FACULTY PERCEPTION ON AVAILABILITY AND ACCESSIBILITY OF INFORMATION RESOURCES IN ACADEMIC LIBRARIES

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ABSTRACT

Any library's capacity to successfully serve its patrons is largely dependent on how easily accessible and available its holdings are to satisfy their needs. Teachers needed a variety of types of information for both study and instruction in order to convey knowledge to pupils and support their own growth. The right information must be made available in the right format to the right person at the right time in order to accomplish this. This study looked at the faculty at Government First Grade College Libraries in Karnataka's access to and availability of information resources, as well as their level of satisfaction with the material used.

KEYWORDS: *Information Resources, Electronic Information Resources, College Libraries, Availability of Resources, Accessibility of Resources.*

INTRODUCTION

In the midst of a technological-scientific revolution, the largest issues facing library professionals are the introduction of technology, the quick growth in the quantity of published information resources, increased access, and shifting user expectations. Libraries cannot exist at all without the patrons who utilize them. When the library meets users' needs or exceeds their expectations, users will be happy. User satisfaction greatly depends on the timely and sufficient provision of resources. It is the most crucial element in improving the library's performance.

The social and economic shifts gradually forced the libraries to enhance their offerings. As a service institution, the library's main goal is to give its patrons the appropriate materials, data, and services. Finding the needed materials in the library easily is a crucial component that improves the services provided by libraries.

In an environment where staffing shortages, tight budgets, shifting user expectations, an increase in toll-based electronic resources, digital obsolescence, and a growth in literature already exist, college libraries are required to give technology a serious look and to improve and expand access to resources and services. It is hard to overcome these obstacles unless libraries are reoriented and reorganized. There is an urgent need for serious thought in order to raise user expectations for quantifiable supporting tools that increase resource availability and accessibility. These tools include the structures related to resource planning, design, and development. According to this perspective, research has been done on the availability and accessibility of information resources at Karnataka's Government First Grade College Libraries.

A large collection of information resources that are easily accessible and available to everyone is highly valued, and it frequently plays a major role in fostering reading habits and a positive learning environment in educational institutions. An attempt was made to find out how satisfied users were with the accessibility and availability of information resources in this study. The primary aim of the research is to assess the level of satisfaction among users regarding the availability and accessibility of information resources in government first-grade college libraries in Karnataka, as reported by faculty members from various departments. Science, Commerce, Arts, Languages, and Other departments (which include Physical Education, Law, Music, and so on) comprise the faculty of various departments.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Information items, gadgets, services, etc. that are made available to consumers through electronic or physical objects that are readily usable or within easy reach are all included in the idea of information accessibility. Aguolu and Aguolu (2002) state that although a resource may be listed in the library and even bibliographically recognized as pertinent to a user's topic of interest, the user may not be able to physically access it. Information sources are more likely to be used if they are easier to reach. Information sources that take the least amount of work to access are typically used by readers. Empirical research by Slater (1963), Allen (1968), and Rosenberg (1967) have confirmed these observations. There are five different kinds of accessibility issues that the user could run into. These include physical, bibliographic, critical, linguistic, and conceptual inaccessibility. According to Aguolu & Aguolu, the mere fact that a source of information is available does not guarantee that it is accessible. This is because a source may be available yet access to it may be restricted for many reasons. Olowu (2004) notes impediments to unrestricted access to information that are both man-made and natural.

The inaccessibility of information sources was cited as the reason for the library's bad image. Information professionals undergoing further training at the University of Ibadan are the subject of an investigation by Iyoro (2004) regarding the role that serial publications play in fostering academic success. The perception of how serial accessibility has aided students' learning is examined in this study. Because the serial collection was readily and conveniently available, it was discovered that serials played a substantial role in information acquisition. Low student library use was noted in a related study conducted in 2004 at Yaba College of Technology in Lagos by Oyediran-Tidings. This was linked to issues with accessibility that were mentioned. While Kuhlthau (1991) contends that the action of seeking information depends on needs, perceived accessibility, sources, and information seeking behaviors, Neelamegham (1981) identified accessibility as one of the precondition of information use. According to Aguolu and Aguolu (2002), efforts are being made globally to support access to information in all formats; however, they bemoan the side effects of underdevelopment, such as power outages, equipment malfunctions, and a shortage of technicians and spare parts, which periodically cause the functionality of contemporary information storage and transfer devices in developing nations to stall.

METHODOLOGY

A researcher's process for attempting to solve a problem is referred to as research methodology. Methodology in the social sciences refers to the process of carrying out research. A researcher adopts various approaches and procedures for analyzing and investigating an issue, depending on the nature of the subject. Around 5700 full-time teachers are employed by Karnataka's government first-grade institutions, according to the literature currently in publication (DCE, 2005). The entire population of the study is defined as all full-time instructors employed by Karnataka's government first-grade institutions. Samples are selected from each stratum after the complete population is split up into several strata according to region for the study. Therefore, stratified random sampling is the appropriate sampling approach.

