User satisfaction on library resources and services: survey conducted in main library of the Open University of Sri Lanka

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Abstract
One of the most important measures used for evaluating the service quality of a library is a user satisfaction survey. The objectives of the study were to find out the purposes of using a library and to evaluate user satisfaction towards the library facilities, library staff, library services, library resources and library website of the Open University of Sri Lanka. The population of the study was the university staff and the students who registered in the library of the Colombo regional centre of the Open University of Sri Lanka. Total sample size was 357 inclusive of both university staff members and students. Purposive sampling technique was utilized to get a representative sample. Primary data were collected with the help of a survey using a structured questionnaire, designed specifically for the purpose. Analysis of primary data was done using frequency tables and basic descriptive statistics such as mean, median etc. To measure the validity and reliability of the statements that are used to measure the user satisfaction, Cronbach Alpha testing was used. User satisfaction was evaluated under 05 parameters, such as (a) Library facilities; (b) Library staff; (c) Library services; (d) Library resources and (e) Library Website and Information access. It was identified that the respondents used the library for different purposes. Study results indicated reading, searching library resources, using computers to access information, and borrowing and returning books as the major purposes of using the library. The results of the study also revealed that on average, the respondents were relatively most satisfied with the library staff and their performance and helpfulness, moderately satisfied with the available library services, satisfied with the library website and its facilities and generally satisfied with the library facilities and library resources as a whole. The results also indicated that overall library users are satisfied with the available

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library resources, services and facilities. But, the study could also identify that there were some areas that users were not much satisfied with, particularly, providing user awareness programs, training on information searching, dissemination of services or providing information through social network media like face book, twitter etc., improving Wi-Fi facilities, improving access to audio visual materials, increasing the availability of electronic databases and providing more online library services. Therefore it is important to conduct information literacy programmes and user awareness programmes in order to make library users aware about new library resources and services and to enhance their information literacy skills. Further, it is recommended that understanding the user information needs, fulfilling those needs and measuring their level of satisfaction on regular basis is essential in order to provide a better service and to establish the sustainability of libraries.

Keywords: Library Resources, Library Services, Open University, Sri Lanka, User Perception, User Satisfaction
**Introduction**

Academic libraries play a major role in providing information resources required for teaching, learning and research purposes of their community. The library resources and services need to be improved with time, to cater to the changing needs of the users and to address the changing information behavior of the users. Accordingly, academic libraries need to identify and understand the user needs on a regular basis and develop strategies to fulfill those user needs. Therefore conducting a user survey in academic libraries is an important activity to be carried out, to identify user needs and information-behavior changes and the level of user satisfaction on the available library resources and services. The level of user satisfaction is the most important measure that can be used to evaluate library resources and services. Verma and Lalrokhauma (2018) defined user satisfaction as “the degree to which the library is able to meet the demands of the user”. Libraries as the service oriented organizations, mainly aimed to provide relevant information resources and services in order to meet the information needs of the users. Hence, it is important to provide relevant and reliable information resources and quality services that will satisfy the users.

The Open University of Sri Lanka is the leading open and distance learning institution in Sri Lanka which provides an opportunity for students to follow certificate, diploma, degree and postgraduate degree programmes through the open and distance learning mode. Open means, there are no restrictions to enroll for the courses available in the Open University of Sri Lanka in terms of age, education level, employment status, religion etc. Distance learning refers to the possibility of students to engage in learning at their convenient places without being in regular face to face contact with the lecturers. Therefore, it is essential for the students to pay more attention on their academic activities as the learning mode is more aligned towards the student centered learning. University also provides additional learner support for the students in different ways such as providing Library services and facilities, providing self study packs (course materials), introducing more advanced online learning methods and tools and improving access to online resources.

