

Evaluation of the Use of College Library Resources and Services by the Undergraduate Students in Darjeeling District of West Bengal

Samiksha Subba¹ and Subarna Kumar Das²

¹Librarian, Kurseong College, Dow Hill Road, Darjeeling, West Bengal, India

¹Research Scholar, ²Professor,

^{1&2}Department of Library & Information Science, Jadavpur University, West Bengal, India

E-Mail: saw_meh@rediffmail.com, skd_ju2002@yahoo.co.in

Abstract - The present study was conducted in 20 college libraries of Darjeeling district of West Bengal to analyze the use of library resources and services by student users. The survey research method using structured questionnaires was adopted for the collection of data from the users. A total of 400 questionnaires were distributed randomly to the users, out of which 364 completely filled-in questionnaires were received back and included in the analysis. The findings reveal that majority of student users visit the college libraries on a regular basis mainly for the purpose of borrowing and returning library books. Most of the college libraries have easily accessible location, good layout, sufficient lighting & ventilation and neat & clean premises. The college libraries are mostly having the collection of text books but the collection of journals/magazines is found to be inadequate in many college libraries. It has been found that only few college libraries offer open access to all documents, electronic information resources, daily newspapers and syllabus & question papers to users. Most of the college libraries under study need to improve the services in regard to issuance of sufficient number of documents, adequate numbers of computers for users, provision of internet and photocopy services, exhibition of newly acquired documents, reference service and reading tables, chairs & space. The lack of internet in the library, short library hour, lack of user orientation/education and insufficient number of computers are found to be the major problems identified to affect the use of library.

Keywords: College Library, Library Resources, Library Services, Users' Satisfaction, Darjeeling District

I. INTRODUCTION

In higher education system, colleges constitute an important sector which mainly offers undergraduate and post-graduate courses leading to bachelor's and master's degrees, respectively. A library is an integral unit of a college and is considered as a reservoir of the intellectual resources for the academic community. The library has central role to play in promoting the academic excellence of the institution. It facilitates teaching-learning processes as the faculties and students depend directly on the available library resources for their academic and research oriented activities. Therefore, a well-established library is essential for providing up-to-date information and other related services to its users.

The main objective of the library is to satisfy its users by providing needed documents in order to support the

academic programmes of the institution. Besides, other services and facilities such as printing and reprographic facility, access to E-resources, daily Newspaper, Internet, adequate physical facility viz. reading space, tables, chairs, etc. are to be provided by the library. Library staffs play an active role in effective utilization of the library resources and services by the users. The adequate library staffs, their behaviour with users as well as their expertise put thrust in the overall function of the library. Therefore, it is quite necessary to undertake the assessment study of the college libraries in order to understand how effectively and efficiently libraries are serving users' needs and expectations. This would further help us to identify the strengths and weaknesses of library resources & services in order to recommend ways for improving the library services. In the present study, attempt has been made to analyze the users' response on the library resources, services and facilities of the college libraries in Darjeeling district of West Bengal.

II. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To ascertain the frequency of library visit by the users.
2. To identify the purpose of users for visiting library.
3. To know the users' perception regarding physical facilities, library staff, library collection and services offered by the college library.
4. To know the users' satisfaction level with available resources and services of the libraries.
5. To identify the constraints for effective use of library resources by the users.

III. LITERATURE REVIEW

The fundamental objective of library is to satisfy the needs of its users by providing information resources and services in order to meet the academic curricula. According to Igben (1993) a library is most functional if the services provided correspond closely with the information needs of its users. The library needs to have adequate resources for effective service delivery. Facilities in terms of library building, reading room, tables and chairs, photocopy, internet, computers, etc. add to quality service delivery. Availability of library facilities means ensuring their presence in the library for immediate use (Aguolu & Aguolu, 2002).

