Abstract

**Background:** Learning environment has a significant role in determining students’ academic achievement and learning. Learning environment refers to the diverse physical locations, contexts, and cultures in which students learn. Outside the classroom, undergraduate students have a decided preference to use the library for their academic work. Nursing professionals need a wide variety of health information to meet their clinical and educational needs.

**Materials and Methods:** Quantitative non-experimental research approach was conducted to assess the opinion of nursing students regarding the choice of library as their preferred learning space at Rufaida College of Nursing, Jamia Hamdard, New Delhi, India. The samples were 104 nursing students of B.Sc. (Hons) nursing 3rd and 4th year, DGNM 3rd year, Post-basic nursing 2nd year and M.Sc. 2nd year. A structured opinionnaire was used to collect data from the samples.

**Results:** The results of the study revealed that out of 104 nursing students, majority (57.69%) of the nursing students spent 1-2 hours per week in library. Majority (81.73%) of nursing students had favorable opinion regarding choice of library as their preferred learning space.

**Conclusion:** The major conclusion drawn from the study was that although most of the students had a favorable opinion regarding choice of library as their preferred learning space, yet they spent less hours in the library. The study concludes that a university library should be designed in a way that its environment supports learning, which would indeed increase the footfall in the libraries.

**Keywords:** Choice of library, Nursing students, Opinion

Introduction

Learning environment has a significant role in determining students’ academic achievement and learning. Learning environment refers to the diverse physical locations, contexts, and cultures in which students learn. Meaningful learning correlates positively with the students’ perceptions of the educational environment, which impacts on students’ learning experiences and outcomes. Student satisfaction is an important indicator of the quality of learning experiences and is related to several outcome variables. Outside the classroom, undergraduate students have a decided preference to use the library for their academic work.

According to the Journal of the University Librarians Association of Sri Lanka, the academic libraries have been described as the “heart” of the learning community, providing a place for students and faculty to conduct their research and advance their knowledge. In the education system, an academic library is the centre of academic life. A university library or any other library attached to an institution of higher education exists to support the

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goals of its parent organization. Since university libraries are an integral part of the higher education system, they should provide support services for the formal educational programs as well as for facilities for research and for generation of new knowledge. It is important for any information professional working in an academic library or any other library to know the real needs of the user community.³

Nursing professionals need a wide variety of health information to meet their clinical and educational needs. Due to time constraints, many health care professionals prefer to obtain information from resources that are convenient, easy to use, and reliable. Professional superiors, colleagues, and other health care providers, especially physicians, are favorite resources for nursing information. Print materials are another group of preferred resources of information, including nursing textbooks and journals. Other reports, however, indicate an underutilization of the available nursing literature with a reduction in textbook use and minimal reliance on print journals.⁴

Williams AP⁵ surveyed Canadian undergraduate library use, and found that active learners who participate more in class and who read, write and study more, are regular and active library users.

Academic libraries are centers for learning on campus, and provide expanded informal learning space for the students. Libraries should provide resources for preparation for exam, research projects, group projects, seminars etc. Resources in the library should be used for collecting review of literature for research purposes. Library gives a sense of scholarship with interactive and collaborative learning. Library should help students to engage optimally with the ever-changing information environment and should serve as an easy access for gathering recent information about new technologies and advancements. Library is a contemplative place for solitary reflection and deep thought. Acoustic property of library is conducive for effective learning.⁶

Dee C, Stanley EE conducted a study on information seeking behaviour of nursing students and clinical nurses and its implications for health science librarians.⁷ This research was conducted to provide new insights on clinical nurses’ and nursing students’ current use of health resources and libraries and deterrents to their retrieval of electronic clinical information, exploring implications from these findings for health sciences librarians. Questionnaires, interviews, and observations were used to collect data from twenty-five nursing students and twenty-five clinical nurses. Nursing students and clinical nurses were most likely to rely on colleagues and books for medical information, while other resources they frequently cited included personal digital assistants, electronic journals and books, and drug representatives. Significantly more nursing students than clinical nurses used online databases, including CINAHL and PubMed, to locate health information, and nursing students were more likely than clinical nurses to report performing a database search at least one to five times a week.

Since the university library is committed to provide excellent resources and services, it has to develop an on-going dialog with its user community. Academic libraries have to improve the quality of their services to survive in this volatile competitive environment. It is of paramount importance that use academic library contributes to the academic excellence of the nursing students and the university librarian addresses to the user needs. The university should assess the changing needs and reading interests of students regarding the usability and feasibility of the existing library and make efforts to improve the ambience of the library within and outside, in order to achieve the learning, teaching and research goal. It is crucial to assess the library service of a university from the student’s point of view and at the same time to determine the user needs. The university should become increasingly sensitive to the student’s requirement from a library and offer services and tailoring those services to meet the interest of the students.

Hence, a vital need was felt to assess the opinion of nursing students’ regarding the choice of library as their preferred learning space in a selected college of nursing in New Delhi.

