

INFORMATION EXPECTATION OF ELITE PUBLIC IN THE CHANGING ENVIRONMENT OF COLLEGE AND UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES

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Abstract

The future of the academic library is a diversifying in the higher education system. The academic library is not fixed. It is changing as it adapts to the changing research and learning behaviors of its home institution, which are the principal drivers of the library service. This is in parallel with the evolving influence of the network on student, teacher and researcher practices and with the shift from print to digital. They describe diversification of the higher education system, around poles of research, liberal education and career preparation. Academic libraries similarly will diverge, with different service bundles depending on the type of educational institution they serve.

Keywords: Information, Expectation, Changing Environment, Network, Educational Institution.

Introduction

After Independence, India has experienced growing population of literate and educated citizens due to various efforts in universalisation of elementary education through programmes like, Sarva Shiksha Abhiyan (SSA), District Primary Education Programme (DPEP), and National Literacy Mission and so on. On the other

hand, for the facilitating educated citizens with the adequate documentary and knowledge resources, government and other agencies have established college & university libraries. The community information centres and village knowledge centres are the recent additions to this effort that would transform India into an information society, where information and knowledge resources are considered as critical ingredient for development. But problem is with the effective and efficient use, consumption and evaluation of information resources, so that informed citizen can take right decisions. Here information literacy can play a vital role in educating the users of libraries on various information and documentary resources, where to start searching of information, what where and how to access them, how to assess and compare retrieved information, how to communicate their information or findings to the general masses and experts, and so on. In addition to borrow books for entertainment and leisure, college & university libraries can also disseminate information on community development, best practices, literature, culture, trade, education, etc. Which may be further elaborated when needs arise. Information seekers may want consolidated or exhaustive information.

Change and Response

Librarians find ourselves at the heart of a debate over the evolving needs of an increasingly technocentric information culture. Perceived downward trends in readership and growing rates of online literacy lead some to predict the decline of traditional knowledge organizations, which struggle to adjust to the “digital transition” and its effect on user expectations, the changing landscape, championing expanded roles for libraries in areas such as digital information storage, access, protection, and advocacy. What is certain is that college and university librarians are continuously challenged to understand the dynamic information needs of incoming students, each cohort ostensibly clearer in its penchant for digital media, mobile and social technologies, ubiquitous internet access, collaborative and multitasked learning, and technology integration in the classroom

Local User Research: Creating Context

A number of recent surveys and field studies at college and university libraries illustrate the insight that can be gained by establishing stronger local cultures of assessment. Their findings highlight students’ “self-service” orientation, a desire for 24/7 remote access, and their sometimes-erroneous perceptions of academic libraries. The

authors note that “students tend to be overly confident of their self-service skills in the library arena,” and when frustrated in an information search, often “that the library simply does not have the resources” instead of persisting or seeking assistance

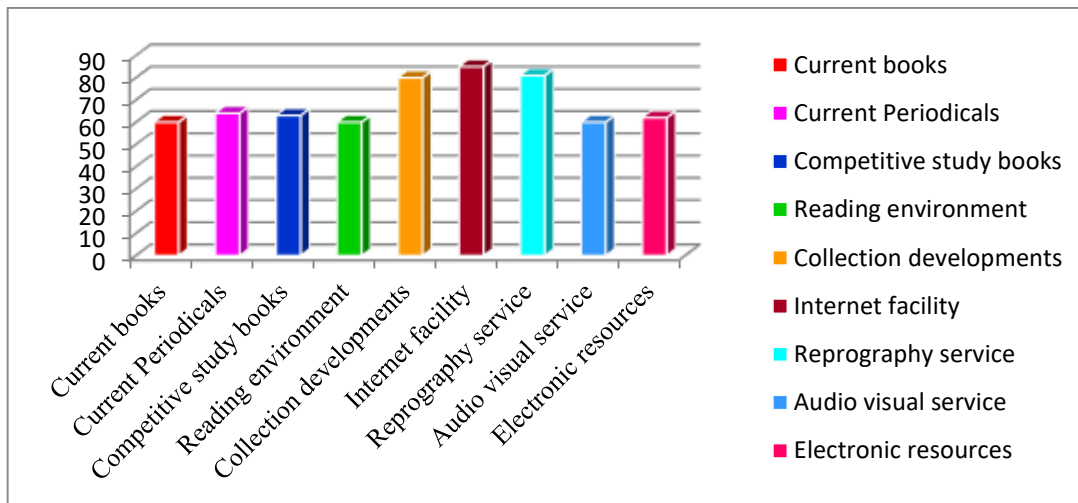
The 21st Century Library Project: Designing a Research Library of the Future

University explored the digital and physical research needs of graduate students and faculty. A series of focus groups revealed a graduate student population dependent on digital resources, generally unsatisfied with library research platforms, and unsure of their own abilities to use or seek help with information tools. Participants wanted libraries to function better not only as information repositories, but also as learning communities or “thought centers.” They also identified the ascendancy of new communication methods and media in scholarship, and discussed the potential role of the library in their development of pedagogical and collaboration skills.

