

# ROLE OF PUBLIC LIBRARY READER EMOTIONAL IN MOULDING AND HEALING: A BIBLIOTHERAPHICAL CASE STUDY

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**ABSTRACT** --Bibliotherapy has been widely recognized as an approach that helps librarians to better address emotional, behavioral and social concerns. In the Indian context, bibliotherapy is still new, by conceptualizing bibliotherapy in a public library. The study will provide a better understanding of concepts bibliotherapy and make recommendations to the librarian by providing a description of and a rationale for the use of bibliotherapy by public libraries. 139 responses received from public library readers of a chosen Central library and Selected Branch libraries in Dindigul Town. The convenience sampling techniques were used. It is observed that more than half of the readers frequently read books like Poetry, Novels, Short stories and Motivational Books. 99 of the respondents (71.22%) feel Difficulty in choosing the right self-help book. Two-third of the respondents strongly agree that reading self-help books 'Enable me to change my perspective towards life as I observe life from a different angle' (69.19%), 'Inspire me to make better choices' (64.3%). Further studies may be undertaken in other environments like schools, universities, working places, etc., to get a real picture of the effect of bibliotherapy.

**Keywords**-- Bibliotherapy, Public Library Users, Self- Help Books, Pros of Self-Help Books

## I. INTRODUCTION

Reading habit is a boon for all of us. Irrespective of age, gender, nativity and culture, the reading habit has a great impact on the readers. In the past, the people used to read everything in printed form – books, magazines, journals, newspapers, reports etc. Due to the advancements of information technologies and the availability of hand-held communication devices like Tablets, Laptops, Smartphones etc, and the people are now more inclined towards screen-based reading. The functioning of hundreds of websites with free e-books has enabled us to read more and think more. The books – print or digital – play a significant role in molding society and its individuals. It may be physical, intellectual, moral, spiritual and emotional molding.

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## II. NEED AND SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

In the present world, public library readers get access to a wide variety of books to read. They read both printed and digital books. They read fictions, non-fictions and what not. Self-help motivational books are available in plenty these days. The low priced self-help books have enabled more individuals to stack them. The mere PDF availability of these self-help books enabled more individuals to read them on the screen. We need to identify and understand to what extent these self-help books are impactful and useful. Do they have a say in the lives of public library readers? Do they create any impact on the attitudes and thinking patterns of public library readers? Do they mold their behavior? Do they bring welcoming changes in their perceptions towards life and work? The present study is undertaken to answer these questions.

## III. OBJECTIVES

The present study was conducted with the following three objectives:

1. To know how frequently what self-help books are read by the respondents
2. To understand how the self-help books mould and heal the Public libraries readers.
3. To understand the problems associated with the access and use of self-help books

## IV. METHODOLOGY

The research was carried out on purposive sampling and the survey method was adopted. A questionnaire was constructed based on Likert's scale and dichotomous. The data has been collected from 139 public library users of a chosen Central library and Selected Branch libraries in Dindigul Town. The convenience sampling technique was used to collect responses. The data was entered in MS Excel and simple percentage was calculated for the responses collected. The study deals with those readers who have the habit of reading self-help books that were included in the study.

## V. DATA ANALYSIS

The categories of gender among the respondents covered under the study. It is found that, of the total respondents, 63.02% of the respondents belong to male category, while the remaining 36.97% are females. It is inferred that male respondents are higher than female respondents. The age-wise distribution frequency of the respondents, it is found that 44.72% of the respondents belong to the category below 30 years and followed by, 55.28% in the age group of above 30 years. The majority of the respondents of the present survey belong to the age group category of above 19 years.