The Open University of Sri Lanka has a network of libraries scattered over the country and the main library is located in Colombo and 08 more regional
center libraries are located in Kandy, Matara, Jaffna, Batticaloa, Anuradhapura, Kurunegala, Badulla and Rathnapura. Library of the Open University of Sri Lanka serves as the major centre available in the university in providing information resources required for the staff and students during their teaching, learning and research activities. Library plays a vital role in fulfilling information needs of the staff and students in relation to teaching, learning and research activities. Therefore, library collections and the services are being continuously upgraded, in order to meet the changing information needs of the users and to make them satisfied. Even though the library resources and the services are expanding over the time, it is important to measure the satisfaction levels of the users which are the ultimate output of the library. Wanyonyi et al, 2018 stated, that “libraries should always focus on user satisfaction, have all essential services under respective sections and departments, understand the needs of its users and measure their level of satisfaction and have quality and adequate information materials both in print and electronic. Accordingly, user satisfaction is a very important phenomenon and understanding user needs is essential.

The open University of Sri Lanka conducted a study to examine the user satisfaction on library facilities, services, and resources of three regional center libraries; Kandy, Matara and Anuradhapura regional center libraries and came up with the findings that the users were satisfied with the library’s physical facilities and were unsatisfied with the library collection and computer facilities provided by the libraries (Kaushamalika & Weerakoon, 2020).

However, Colombo regional centre library as the leading library of the Open University library network which caters to a large number of users, it is important to periodically carry out user surveys to understand user needs and to identify the changes needed, in order to provide a better service.

Therefore, this study was carried out to evaluate the user satisfaction on library resources, its services and library facilities provided by the main library of the Open University of Sri Lanka.
Research Objectives:
The overall objective of the study was to evaluate the user satisfaction on library resources and services of the Open University of Sri Lanka. The specific objectives were to;

1. Identify the purposes of using library
2. Evaluate user satisfaction towards the library facilities, library staff, library services, library resources and library website of the Open University of Sri Lanka

Literature Review
At present, traditional libraries are facing a huge challenge with the emergence of digital information and associated benefits of these information resources. Identification of user needs and expectations on a regular basis and focusing on meeting those information needs will be a good solution to overcome the above challenge and it will be beneficial in continuous upgrading of the traditional libraries. User survey is one way which can be adopted to identify user expectations and to measure the level of user satisfaction on the resources and the services offered through the library.

Several past studies have been conducted to evaluate the user satisfaction and it’s influencing factors and to identify the user expectations. A study conducted by Ranganadham and Babu in 2013 to evaluate the user satisfaction on library resources and services in B.M.S College of Engineering, Bangalore, which indicated that the respondents were satisfied with the library resources, services, physical facilities, internet and computerization of library services. A similar study done by Kassim, 2009 to evaluate the user’s satisfaction towards the library services, infrastructure and collection of an academic library in Malaysia discovered that the respondents were relatively most satisfied with infrastructure/ place/ space, followed by library collection, and library services. Accordingly the study suggested that the libraries need to pay serious attention towards giving the best service ever.
Andaleeb and Simmonds (1998) tested a five-factor model to explain user satisfaction with regard to academic libraries and pointed out the below mentioned factors, that may influence the user satisfaction as responsiveness, competence and assurances, tangibles and resources. Majid et al. (2001) carried out a study to investigate factors that contribute positively to the library effectiveness. The study found that the adequacy of collections, services and facilities were the most important factors.

It was found in the literature, that there are several studies focused on information needs, information seeking behavior, student’s usage patterns, user satisfaction and service quality under the Sri Lankan context. Researchers in library science, always focused on these key areas as these areas directly indicate the library’s performance and it is easy to identify further developments and improvements needed.

A study conducted by the University of Jaffna library to assess the user satisfaction on the library services by Chandrasekar & Murugathas (2012) stated that biology undergraduate students mainly depend on the textbooks mainly depend on the textbooks and it is essential that the collection be improved and also the collection of electronic resources.

