

USER SATISFACTION ABOUT THE LIBRARY SPACE, INFRASTRUCTURE FACILITIES :A STUDY OF CENTRAL LIBRARY, KMC .MANGALORE

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ABSTRACT: To provide an efficient service, any library should identify the specific community which needs its services as different users need not only different services, but also services at different levels with suitable space and infrastructure. The paper gives a brief description about the Central Library, KMC Mangalore and discusses the results of a user satisfaction survey as a guide to improve the infrastructure, collection and services of a library. The research sought to develop user needs assessment and user satisfaction measurement instruments for the Central Library, KMC, Mangalore. Using focus group sessions and a questionnaire survey the research determined from a sample of users of the Central Library services, their expectation and perception of the service/facility provisions of the Central Library Service. Some of the findings from the research on services/facilities that act as indicators of library effectiveness to the sampled users are not apparent in the literature. On basis of the findings, user needs assessment and user satisfaction measurement instruments have been developed for the Central Library.

Keywords: Library space, collection, infrastructure, facilities, user satisfaction

1. Introduction:

The user community is the most important constituent of a library. Every information service exists for the sole aim of satisfying its users. How well this purpose is served is a measure of the effectiveness of that information service. All libraries (public, academic, and specialist) need to develop plans regarding their goals, service priorities, resource allotment etc. For these plans to be effectively developed and implemented, regular collecting and analysis of performance data is necessary. And so is user feedback on how well services meet their needs and user “comment on enviable new services and developments to existing services”. In short, user needs assessment and user satisfaction measurement outputs support library management to:

- set strategic objectives that help meet user’s needs;
- set appropriate priority areas;
- obstruct problems;
- Justify the present funding or increased funding from administrators, policy makers, donors etc. allocate resources in such a way as to ensure that the library concentrates on “what makes a difference” to users. This study covered the way to do a SWOT (Strengths/Weaknesses/ Opportunities Threats) analysis of the work carried out at this library in order to modify, correct or completely change activities to suit the user needs.

Being a discipline and a profession, medical science differs from many other fields of study. Further the patrons of a medical library vary with the type of library and the organization supporting it. Each type of medical library user has enormous different information needs. A clear understanding of the needs of the user is necessary to assist him in meeting the precise information need

In a rapidly changing environment user surveys and studies provide an important tool for measuring customer opinions, practices and satisfaction, thus improving the efficiency and effectiveness of services. Observed methods such as these can assist in the tactical planning process, enabling decisions to be made about existing and future infrastructure, collection building and service delivery. By taking the time to find out how customers are using the library, a “best-fit” between client and services can be obtained, ensuring that maximum benefits are achieved.

2. Infrastructure of the Central Library, K.M.C., Mangalore

Kasturba Medical College (KMC), Mangalore has a rich and diverse library service. The college library, named Central Library is housed in a three storey’s located at the Light House Hill Road campus. The total area of the Library building is about 2025.89 sq.m with a seating capacity of 400 people. The library is centrally air-conditioned and well structured with separate book section for the undergraduate at the basement and postgraduate/reference section in the ground floor. Separate sections are maintained for the current periodicals and the back volumes respectively. The distribution of various sections in three floors is as follows:

Basement Floor:-	I Floor :-	II Floor (Mazanine):-
Property keeping section Reception & U.G.Counter Charging & Discharging Section Library Office Sr. Librarian Librarians Xerox Photocopy Undergraduate Reading Hall Bound Volumes Section Internet Section Stack Area and Reference section	P.G. Reading Hall Specialized & P.G. Books Old book’s section	Current Periodicals Staff Reading Area PG Reading Area Binding Room

It is open from 9 a.m. to 11.30 p.m. on all week days. The Library aims to acquire Health Sciences Information and provide timely, accurate and current information and documents to its users for their teaching, Research and Academic achievement. The Library contains the back volumes since 1955.

2.1.Users of the Library:

The Central library is used by all the faculty and students of Medical, Dental and Nursing colleges of Kasturba Medical College, Mangalore. It includes Undergraduates, Postgraduates, Research Scholars and faculties from all the departments of health science. On an average 50 faculty and 400 students visiting the library/day and an average of 50 books will be issued/returned/per day. Ratio of books to number of students enrolled is 8; 1

2.2. Library Collection:

Holdings of the Library:	
Books :	39800
Back Volumes of Journals :	22500
Current Journals subscribed :	National & International journals –Print-290 and Online journals subscribed : 2220
Online databases	5
Compact disks, DVD's,	944
Other Audio/Video Resources (videotapes, audiocassettes)	21
Thesis and Dissertations	890
Computers in the Library	36
S.C./S.T. Book-Bank Books	897
Scanners	2
Printer	Ink jet : 2: Color Printer : 1 Laser Printer : 1 Colour Printer : 1
Xerox Machine	3

2.3. Services of the Library

Computer based service: Internet browsing, facilities for preparing presentation material such as C.D. writing, scanning and laser printing services are provided to the staff and students of this college. Computer based service for project work & dissertation work for the students from 9 a.m. to 11 p.m. on all working days is provided in the central library.