Each of these projects exemplifies how local investigation can contextualize the baseline of understanding provided by external technology and library assessment initiatives. In each case, local information was applied towards programmatic ends - evaluating, modifying, and developing services based on actual feedback. There are many approaches to user assessment, all of which can increase working knowledge of user populations, library satisfaction, and the potential reception of technology-based library products. Focus groups, usability studies, polls, interviews, direct observation, and questionnaires can be combined in a number of ways based on contextual needs and resources. Extant local knowledge of user populations and library goals allows homegrown studies to illuminate contextual nuance and character, customization that can be difficult to achieve when using externally developed survey instruments. To provide insight of the practical or “action” research process. I outline considerations important in developing and deploying local studies, focusing in particular on web-based surveys as one of the most accessible and cost-effective research methods

Table -1 IMPROVEMENT OF THE LIBRARY

S.No	Improvements users suggest to improve the Library	Total no. of Respondents
1.	Improve the collections of the Library by adding more number of Current books	60
2.	Subscription to more Current Periodicals	64
3.	Increase more number of competitive study books	63
4.	Improvements in the reading environment	60
5.	Awareness about the collection developments	80
6.	Provision of Internet facility	85
7.	Provision of reprography service	81
8.	Provision of audio visual service	60
9.	Provision of electronic resources	62

FIGURE SHOWS THE IMPROVEMENT OF THE LIBRARY**Figure-1**

Improvement of the library

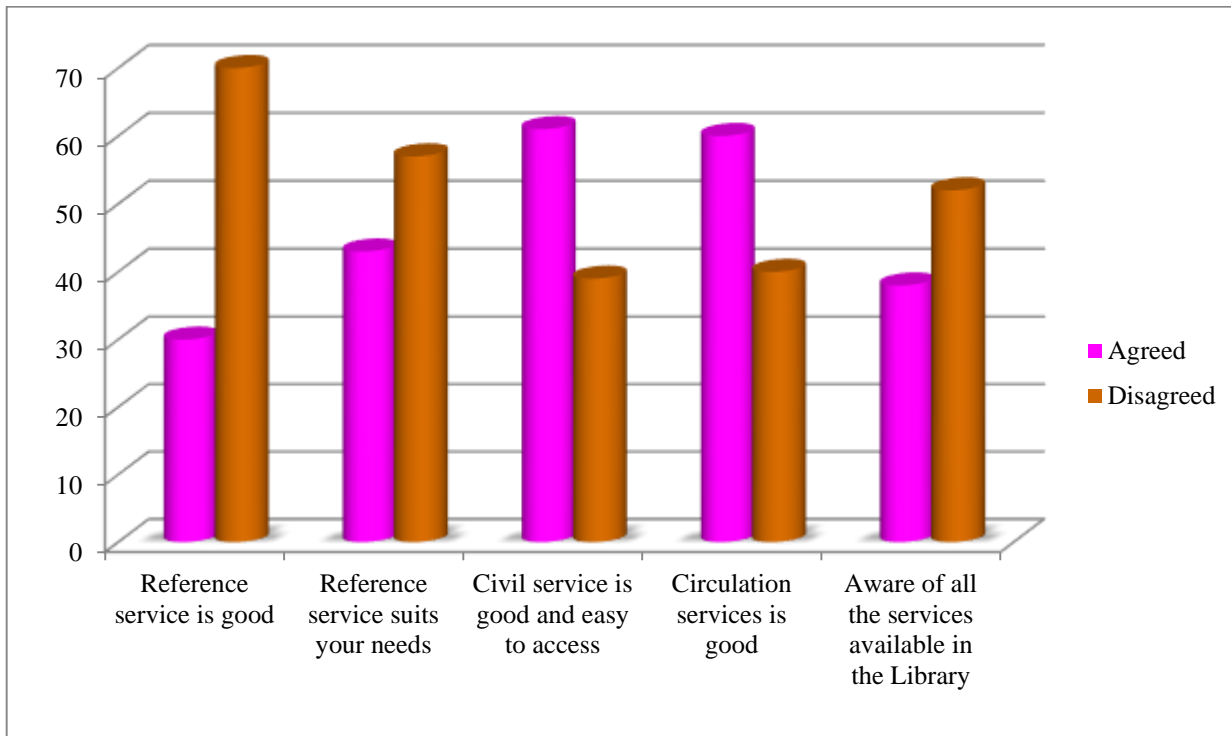
Apart from assessing the Library sources and benefits from the view point of the respondents, this study is also made an attempt to find users opinion about the further improvements in terms of resources and services of the Library. The collected data for this purpose is presented in the Table No.1. It is seen from the table