Numerous studies have been conducted in different countries by various researchers to analyze the users' perception with the library resources, services and facilities. Gunasekera (2010) found the undergraduate library users to be satisfied with available library resources, services and facilities of main Library in the University of Peradeniya. However, it was found that the library resources and services were not being fully utilized by the undergraduate users. On the basis of the findings, it was recommended that a comprehensive information literacy program should be conducted to promote awareness and use of electronic information resources. In addition, the library should increase the acquisition of electronic information sources while continuing to acquire general and reference materials to fulfil the current research needs of the users.

The study conducted by Saikia and Gohain (2013) revealed that almost half of the total respondents visited library on regular basis and the main purpose of library visit was to borrow books, followed by reading print journals and having access to online periodicals, reference sources and to read newspaper/magazine. They showed that the students and research scholars were highly satisfied with the collection of online journals and they were using these resources for their academic and research purpose. Further, it was reported that the users were very much satisfied with the library services such as circulation, online reservation and online renewal of book.

Bansal (2014) carried out a study to find out the existing library and information service facilities in Shrimati Janki Devi Library situated in Fateh Chand College for Women, Hisar. It was found that majority of users visited library to read newspapers or borrow books. There were inadequate copies of needed books in the library. Furthermore, it was revealed that a good percentage of users were not aware of CAS, reprographic and OPAC services. Users were found to be satisfied with the behaviour of library staff and the physical facilities such as reading space, cleanliness, lighting, ventilation, property counter and furniture.

Veena and Kothari (2016) showed that 59.0% of respondents used to visit library on daily basis, 86.7% of respondents were highly satisfied with the collection of general books, 70.0% of respondents were highly satisfied with collection of text books and 53.3% respondents considered circulation services to be excellent. They suggested that college library should carry out user studies at regular intervals to identify users' information needs and their information gathering behaviour.

Rilwanu (2017) analyzed the perception of undergraduate students about the library information resources, services and facilities. The findings showed that the undergraduate students were highly satisfied with the facilities, resources and services of the YMSU library, city campus. The study recommended that YMSU library management should keep on maintaining the high level of user satisfaction by improving on providing current and relevant information

resources, modern facilities and befitting services that would meet the need and expectations of users.

IV. METHODOLOGY

The survey method using structured questionnaire was used for the collection of primary data from student users of 20 college libraries of Darjeeling district. As there are certain limitations of questionnaire method, thus the researcher adopted interview and observation methods to collect required information to supplement the questionnaire method and to bring more clarity to the data. The population of the study included 400 undergraduate students as the respondent users of the libraries. The respondents were selected randomly out of those using the library at that particular time. A total of 400 questionnaires were distributed to the users of the college libraries. Out of 400, 364 (91%) completely filled-in questionnaires were received back. The data collected were analyzed using descriptive analysis showing simple frequency and percentage.

V. SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

The present study was confined to twenty general degree college libraries of Darjeeling district. Other technical and professional colleges were excluded. Moreover, only the undergraduate students were considered as the respondent users.

VI. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A. Frequency of Library Visit

Table I shows the frequency of library visit by the respondent users. The majority of respondents i.e. 134 (36.81%) visit library once in 2-3 days, followed by 94 (25.82%) respondents visiting library once a week, 68 (18.68%) respondents visiting library on a daily basis, 52 (14.29%) respondents visiting library once in 15 days and 16 (4.40%) respondents visiting library only occasionally. The findings reveal that the most of the respondent users visit library more or less on a regular basis.

TABLE I FREQUENCY OF LIBRARY VISIT

Frequency of visit	No. of respondents	Percentage
Daily	68	18.68%
Once in 2-3 days	134	36.81%
Once in a week	94	25.82%
Once in 15 days	52	14.29%
Occasionally	16	4.40%
Total	364	100%

B. Purpose of Library Visit

The various purposes of the respondent users for visiting library are presented in Table II. The majority of the users, 218 (59.89%), visit library for borrowing and returning

books. It is further observed that 58 (15.93%), 7 (1.92%), 26 (7.14%), 48 (13.19%), 33 (9.07%), 64 (17.58%), 53 (14.56%), 37 (10.16%) and 15 (4.12%) users visit library for consulting text books, journals, reference materials, doing assignments, reading newspapers, consulting previous years' question papers, photocopying materials, browsing internet and other purposes, respectively. The findings reveal that the majority of student users visit library for the purpose of borrowing and returning library books.

