

User satisfaction of Library Resources and Services of Alva's Center for PG Studies library: A Study

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***Abstract** - Library, an open system must adapt to the changing times. As the needs of the users go on changing with the time, library managers need to use certain tools to assess the user's satisfaction of library resources and services. Getting feedback and analysis is one of them. Feedback analysis facilitates certain actions that will pave way for the improvement of the library. The current study used questionnaire method for collection of the data. Stratified sampling with proportionate allocation was used. Descriptive statistics was used for analysis and interpretation of the data.*

Keywords: user satisfaction, feedback analysis, post-graduate library, library resources, services.

Introduction:

Library is a system, an open system. "... organisation thought of as using input to create output through processes." (Brophy 8). Like all other systems, library processes the inputs and gives the outputs. In library, books/e-books, journals/e-journals, magazines/e-magazines, newspapers/e-newspapers, etc. are considered as inputs. Classification, cataloguing, etc. are processes. Library services like lending services, CAS, OPAC, remote login, reference services, bibliography, etc. are considered as outputs.

An open system depends upon the environment for resources and feedback. Systems get feedback from the environment. Feedback helps the system in decision making and improving its services and products. Thus, feedback is an invaluable element in the system. Library being an open system always interacts with the environment to have equilibrium with it. For any system to survive, it has to adapt to the changes in the environment. Library is meant for serving the user community by providing information at the right time and right place to right user. Five laws of library science emphasise mainly on user.

Though library is a nonprofit organization, it displays all the characteristics of an organisation. It has to provide a service in tune with the changing needs of the library users. Feedback from the users helps the library manager to assess the satisfaction level of user; find out strengths and weaknesses of the library system and take corrective actions for improving the library. Feedback gives an idea to the library managers whether the output and services of the library satisfy the library users and meet their demands and if yes, to what extent. Library being an open system cannot be cut off from the environment. It needs to respond to the changes in the environment. Otherwise, it will be obsolete and loses its relevance. Getting feedback periodically and its analysis helps the library manager to develop a library that meets the changing needs of users in different times and stay relevant in a fastly changing scenario.

Alva's College Library:

Library at Alva's Centre for PG Studies&Research is a unique system catering to the needs of the PG students and teachers. It is helping the users, i.e., students and the teachers, in their curriculum and research activities. The library, as in June 2017, was housing 8,150 volumes with 4,166 titles of printed books. The library subscribes to 51 journals, besides 11 magazines and 17 newspapers in three languages. Of 51 journals, 19 journals are indexed in ISI Web of Science; four are indexed in Elsevier Scopus and three are indexed in Google Scholar and Elsevier Scopus. There are 31 reports and 19 PhD theses in the library. The library is an institutional member of online consortia like INFLIBNET-NLIST, DELNET and NDL of India. The library provides remote access to online resources and library resources through WEBOPAC. The library is automated using EASYLIB, a software developed by Easylib Software Private Limited, Bengaluru. All the operations including physical visits by the users are automated using the software.

In its endeavour to live up to the expectations of the user community and the challenges the present era throws, the library constantly is in touch with the users. To provide a library the user expects, and to meet the demands of the user community, the library collects feedback from the users using structured questionnaire periodically.

Literature Review:

There were many studies to assess the user's needs and the satisfaction for the library resources and services in Indian libraries. But, studies in first grade colleges and PG centres are less in number. In this context, this study is a little distinct.

(Suresha 1-9) discusses the user satisfaction on print and electronic resources in St. Claret's College Library, Bangalore. The author "adopted the survey method for data collection using questionnaire in a simple random sampling method. Descriptive statistics was used for interpretation of the data". (Doraswamy 1-9) discusses the information seeking pattern of the post graduate students. "Questionnaire method was used for data collection and descriptive statistics was used for interpretation of the results". (Ranganadham and Babu 39-47) tries to "assess the satisfaction of users with different services and physical facilities". (Rani 15443-15450) says that, "user's fulfilment is considered as dependable criteria to deciding library efficiency." Level of user satisfaction gives the library managers to understand the effectiveness of the library, its resources and services. (Mishra and Pachhaua 33-43) conducted a study on user's approach in government Hrangbana College, Mizoram in north east India.

Objectives of the study:

- To know the extent of satisfaction of the users for each individual services.
- To know the extent of satisfaction of the library services as whole.
- To know whether any services is required to be improved/given special attention/maintained.

Methodology:

This study was conducted when the author was the Chief Librarian of Alva's College, Moodubidire. The study was conducted using a structured questionnaire. The questions were prepared using 3-degree Lickert type scaling. The students were asked to select the option

they think is appropriate. The student strength in 2016-17 was 775. It was decided to take responses from 81 students which is almost 10% of the total student strength. Questionnaires were given to only 81 students and saw to it that all the students returned the questionnaire. The students who visit the library regularly were chosen. Samples were collected using stratified sampling following proportional allocation method. There were 18 courses in PG centre. The students were chosen according to the proportion of strength of each course to the total strength. After getting responses, the data was codified and tabulated.

Limitations of the study:

The teachers, though, are users of the library were not included in the study. The study takes into consideration the analysis of the feedback responses collected in June 2017 concerning the academic year 2016-17.