The sample size has been calculated using the Krejcie and Morgan method (Krejcie & Morgan, 1997). A sample size of 426 is greater than the necessary number for a given population of 5700 instructors, according to the Krejcie and Morgan table for calculating sample size. Therefore, it is adequate to depict the populace. A cross-section of the population is represented by a 95% confidence interval with an approximate 5% margin of error. A Likert five-point ordinal scale is used to measure the questionnaire's responses: "Highly Satisfied," "Satisfied," "Moderately Satisfied," "Dissatisfied," and "Highly Dissatisfied."

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Table 1 displays user responses regarding the quantity of books, journals, and periodicals the library has available.

Table 1: Availability of Books

Faculty	Satisfied	Dissatisfied
Science	23 (62.15)	14 (37.85)
Arts	48 (70.60)	20 (29.40)
Commerce	132 (69.00)	59 (31.00)
Languages	83 (68.60)	38 (31.40)
Other Departments	6 (66.65)	3 (33.35)
Total	292 (68.55)	134 (31.45)

(Note: Figures in parentheses indicate percentages)

According to Table 1, 2/3 of users (68.55%, N=292) are happy with the quantity of books the library has available, while 134 users (31.45%) are not. Out of all the faculty, the Faculty of Arts has the highest level of satisfaction with 48 (70.60%), while the Faculty of Science has the lowest level of satisfaction with 23 (62.15%). The prior study by Ashwani, Singh, and Pravish (2012) on the information-seeking behavior of the art faculty at Aligarh Muslim University examined and validated this as well, showing that the majority of the faculty is happy with the availability of books.

Table 2: Availability of Journals and Magazines

Faculty	Highly Satisfied	Satisfied	Moderately Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Highly Dissatisfied
Science	0 (0.00)	14 (37.80)	15 (40.60)	5 (13.50)	3 (8.10)
Arts	3 (4.40)	39 (57.35)	14 (20.60)	9 (13.25)	3 (4.40)
Commerce	7 (3.60)	82 (43.00)	52 (27.20)	46 (24.10)	4 (2.10)
Languages	4 (3.30)	51 (42.15)	39 (32.25)	26 (21.50)	1 (0.80)
Other Departments	0 (0.00)	5 (55.55)	2 (22.25)	1 (11.10)	1 (11.10)
Total	14 (3.30)	191 (44.80)	122 (28.70)	87 (20.40)	12 (2.80)

(Note: Figures in parentheses indicate percentages)

According to the table, just 14 (3.30%) of users are highly satisfied, 122 (28.70%) are moderately satisfied, and 99 (23.20%) are unsatisfied with the availability of journals and periodicals. Nearly half of users (44.80%, N = 191) are satisfied with this availability. Of all the faculties, the Arts faculty has the highest level of satisfaction (56, 82.37%), while the

Commerce faculty has the lowest level of satisfaction (141, 73.84%). According to a research by Ashwani et al. (2012), the majority of the arts faculty experienced issues with periodicals and magazines being unavailable or insufficient in the library.

It is discovered that around one-third of users are not happy with the books that are available in the library, and approximately one-fourth of users are not happy with the periodicals and magazines that are available. Therefore, the libraries need to have more books, journals, and periodicals.

According to Okello-Obura and Magara's (2008) study, the majority of users prefer electronic resources over printed ones when it comes to features like speed, ease of use, multi-file searching, and access to documents from outside the library. Therefore, an attempt was undertaken to determine how satisfied users were with the accessibility of online resources. Table 3 displays user responses regarding the accessibility of e-resources, including databases, electronic books, journals, and CDs and DVDs.

Table 3: Availability of E-Resources

Faculty	Highly Satisfied	Satisfied	Moderately Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Highly Dissatisfied
Science	0 (0.00)	10 27.03)	8 (21.63)	13 (35.14)	6 (16.22)
Arts	2 (2.95)	22 32.36)	8 (11.77)	22 (32.36)	14 (20.59)
Commerce	6 (3.15)	57 29.85)	25 (13.09)	85 (44.51)	18 (9.43)
Languages	0 (0.00)	29 23.97)	27 (22.32)	52 (42.98)	13 (10.75)
Other Departments	0 (0.00)	0 0.00)	1 (11.12)	6 (66.67)	2 (22.23)
Total	8 (1.88)	118 27.70)	69 (16.20)	178 (41.79)	53 (12.45)

(Note: Figures in parentheses indicate percentages)

The availability of CDs and DVDs, electronic books, journals, and databases is found to be unsatisfactory with over half of users (54.24%, N=231), whereas 118 (27.70%) are satisfied, 69 (16.20%) are moderately satisfied, and only 8 (1.88%) are highly satisfied. The faculty of science has the highest level of satisfaction among all departments, with 18 (48.66%), while the faculty of departments other than science, arts, commerce, and languages has the lowest level of satisfaction, with 1 (11.12%).