Materials and Methods

Quantitative non - experimental research approach and descriptive research design were found appropriate for this study. The present study was conducted in Rufaida College of Nursing, Jamia Hamdard, New Delhi in May 2018. The population comprised of nursing students of Rufaida College of Nursing, Jamia Hamdard and the sample were 104 nursing students of B.Sc. (Hons) nursing 3rd and 4th year, DGNM 3rd year, Post-basic nursing 2nd year and M.Sc. 2nd year. The samples were selected using convenient sampling technique.

Inclusion Criteria

• Nursing students of courses M.Sc. Nursing, B.Sc. (Hons) Nursing, Post Basic B.Sc. Nursing and DGNM.
• Those nursing students who were available at the time of study.

Exclusion Criteria

• DGNM and B.Sc. (Hons) Nursing-First year students.

A structured opinionnaire to assess the opinion of nursing students regarding the choice of library as their preferred learning space was used to collect data from the samples. The tool comprised of two sections:

Section 1: Demographic Variables: It consists of 3 items to collect the demographic information of the nursing students, age, course of study, number of hours/weeks spent in library.

Section 2: Rating Scale to assess the opinion of nursing students regarding choice of library as their preferred learning space which included the following items:
• **Item 1:** Usability of library as a preferred learning space, which comprised of 18 sub-items.

• **Item 2:** Feasibility of library as a preferred learning space, which comprised of 14 sub-items.

The rating scale comprised of total 32 sub-items. There were three alternative responses as agree, don’t know and disagree.

In order to measure the content validity, the tool was given to 7 experts including from the field of community health nursing, child health nursing, obstetrics and gynecological nursing and medical surgical nursing. The tool was found to be valid. Formal administrative approval was sought from the Principal, Rufaida College of Nursing, Jamia Hamdard. The ethical approval was sought from Jamia Hamdard Institutional Review Board. Informed Consent was taken from the nursing students and their confidentiality was assured. The tool was administered to the nursing students and data was collected from May 16-18, 2018. The data was analysed using descriptive statistics.

**Results**

The results are presented under the following sections:

**Section I: Findings Related to Demographic Characteristics of the Nursing Students**

This section describes demographic characteristics of 104 nursing students in terms of their age, course of study and hours spent per week in library. The data collected was tabulated and analyzed to obtain frequency and percentage distribution, table 1.

| S. No. | Demographic characteristics | Frequency (f) | Percentage (%) |
|--------|-----------------------------|---------------|----------------|
| 1. Age (years) | 18 – 20 | 25 | 24.04 |
|       | 21 – 23 | 49 | 47.12 |
|       | 24 – 27 | 18 | 17.31 |
|       | Above 27 | 12 | 11.54 |
| 2. Course of Study | DGNM | 25 | 24.04 |
|       | B.Sc. (Hons) Nursing | 49 | 47.12 |
|       | Post-basic B.Sc Nursing | 18 | 17.31 |
|       | M.Sc. Nursing | 12 | 11.54 |
| 3. Hours spent per week in library | Nil | 42 | 40.38 |
|       | 1 – 2 hours | 60 | 57.69 |
|       | 3 – 4 hours | 1 | 0.96 |
|       | More than 4 hours | 1 | 0.96 |

Out of 104 nursing students, majority (57.69%) of the nursing students spent 1-2 hours per week in library, followed by 40.38% not spending anytime in library and 0.96% spending 3-4 hours and more in library (Figure 2).

![Figure 1. Distribution of Nursing Students by their Course of Study](image)

![Figure 2. Distribution of Nursing Students by their Hours Spent Per Week in Library](image)

**Section II: Findings Related to Frequency and Percentage of the Opinion Score of Nursing Students regarding Choice of Library as their Preferred Learning Space**

This section describes the findings related to frequency and percentage of the opinion score of the nursing students regarding choice of library as their preferred learning space.

| Category | Frequency | Percentage |
|----------|-----------|------------|
| Favorable opinion | 85 | 81.73% |
| Uncertain opinion | 18 | 17.31% |
| Unfavorable opinion | 1 | 0.96% |

The data presented in Table 2, depicts the frequency and percentage of opinion scores of nursing students regarding choice of library as their preferred learning space. According to their opinion scores, the majority (81.73%) of nursing students had favorable opinion regarding choice of library.
as their preferred learning space, 17.31% had uncertain opinion regarding choice of library as their preferred learning space, and only 0.96% had unfavorable opinion regarding choice of library as their preferred learning space.

**Findings related to Mean Score, Possible Range of Scores, Obtained Range of Opinion Scores, Modified Mean and Rank Order of Nursing Students Regarding Choice of Library as their Preferred Learning Space**

The section describes the area wise possible range of scores, range of scores obtained, mean score, modified mean and rank order of opinion scores of nursing students regarding choice of library as their preferred learning space.

