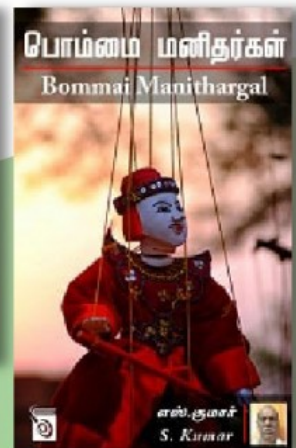


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Karnataka, Bengaluru, Jan 27, 2021 (Issuewire.com) - Bangalore-based, Pustaka Digital Library sells and lend [eBooks online](http://www.pustaka.co.in) and AudioBooks online in vernacular languages such as Tamil, Telugu, Kannada and Malayalam.

As a young girl, Nivetha Padmanaban would stay up till 2 am reading books. Addicted, she would even read between her classes in school. Little wonder that she grew up to be a bookworm. But it was after she moved from Madurai to Bangalore in 2001 as an IT consultant for Thought Works, that she realized books in her vernacular language, Tamil, were not easily available. “Even the bookstores that did stock a few had only one or two,” Padmanaban says. That’s when she decided to convert her passion for books into a venture, selling and lending books of vernacular authors with the Pustaka Lending Library portal.

What started as a physical library in 2012 at her home in Bangalore, is today also an e-book selling and lending portal – www.pustaka.co.in (October 2014) – stocking 250 titles in Tamil, Kannada, Telugu and Malayalam. The portal also offers e-books for the mobile platform, and today, Pustaka is the first ever to digitise books in vernacular languages. Padmanaban quit her corporate job in April 2014, to launch the site along with her husband Padmanaban Rajagopalan and two other founders – Dr Rajesh Devadas and Indumathi Prasanna.

Initially, it was a labour of love. She created a delivery model for books with about 800 titles, dropping them off to customers on weekends. “Because I was working in the corporate space, I couldn’t do it full-time,” she says. She created a portal to list the titles, for users who could buy or borrow books for a price. During her many overseas travels on work projects, Padmanaban discovered another opportunity. Many other non-resident Indians in Australia, Europe and America were unable to get a hand on any

vernacular language books. “They were all in English, and many resorted to websites that offered illegal digitization of vernacular books, because there was no other place to go,” Padmanaban says. She saw e-books as a solution to this logjam.

Today, the Pustaka e-book library has about 800 published titles and 1,500 copyrights pending digitisation. “Digitising a 100-page book takes about a week, so there is a lag between the acquired copyrights and published titles,” Padmanaban says. To safeguard the interests of the authors, the e-book versions use software that makes copying impossible. Even in the offline reading option, the text is encrypted and difficult to hack. Of the revenue, 40-50 per cent is paid to the author as royalty. Popular books available on the ebooks and [audio books online](#) platform include works of Tulasī, Pallikondapuram, Khajurao and Aindhu Vazhi Moondru Vaasal. Authors such as Indira Soundarrajan, Pattukottai Prabhakar, Yandamoori Veerendranath, Neela Padmanabhan, Rajesh Kumar, KT Gatti and more are also featured on the site.

And readers love it. Among them is Kusuma N (32), a young housewife in Bangalore. Although she speaks in English and Hindi, Kannada is her first language. The Pustaka e-book library has now become her companion in solitude. “I have something to read now. Earlier all I had was the newspaper, which I would read over and again,” she says. No wonder the Pustaka e-book library witnesses about 700 downloads every day. Vernacular authors too have found a new revenue stream.

“Nowadays there are hardly any reprints of Kannada eBooks online. Government-sponsored publishing houses, which used to be prolific, have stopped publishing any vernacular books. Writers have nowhere to go. With Pustaka library I have seen my readership increase and some traction too,” says KT Gatti, who has more than 90 novels, short stories, plays and essays to his credit. Aruna Nandini, a prolific Tamil author, has also started listing her 50-odd short story titles on the Pustaka e-book library, because “one has to keep pace with changing times,” she says.

“This way we can introduce new-age readers to our rich Indian literature and culture.” Padmanaban believes it’s not just the older generation she’s targeting, “It’s not like the youth has lost the reading habit. Only the medium has changed. If we provide good and quality content in vernacular languages, they will read.” Bangalore based copy-writer Sujatha S, an avid reader of Tamil books, could be one of them. “I finally have an organized place from where I can buy [Tamil eBooks online](#),” she says, excited. Next, Pustaka is looking at adding book titles in other languages including Marathi, Gujarati, Bengali and Hindi. A library of ideas well-executed.

About Pustaka:

Pustaka is an online book rental service that provides a unique reading experience to book lovers with a wide range of books for every type of Multi-Language Novels from our best authors. Pustaka started as a private limited company in 2014 with the intent of publishing Indian regional multi-language books in a digital format with the ease of use in the simple user interface. We started with just 200 books and grown to 5200+ Tamil eBooks, Kanada eBooks, Malayalam eBooks, Telugu eBooks, and English eBooks from 390+ authors (as of Oct 2020). Rent & Read eBooks Online and Audio Books Online From India's Largest Bookstore India At Best Prices at @Pustaka.co.in.

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Source : Books

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