**Table 1:** Level of Books Reading

Books	Frequently Read		Occasionally Read		No Read	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%

Poetry	97	69.78%	24	17.27%	18	12.95%
Short Stories	59	42.45%	42	30.22%	38	27.34%
Novels	95	68.35%	33	23.74%	11	7.91%
Picture Story	19	13.67%	69	49.64%	51	36.69%
Subject Books	29	20.86%	57	41.01%	53	38.13%
Motivational Books	58	41.73%	37	26.62%	44	31.65%
Traditional Literature	17	12.23%	29	20.86%	93	66.91%
Biography	12	8.63%	17	12.23%	110	79.14%
Others Books	27	19.42%	28	20.14%	84	60.43%

Source: Primary Data

Table 1 shows that more than half of the readers frequently read books like Poetry, Novels, Short stories and Motivational Books. More than 20 but less than half of them frequently read Subject Books and Other Books. More than 10 but less than 20 of them frequently read books like Picture Story, Old Literature and Biography. It is inferred that the readers wish to read Books of Poetry, Novels, Short Stories and Motivational.

**Table 2 : Pros of Self-Help Books**

S. No	Reading Self-Help Books	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Total
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
1	Build a higher sense of confidence in me	55	39.57%	42	30.22%	42	30.22%	139
2	Help me to get out of almost any challenging situation without resorting to the help of others	24	17.27%	32	23.02%	83	59.71%	139
3	Develops the mentally tough attitude of relying on oneself	39	28.06%	20	14.39%	80	57.55%	139
4	Develops the skills of addressing and untying the knots of day to day life	77	55.40%	38	27.34%	24	17.27%	139
5	Make me feel better	99	71.22%	21	15.11%	19	13.67%	139
6	Help me get hindsight or point of view from different people	101	72.66%	28	20.14%	10	7.19%	139

7	Make my command over language better	74	53.24%	34	24.46%	31	22.30%	139
8	Enable me to change my perspective towards life as I observe life from a different angle	92	66.19%	29	20.86%	18	12.95%	139
9	Increase my chances of achieving my goals	68	48.92%	37	26.62%	105	75.54%	210
10	Charge me to take actions and execute my plan	79	56.83%	29	20.86%	31	22.30%	139
11	Flood my brain with positive words and uplifting concepts	57	41.01%	19	13.67%	63	45.32%	139
12	Inspire me to make better choices	89	64.03%	27	19.42%	23	16.55%	139
13	Help me to smash through my limitations	79	56.83%	49	35.25%	11	7.91%	139
14	Enable me to find mapping out a vision for my life	73	52.52%	21	15.11%	45	32.37%	139
15	Amplify my creativity	69	49.64%	27	19.42%	43	30.94%	139

**Table 3 : Pros of Self-Help Books**

S. No	Reading Self-Help Books	Strongly Agree		Agree		Disagree		Total
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	
16	Amplify my productivity	84	60.43%	41	29.50%	14	10.07%	139
17	Amplify my positive self-image	109	78.42%	27	19.42%	3	2.16%	139
18	Amplify my capabilities	37	26.62%	97	69.78%	5	3.60%	139
19	Get me the relaxation I need in life	111	79.86%	28	20.14%	0	0.00%	139
20	Heal my wounds (Mental / Emotional)	49	35.25%	87	62.59%	3	2.16%	139
21	Help me appreciate the things around me	57	41.01%	81	58.27%	1	0.72%	139
22	Point out the importance of friendships, families, love lives and intimacy	74	53.24%	51	36.69%	14	10.07%	139

23	Help me to go through a life transition	42	30.22%	58	41.73%	39	28.06%	139
24	Make it easier to cope and accept things before they happen	57	41.01%	64	46.04%	18	12.95%	139
25	Question the way I think or how I had dealt with my issues until now	59	42.45%	72	51.80%	8	5.76%	139
26	Help me understand conflicts and help ease the tension amicably	24	17.27%	84	60.43%	31	22.30%	139
27	Help me reduce my anxiety and depression	77	55.40%	62	44.60%	0	0.00%	139
28	Empower me more to take control of my life	19	13.67%	59	42.45%	61	43.88%	139

