

Utkal University Library Services Towards Research Scholars : An analysis

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Abstract

The central library of the Utkal University, known as the Parija Library, has a good collection of books, journals, backvolumes, palmleaf and paper manuscripts for use. To assess the quality of library services to its research scholars, the author has conducted an opinion survey of a sample of 23 research scholars with the help of a structured questionnaire. The findings of the survey deal with the convenience of working days of the library; use of the library by the scholars; library collections and helpfulness of the staff; usefulness of the library services. The scholars in general possessed a negative opinion towards the usefulness of the library services.

Introduction

The library is an essential part of educational life and one can hardly visualise any kind of socio-economic development and rise in qualitative life without the aid of adequate library facilities, especially in the education environment. The research scholars of the university form a part of the educational system who have utilised the library services for their research purposes. The central library of the Utkal University known as the Parija Library holds more than 3 lakhs of books with 300 journals having a separate manuscript section with 3118 palmleaf and 420 paper manuscripts. Keeping in view to assess the quality of the library services to its research scholars, this survey is conducted by taking the opinions of 23 research scholars belonging to different P.G. Departments of the University with the help of a structured questionnaire.

Findings

Convenience of working days of the library

The convenience of the working days of the library to the research scholars is provided in Table 1.

Table 1
Convenience of working days of the library

Days	Percentage of Respondents								
	Very convenient			Fairly convenient			Not convenient		
	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total	Male	Female	Total
Normal working days	-	5.88	5.88	41.18	47.06	88.24	5.88	-	5.88
Sundays/Holidays	25.00	12.50	37.50	6.25	25.00	31.25	18.75	12.50	31.25
During vacation	11.77	5.88	17.65	11.77	23.52	35.29	29.41	17.65	47.06
During examination	-	6.67	6.67	33.33	46.67	80.00	13.33	-	13.33

It is observed that the timings of the library is most convenient to research scholars during Sundays / Holidays followed by normal working days, during examination and during vacation being the last. The convenience of library timings vary according to the sex of the scholars. This might be due to the influence of social factors, mobility etc., which vary from male to female.

Use of the library by the scholars

Only 16.67% of the research scholars visited the library daily and more than once in a week followed by 5.55% once in a week, 44.44% occasionally, whereas rest 16.67% don't visit the library at all. When the respondents are asked to state the reasons for not using the library they said that they do not feel like using the library since the library is not properly equipped (58.33%), library material is disorganised, library atmosphere is not conducive, librarians are not helpful, library timings are not convenient (33.33% each), library rules & regulations are not satisfactory (16.67%) and lack of ventilation & lighting (16.67%) in the library. While assessing the main objectives of the use of the library, it is found that reference materials are used by 77.78% respondents followed by issue of books (27.78%), reading newspapers / magazines and using periodicals (22.22% each), using reports / pamphlets / vertical files being 11.11%.

Library collection and helpfulness of the staff

The general opinion of the scholars on the library collection is assessed and found that none of them considered the collection to be 'excellent'

for their purposes whereas 5.56% considered it as 'adequate': 16.67% as 'fair', 5.00% as 'inadequate' and 27.78% as 'poor'. Regarding usefulness of librarian and his staff for finding answers to their queries, 5.56% of respondents remarked as 'always helpful' and 77.78% as 'sometimes helpful' when the rest 16.66%, of respondents remarked as 'never helpful'.

Usefulness of library services

The opinion of the scholars regarding the usefulness of the library services is provided in Table 2.

Table 2
Opinion of the scholars on library services

Sl. No.	Library Services	Frequency of preferential order				
		1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th
a	Services are adequate	2	1	1	6	1
b	Services are very good	-	1	-	1	8
c	Services are not upto standard	8	5	2	-	-
d	Services are very poor	3	2	5	-	1

It can be noted from the table that most of the scholars who gave 1st preference to the five suggested opinions belonged to 'services are not upto standard'; even their 2nd preference also belonged to the same opinion. When considered their 3rd preference it is 'Services are very poor'. Their 4th and 5th preferences are however, positive. This indicated that the scholars in general possessed a negative opinion towards the usefulness of the library services.

Conclusion

The library authorities are not serious about the gravity of the problem of the scholars in academic atmosphere. To improve the attitude of the research scholars towards positive side and to make the library services more effective in their research and academic pursuit, there is a need of greater qualitative improvement in the library services and potential development in the top management within the present hierarchial, conical structure.

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References

1. Krejcie, R. and Daryle, W.M. Determining sample size for research activities. *Educational & Psychological Measurement*, 1970; 30; 608.

Table 3
Opinion of the scholars on library services

Sl. No.	Frequency of preferential order				
	1st	2nd	3rd	4th	5th
a	8	2	0	0	0
b	0	0	0	0	0
c	0	0	0	0	0
d	0	0	0	0	0

It can be noted from the table that most of the scholars who gave 1st preference to the five suggested opinions belonged to services are not quite standard, even their 2nd preference also belonged to the same opinion. When considered their 3rd preference it is services are very poor. Their 4th and 5th preferences are however positive. This indicated that the scholars in general possessed a negative opinion towards the facilities of the library services.

Conclusion

The library authorities are not genuine about the gravity of the problem of the scholars in academic atmosphere. To improve the attitude of the research scholars towards positive side and to make the library services more effective in their research and academic pursuit, there is a need for