TABLE II PURPOSE OF LIBRARY VISIT

S. No.	Purpose	No. of respondents	Percentage
1	To borrow and return books	218	59.89%
2	To consult textbooks	58	15.93%
3	To consult journals	7	1.92%
4	To consult reference materials	26	7.14%
5	To do assignments	48	13.19%
6	To read newspapers	33	9.07%
7	To consult previous years' question papers	64	17.58%
8	To photocopy materials	53	14.56%
9	To browse the internet	37	10.16%
10	Others	15	4.12%

C. Physical Facilities

Adequacy of the physical facilities in the library determines the effective use of the library resources and services. A library with good physical facilities certainly attracts the users to visit the library which in turn enhances the optimum utilization of the library resources. Therefore, the physical facilities of the college library may be assessed to determine the quality of the libraries.

1. Users' Response to Physical Facilities of the Libraries

The users' response to various physical facilities of the college libraries under study is presented in Table III. The numbers of responses are indicated in the table as frequency (F) and percentage in the parenthesis. Analysis of the users' responses reveals that majority of the users, 180 (49.45%), agree with easily accessible location, 148 (40.66%) users strongly agree with good library layout, 115 (31.59%) users strongly agree with adequate space for readers in the library, 209 (57.42%) users agree with good lighting and ventilation in the library, 215 (59.07%) users agree with neat and clean library, 145 (39.84%) users agree with comfortable library furniture and 136 (37.36%) users disagree with having property counter in the library. The findings suggest that most of the college libraries have easily accessible location, good layout, good lighting and ventilation and neat and clean premises while only around half of the total college libraries have adequate space for readers and comfortable furniture.

TABLE III USERS' RESPONSE TO PHYSICAL FACILITIES OF THE LIBRARIES

S. No.	Physical Facilities	SA F (%)	A F (%)	N F (%)	D F (%)	SD F (%)
1	My library is in easily accessible location	124 (34.07)	180 (49.45)	24 (6.59)	36 (9.89)	0
2	My library has a good layout	148 (40.66)	127 (34.89)	13 (3.57)	40 (10.99)	36 (9.89)
3	My library has adequate space for readers	115 (31.59)	78 (21.43)	18 (4.95)	102 (28.02)	51 (14.01)
4	My library has good lighting and ventilation	97 (26.65)	209 (57.42)	11 (3.02)	47 (12.91)	0
5	My library is neat and clean	78 (21.43)	215 (59.07)	17 (4.67)	49 (13.46)	5 (1.37)
6	My library has comfortable furniture.	36 (9.89)	145 (39.84)	37 (10.16)	98 (26.92)	48 (13.19)
7	My library has property counter	47 (12.91)	74 (20.33)	67 (18.41)	136 (37.36)	40 (10.99)

SA= Strongly agree, A= Agree, N= Neither agree nor disagree, D= Disagree, SD= Strongly disagree, F= Frequency

D. Library Staff

The functioning of the libraries depends mostly on the qualifications and experience of the library staffs. The library staffs have diverse roles to play in the libraries for ensuring optimum utilization of the library resources by the users. Hence, the library staff is an important parameter to be considered while assessing the quality of the library services.

1. Users' Response to Library Staff

Users' responses to library staff of the colleges under study are presented in Table IV. The maximum number of users, 117 (32.14%), agree that library staffs help

them to locate the needed document, 143 (39.29%) users disagree that library staffs do their work in time, 128 (35.16%) users agree with immediate response of staff to their queries, 136 (37.36%) users agree with the behaviour of library staffs that gives confidence to visit the library. Similarly, the majority of users, 190 (52.20%), disagree with the provision of user orientation to enable the effective use of library resources and services. The findings reveal that more than 50% users agree with helpful nature of the library staffs in locating the needed document, immediate response to their queries and well behaviour with their users. While more than 50% users disagree that their libraries provide user orientation to enable the effective use of library resources & services.