A survey carried out by Gunasekera (2010) at the main library University of Peradeniya to assess the student usage, stated that the library resources and services are not being fully used by the undergraduates, and that either they were not aware of the resources and services or did not consider them as important for their studies. Further the researcher recommended that comprehensive information literacy programs should be conducted to improve the awareness of the available resources.

Somaratna and Peiris, (2011) have carried out a study to investigate dimensions of service quality of the University of Colombo Library System from the user perspective and identified that the following seven dimensions represent the service quality, such as, service delivery by staff, collection and access, e resources and awareness, physical facilities, information control, library catalogue and security.
Illangarathne (2017) has proposed a new framework to evaluate the library performance and the major criteria used in the performance evaluation were library efficiency, library core people process, library environment, library users’ satisfaction, library adaptability and library capacity. The study has found that library performance is significantly related to users’ satisfaction with available services and the level of efficiency in providing services to users.

By reviewing the existing literature, it can be suggested that it is important to conduct user surveys regularly in academic libraries to evaluate the user’s satisfaction, as it is the major measure used in improving the service quality. Libraries should always focus on meeting the user information needs with a view to achieving maximum user satisfaction.

**Methodology**

The study used the quantitative research approach and the survey method was used in collecting primary data through a structured questionnaire.

The Open University of Sri Lanka consists of 09 regional centers scattered all over the country; Colombo Regional centre, Kandy, Matara, Anuradhapura, Jaffna, Batticaloa, Kurunegala, Badulla and Rathnapura. The University is established mainly to facilitate life-long learning process and that all individuals had a right to be provided opportunities for such learning (The Open University of Sri Lanka, 2010). The population of the study included the library members, both staff and students registered in the Colombo regional centre library and it is the main library of the Open University library network. Accordingly total number of library members was 5938 as at the end of the year 2018. Krejcie & Morgan sample size table was used to estimate the sample size and the estimated sample size was 357. Purposive sampling technique was used to draw a proportion of the population since the difficulties were associated with interviewing all the members of the population. The major reason behind using a nonprobability sampling technique was the difficulties associated in contacting the study group as they are involved in learning in distance mode without regularly attending the university. Accordingly primary data were gathered through a survey using a specially designed, structured questionnaire. The
questionnaires were distributed to the students and the staff who visited to the Colombo regional center library and the response rate was 84%.

Primary data were analyzed making use of frequency tables and basic descriptive statistics like, mean, median etc. Cronbach Alpha testing was used to measure the validity and reliability of the statements that were used to measure the user satisfaction. User satisfaction was evaluated under 05 dimensions as (a) Library facilities; (b) Library staff; (c) Library services; (d) Library resources and (e) Library Website and Information access.

Results and Discussion

Background of the respondents

Distribution of respondents by category (Figure 01) shows that the majority of the respondents (80%) were undergraduates and least number of responses (0.48%) was received from the institutional staff and certificate level students.

Figure 01. Distribution of respondents by category

Figure 02 illustrates the distribution of respondents by faculty. Accordingly, 41.45% of respondents belong to the Faculty of Natural Sciences, followed by 32.12% from the Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences and least number of respondents (0.52%) was from the Post Graduate Institute of English.
According to the results shown in figure 03, more than 80% of respondents were below the age of 35 years. Only 1.9% of respondents were belongs to the age category of 56-65 years. This indicated that the higher percentage of young students involved in following programmes.
Accessing Library Resources and Services

The following table (Table 01) details the ways of accessing Library resources. There are basically 02 ways of accessing Library resources such as, Visiting the library and using the Library website. Accordingly, only 17.1% of the respondents used both ways in accessing Library resources. Majority of the respondents (71.4%) visited the Library to access the Library resources.

It revealed that the traditional way of accessing Library resources by visiting the Library is the most popular and widely used method of accessing Library resources. 11% of respondents used only the Library website to fulfill their information requirements.