that more than 55 percent i.e. 55 to 80 percent of respondents wanted to improve the following aspects of the library.

- Improve the collections of the library by adding more number of Current books
- Subscriptions of more current periodicals
- Increase more number of competitive study materials
- Improvements in the reading environment by providing A/C environment
- Provisions of awareness about the collection developments
- Reference service may be enhanced with more number of dedicated professionals
- Provision of Internet facilities
- Provision of reprography service
- Provision of audio visual materials and audio-visual services

TABLE -2 PERCEPTIONS SERVICES OF THE LIBRARY

S.No	Opinion about the Library services	Agreed (Total no. of Respondents)	Disagreed (Total no. of Respondents)
1.	Reference service is good	30	70
2.	Reference service suits your needs	43	57
3.	Civil service is good and easy to access	61	39
4.	Circulation services is good	60	40
5.	Aware of all the services available in the Library	38	52

FIGURE SHOWS THE PERCEPTIONS SERVICES OF THE LIBRARY**Figure-2**

The services of the library are ranging from paper clippings to Circulation services. To find out whether they are beneficial, users opinions were collected. Thus the collected opinions / data has analysed and presented in the Table No.2.

It is seen from the table that 70 percent of respondents disagreed that the reference service offered by the library is not good and suits to the needs of the respondents. And about 61 percent of respondents approved that the civil service are good and easy to access.

The users perceived that circulation services offered by the respondents are good and thus, 60 percent of the respondents felt that the circulation service is good one.

E-readers—redefining reading

Available since the early 1970s with the launch of Project Gutenberg, e-books and e-book readers (first introduced in the late 1990s with the Rocket eBook reader) are just now achieving consumer adoption. While hundreds of thousands of titles were available in 2005, adoption was low. The consumer appetite increased when

Amazon released its now market-leading Kindle e-book reader in 2007. The first shipment of the Kindle sold out within hours. Just three years after the Kindle's debut, Amazon reported that customers purchased more Kindle e-books than hardcover print books during the three-month period of May–July 2010.

Amazon may be leading the e-reader market with its Kindle, but other players in the e-book and e-book reader field have led to an e-book adoption tipping point. E-readers, including Barnes & Noble's Nook, Kobo, Sony Readers and Apple's iPod, have fueled the market for digital books. E-reader features include highlighting and note-taking, expanding the interactions between the reader and his book. Integrated links and embedded video are just the beginning of the social tools that will unlock the boundaries of the traditional book and redefine the act of reading.

Conclusion

Information Behavior of the Research of the Future, asserts that “in a real sense, we are all the Google generation now: the demographics of internet and media consumption are eroding... presumed generational difference”. In higher education, students use technology to fashion their learning environments in ways that contradict numerous age-based assumptions. My research at Ohio University points to a trait that is likely widely generalized, while younger students tend to own and use more mobile and social tools, they have not necessarily reached the stage in their academic development that allows them to see their value in a research context. In a related sense, they do not exhibit the library predisposition demonstrated by older students, or the tendency to view our tools and services as inherently beneficial regardless of personal relevance.

In general, library technology receptivity was strongest among the oldest respondents regardless of academic standing. Paradoxically, these were also the least technology-engaged of all respondents. Does this point to a diminishing personal sense of library value among incoming cohorts of college students, or to a lack of current research needs and/or library awareness? Does this awareness gradually develop as academic needs become more acute? Are older students simply expressing their desire to become more conversant with emerging technologies, and consequently demonstrating a heightened sense of their promise in a research context? Would a greater research focus on library-as-place in this study have revealed a different library value system among younger

students, one oriented more towards community endeavor and the overall library experience? My sense is that to some extent, all of the above are true. The shifting technology and literacy landscape sharpens our responsibility to encourage this awareness among all users, and to ensure that it is validated by libraries that enable positive and customizable digital and physical learning experiences.

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