

Impact of ICT application and library services on user satisfaction

*Bibhash Kumar Mishra

Assistant Librarian, Kumaun University, SSJ Campus, Almora, Uttarakhand (India)

ARTICLE DETAILS

Article History

Published Online: 19 May 2018

Keywords

User satisfaction, Library service quality, Library users, Library facilities, User study

*Corresponding Author

Email: bibhashkumarmishra[at]gmail.com

ABSTRACT

User satisfaction of library regarding resources and services has become main concern in recent time. User satisfaction affects the use or non use of library services. The purpose of the paper is to discuss planning and different steps involved in user studies for user satisfaction. Paper also discussed advantage of user studies and some criticism of user studies.

1. Introduction

"It is natural for human beings to evaluate things, events and other people around them. Librarians too indulge in this practice. They have the need to periodically measure the resources and services of their library as a way of ensuring that they are meeting the set objectives of the library" [1].

"The academic libraries need to provide various services and facilities to the users to motivate them to use library. The developing nations are nowadays concentrating more in providing various facilities and services, in turn, which will help the countries in scientific and research development" [2].

"The basic philosophy of the library is to meet the varied information needs of the users engaged in the academic pursuit and research. Therefore, it is necessary to assess the quality of library services rendered and user satisfaction because success of any library depends upon how well a service satisfies the demands placed upon by the users" [3].

2. Literature Review

Satpathy and Satpathy (2013) in their study "Users' Perception on Medical College Libraries' Systems and Services of Odisha" found that all the medical college libraries are good as a traditional library. Majority of the basic reference services are moving away from the practice such as CAS, SDI etc [4].

Sriram and Rajev (2014) in their study "Impact of Academic Library Services on User Satisfaction: Case Study of Sur University College, Sultanate of Oman" identified that all the services provided by the academic library have significant impacts on the Sur University College users' satisfaction. The academic library has to provide numerous facilities and services that justify more interest to satisfy the needs of the users [2].

Rakesh Mohindra and Anil Kumar (2015) in their paper "User Satisfaction Regarding Quality of Library Services of A.C. Joshi Library, Panjab University, Chandigarh" revealed that library environment and library services had impact on the

levels of users satisfaction by 26.2 % based on the regression analysis [3].

Tamrakar and Garg (2016) made a study on "User Perception towards E-resources and Services of IIT-Guwahati Library" and suggest that the library should have to institutionalize its performance assessment by customers approach. This might be done periodically to have a response from the users on how excellently the library is meeting their information necessities [5].

Iqbal, Ali and Khan (2016) state that Information and Communication Technology (ICT) enabled library products, operations and services and the availability of online information resources are fulfilled the information needs of the researchers [6].

3. Objective of the study

The basic aim of this study is to identify the process involved to conducting the library user survey for the quality of library collection in ICT environment and services. Another objective is to find out the foremost purpose of using user studies.

4. Why User Study

It is common in the developed world for libraries to conduct user satisfaction surveys to improve the level and quality of services offered to users. These surveys help in evaluating the strengths and weaknesses of libraries and provide an opportunity to library managers to enhance the user satisfaction. Users' perceptions and satisfaction about library services have largely been ignored by researchers and practitioners of library and information science in developing countries [7].

"Lancaster (1978) suggested three possible levels for checking evaluation of user satisfaction:

- Effectiveness evaluation
- Cost-effectiveness evaluation
- Cost-benefit evaluation.

In simple terms, library evaluation is carried out to check and balance library activities with its mandate. This helps to see how the library is meeting its users' needs and also what decision to take and those to be revised. This is the reason why library evaluation has been referred to by some scholars as a management activity"[8] [1].

"In order to provide better library services, it is imperative to know how users assess those services, and surveys are a common data collection instrument to investigate users' needs"[7].

"The library users' satisfaction plays a vital role in the development and provisions of the library. The potential users' feedback regarding the library resources, services and facilities should be considered for providing necessary resources and amenities in the library"[2].

5. Planning of a User Study [9]

Library should plan a user study carefully from the beginning to the very end. While conducting a user study we should consider at least the following steps:

- Literature review of previous studies in general and learning about all aspects of user studies.
- Describe the objectives of the study.
- Selecting the variables to be studied.
- Selecting the sample of the population
- Selecting the method for collection of data for observation.
- Selecting the method of analysis of data.
- Method of data presentation and utilization of the results including.

6. Method for User Studies [9]

Different type of methods used for user studies are as following:

General Methods

1. Questionnaire
2. Interview
3. Diary
4. Observation by self
5. Operations research study

Indirect Methods in the context of Information Use

1. Analysis of library Data /records
2. Citation analysis

Unconventional Methods,

3. Computer-feedback
4. Unconventional methods

It is very useful in a survey of user experience to compare the replies of different sub groups – especially of those who are more satisfied, with those who are less satisfied, or of those who would with those who would not recommend others to use the library, or of those who are more with those who are less satisfied with the performance of the staff. This can identify what

aspects of the user experience have the strongest relationship to overall satisfaction [10].

7. ICT and user satisfaction

"Information and communication technology has helped libraries to provide more user friendly services and thereby provide right information to the right user at the right time and in the right format"[11].

