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Shakeel Ahmad Khan

Government College University Lahore, shakeelkhan575@gmail.com

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User's Perception of Services Quality of The Central Public Library Bahawalpur

*Dr. Rubina Bhatti
Atta-ur-Rehman Marwat
Shakeel Ahmad Khan*

Abstract

The study aimed at investigating the user's perception of services quality provided by the Central Public Library of Bahawalpur. Survey among library users was administered and data was collected with the help of questionnaire. Findings of the study revealed that the Central Public Library of Bahawalpur is offering good quality of services for its users. Respondents were satisfied with different library services including, library books, journals, dictionaries, encyclopedias, Internet services, special collection, periodical collections, reference service, adult education program, reading room facility, library environment, opening hours and attitude of library staff with the library users. Respondents demanded e-resources of information in the library and suggested that library should provide training programs for its users to make the better use of library services. Study concludes that the overall services quality offered by the Central Public Library of Bahawalpur is satisfactory.

Keywords: User's Perception, Public Library, Central Library, Bahawalpur

Introduction

Public libraries play a very significant role in developing informational system for lifelong learning of the general public. Public libraries can access the global information by utilizing the virtue of information technology. Public library can provide access to the peer-reviewed online journals and help the individuals of the society in obtaining quality information for improving education, research and knowledge. Librarians working in public libraries can meet the new demands of the users by fulfilling their information needs in effective way (Haggstrom, 2004). Public libraries are crucial institutions for providing education. It is essential for adult education and improving literacy rate in any country (Akparobore, 2011). Public library is a cultural library that aims at satisfying the customer's information needs (Zhong, 2007). Public library can develop quality services to fulfill the needs of target market. Public library through careful planning strategies can attract the attention of potential users by encouraging them to use the library services for their needs (Change & Hsieh, 1996). Public libraries can tailor quality information services to meet the information needs of its users. Public libraries can attract users with careful marketing and planning strategies to attract the potential users (Nsieh, 1997). The Central Public Library Bahawalpur is regarded as a prestigious and historical institution of the City. It has a very fine building of classical Italian style of architecture. It was founded in 1924 by the Nawab Sir Sadiq Muhammad Khan Abbasi. It has three separate blocks for the users. The library possesses more than one lack collection of information to cater the information needs of the locality.

Problem Statement

Public libraries can play significant role in the development of information society in any country. Public libraries must build effective information services for satisfying educational and informational needs of its users. To provide effective information services, it is essential to measure the perception of library users with quality of library services in order to ascertain that whether the library is meeting the diversifying

information needs of its users or not. The instant study has been conducted to achieve this aim.

Research Objectives

1. To investigate the user's perceptions of services quality of The Central Public Library of Bahawalpur.
2. To ascertain the purpose of using library resources and services.
3. To explore the Problems faced by the users while using the library.

Research Method

Quantitative research method was used by adopting survey research technique. Study used literature based questionnaire to collect data from the respondents. The second researcher surveyed the Central Public Library of Bahawalpur and collected data from the respondents. Convenient sample of 50 respondents was taken due to shortage of users in the library during survey. The collected data was arranged, sorted, analyzed and interpreted in Chapter 4. SPSS was used to analyze the data. Descriptive statistics were applied to measure the degree of responses and to reach the results.

Review of Related Studies

Investigating user's perception regarding quality of library services is a fine tool to examine the role of library in providing effective information services to its user. It provides feedback for library administrations to evaluate library services and bring necessary improvement in its services if necessary. Given section provides the review of different studies conducted to measure user's satisfaction with different services provided by public libraries in different countries.