TABLE IV USERS' RESPONSE TO LIBRARY STAFF

S. No.	Library Staff	SA F (%)	A F (%)	N F (%)	D F (%)	SD F (%)
1	My library staffs help me when I fail to locate a needed document	87 (23.90)	117 (32.14)	25 (6.87)	93 (25.55)	42 (11.54)
2	My library staffs do their work in time	77 (21.15)	83 (22.80)	23 (6.32)	143 (39.29)	38 (10.44)
3	My library staffs immediately respond to my query	65 (17.86)	128 (35.16)	53 (14.56)	103 (28.30)	15 (4.12)
4	The behaviour of my library staffs gives me confidence	72 (19.78)	136 (37.36)	23 (6.32)	95 (26.10)	38 (10.44)
5	The library provides user education/ orientation that enable me to make effective use of library resources & services	22 (6.04)	54 (14.84)	30 (8.24)	190 (52.20)	68 (18.68)

SA = Strongly agree, A = Agree, N= Neither agree nor disagree, D = Disagree, SD=Strongly disagree, F = frequency

E. Library Collection

The college library should have rich collection of textbooks, reference books, journals and other resources in order to facilitate the teaching learning process. Library collection is considered to be the base on which the information services of the college library depend. Besides the library collection, accessibility to the collection is an important factor contributing to the use of library resources.

1. Users' Response to Library Collection and Form of Access

The users' responses to library collection and form of access are shown in Table V. The majority of users, 157 (43.13%), agree with adequate collection of books, 134 (36.81%) users agree with adequate collection of reference books, 123

(33.79%) users neither agree nor disagree with adequate collection of journals and magazines, 161 (44.23%) users disagree with libraries having open access to all documents, 231 (63.46%) users disagree with libraries having the electronic information resources, 146 (40.11%) users disagree with the availability of daily newspapers and 186 (51.10%) users disagree with the availability of syllabus and the previous years' question papers in the library. The findings reveal that the college libraries are mostly having the collection of text books while the collections of journals/magazines are found to be inadequate in many colleges. It is also apparent that only few college libraries offer the open access to all documents. Furthermore, only few college libraries provide the electronic information resources, daily newspapers, and syllabus and previous years' question papers to their users.

TABLE V USERS' RESPONSE TO LIBRARY COLLECTION AND FORM OF ACCESS

S. No.	Library collection	SA F (%)	A F (%)	N F (%)	D F (%)	SD F (%)
1	My library has adequate collection of text books required	93 (25.55)	157 (43.13)	17 (4.67)	40 (10.99)	57 (15.66)
2	My library has adequate collection of reference books required	43 (11.81)	134 (36.81)	17 (4.67)	120 (32.97)	50 (13.74)
3	My library has adequate collection of journals and magazines	18 (4.95)	55 (15.11)	123 (33.79)	106 (29.12)	62 (17.03)
4	My library offers open access to all documents	12 (3.30)	47 (12.91)	28 (7.69)	161 (44.23)	116 (31.87)
5	My library provides me with electronic information resources.	20 (5.49)	18 (4.95)	57 (15.66)	231 (63.46)	38 (10.44)
6	My library provides me with daily newspapers	30 (8.24)	78 (21.43)	93 (25.55)	146 (40.11)	17 (4.67)
7	My library provides me with syllabi and previous year question papers	23 (6.32)	57 (15.66)	6 (1.65)	186 (51.10)	92 (25.27)

SA = Strongly agree, A = Agree, N= Neither agree nor disagree, D = Disagree, SD=Strongly disagree, F = frequency

F. Services Offered by the College Library

The college libraries provide necessary documents and information services to faculty and students in order to facilitate the teaching-learning process in the colleges. Basically, the library services in the colleges include borrowing of books, reference service, current awareness service, photocopy facility, etc. Besides, the working hour, user orientation programme, environment of the library, co-operation of the library staff, etc. also determine the quality of services offered by the library. Thus, the assessment of

the services offered by the college libraries is of prime importance to judge the quality of college libraries.