Data analysis and interpretation:

1. Are there adequate number of books for all subjects in the library?

Considering the strength of Alva's Center or PG Studies, it is necessary that the library should have adequate number of books for all subjects. Inadequacy will hamper the curriculum and research activities.

Responses	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Total	34	40	7
Percentage (%)	41.98	49.38	8.64

Taking into account the fact that Alva's PG Library has almost 10 books for each user, it is expected that the dissatisfaction is at a lower level. But, since 'good' responses are not more than the 'satisfaction' responses, this area requires attention of the authorities. The library needs to procure more number of books and see that students do not lack enough books for their curricular and research activities. The librarian needs to bring this fact to the notice of the higher authorities and improve the collection of the library.

2. Tell your response about the quality of books.

Responses	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Total	43	38	0
Percentage (%)	53.08	46.91	0

It is not just the quantity but quality of the books that is also important. Here, quality of books refers to the standard of binding, printing, quality of paper, authors and publishers, illustrations, and content, etc. As the first law of library science says, 'Books are for use', the books must be put to the maximum usage. Lower quality books will not be used by the users much. Lower quality in terms of durability leads to damage of the books in a very short time. This results in economic loss to the organization. Thus, lower quality books certainly defeats the purpose of the first law.

That 0% users are unsatisfied suggests the users are fully satisfied with the quality of the books in the library.

3. Are the books relevant to the syllabus?

Responses	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Total	39	41	1
Percentage (%)	48.14	50.61	1.23

Relevance of the books to the syllabus is an important factor. This makes the most of the books used by the users. Users' responses show that books purchased by the library are relevant to the syllabus.

4. Tell your response about the timings of the library.

Responses	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Total	56	23	2
Percentage (%)	69.13	28.39	2.46

Timings of the library is very important. If the library closes immediately after the college hours, the users will be inconvenienced. Alva's PG Library is open from 5am to 11pm. The responses show that most of the users are satisfied by the timings of the library.

5. Tell your response about the support and cooperation of the library staff.

Responses	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Total	57	24	0
Percentage (%)	70.37	29.62	0

Quantity of resources does not matter. To put the resources to good use, responsive staff is necessary. The staff act as an intermediators between the books and the users. The responses show that the library staff are responding well to the needs of the users.

6. Tell your response about the availability of journals.

Responses	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Total	42	37	2
Percentage (%)	51.85	45.67	2.46

Journals facilitate research activities. For a PG Library, availability of journals is a must. Journals subscribed by the library are good in quality and quantity, as described in the paragraph 'Alva's College Library'. Responses show that most of the students are satisfied by the availability of journals.

7. Tell your response about the availability of reprographic facility.

Responses	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Total	28	41	12
Percentage (%)	34.56	50.61	14.81

Reprographic facility helps the users get the photocopy of the important Library materials. Alva's college library has the reprographic facility in the library. The responses indicate that not many are happy with the service. The reprographic service must be improved.

8. Tell your response about the lending services.

Responses	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Total	46	33	2
Percentage (%)	56.79	40.74	2.46

A user-friendly lending facility adds to the value of a good library. The PG Library lends three books for a period of two weeks. One renewal is allowed, subject to the availability of books. Responses show that most of the users are satisfied by the lending services.

9. Extent to which INFLIBNET-NLIST, DELNET and NDL of India helped insupplementing/complementing library resources.

Nowadays, library consortia like INFLIBNET-NLIST, DELNET and National Digital Library of India play an important role in learning in higher education institutions.

Responses	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Total	43	37	1
Percentage (%)	53.08	45.67	1.23

All the students were made members of INFLIBNET-NLIST and NDL of India. They were given access to DELNET in the campus using IP-based service. All the students were trained in accessing INFLIBNET-NLIST, NDL of India and DELNET.

10. Availability of proper seating arrangements.

Responses	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory
Total	65	16	0
Percentage (%)	80.24	19.75	0

Seating arrangement that commensurates with the strength of the student and faculty strength is a must. The PG Library has the seating capacity of 200 members.

Conclusion:

In the following table, percentage of 'good' responses received for each of the questions is categorized and shown.

	No.	Title of the service in short form	Total items
70% - 100%	5	Cooperation of library staff	02
	10	Seating arrangements	
60% - 69.99%	4	Timings of the library	01
50% - 59.99%	2	Quality of books	04
	6	Availability of journals	
	8	Lending facility	

	9	INFLIBNET-NLIST, etc. service	
40% - 49.99%	1	Adequate no. of books	02
	3	Relevance of books to the syllabus	
< 40%	7	Reprographic facility	01
TOTAL			10

This gives us an idea to what extent the library services are able to meet the expectations of the user. If the grade system (70%-100%= excellent; 60%-69.99% = very good; 50%-59.99% = Good; 40%-49.99% = Average; < 40% = below average) is accepted, it can be seen that only one service, i.e., reprographic service, is below average; two services are average; four services are good; one service is very good and two services are excellent.

Here, the response 'satisfactory' is not taken into account, as it denotes an average response of the user. To improve the utility and excellence of the library, that response does not give a clear picture. As mentioned earlier, two topics, adequate number of books relevance of the books to the syllabus must be given special attention. The library should try to improve the services that are good (50%-59.99%). Cooperation of the staff and seating arrangements aspects must be maintained.

Since only three services out of ten, come under 'average' and 'below average' category, it can be concluded that users are, overall, satisfied by the services of the library.

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