**Table 3.** Possible Range of Scores, Range of Scores Obtained, Mean, Modified Mean and Rank Order of Opinion Scores of Nursing Students Regarding Choice of Library as their Preferred Learning Space

| Category                          | Possible range of scores | Range of scores obtained | Mean score | Modified mean | Rank order |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|------------|---------------|------------|
| Usability of library as a preferred learning space | 0 – 36                   | 17 – 36                  | 28         | 1.572         | II         |
| Feasibility of library as a preferred learning space | 0 – 28                   | 0 – 28                   | 24         | 1.64          | I          |

The data represented in table 3 depicts that the nursing students had a mean opinion score (28) towards usability of library as a preferred learning space and a modified mean of 1.572. The mean opinion score obtained for feasibility of library as preferred learning space was 24, with a modified mean of 1.64, which shows that nursing students had highly favorable opinion towards feasibility of library as preferred learning space, followed by towards usability of library as a preferred learning space.

**Findings Related to Comparison between Mean Opinion Score of B.Sc. (Hons) Nursing, Post-basic B.Sc. Nursing, DGNM and M.Sc. Nursing Students, Regarding Choice of Library as their Preferred Learning Space**

The section describes the comparison between mean opinion score of nursing students according to their course of study.

The data presented in Table 4 depicts that mean opinion score (27.28) regarding choice of library as their preferred learning space were high among Post-basic B.Sc. Nursing students, followed by a mean opinion score of 24.53 among M.Sc. Nursing students, mean opinion score of 25.26 among B.Sc. (Hons) Nursing students and the least mean opinion score (24.26) was among DGNM students.

**Table 4.** Comparison between Mean Opinion Score of B.Sc. (Hons) Nursing, Post-basic B.Sc. Nursing, DGNM and M.Sc. Nursing students regarding Choice of Library as their Preferred Learning Space

| S. No. | Class                          | Mean Opinion Score |
|--------|--------------------------------|--------------------|
| 1.     | B.Sc. (Hons) Nursing           | 25.26              |
| 2.     | Post-basic B.Sc. Nursing       | 27.28              |
| 3.     | DGNM                          | 24.26              |
| 4.     | M.Sc. Nursing                 | 25.53              |

**Discussion**

The objective of the study was to assess the opinion of nursing students regarding choice of library as their preferred learning space. The present study findings revealed that out of 104 nursing students, majority (57.69%) of the nursing students spent 1-2 hours per week in library, followed by 40.38% not spending anytime in library and 0.96% spending 3-4 hours and more in library. These findings are not consistent with a study conducted by Susan Betty to assess students’ perception of informal learning spaces in an academic library; an investigation into the relationship between learning behaviour and space design. The study was conducted in early 2016. Students were interviewed regarding their perception of the spaces that they use, in relation to the learning activities they needed to undertake. The goal of the study was to determine the features in open learning spaces that assist students in their learning. A total of 21 participants were interviewed (11 female). The majority of the students (n=18) report coming to the library between 3 and 5 times per week. One student reported coming to the library more than once daily. Fourteen students reported staying from 1-3 hours at each visit, while 7 reported staying more than three hours per visit.

Neda Abbasi, Richard Tucker, Kenn Fisher, and Robert Gerrity conducted a study on Library Spaces Designed with Students in Mind: an Evaluation Study of University of Queensland Libraries at St Lucia Campus. 1505 students completed the survey, which aimed to assess how effective and responsive library spaces are in meeting students’ needs and supporting their learning experiences. Findings revealed that the qualities of physical spaces were ranked as the third most significant category of reasons accounting for students’ preference for certain library buildings over others, and for their frequency of visit (behind “location” of the library building and then “access to books and course-
related materials or resources”). In the present study, the nursing students had a mean opinion score of 28, towards usability of library as a preferred learning space and a modified mean of 1.572. The mean opinion score obtained for feasibility of library as preferred learning space was 24, with a modified mean of 1.64, which shows that nursing students had highly favorable opinion towards feasibility of library as preferred learning space, followed by towards usability of library as a preferred learning space.

The study has implications in nursing education, nursing practice, nursing administration and nursing research. The library in nursing colleges should be having an ambience which helps to attain learning, teaching, academic and research goal. Regular practice utilization of library should be inculcated in the students by the faculty. The college library should have ample resources for reference for preparation during exams, competitive exams, research projects and group projects. Nurses should be sensitized regarding updating their knowledge by making efficient use of library. Regular in-services education of staff nurses on utilization of library for updating their knowledge in nursing care may be conducted by the nursing department. Nurse researcher can conduct a study to assess the opinion of faculty regarding choice of library as their preferred learning space. There were some limitations to the present study like, the structured opinionnaire was used to collect the information, which made the responses were restricted and not open ended and the study was conducted only in one Nursing College of New Delhi, hence the limits the generalizability of the study findings. College library increase the acquisition of electronic information sources while continuing to acquire general and reference materials to fulfill the current research needs of the users. University librarian should become increasingly sensitive to the user needs.

Conclusion

The major conclusion drawn from the study was that although most of the students had a favorable opinion regarding choice of library as their preferred learning space, yet they spent less hours in the library. learning space. The nursing students had a highly favorable opinion towards feasibility of library as a preferred learning space it’s usability of library. The study concludes that a university library should be designed in a way that it’s environment supports learning and should be of great value to students who are in the pursuit of gaining new knowledge, which would indeed increase the footfall in the libraries.

Conflict of Interest: None

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