1. Users' Response to Services Offered by the College Libraries

The users' responses to the services offered by college libraries are presented in Table VI. The majority of users, 145 (39.84%), agree with convenient library hours, 138 (37.91%) users disagree with issuance of sufficient number of documents, 221 (60.71%) users disagree with the sufficient number of computers, 217 (59.62%) users

strongly disagree with internet service, 207 (56.87%) users disagree with photocopy service and 225 (61.81%) users disagree with the exhibition of newly acquired documents on regular basis. The findings reveal that the college libraries under study need to improve the services in terms

of issuance of sufficient number of documents, sufficient number of computers for users, provision of internet and photocopy service and exhibition of newly acquired documents.

TABLE VI USERS' RESPONSE TO SERVICES OFFERED BY THE COLLEGE LIBRARIES

S. No.	Services offered	SA F (%)	A F (%)	N F (%)	D F (%)	SD F (%)
1	The library working hours are convenient to me	38 (10.44)	145 (39.84)	22 (6.04)	74 (20.33)	85 (23.35)
2	The library issues sufficient number of documents I need	41 (11.26)	88 (24.18)	6 (1.65)	138 (37.91)	91 (25)
3	The library has sufficient number of computers	28 (7.69)	15 (4.12)	14 (3.85)	221 (60.71)	86 (23.63)
4	The library provides me with internet service	18 (4.95)	20 (5.49)	3 (0.82)	106 (29.12)	217 (59.62)
5	The library provides me with photocopy service	17 (4.67)	36 (9.89)	31 (8.52)	207 (56.87)	73 (20.05)
6	The library regularly exhibits the list of newly acquired documents	27 (7.42)	10 (2.75)	37 (10.16)	225 (61.81)	65 (17.86)

SA=Strongly agree, A=Agree, N=Neither agree nor disagree, D=Disagree, SD=Strongly disagree, F = Frequency

G. Users' Satisfaction Level with the Library Services and Facilities

Table VII presents the users' satisfaction level with the services and facilities offered by the college libraries. The majority of the users, 137 (37.64%), are found to be satisfied with the library collection of books, journals, etc., 139 (38.19%) users are dissatisfied with the reference service, 125 (34.34%) users are satisfied with lending service, 194 (53.30%) users are dissatisfied with number of computers and 215 (59.07%) users are dissatisfied with the internet service in their libraries. Similarly, the majority of users, 180 (49.45%), are dissatisfied with photocopy facility, 195 (53.57%) users are neither satisfied nor

dissatisfied with library catalogue, 108 (29.67%) users are satisfied with the arrangement of books in the shelves, 121 (33.24%) users are satisfied with the behaviour of library staff and 137 (37.64%) users are dissatisfied with the reading tables, chairs and space. The findings suggest that the majority of the users are found to be satisfied with the collection of books, journals, etc., lending service, arrangement of books and behaviour of the library staff while majority of the users are dissatisfied with various library services such as reference service, number of computers available, internet and photocopy services and reading tables, chairs and space. Therefore, the college libraries under study should enhance these services in order to satisfy the users' need.