Iwhiwhu (2012) studied the users' level of satisfaction with public library of Edo State. Results indicated that respondents were not satisfied with information resources provided in the library. They did not show their satisfaction with the availability of text books, journals, CD-ROM services and other recreational materials available in the library. Study found that the library is not achieving its objectives in satisfying the information needs of its users. Findings revealed that users were satisfied with other than literary services provided in the library such as sitting plan, library space, air condition, photocopier service, lighting in the library, circulation and computer services. Nzivo (2012) examined the public library system and information services in Kenya. Study used Survey technique questionnaire as a tool to collect data. Majority of the respondents were students (64.3 %) while other were administrator, businessmen, lawyers, accountants and information officers. Findings showed that OPAC of the library is widely used by the users to find the information, they were using library catalogue (15.2 %). Results also indicated that respondent's satisfaction with library services was (69.3 %). They were utilizing internet facility (63.3 %). They regarded the computer services in the library as very good (84.2 %). Islam (2012) conducted focus group discussion to evaluate the library services in northern districts of Bangladesh. Study also highlighted the information needs of rural community. Respondents mentioned that they need information for education, health care, food and nutrition, family planning, agriculture information needs such as information about weather, soil, seeds, fertilizers and pesticides. They mentioned that they also need information about cultivation of vegetables and dairy development. They described that in leisure time they visit their neighbor or friends. They pointed out that they like to read books on poetry, text books, and books on religion, agriculture, poultry, biography and livestock. They were aware of the rural library services and use library for finding needed information.

Pors (2010) analyzed the services for citizens by public libraries in Denmark. Study found that the library staff working in public libraries of Denmark welcomes the new work tasks. Library visitors in Denmark public libraries appreciated the provision of new services. They utilize the new services for acquiring required information. Manjunatha and Shivalingaiah (2004) measured the customer's perception of service quality in libraries and found that customers of the library expect that library should offer good resources and services. Study found that the satisfied customer brings more users to the library. Study concluded that there is a need of leadership qualities in library staff for promoting library services to the customers. Gallimore (1999) overviewed the challenges faced by public library managers and found that the change with the library science profession has changed the responsibilities of public library managers. Due to this change public library managers are facing issues such as use of technology in libraries, staff and services issues.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Gender of Respondents

Out of 50 respondents, 34 were male and 16 were female library users.

Table 1
Frequency of Respondent's Gender

Gender	Frequency	Percent
Male	34	68
Female	16	32
Total	50	100.0

Type of Library Users

Results showed that different types of users including students, researchers, govt. servants and users from different occupations visit the Central Public library Bahawalpur. However, students are in majority.

Table 2
Frequency of User's Type

Users types	Frequency	Percent
Student	25	50
Researcher	10	20
Professional occupation	5	10
Govt.Servant	10	20
Total	50	100

Purpose of Library Use

Respondent's purpose of library use was inquired. Majority was using library for general readings (n= 20, 40 %). There were also using the library for their research work, entertainment (n= 10, 20 %) and career development (n= 5, 10 %).

Table 3
Purposes of using the Public Library

Purpose	Frequency	Percent
General Reading	20	40
Research work	10	20
Entertainment	10	20
Career Development	5	10

Information Sources Used by Library Users

A list of different library sources was provided to the respondents and they were asked to mention the frequency of their usage. Given table shows that they frequently use library books, journals, dictionaries, encyclopedias, Internet service, govt. publications, yearbooks and media/T.V/Radio etc. It shows that they were using maximum information sources of the library.

Table 4
Information Sources used by Library Users

Information source	Mean	Std. Deviation
Book	2.89	.895
Journal	2.73	.949
Dictionaries	2.65	1.089
Encyclopedias	2.55	1.022
Internet	2.59	1.127
Govt.Publications	2.77	.868
Newspapers/Magazines	2.32	1.196
Media/T.V/Radio	2.73	1.086
Year book /Annual Report.	2.82	1.225

*Note: 1= Seldom, 2= Sometimes, 3= Frequently
4= Always*

Frequency of Library Usage

Respondents asked to mention the frequency of their library usage. Findings showed that they were frequently using the library. It shows that library is offering good services.

Table 5
Library usage by the users

Frequency of Library Usage	Mean	Std. Deviation
How often do you use the Library?	2.73	1.086

Note: 1= Seldom, 2= Sometimes, 3= Frequently 4= Always

Satisfaction with Library Services

User's satisfaction with library services should be the prime goal of any library. Results depicted that they were satisfied with circulation services, reference services, special collection, Internet facility, reading rooms facility and newspaper/magazine

services. It was found that library should improve digital collection services and adult education program as the respondents were not fully satisfied with these services.

