the Library in the form of 136 bound registers. The collections are named as Sabarmati Ashram and Gandhi Nidhi (SN and GN) Papers. The documents comprise of letters, telegrams, notes, speeches, minutes of proceedings and other material relating to Gandhiji and freedom struggle. Major part of the collection comprises of letters etc. written by Mahatma Gandhi to other persons. However, a significant number of letters etc. written by others to Mahatma Gandhi are also available in this collection. All documents are numbered and indexed to facilitate reference. Xerox copies of selected documents can be supplied, on demand.

The Research and Publication

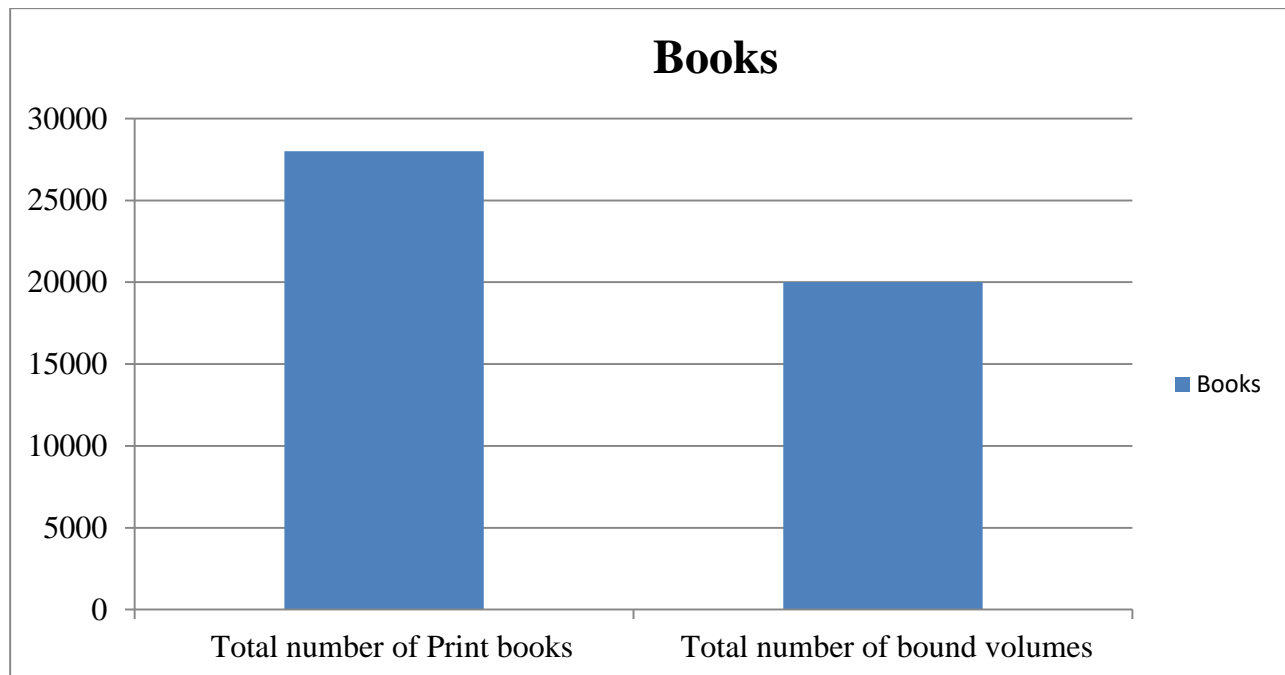
The Research and Publication Wing of the museum is in the first floor of the Library building. This wing undertakes translating specific writings of Mahatma Gandhi from English to Tamil since all the 100 volumes of the collected works of Mahatma Gandhi are not available in Tamil. So far books on Swadeshi, Bhagavads Gita, etc., are published. Editing and publication of various titles are also undertaken under the auspices of this section of Gandhi Memorial Museum, Madurai. Following is the list of publications

- Doctor Martin Luther King,
- Homage to Mahatma
- Anugundum Mahatmavum (Tamil)
- Mahatmavukku Anaithulaga Anjali (Tamil)
- Voice of a Great soul, etc.