Source: Primary Data

Table 2 shows the impact of self-help books on the respondents. More than three fourth of the respondents strongly agree that ‘Get me the relaxation I need in life’ (79.86%), ‘Amplify my positive self-image’ (78.42%), ‘Help me get hindsight or point of view from different people’ (72.66%), and ‘Make me feel better’ (71.22%). Two -third of the respondents strongly agree that reading self-help books ‘Enable me to change my perspective towards life as I observe life from a different angle’ (69.19%), ‘Inspire me to make better choices’ (64.3%) and ‘Amplify my productivity’ (60.43%). Half of the respondents strongly agree that reading self-help books ‘Help me to smash through my limitations’& ‘Charge me to take actions and execute my plan’ (56.83%), ‘Develop the skills of addressing and untying the knots of day to day life’& ‘Help me reduce my anxiety and depression’ (55.40%), ‘Make my command over language better’& ‘Point out the importance of friendships, families, love lives and intimacy’ (53.24%) ‘Enable me to find mapping out a vision for my life’ (52.52%), ‘Amplify my creativity’ (49.64%), ‘Increase my chances of achieving my goals’ (48.92%), ‘Question the way I think or how I had dealt with my issues until now’ (42.45%) and ‘Make it easier to cope and accept things before they happen’ & ‘Help me appreciate the things around me’(41.01%)

One- third of the respondents strongly agree that reading self-help books ‘Build a higher sense of confidence in me’ (39.57%), ‘Heal my wounds (Mental / Emotional)’ (35.25%) and Help me to go through a life transition (30.22%). One -fourth of the respondents strongly agree that reading self-help books ‘help them get out of almost any challenging situation without resorting to the help of others Develops the mentally tough attitude of relying on oneself’ (28.06%), ‘amplify their capabilities’ (26.62%), ‘Help me to get out of almost any challenging situation without resorting to the help of others’& ‘Help me understand conflicts and help ease the tension amicably’ (17.27%) and Empower me more to take control of my life (13.67%).

Table 3 shows the problems: Access, use and impact of self- help books. 99 of the respondents (71.22%) feel Difficulty in choosing the right self-help book. Two- third of the respondents (62.59%) revealed that they get

energy while reading self-help motivational books but lose their energy afterward (59.71%) It works for them, not for me, (56.83%) Inadequate self-help books in the Tamil language, 44 to 44.99% of them worried that Claims made by self-help books are without basis and scientific basis. I don't have access to self-help books and no librarian motivates them to read self-help books. One- third of them don't have access to such books while slightly less than one -fourth of them said that their Public libraries do not have more self-help books. Affordability is the problem faced by the least number of respondents (10.79%).

**Table 4 :** Problems: Access, Use and Impact of Self-Help Books

S.No	Statements	Yes		No		Total
		No.	%	No.	%	
1	I don't have access to self-help books	64	46.04%	75	53.96%	139
2	The library does not have more self-help books	24	17.27%	115	82.73%	139
3	Inadequate self-help books in the Tamil language	79	56.83%	60	43.17%	139
4	Difficulty in choosing the right self-help books	99	71.22%	40	28.78%	139
5	Get energy during reading and afterward I lose them	87	62.59%	52	37.41%	139
6	No Librarian motivates me to read self-help books	62	44.60%	77	55.40%	139
7	Claims made by self-help books are without basis and scientific basis	69	49.64%	70	50.36%	139
8	High priced self-help books; not affordable	15	10.79%	124	89.21%	139
9	It works for them, not for me	83	59.71%	56	40.29%	139

Source: Primary Data

## VI. FINDINGS

In light of the above findings, the researcher has put forth the following conclusion:

- The college libraries should stack an adequate number of self-help books in regional language.
- The Librarian should guide and motivate the readers to read self-help books.
- Readers need to be guided on how to choose right self-help books for them
- A list of must-to-read self-help books for every month may be read.
- The website that offers free self-help books (pdfdrive.com, Gutenberg, etc) may be intimated to the readers.

## VII. CONCLUSION & SUGGESTIONS

The present study was conducted with just 139 public library readers. This can be extended in future studies. Various demographic factors like gender, year of study, nativity, course/discipline, level of computer expertise, availability of home library, educational qualification of the parents, etc., may be employed in future studies to explore their impact and association. Formal questionnaires may be employed by future researchers to collect data from more samples. Further studies may be undertaken in other environments like schools, universities, working places, etc., to get a real picture of the effect of bibliotherapy.

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