"The changing technology, explosion of information and the transition of libraries from print to electronic have influenced the user behavior. Most of the libraries, especially academic libraries are continued to be hybrid (print and electronic) libraries"[4].

ICT has changed user needs and also methods of evaluation of library resources and services.

Library and information centers have been using ICT based resources and services to satisfy the diverse information needs of their users. However, these resources and services are not fully utilized. Underutilization of these resources and services has been a cause of concern to librarians worldwide. The use of ICT has become increasingly important in academic and special libraries as libraries are switching over to ICT based resources and services at an accelerated pace. It has opened new avenues, like online learning, e-education, e-journal, CD-ROM Database, e-books, web based resources etc [12].

8. Impact of user studies

All the services and resources provided by any library have significant impacts on the user satisfaction. Library should do proper user studies so that user can respond properly. "User satisfaction survey has a positive impact on users as they realize that they are given importance, and efforts are being made to remove the deficiencies and improve the services"[7]. "The potential users' feedback regarding the library resources, services and facilities should be considered for providing necessary resources and amenities in the library"[5].

Oyelude (2004) suggested that a good research library, after proper evaluation, should have the following qualities:

- Library should have relevant resources
- Library should ensure that adequate storage is provided for the collection
- Proper guidelines for accessing the collection through classification, cataloguing and other arrangements.
- Library should put in place special library services to make library resources and services available through inter-library loans, telephone calls, and other means.
- Library should facilitate retrieval of resources through self-help, or an intermediary who could be librarian or other information expert.
- Trained library staff to organize resources and services.
- Policy for evaluation of information resources and services at stated intervals [13].

9. Limitation

Some criticism on the method and techniques used in the user studies or survey has been raised.

Although a number of studies have been conducted in the past to assess the information needs of scientists, engineers and technologists, the, information needs proved to be extremely complex and varied. As a result, most of these studies proved to be inadequate to the task of completely revealing the precise nature and needs of information users. These investigations have, at best, provided only an a priori approach to the problem and much is needed to be done in this direction[9]

10. Conclusion

Library user studies system is a useful tool to find out the views and requirements of library users. It helps to improve the library resources and services. The libraries should provide various services and facilities to the users to motivate them to use library for their study/research. Library has to deal with problems and train the users for better use of library resources. Library should take an essential step to strengthen the present services and facilities for better use. To implement the newer technology effectively, the existing staff of the libraries should be trained so that they can make use of this technology in the proper manner and provide better and faster services to the library users.

References

1. L. O. Ezeala and O. Yusuff, "User Satisfaction with Library Resources and Services in Nigerian Agricultural Research Institutes," *Libr. Philos. Pract.*, 2011.
2. B. Sriram and M. K. G. Rajev, "Impact of Academic Library Services on User Satisfaction: Case Study of Sur University College, Sultanate of Oman," *DESIDOC J. Libr. Inf. Technol.*, vol. 34, no. 2, pp. 140–146, 2014.
3. R. Mohindra, "User Satisfaction Regarding Quality of Library Services of A.C. Joshi Library, Panjab University, Chandigarh," *DESIDOC J. Libr. Inf. Technol.*, vol. 35, no. 1, pp. 54–60, 2015.
4. S. K. Satpathy and S. K. Satapathy, "Users' Perception on Medical College Libraries' Systems and Services of Odisha," *DESIDOC J. Libr. Inf. Technol.*, vol. 33, no. 2, pp. 87–89, 2013.
5. A. K. Tamrakar and R. G. Garg, "User Perception Towards E-resources and Services of IIT-Guwahati Library," *DESIDOC J. Libr. Inf. Technol.*, vol. 36, no. 1, pp. 40–46, 2016.
6. J. Iqbal, A. Ali, and R. A. Khan, "ICT Applications and User Satisfaction in Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh: A Survey," *Libr. Philos. Pract.*, 2016.
7. M. I. Mairaj and M. N. Mirza, "Library services and user satisfaction in developing countries: a case study," *Heal. Inf. Libr. Journal*, vol. 30, no. 4, pp. 318–326.
8. F. W. Lancaster, "Guidelines for the evaluation of Information systems and services.," *UNESCO*, p. 15, 1978.
9. IGNOU, *USER STUDIES (Block-4 BLIS-01 Unit-11)*. New Delhi: IGNOU.
10. S. L. N. S. Wales, "Library User Satisfaction Survey Model For NSW Public Libraries Guidelines for implementing the survey," *State Library New South Wales*, 2012. [Online]. Available: <http://www.sl.nsw.gov.au/public-library-services/library-user-satisfaction-survey>. [Accessed: 27-Apr-2018].
11. A. P. Mehendale, "Use of Information and Communication Technology in Aided Arts. Commerce and Science Colleges of Maratha Vidya Prasarak Samaj, Nasik," in *Next generation libraries: issues and challenges*, 2015, pp. 51–57.
12. A. Singh, K. M. Krishna, and S. Jaiswal, "Use of ICT based Library Resources and Services and its impact on Users: A Case Study of University of Allahabad," *SRELS J. Inf. Manag.*, vol. 51, no. 2, pp. 93–98, 2014.
13. A. . Oyelude, "Academic Libraries: the state of the Art," *Technol. Inf. Manag. Serv. Mod. Libr. Inf. centers Dev. Ctries.*, pp. 121–146, 2004.