Library Collection

A. Books

Sr. No.	Resources (Type of Library Materials)	Total
01	Total number of Print books	28000
02	Total number of bound volumes	20000

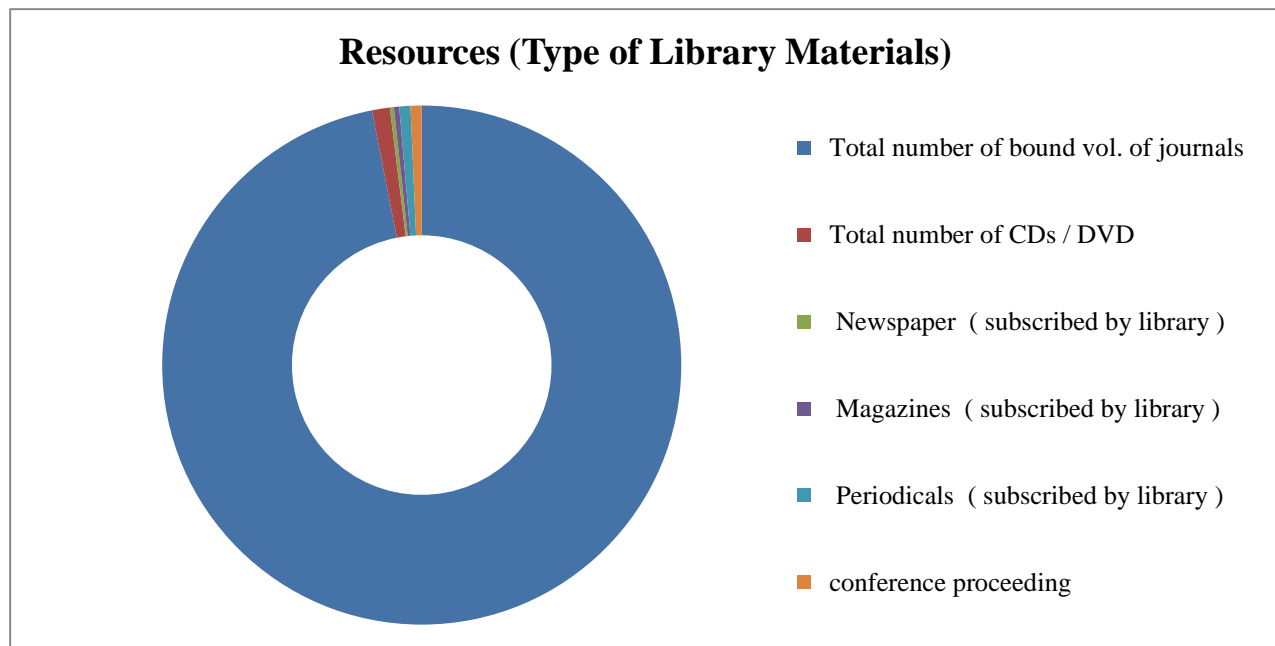


In the library collection (books) under study , It is observed that over 28,000 printed books are available

for the esteemed members of Gandhi Memorial Museum Library. They also have more than 20,000 bound volumes ..

B. Others

Sr. No.	Resources (Type of Library Materials)	Total
01	Total number of bound vol. of journals	3500
02	Total number of CDs / DVD	40
03	Newspaper (subscribed by library)	9
04	Magazines (subscribed by library)	12
05	Periodicals (subscribed by library)	25
06	Conference proceeding	25
07		