Reprographic Services: Photocopying services provided to the Staff and Students from 9.00 a.m. to 11.30 p.m. on all working days.

Book Bank Facility: The Library provides the Book Bank Facility to the S.C./S.T. Students studying in our College. The Books are supplied by the Karnataka Government.

Other Services of the Library: The library provides open access for books to post graduate students/staff members and partial open access for undergraduate students. The library provides the services like reference service, computer based search services, bibliographic service, MEDLINE Services, current awareness service and inter-library loan services in the library.

Access to the Central Library, Manipal: The students/ staff have access to the Website of Manipal University. Through this request may be placed for articles from back volumes/ current journals/books there, and copy of which is sent for reference to the library either in print form or in electronic form.

Outside membership: The library extends the library membership for the outside staff and students who wish to study in the library for their entrance test, reference and overseas assignment on payment basis.

Other library centres: Other than the central library, library books can also be accessed through the departmental libraries at different colleges and hospitals of Manipal University, which are part of the central library.

2.4. Library Automation

The library uses *EASYLIB* cataloguing software system, which allows efficient and fast tracking of books and periodicals. The library also has internet browsing facilities and Medline facilities to access the recent research material. The members have the facility of photocopying facilities within the library.

3. Objectives of the study

- ❖ To examine the factors which influence on user satisfaction
- ❖ To examine user's perception about the space, infrastructure and facilities of central library
- ❖ To examine user's perception about the library collections of central library
- ❖ To provide suggestion to improve the use of library materials.

4. Research Methodology

The survey method was selected for data collection through questionnaire. The survey collected information on the use of library resources, facilities, and their opinion about the library infrastructure and the space management. The author designed a questionnaire to determine the infrastructure, facilities and use of the library resources among the students.

5. Data Analysis

Questionnaires distributed	Responses received	Percentage
60	55	91.6

Totally 60 questionnaires were distributed and 55 were received back and the response rate is 91.6%.

5.1. Frequency of library use

Frequency is the number of times one can use the library within a stipulated time/period. To study the promptness in library use the respondents were asked as to how frequently they use the library and the responses were represented in the Table

FREQUENCY OF USE	NUMBER	PERCENTAGE
Daily	20	36.36%
Once in 2-3 days	25	45.45%
Fortnightly	8	14.5%
Rarely	2	3.6%

The above table indicates that 36.36% of students use the library daily, 45.45% use once in 2-3 days.

5.2. Opinion about the satisfaction of library space in different sections of library

Library spaces are intimately tied to library roles, collections, and services. Creating new roles for research libraries in research, teaching and learning involves reconceptualising both library physical spaces and library virtual spaces. The opinion about the library space at central library is as shown in the Table

Sections	Satisfied	Percentage
UG Section	45	81.8%
PG Section	47	85.5%
Bound journal section	35	63.6%
Current journal section	49	89%
Internet section	40	72.7%

From the Table it is observed that majority of users are satisfied with the library space available at various sections of library.

5.3. Opinion about the infrastructure facilities of library

The infrastructure means the physical conditions in which the service is provided. The physical facilities like, lighting, sound prevention, cleanliness and arrangement of resources are considered here under the infrastructure. The cleanliness of library premises is a vital factor among the tangible elements. Proper dusting of shelves, clean flooring and toilet create a proper service environment. Hence the opinions about these are collected and shown as in the following Table

Infrastructure	Lighting	Sound prevention	Cleanliness	Arrangement of library resources
Excellent	50(90.9%)	40(72.7%)	51(92.7%)	44(80%)
Good	3(5.45%)	11(20%)	3/(5.45%)	8(14.5%)
Poor	2/(3.6%)	4(7.2%)	1(1.8%)	3(5.45%)

From the Table it is observed that majority of the students are satisfied with the present infrastructure facilities of the library.