TABLE VII USERS' SATISFACTION LEVEL WITH THE LIBRARY RESOURCES, SERVICES AND FACILITIES

S. No.	Library resources, services and facilities	VS F (%)	S F (%)	N F (%)	D F (%)	VD F (%)
1	Collection of library (Books, Journals etc.)	64 (17.58)	137 (37.64)	15 (4.12)	104 (28.57)	44 (12.09)
2	Library reference service	62 (17.03)	93 (25.55)	12 (3.30)	139 (38.19)	58 (15.93)
3	Lending service	97 (26.65)	125 (34.34)	20 (5.49)	91 (25)	31 (8.52)
4	Number of computers in the library	19 (5.22)	30 (8.24)	41 (11.26)	194 (53.30)	80 (21.98)
5	Internet service	16 (4.40)	28 (7.69)	11 (3.02)	215 (59.07)	94 (25.82)
6	Photocopy service	21 (5.77)	47 (12.91)	18 (4.95)	180 (49.45)	98 (26.92)
7	Library catalogue	33 (9.07)	49 (13.46)	195 (53.57)	61 (16.76)	26 (7.14)
8	Arrangement of books in the shelves	70 (19.23)	108 (29.67)	24 (6.59)	103 (28.30)	59 (16.21)
9	Behaviour of the library staff	74 (20.33)	121 (33.24)	27 (7.42)	87 (23.90)	55 (15.11)
10	Reading tables, chairs and space	57 (15.66)	116 (31.87)	13 (3.57)	137 (37.64)	41 (11.26)

VS= Very satisfied, S= Satisfied, N= Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied, D= Dissatisfied, VD= Very dissatisfied, F = Frequency

H. Users' Response to the Problems Affecting the Effective Use of Library and Library Resources

Table VIII presents the problems encountered by the users while using the library resources. The majority of the users,

138 (37.91%), express the lack of internet in the library, 118 (32.42%) users indicate the short library hour, 113 (31.04%) users express the need of user education for using library and 105 (28.85%) users indicate the insufficient numbers of computers in library to be the major problems. Among the other problems, 89 (24.45%) users express the inadequate library collection, 83 (22.80%) users express the lack of photocopy facility, 72 (19.78%) users indicate the insufficient number of books for users, 67 (18.41%) users express the lack of space in reading room, 53 (14.56%) users express the lack of daily newspapers, 43 (11.81%) users indicate poor organization of materials in the shelves, 35 (9.62%) users express the ineffective library catalogue, 28 (7.69%) users express the little or no assistance from the library staff and 25 (6.87%) users indicate the poor electronic/online library services.

The findings identify thirteen different problems encountered by the users while using the college library resources. The major problems identified to affect the effective use of library and library resources by the users are: lack of internet in the library, short library hour, need of user education for using library and insufficient numbers of computers in library.

TABLE VIII USERS' RESPONSE TO PROBLEMS AFFECTING EFFECTIVE USE OF THE LIBRARY AND LIBRARY RESOURCES

S. No.	Problems	F	Percentage
1	Little/no assistance from the library staff	28	7.69%
2	Collections are inadequate	89	24.45%
3	Ineffectiveness of the library catalogue	35	9.62%
4	Poor organization of the materials on the shelves	43	11.81%
5	Library hour is short	118	32.42%
6	Insufficient number of books for user	72	19.78%
7	Lack of space in reading room	67	18.41%
8	Insufficient number of computers in library	105	28.85%
9	The library is poor in electronic/online library services	25	6.87%
10	No internet facility	138	37.91%
11	Lack of photocopy facility	83	22.80%
12	Users are not educated on how to use the library	113	31.04%
13	Lack of daily newspapers	53	14.56%

F= Frequency

VII. CONCLUSION

From the findings of the study, it may be concluded that the majority of student users visit the college libraries on a

regular basis mostly to borrow and return the books. Most of the college libraries have easily accessible location, good layout, sufficient lighting & ventilation and neat & clean premises. More than 50% users agree that the library staffs are helpful and behave well with the users. However, more than 50% users disagree that the libraries provide user orientation. The college libraries are mostly having the collection of text books but the collection of journals/magazines is found to be inadequate in many college libraries. It has been found that only few college libraries offer open access to all documents, electronic information resources, daily newspapers and syllabus & question papers to their students. Most of the college libraries under study need to improve the services in regard to issuance of sufficient number of documents, adequate numbers of computers for users, provision of internet and photocopy services, exhibition of newly acquired documents, reference service and reading tables, chairs & space. The lack of internet in the library, short library hour, lack of user orientation/education and insufficient number of computers are the major problems identified to affect the use of library.

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