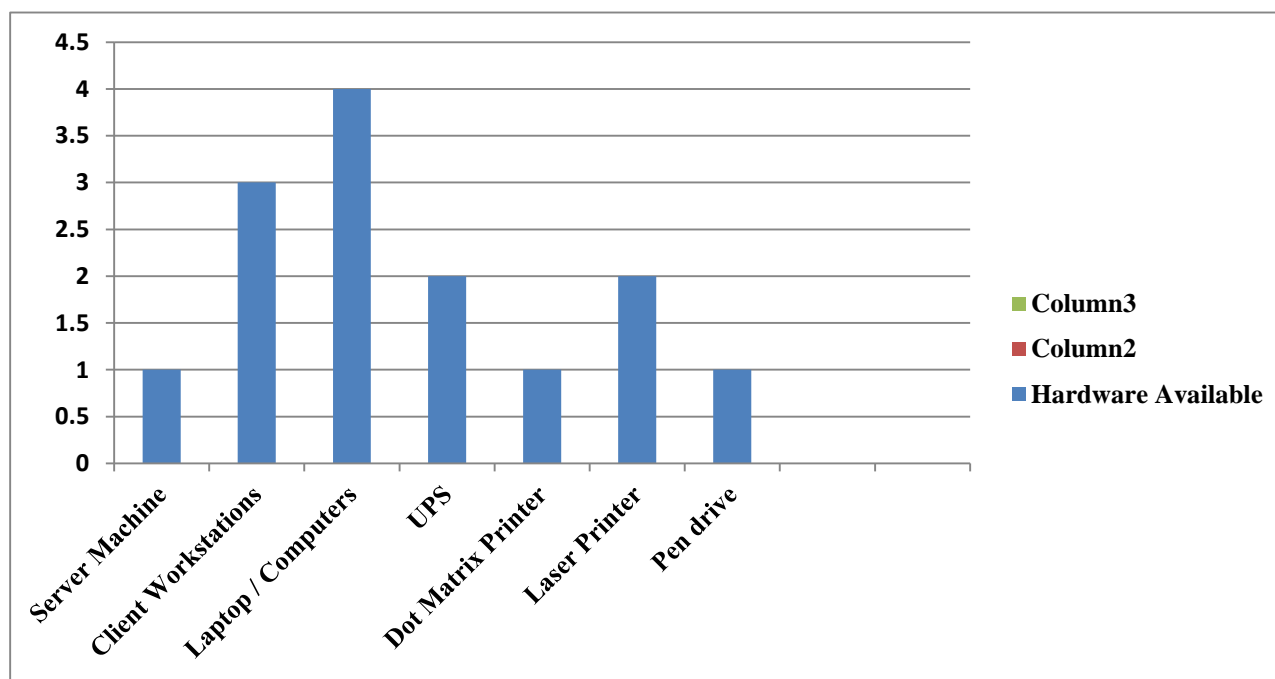


It has been observed that the well known journals subscribing more than three hundred and five . More than forty CDs & DVDs are also available for the users. More than nine newspapers are available for readers. The library also subscribing more than twelve well known magazines for their members. In one year more than twenty five periodicals are subscribed for the library. Twenty five conference proceeding are available for the valuable readers as well as museum library

Details of Library Automation

A. Hardware Available

Sr. No.	Hardware Items Available	Total
i	Server Machine	01
ii	Client Workstations	03
iii	Laptop / Computers	04
iv	UPS	02
v	Dot Matrix Printer	01
vi	Laser Printer	02
vii	Pen drive	01



It has been observed that four computers are available in the library for handling the daily activities

of library. Three client workstations are available in the library and attached it to main severer. Two UPS are supported to the computers for breakdown of electric. Two laser printer are attached to the computers for essential printing documents. One server machine is attached to three clients and all data of library saved in this server machine. . One dot matrix computer is also available for printing. One pen-drive is used in library for carry the necessary data transformation.

B. Software Available

Sr. No.	Name of the Software	Available	Available Product Name
i	Network Operating System\	Yes	
ii	Library Management Software	Yes	WIN-ISIS
iii	Digital Library Software	Yes	

Objectives

The main objective of this study is to find out the present status of the library and give some suitable suggestions for its further improvement in the collection and services for the benefits of the library

Some other objectives are:

1. To study the use of collection and services of Museum Library
2. To identify the status of present staff.
3. To identify the actual strengths & weakness of library resources & services.
4. To identify the kinds of users and their needs.
5. To identify the limitations or problems.

Scope of the study

The scope of the study was limited to the, Gandhi Memorial Museum Library, Madurai

Methodology

Questionnaire was prepared for the librarian of Gandhi Memorial Museum Library, Madurai for this study. In this study, primary data have been collected through questionnaire and secondary data from the records of the library, books and journals etc The collected necessary data was analyzed, tabulated, interpreted and presented in the form of tables and figures.

Conclusion

The library has procured the software for computerization but there is no any technical staff working on it. Due to lack of funds and staff, the library is not able to improve the IT services . A lot of things, which should be considered by the government and appropriate steps, should be taken for its further improvement in order to provide the best services to the users. As it is the very oldest library, therefore, it should be maintained by the government in the proper way so that the library could attract number of users and plays a vital role in their research work.

Suggestions

The following suggestions/recommendations are set forth on different aspects of research library of Gandhi Memorial Museum Library, Madurai on the basis of the study. These recommendations, if implemented, are likely to solve the existing problems and make the system more effective in future

1. There should be digitization of available manuscripts and rare books. So, that these valuable sources not

only become the showcase item of the library but also become approachable information source also.

2. There should be given a chance to research scholars for becoming the member of this library.

So, that

they can also borrow the books.

3. There should be a website of this library & museum also. So that people from all over the world can be

able to aware about its rare collection and able to utilize it.

4. Library management should take the guidance and support of advisory body for the Institute of Museum

and Library Services

5. Donated books also should be displayed properly. So that everyone can use them too.

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