

Evaluating User Satisfaction in Academic Libraries

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Abstract

Purpose: To measure the satisfaction level of college library users in South Kamrup, Assam, with the physical infrastructure facilities provided by their college libraries.

Design/Methodology/Approach: This study selected the survey method. To collect the necessary data to accomplish the aim of this study, a well-structured questionnaire was formulated in three parts: general information about the respondents, library usage, and level of satisfaction with library infrastructure facilities.

Findings: The results of this survey showed that while the vast majority of respondents were happy with the infrastructure their college library provided, every respondent desired further improvements to that infrastructure.

Research Limitations: This study is confined to the provincialized college library users of South Kamrup, Assam. Private and non-provincial colleges in South Kamrup are excluded from this study.

Practical Implications: Measuring user satisfaction helps libraries identify the level of user satisfaction and enhance their offerings to users to achieve higher levels of satisfaction.

Originality/value: This study will help the college libraries in South Kamrup, Assam, improve their library infrastructure to enhance the satisfaction level of the users.

Keywords: User Satisfaction, Library User, Academic Library, Library Infrastructure, Library Facilities, South Kamrup, Assam

1. Introduction: Libraries are like the heart of any institution, and users are the main component of that library. Without its users, a library can never be fully completed. User satisfaction is as important for the development of a library as it is for its users. A library is a trinity of books, readers, and staff, where books serve as knowledge containers, readers as knowledge seekers, and staffs serve as the suppliers of knowledge to the information searchers. Libraries are service institutions where they serve their users to fulfil their information needs. The use of libraries and the level of user satisfaction are two multidimensional concepts. A library should offer various facilities to its patrons in order to achieve the greatest level of satisfaction possible, and the infrastructure of a library is essential to achieving this goal. This research is being done among the college library users in South Kamrup, Assam. In total, there are five provincialized colleges in South Kamrup: Dakshin Kamrup College, Mirza (DKC), Dakshin Kamrup Girls' College, Mirza (DKGC), Chhaygaon College, Chhaygaon (CC), Jawaharlal Nehru College, Boko (JNC), and Bimala Prasad Chaliha College (BPCC).

2. Literature Review: Barad (2019) finds out that university libraries in Himachal Pradesh subscribe to the E-Journals subscription and use online and offline databases. The study finds that users were satisfied with the services provided by the library, but they demanded some quality improvement in library services. Gudi and Paradkar (2016) evaluated the level of user satisfaction with library facilities in engineering colleges in Pune city. From their study, they found that users are extremely satisfied with library security systems, and the number of air conditioners and fans provided by engineering college libraries is lower. It is recommended that library authorities and the management of engineering colleges make efforts to improve the library facilities in order to increase the number of satisfied users. Gudi (2019) focused on

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the measurement of the satisfaction level of students and faculty members with the library infrastructure provided by the engineering colleges in Pune. Users are satisfied with the seating arrangement, library furniture, lighting and ventilation, library cleanliness, library rules, generator facilities, and drinking water facilities. Comparatively, respondents are less satisfied with the library group discussion hall and suggestion box facilities. Verma and Laltlanmawi (2016) examined the use and user satisfaction of library collection and services provided by the college libraries of Government Hrangbana Collage, Aizawl. They found that the majority of users of the Government Hrangbana College are satisfied with library resources and services, but the majority of them are not regular users of the library. Many respondents were not satisfied with the reading space available for the users.

3. Objectives of the Study: The major goal of this study is to find out the level of satisfaction of college library users in South Kamrup, Assam, with the infrastructure facilities provided by their academic libraries. In addition to this goal, this study has other goals, such as determining the frequency of library use, the amount of time spent during a particular visit, specific reasons for visiting or utilising the library, etc.

4. Area, Scope and Limitation of the Study: This study is confined to the provincialized college library users of South Kamrup, Assam. South Kamrup's private and non-provincial colleges are excluded from this analysis. Further, the study will only assess how satisfied the library patrons are with the library infrastructure provided to them.

5. Research Methodology: The survey method was chosen for this study. A well-structured questionnaire with three sections, including general information about the respondents, library use, and level of satisfaction with library infrastructure, was formulated to gather the data required to achieve the goal of this study. The survey was conducted during the month of January 2020. The respondents are selected by a convenient random sampling method. SPSS is used to analyse the data in both tabular and graphical formats.