Table 1. Ways of accessing Library resources

| Visit to The Library | No | Yes | Total |
|----------------------|----|-----|-------|
| **Library website**  |    |     |       |
| No                   | 1  | 23  | 24    |
| % of Total           | 0.5% | 11.0% | 11.4% |
| Yes                  | 150 | 36  | 186   |
| % of Total           | 71.4% | 17.1% | 88.6% |

Frequency of visiting the library is one of the measures that can be used to rank the utilization of library resources. Figure 04 illustrates the responses towards the frequency of Library visits. It indicates, that only 19% of respondents visited the Library daily, followed by 32% of respondents visited 2-3 times per week and 33% of respondents visited 2-3 times per month. Overall 85% of respondents visited the library at least 2-3 times per month. The results further showed that more than 50% of respondents visiting the library 02 to 03 times per week, is a good indication of the library usage.
According to the results given in table 02, many electronic devices were used by the respondents to access library resources digitally. Computer is the most common electronic device and it is used by 61% respondents, followed by smart phone (50%), Laptop (45%) and very less number of respondents (9%) used IPad/Tablet to access online Library resources.

| Device      | Responses | Overall Percentage | Percentage of Cases |
|-------------|-----------|--------------------|---------------------|
| Computer    | 111       | 36.9%              | 60.7%               |
| Smart phone | 91        | 30.2%              | 49.7%               |
| Laptop      | 83        | 27.6%              | 45.4%               |
| Ipad/Tablet | 16        | 5.3%               | 8.7%                |
| Total       | 301       | 100.0%             | 164.5%              |

Library users visited the library for different purposes (Table 03). Many of the respondents visited the library to read, search library resources, use computers to access information and to borrow books while very few respondents visited the library for relaxation.
Table 3. Purpose of visiting library (Given more than one Choice)

| Purpose                        | Count | Overall Percentage | Percentage of Cases |
|--------------------------------|-------|--------------------|---------------------|
| Reading                        | 109   | 21.8%              | 53.2%               |
| Searching library resources    | 103   | 20.6%              | 50.2%               |
| Using computers to access      | 82    | 16.4%              | 40.0%               |
| Borrowing and Returning        | 81    | 16.2%              | 39.5%               |
| Get the assistance for Research| 42    | 8.4%               | 20.5%               |
| Request for Documents          | 34    | 6.8%               | 16.6%               |
| Relaxing                       | 24    | 4.8%               | 11.7%               |
| Any Other (Studying)           | 26    | 5.2%               | 12.7%               |
| **Total**                      | 475   | 100.0%             | 247.4%              |

User Satisfaction

This study evaluated the user satisfaction under 05 dimensions: (a) Library facilities; (b) Library staff; (c) Library services; (d) Library resources and (e) Library Website and Information access. The level of satisfaction of the users for each dimension was measured using five point likert scale of 01 (Strongly dissatisfied), 02 (Dissatisfied), 03 (Average), 04 (Satisfied) and 05 (Strongly Satisfied). The number of statements under each dimension varied.

Reliability test was carried out on each dimension to measure their reliability or the internal consistency. Hence, Cronbach’s alpha values were used, as it is the most common measure of internal consistency. All the Cronbach’s alpha values were greater than 0.7 which indicated a high level of internal consistency of each dimension. Further analysis was carried out to determine the user satisfaction on each statement.

Table 04 summarizes the mean and the median of the scores of the statements used to measure the level of satisfaction on library facilities including infrastructure, space and some other facilities. Accordingly, for the
overall satisfaction, mean and median values were 3.42 and 4.00 respectively, which indicates that the responses for each statement varied. Therefore it is important to identify facilities that users showed less satisfaction, in order to take necessary measures to improve those facilities. Based on the results, respondents were satisfied with 04 aspects; (a) Ideal environment for learning; (b) Space for individual learning; (c) Space for group study or group learning; and (d) Lighting and ventilation of the Library. Accordingly, having a favorable environment for learning will always encourage users to make use of the library. Lower mean score value was recorded for the statement of availability of Wi-Fi facility.