Table 4: Accessibility of Print Resources

Faculty	Highly Satisfied	Satisfied	Moderately Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Highly Dissatisfied
Science	2 (5.41)	20 (54.06)	12 (32.44)	3 (8.11)	0 (0.00)
Arts	10 (14.71)	37 (54.42)	17 (25.00)	3 (4.42)	1 (1.48)
Commerce	23 (12.05)	97 (50.79)	52 (27.23)	16 (8.38)	3 (1.58)
Languages	12 (9.92)	55 (45.46)	43 (35.54)	11 (9.10)	0 (0.00)
Other Departments	0 (0.00)	6 (66.67)	2 (22.23)	1 (11.12)	0 (0.00)
Total	47 (11.04)	215 (50.47)	126 (29.58)	34 (7.99)	4 (0.94)

(Note: Figures in parentheses indicate percentages)

According to the table, half of the users (50.47%, N = 215) are happy that print resources are easily accessible from the stacks, compared to 29.58%, N = 126, who are somewhat satisfied, 47 (11.04%) who are extremely satisfied, and 38 (8.93%) who are not. The faculty of arts has the highest level of satisfaction (94.13%) among all faculty, while the faculty of departments other than science, arts, commerce, and languages has the lowest level of satisfaction (88.90%).

The majority of faculty members in areas other than science, arts, commerce, and languages are reported to be unhappy with how easily accessible reading materials are. Table 5 displays user responses about the accessibility of electronic information resources.

Table 5: Accessibility of Electronic Information Resources

Faculty	Highly Satisfied	Satisfied	Moderately Satisfied	Dissatisfied	Highly Dissatisfied
Science	0 (0.00)	2 (5.41)	12 (32.44)	16 (43.25)	7 (18.92)
Arts	2 (2.95)	2 (2.95)	28 (41.18)	26 (38.24)	10 (14.71)
Commerce	8 (4.19)	8 (4.19)	66 (34.56)	78 (40.84)	31 (16.24)
Languages	1 (0.83)	4 (3.31)	47 (38.85)	48 (39.67)	21 (17.36)
Other Departments	0 (0.00)	1 (11.12)	1 (11.12)	6 (66.67)	1 (11.12)
Total	11 (2.59)	17 (4.00)	154 (36.16)	174 (40.85)	70 (16.44)

(Note: Figures in parentheses indicate percentages)

As can be seen from Table 5, the majority of users (57.29%, N=244) are not content with how easily accessible electronic information resources are, whereas 154 (36.16%) are somewhat satisfied, 17 (4.00%) are satisfied, and only 11 (2.59%) are extremely delighted. Of the faculty as a whole, 32 (47.08%) are from the arts department, and 2 (22.24%) are from departments other than science, arts, commerce, and languages. These faculty members have the highest level of satisfaction. It is discovered that the majority of users are not happy with how easily accessible electronic information resources are, even in libraries where they are provided. Therefore, user education programs on the accessibility of electronic information resources must be conducted by libraries that subscribe to such resources. The prior study by Dhanavandan, Esmail, and Sivara (2009) examined and corroborated this, reporting that most users are unsatisfied with the accessibility of electronic information resources since they are ignorant of them. In the study on the utilization of electronic resources, Parameshwar and Patil (2009) have also observed that the majority of faculty members have stated that training is necessary for finding e-resources.

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The summary of the findings is listed out below:

- The majority of the science faculty is not happy with the books that faculty members in departments other than science, arts, commerce, and languages can access.

- The faculty of languages is the next most dissatisfied group, with 26.19% of the faculty of commerce expressing dissatisfaction with the periodicals and magazines' accessibility.

- Professors in departments other than Science, Arts, Commerce, and Languages, more than one-tenth (11.12%) are not satisfied with how easily accessible print resources are.

- The majority of faculty members (88.90%) in departments other than Science, Arts, Commerce, and Languages express dissatisfaction with the accessibility of electronic books, journals, databases, and CDs/DVDs.

- The majority of faculty members (77.79%) in departments other than science, arts, commerce, and languages are not happy with how easily accessible electronic information resources are.

SUGGESTIONS AND CONCLUSION

A few ways that libraries can encourage patrons to visit and utilize their services more frequently are by holding regular orientation programs, providing library user manuals, utilizing e-mail services, and offering Short Message Services (SMS) via mobile devices. Additionally, the librarian's one-on-one assistance and communication guarantee that patrons make the most use of the library's resources.

The best places to find up-to-date information are periodicals, newspapers, magazines, and other printed materials. It is advised that the librarian compile an article subject list and routinely scan the periodicals and magazines the library receives. The faculty members could make notes for teaching and learning with the help of this list.

In summary, the survey shows that people are not very happy with the materials that libraries have available. The majority of professors in departments other than science, arts, commerce, and languages are not happy with how easily accessible and available electronic books, journals, databases, and CDs and DVDs are. Therefore The use of ICT applications should be taught to the library staff. When a faculty member wants to use electronic resources, the staff is meant to help. Minor IT issues should be quickly resolved by the team. When purchasing equipment, instruction on its use ought to be part of the package.

Effective teaching and learning are ensured in colleges through the usage of electronic information resources. A variety of electronic resources, including as databases, CDs and DVDs, e-books, e-journals and magazines, and CDs, are constantly in demand to be added to the library's collection.

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