MEASURING USER SATISFACTION: A CASE STUDY OF SELF-FINANCING ARTS AND SCIENCE COLLEGES OF TRICHIRAPPALLI DISTRICT.

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Abstract
Satisfying the users is the prime concern of every modern library. Hence it is mandatory on the part of the libraries to measure the satisfaction of the users in order to provide better services. To measure the user satisfaction, standardized and appropriate tools are necessary. The author is reporting the user satisfaction scale developed by him for measuring the user satisfaction of academic libraries. The scale can be adapted and used for measuring user satisfaction in other types of libraries as well.

Keywords: User satisfaction, Academic libraries, User satisfaction and Reliability.

INTRODUCTION

The user community is the most important component 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. 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. This identification is essential for the systematic development of the collection and the planning of suitable services for the effective utilization of the collection. Being a discipline and a profession, medical science differs from many other fields of study. Further the clientele of a medical library varies with the type of library and the organization supporting it. Each type of medical library user has vastly different information needs. A clear understanding of the needs of the user is necessary to assist him in meeting the specific information need.

User Satisfaction

Although many different kinds of studies have paid passing attention to how satisfied users are with the information they receive, there have been a few studies that have dealt specifically with satisfaction. A survey carried out by Davis (1975) outlined an outreaching approach to the problem of adopting library services to patrons' changing needs. Lancaster (1977) defined "effectiveness must be measured in term of how well a service satisfies the demand placed upon it by the users." Mundt (2003) says "satisfaction surveys are an established means to collect and gather subjective judgments of single customers and convert them into a complex, objectified "snapshot". It is interesting to note that Sri Lankan librarians' enthusiasm over improving services to meet the user satisfaction. Rifaudeen (2004) has proposed a model structure for the improvement of the Inter Library Loan services. study as well as an effort to find solutions to the complaints and suggestions placed at the library. This study paved 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.

Scope of the study

The purpose of this study is to find out the user satisfaction among self-financing arts and Science College Libraries in Trichy district. Today Trichy district is very fast growing in educational sectors. Migrations of many students are come from villages (excluding Chennai) in Trichy district. The study covers user's satisfaction among self-financing arts and science college libraries in Trichy district.

Objectives

The objectives of the survey were to learn.
(1) The user categories and their pattern of library use.
(2) Whether they are satisfied with these resources, services and staff.
(3) What other services they would like to see the library provide.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Singh, Dev Raj; Abbas, S.M.; and Mani, V. (1989) “An Evaluative Study of Services Provided by Delhi University Library System”. Author measured the satisfaction of research scholars with services provided by the Delhi University library system. No particular collection was found to be excellent. Majority of users were satisfied with circulation and reference service. Chavez et al. (2005) carried out a survey of the students, faculty and staff to measure their satisfaction with the Paradise Valley Community College Library under title “Library User Survey: Resources, Facilities and Circulation Service”. Findings revealed that generally users were satisfied with the resources, facilities and circulation service. It was recommended to repeat survey in two years to compare satisfaction level of students. In a study titled “Satisfaction of the Carrier Seekers in the Resources and Services of Libraries in Kerala” Koovakki and Jalaja (2005) ascertained the level of satisfaction of career seekers in the resources and services of university, college and public libraries. Survey revealed that users using university libraries were most satisfied and using public libraries were least
satisfied. A difference was also observed between the level of satisfaction of male and female users. To ascertain the level of effectiveness of F.S. Idabacha Library,

Uganneya and Idachaba (2005) conducted a survey of the students and teachers under name “Information System Effectiveness: A User’s Satisfaction Approach Study of Francis Sulemanu (F. S.) Idachaba Library, University of Agriculture, Makurdi, Benue State, Nigeria”. Circulation and Information Technology services were deficient. Frequency of use of library was low, which indicates that library did not meet information needs of users properly. Respondents suggested the introduction of new journals and the Internet service to improve the library system.