Table 6
Satisfaction with Library Services

Library services	Mean	Std. Deviation
Circulation	2.93	1.043
Reference	2.91	.884
Digital Collection	2.32	1.377
Special Collection	2.57	1.043
Govt. documents	2.30	1.173
Adult education program	2.30	1.231
Internet facility	2.66	1.098
Reading rooms facility	2.68	1.116
Newspapers and Magazines facilities. (latest and old ones)	2.91	.884

Note: 1= Not satisfied, 2=Satisfied to some extent, 3=Satisfied

Respondent's Opinion about different Library Services & Staff

Different library facilities were evaluated in the light of respondent's opinion. They agreed that library collection is adequate and organized, library environment is conducive, there are recreational facilities for children, it conducts seminars, book fairs, computers are adequate, opening hours are convenient, membership process is easy, library staff is co-operative and competent, library keeps it users up-date regarding new development in their fields of interest. They were satisfied with the overall services provided by the Central Public Library of Bahawalpur.

Table 7
Opinion about different Library Facilities

Opinions	Mean	Std. Dev.
Library collection is adequate for my needs.	2.89	.895
Library collection is well organized and easy to find.	2.73	.949
Library environment (cooling, water, noise level, lighting, cleanliness,) is conducive	2.55	1.022
Library provides recreational facilities for the children.	2.59	1.127
Library arranges seminars, book fairs, and book exhibitions round the year.	2.77	.868
Library computers are adequate for my study needs.	2.73	1.086

Library opening hours are appropriate for my study needs.	2.82	1.225
Library membership procedure is easy.	2.70	1.250
Books borrowing procedure is easy and is users friendly.	2.73	1.065
Library staff is co-operative, competent and helpful.	2.98	1.035
Photocopying facility is easy for the users	2.98	.963
The Library keeps me up-to date about the developments in my field of interest.	2.95	.939
I am satisfied with the overall quality of Library services.	3.02	.927

Note: 1= Strongly disagree,2= Disagree, 3= Agree, 4= Strongly Agree

Problems Faced by Library Users

Most of the respondents mentioned that electronic resources are not available in the library (n= 25). Library should arrange e-resources of information for the users as they are interested in using e-resources. Some of the respondents mentioned that required information is not found and there is a lack of users training programs (n= 10). Very few respondents complained against the lack of support from library staff (n= 05).

Table 8
Problems Faced by Library Users

Problem	Frequency	Percent
Required information is not available	10	20
Non availability of Electronic resources	25	50
Lack of users training program about the use of Library resources.	10	20
Lack of support from library staff	05	10

Key Findings:

1. The Central Public Library of Bahawalpur is offering good quality of services.
2. The library users are effectively utilizing library services and visit the library frequently.
3. They are satisfied with different library collections and overall services provided by the library.
4. They are interested in utilizing electronic sources of information and demanded e-resources in the library.
5. They need trainings for utilizing the library more effectively.

Conclusion & Recommendations

Study concluded that The Central Public Library of Bahawalpur is offering good quality of services to its users as the library users were found satisfied with different library collections and services. It is plausible that the library users showed their positive perceptions about the quality of library services and were satisfied with overall services of the library. However, library should offer electronic resources for the users as they are interested to use e-resources. Library should also offer training programs for the users in using different type of library services. Library should conduct seminar, workshops and

user education programs to educate the library users to utilize library services for lifelong learning. Library administration should focus to organize special activities in the library to make the library as the centre for innovation, learning and cultural development.

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About Authors:

Dr. RubinaBhaiit

Chairperspon, DLIS, TheIslamia University of Bahawalpur

dr.rubytariq@gmail.com

Ata-ur-RehmanMarwat

M.Phil, TheIslamia University of Bahawalpur

Shakeel Ahmad Khan

Librarian, GC University, Lahore

Shakeelkhan575@gmail.com

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