5.4. Opinion about the library collection

To study the level of satisfaction of respondents about their library collection in meeting their information needs it was asked to rate their library collection in terms of books and journals, (both online and print) their responses are shown in the following Table

S.No.	Rating	Book Resources	Print journal resources	Online Journal resources
1	Poor	2 (3.6)	10 (18.1)	3 (5.45)
2	Good	45 (81.8)	40 (72.7)	45 (81.8)
3	Excellent	8 (14.5)	5 (9)	7 (12.7)

From the Table it is observed that majority of the students are satisfied with the Library resources available in the library

5.5. Opinion about the satisfaction of library equipments in different sections of library

In addition to basic resources like books, journals and other reading materials, library equipments like computers and furniture's also play an important role while using the library. Hence to study the user's opinion about these it was asked to give their opinion about these and their opinions are shown in the following Table.

Library equipment	Reading sections (Table, Chairs, Book Racks)	Computer sections (Computers, Printer, Scanners, Chairs)	Property Counter (No. of Lockers)
Sufficient	48(87.2%)	50(90.9%)	50(90.9%)
Not Sufficient	7(12.2%)	5(10%)	5(10%)

From the Table it is observed that, maximum numbers of users are satisfied with the library furniture's and computers available in the library.

6. Suggestions:

After this users study about their opinions on the library, it was mandatory to act upon their suggestions which were realistic. During and after the study some suggestions can be implemented as a result of fulfilling infrastructure quality expectations as visualized by the library users. Some of the suggestions that can be given are as follows.

- **Infrastructure Development:** Infrastructure is an important aspect covered under environment service quality aspect. The library should give much importance to infrastructure which includes exclusive calm, quiet and well furnished study area, comfortable seating arrangement, proper lighting and ventilation, studios atmosphere etc.
- **Equal importance to print and online resources:** The impact of online journals on print journal usage needs to be studied for a longer period of time to achieve a better understanding of emerging use patterns. Therefore, definitive conclusions regarding implications for collection development, in terms of whether print journal subscriptions should be dropped if an online license is owned, cannot be made at this time. However new journal titles added to a collection should be made available online, if possible. Nevertheless, having campus wide access to the online journals does allow site libraries with smaller collections the opportunity to drop lower-use print titles with online counterparts and add unique print titles of particular relevance to local users and of importance to the overall collection.
- **Guidance for use of Library Resources:** Guidance for the maximum use of library resources is part of librarian's job. Hence self explanatory boards, labels, display of new documents added and personal help would help the user to locate the documents and facilitate utilization of available resources.

Data from all of the above assessment tools has provided a wealth of knowledge and first hand user accounts of how students, staff and faculty are using the Central Library. As mentioned above, a major trend in our overall assessment data from the past year focuses on building concerns and improvements, particularly with survey respondent comments. As a response to this trend, we need to move forward with solving small issues that will improve the

environment in planning for further assessments to give us additional data for a possible larger addition or renovation to the library building. Small solutions include reviewing library policies that address the acceptable use of library space which is conducive to study within the Central Library. Library staff will look at acceptable study room use and noise levels and how policies can be enforced without burdening staff and upsetting students. In addition, work is in progress to add temporary tables and electrical power, if feasible and safe, during peak exam times. We are also looking at ways to better divide quiet and collaborative areas.

The paper gives suggestions on the effective use of the developed instruments. The paper points out that the user needs assessment and user satisfaction measurement instruments can positively act as management tools that can assist the Central Library in decision making, long term planning, budgeting, employee training and development in addition to being a mechanism for continually enhancing and improving the relationship between the Central Library and its users.

7. Conclusion:

To know user's expectations, it is necessary to establish a communication channel and to have a regular discussion with the users. Involvement of users in the development plan of library Infrastructure and services would certainly improve the utilization of the library resources. The librarians are concerned with evaluating the effectiveness of the service quality in the competitive world and society's investment in them. For the effective service delivery, it is important to know the expectations of the users from the library. For last few decades technological advancements have provided the libraries capacity not only to meet but also to exceed the user's expectations. The technological applications in library, automation of the library functions, and invention of new technology based services offer some benefits to library users.

Medical libraries must be as self-motivated like the discipline they serve. In a rapidly developing field such as medical science, changes in user behavior and the impact of improvements need to be re-assessed in regular intervals on a continuous basis. The answer to the question "how can a library improve its collection and services to satisfy user requirements?" is continuously changing since user needs never remain stagnant. However, finding answers to this question will help any librarian to be more helpful to the objective of satisfying users and to implement changes depending on the user needs.

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