Table 4. User satisfaction on Library facilities

| Statement                                         | Mean  | Median |
|---------------------------------------------------|-------|--------|
| Ideal environment for learning                    | 4.04  | 4.00   |
| Space for individual learning                     | 3.92  | 4.00   |
| Space for group study or group learning           | 3.53  | 4.00   |
| Lighting and ventilation of the Library           | 3.48  | 4.00   |
| Seating Capacity                                  | 3.39  | 3.00   |
| Number of computers for accessing information     | 3.05  | 3.00   |
| Wi-Fi facility                                    | 2.56  | 3.00   |
| Overall mean for Library facilities               | 3.42  | 4.00   |

The results given in table 05, indicates that the respondents have positive attitudes towards the Library staff, as the overall mean and the median values were 3.9 and 4.0 respectively. Respondents were satisfied with the helpfulness, approachability and the knowledge of the staff members. This indicates that having a well qualified staff in terms of knowledge, skills and attitude in a library is an essential fact which positively affects the user satisfaction. This finding further confirms the earlier findings of Adeniran (2011), Wanyonyi et al, (2018), Iwhiwhu and Okorodudu 2012, Somaratna and Peiris (2011), that having a competent and knowledgeable staff is a key factor that affects the user satisfaction and service quality of a library.
Table 5. User satisfaction on Library staff

| Statement                                           | Mean | Median |
|-----------------------------------------------------|------|--------|
| Attitude towards the helpfulness of staff members   | 4.00 | 4.00   |
| Approachability of staff members                    | 3.87 | 4.00   |
| Knowledge of staff members about users’ questions   | 3.82 | 4.00   |
| Overall mean for Library staff                      | 3.90 | 4.00   |

Table 06 presents the mean and the median scores for the statements used to measure the level of satisfaction on library services. The respondents were satisfied with the library services provided, as overall mean and the median values were close to 4. Based on the median scores of 4.0, majority of the respondents were satisfied with the 08 statements; (a) Library service hours; (b) 04 statements under services associated with the books circulation; (c) Photocopying service; (d) Research assistance /Literature search; and (e) Physical arrangement of the library resources.

Respondents showed less satisfaction with 04 statements including (a) Keeping the users informed about the services; (b) Provision of user awareness programs; (c) Provision of training on information searching; and (d) use of social media to disseminate information.

Based on the above results, it can be concluded that, providing user awareness programmes about Library services and improving the online information services are important. A study done by Gunasekera in 2010 at the main library, University of Peradeniya also recommended that comprehensive information literacy programs should be conducted to improve the awareness of the available resources as a measure to increase the usage of library resources.

Table 6. User satisfaction on Library services

| Statement                                           | Mean | Median |
|-----------------------------------------------------|------|--------|
| Library service hours                               | 3.91 | 4.00   |
| Circulation service of the library:                 |      |        |
| Reminder service for the overdue books              | 3.71 | 4.00   |
### Table 07

| Service                                                                 | Mean Score |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------|------------|
| Fine charges for overdue books                                        | 3.59       |
| Borrowing period                                                       | 3.54       |
| Number of books allowed to borrow at a time                            | 3.53       |
| Photocopying service                                                  | 3.72       |
| Research assistance /Literature search                                 | 3.48       |
| Physical arrangement of the library resources                          | 3.44       |
| Keeping the users informed about the services (Interlibrary loan, E access, Document delivery) | 3.29       |
| Provision of user awareness programs                                   | 3.25       |
| Provision of trainings on information searching                        | 3.24       |
| Dissemination of services or information through social network media like face book, twitter etc. | 3.09       |
| **Overall mean for Library services**                                  | **3.48**   |