6. Data Analysis: In the first part of this questionnaire, some general information about the respondents, like gender, user categories, and age, is collected.

6.1 General Information of the Respondents: From Table 1, it is seen that a total of 92 library users responded to the questionnaires, where 25 (27.17%) respondents are from DKC, 23 (25%) are from DKGC, 18 (19.57%) are from CC, 15 (16.30%) are from JNC, and 11 (11.96%) of the respondents are from BPCC. Most of the respondents are from the female category, 53 (57.61%), followed by 39 (42.39%) of the respondents from the male category. The majority of the respondents are students, 68 (73.91%), followed by 18, (19.57%), and 6, (6.52%) of the respondents, which are teaching staff and non-teaching staff. The majority of 54 (58.69%) of the respondents are under the age of 20, followed by 20 (21.74%) and 18 (19.57%) of the respondents whose ages are above 30 and in between 20 and 30, respectively.

Table 1: General Information of the Respondents

Category	Item	No. of Respondents (Percentage)	
Total respondents	DKC	25 (27.17%)	Total=92
	DKGC	23 (25%)	
	CC	18 (19.57%)	
	JNC	15 (16.30%)	
	BPCC	11 (11.96%)	
Gender (respondents)	Male	39 (42.39%)	
	Female	53 (57.61%)	

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User category (respondents)	Students	68 (73.91%)
	Teaching Staff	18 (19.57%)
	Non-Teaching Staff	6 (6.52%)
Age of the respondents	Below 20	54(58.69%)
	20-30	18 (19.57%)
	Above 30	20 (21.74%)

6.2 Use of the Library: The next part of the questionnaire was about library use, in which the students were asked about the frequency of visiting their college library, spending time in their college library on a particular visit, and the reason for using their college library. Figure 1 shows that a majority of 48 (52.17%) of the respondents visit their college library weekly, followed by 25 (27.17%) and 19 (20.65%) of the respondents who stated that they visit their college library daily and monthly, respectively.

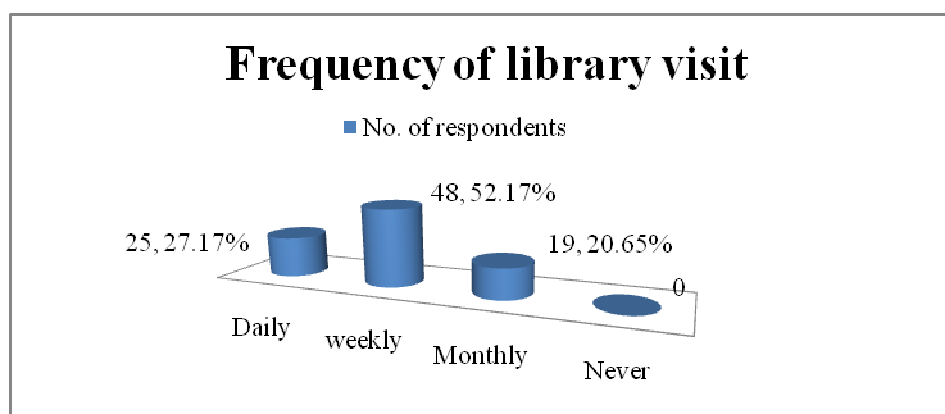


Figure 1: Frequency of Library Visit

6.3 Time Spent in the Library: Respondents were asked about the time they used to spend in their college library on a particular visit. The majority of 52 (56.52%) of the respondents mentioned that they spend 1 to 3 hours in their college library, followed by 28 (30.43%) of the respondents who stated that they used to spend less than 1 hour in the library. (Figure 2)