Daisy Seneviratn (2006) Medical libraries must be as dynamic like the discipline they serve. In a rapidly developing field such as medical science, changes in user behaviour 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 perpetually changing since user needs never remain static. However, finding answers to this question will help any librarian to be more attentive to the objective of satisfying users and to execute changes depending on the user needs.

Liu and Allmang (2008) conducted a survey through online tool ‘Survey Monkey’ to reveal the user’s satisfaction under title “Assessing Customer Satisfaction at the NIST Research Library: Essential Tool for Future Planning”. Questionnaire addressed library resources, services, customer preferences and impact of libraries on customer’s work. It revealed that journals continued to be the most valuable resource for NIST scientists, with overwhelming preferences for e-journals.

METHODOLOGY

The study is designed as a descriptive and analytical one. Considerable data are available both from primary and secondary data. The study is carried out with the help of sample survey. The research problem and interview schedule have been formulated and tested on the basis of the research objectives.

Sources of data

The required data for the present study are collected both from Primary and Secondary Sources. Primary data are collected from various self-financing arts and Science College in Trichy district, with the help of schedule designed for the Interview Schedule. The Secondary data are also collected from the various standard text books, research articles, reports, leading newspapers, magazines and journals. These have constituted a supportive literature for the purpose of carrying out the research work.

Sampling Design

The population of the current study is the Self-financing arts and science colleges in Trichy district. It is not feasible to collect data from the entire population. Therefore the researcher has used the sampling technique for data collection. The researcher has selected 100 samples in self-financing arts and science colleges teaching faculty and students on the basis of convenience sampling technique.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

User Categories

39% of respondents were Post Graduate students while 31% were those Undergraduate students 20% of respondents were teaching staff’s and 10% respondents were non-teaching staff’s using the library. Opinion of these groups on the library is vital as one of the primary objectives of the library is to fulfill their needs.

Use of the Library

97% surveyed responded that they visit the Library in person at least once a fortnight. Of those, more than three-quarters indicated that they visit daily or many days a week

Table (1) frequency of use of the library

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Daily</th>
<th>Many Days a Week</th>
<th>Weekly</th>
<th>Fortnightly</th>
<th>Monthly</th>
<th>Never</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>YES</td>
<td>60</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>08</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NO</td>
<td>40</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>15</td>
<td>06</td>
<td>08</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Non-use of the library

It is difficult to make generalizations about the users who report they rarely use the library, as the numbers are low (7% or less overall). However, the most frequent comment given was: “The lack of time due to busy work schedule.” Another reason given was that “the atmosphere in the library is not conducive to reading”. One comment was “he would love to visit more frequently, if there was more space less congestion and better ventilation”.

Table (2) Aware of selection process.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>YES</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>30</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NO</td>
<td>30</td>
<td>70</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

70% of the users were aware of the resource selection process of the library but their participation in material selection was at a low level.

Table (3) participate in material selection

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>YES</th>
<th>NO</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>YES</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>23</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>NO</td>
<td>23</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Majority of the users were satisfied or very satisfied with books and journal selection process but dissatisfied or very dissatisfied with the non-print and other material selection procedure.

Table (4) Resource selection process

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>BOOKS</th>
<th>JOURNALS</th>
<th>NON-PRINT</th>
<th>OTHERS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>27%</td>
<td>21%</td>
<td>05%</td>
<td>02%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Satisfactory</td>
<td>63%</td>
<td>62%</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>06%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poor</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>02%</td>
<td>12%</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Unanswered</td>
<td>10%</td>
<td>15%</td>
<td>49%</td>
<td>92%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A user suggestion was that books and journals must be selected by
the examiners or members of Boards of Study and those who have got through exams in the recent past.

**CONCLUSION**

The Library is very proud that majority of people who completed the survey agreed that the Library was providing a good level of service. This survey has also provided Valuable intelligence that has already been used to inform the Library refurbishment and will be used in other service development. This complexity is illustrated by the changing way the Library building has been used over the year. It is also very gratifying that services where there is personal contact with Library staff (enquiry/information desks and academic librarians) have high satisfaction levels.

**References**