Availability and adequay of relevant library resources in a library is a key factor that affects the user satisfaction. A study conducted by Wanyonyi et al. (2018) found that there was a positive and significant relationship between adequacies of the information materials in a library and the user satisfaction. Table 07 shows the overall and individual mean scores of the statements used to evaluate the user satisfaction on library resources. Overall level of satisfaction was average as indicated by the mean score 3.3 and median score 3.5. Respondents were satisfied with the availability of printed materials but have shown an average satisfaction on usability of audiovisual materials. The reason might be the lack of awareness about the availability of audiovisual materials in the library. Several past studies carried out to evaluate student’s satisfaction on library resources, identified that the availability of adequate information resources both in print and electronic, is essential to meet the user demand [Kassim (2009), Wanyonyi et al, (2018), Iwhiwhu and Okorodudu (2012), Verma and Lalrokhawma (2018), Somaratna and Peiris (2011)].
Table 7. User satisfaction on Library resources

| Statement                                                                 | Mean | Median |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|--------|
| Availability of printed materials required for your needs (Books, Periodicals, Course Materials, PQPs) | 3.52 | 4.00   |
| Usability of Audio visual materials                                       | 3.16 | 3.00   |
| Overall mean for Library resources                                        | 3.34 | 3.50   |

Further, it is important to evaluate the user satisfaction on online resources and services provided through the library, as it is the upcoming and evolving trend of the information society in response to the technological advancements happening worldwide. Overall user satisfaction on library website and online information access was placed as average on the scale with the mean of 3.47 and median of 3.58 (Table 8). Respondents were satisfied with the statements of (a) Usability of Past Question Papers; (b) Usability of the library online catalog and (c) Accessibility of electronic resources at all times. They showed average satisfaction on the rest of the statements. The results indicated that the respondents have shown approximately the same level of satisfaction for both printed and online resources.

Table 8. User satisfaction on Library Website and Information access

| Statement                                                                 | Mean | Median |
|---------------------------------------------------------------------------|------|--------|
| Usability of Past Question Papers (PQP’s online)                          | 3.76 | 4.00   |
| Usability of the library online catalog                                   | 3.56 | 4.00   |
| Accessibility of electronic resources at all times (E books, Dictionaries, Videos etc.) | 3.38 | 4.00   |
| Usability of OER Repository                                               | 3.47 | 3.50   |
| Availability of databases required for your needs                         | 3.32 | 3.00   |
| Usability of Online library services (Article request service, Document delivery service etc) | 3.32 | 3.00   |
| Overall mean for Library Website and Information access                   | 3.47 | 3.58   |
Table 09 indicates the level of overall user satisfaction of the respondents. Accordingly mean and the median values were 3.79 and 4.00 respectively, which were close to 04. Thus, it can be concluded that the respondents were satisfied with the facilities, resources and the services provided by the library.

| Statement                      | Mean | Median |
|--------------------------------|------|--------|
| Overall User Satisfaction      | 3.79 | 4.00   |

Conclusions
The main aim of any library is to provide the right information to the right person at the right time in order to fulfill the information needs of the users. This study was an attempt to identify the level of satisfaction of the library users in relation to 05 basic parameters a) Library facilities; (b) Library staff; (c) Library services; (d) Library resources and (e) Library Website and Information access. Based on the findings, it can be concluded that the respondents were relatively most satisfied with the library staff and their performance and helpfulness, moderately satisfied with the available library services, satisfied with the library website and its facilities and generally satisfied with the library facilities and library resources as a whole.

The study points out that there are some areas that need to be improved, particularly providing user awareness programs, training on information searching, dissemination of services or providing information through social network media like face book, twitter etc., improving Wi-Fi facility, improving access to audio visual materials, increasing the availability of electronic databases and providing more online library services. The study also indicates that it is important to carry out more and more awareness programmes to promote the available library resources and services among the library users.
Above findings can be seriously considered in making further improvements to the OUSL library in future. The practical implication of the study is that the libraries need to understand the user information needs, fulfill those needs and measure their level of satisfaction on a regular basis in order to provide a better service.

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