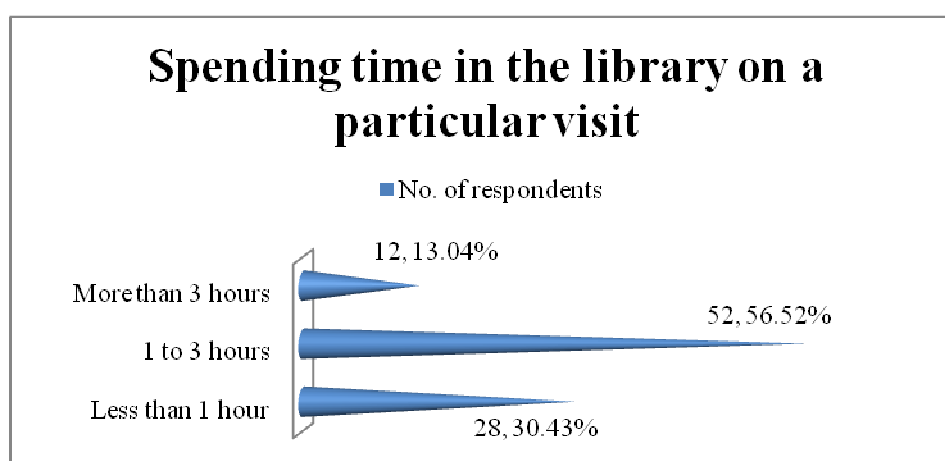


Figure 2: Time Spent in the Library

6.4 Purpose of Library Use: 92 (100%) of the respondents stated that they used to visit their library for study purposes, which is followed by 90 (97.83%) of the respondents who mentioned that they are using their college library for issues, returns, renewals, or reserve books. 10 (10.87%) of the respondents stated that they are using their college library to get

information from the library staff, and 8 (8.69%) stated that they used to go to their college library to get the internet facility (refer to Table 2).

Table 2: Purpose of Library Use

Purposes	No. of Respondents
Study purpose	92 (100%)
Book Issue/return/renew/reserve	90 (97.83%)
To get information from the library staff	10 (10.87%)
Browsing internet	8 (8.69%)
Other purpose	5 (5.43%)

6.5 Satisfaction with Library Infrastructure: Out of a total of 92 respondents, the majority of 68 (73.91%) respondents are satisfied with the reading room facility of their college library; 62 (67.39%) respondents are satisfied with the space; 85 (92.39%) respondents are satisfied with the furniture of the academic libraries of their college; 62 (67.39%) respondents are satisfied with the lighting of the college library; and 73 (79.34%) respondents are satisfied with the cleanliness of the college library.

The majority of 53 (57.60%) and 49 (53.26%) respondents of the total respondents stated that they are slightly satisfied with the drinking water facility and washroom facility provided by their college library.

Only 23 (25%) and 3 (3.26%) of the respondents stated that they are very satisfied with the reading room and space provided by their college library, whereas only 2 (2.17%) and 9 (9.78%) of the respondents stated that they are very satisfied with the library furniture and cleanliness of their college library. No respondents stated that they were very satisfied with the lighting, drinking water, and washroom facilities provided by their college library. Finally, all respondents stated that they want their library infrastructure to be improved further.

Table 3: Satisfaction Level of the Respondents with Library Infrastructure

Library Infrastructure Facility	Very Satisfied	Satisfied	Slightly Satisfied	Dissatisfied
Reading room	23 (25%)	68 (73.91%)	1 (1.08%)	0
Sufficient space	3 (3.26%)	62 (67.39%)	27 (29.34%)	0
Library furniture	2 (2.17%)	85 (92.39%)	5 (5.43%)	0
Lighting	0	62 (67.39%)	30 (32.60%)	0
Cleanliness	9 (9.78%)	73 (79.34%)	8 (8.69%)	2 (2.17%)
Drinking water facility	0	38 (41.30%)	53 (57.60%)	1 (1.08%)
Washroom	0	36 (39.13%)	49 (53.26%)	7 (7.60)

7. Conclusion: One of the most important components of a library is its users. Users are referred to by different terminologies in the field of library and information science, including customers, patrons, clients, members, borrowers, etc. For a library, user satisfaction is also very important, along with that of the users. The survey method can be used to gauge user satisfaction. According to the results of the current study, the majority of the respondents are satisfied with the infrastructure facilities provided by the college library. Some of them are extremely satisfied with the library's infrastructure facilities, but all of the respondents stated that they want the physical infrastructure of their college library to be significantly improved.

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