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Sunil Tyagi
Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, Suniltyagi1979@gmail.com

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Use of Information Resources and Services at Delhi Public Library (DPL): A Survey

Sunil Tyagi
Library & Information Centre
Indian Pharmacopoeia Commission
Government of India
Ministry of Health & Family Welfare
Ghaziabad-UP

Introduction

In the urban complex of the past, the library was at best an isolated and ephemeral phenomenon. Today a far-reaching and all-embracing library network exists reaching over the entire field of public and private life. This is especially the case in our metropolises in which the intellectual and business life is polarized. The Roman metropolis with its more than 25 city libraries in the late imperial period is probably the only example of a fairly expansive library system, which we could point to in the past. Intensive research and education at all levels and in all branches of knowledge makes the services of library inevitable. In recent times institutions of scientific and professional training have multiplied manifold to keep pace with the explosion taking place in the sphere of knowledge. Rational functioning of modern life has become impossible without library. Knowledge that is already available is essential in the general struggle for survival, to keep pace with technological development, for rational planning and intervening in a world, which is becoming smaller and smaller through modern methods of communication. The library is the instrument, which collects and make available both knowledge and documentation. The evolution of libraries forms part of the mainstream social history and understanding. This process is essential to an understanding of twentieth century mass culture. Yesterday, the library was symbol of a tradition that rested securely in the bosom of an educated minority. This elitist nature of library has considerably declined today. Everyone has now been brought within the reach of the book. And the public libraries have most drastically changed the physiognomy of every town in our times. In earlier periods, the library shut itself up within its four walls, when it patiently awaited its limited clientele. Today books are carried over all roads into scarcely populated rural areas as much as to the densely populated urban centers. Universal extension of the library to all fields of human activity is only the direct result of a more profound cause. The quantitative expansion of the library should be regarded as the echo of the tremendous metamorphoses which intellectual life and social thought have undergone in the past century. Attempts by pressure groups to control libraries by invoking laws and regulations or through intimidation have been common in the past. Library literature amply documents the fear of libraries that is endemic to

certain types of mind, the most horrifying example of all being of course the attitude of the Nazi party towards the public and the academic library system in Germany during the 1930's; libraries were used to foster an approved Nazi consciousness. There are two types of libraries, which exist along side each other for different purposes, with different kinds of stock and with two distinct kinds of public. One, the Scholarly library and the other the Public library. Scholarly library was the classical institution of the past and its present day composition does not differ materially from its historical face. The present-day scholarly library is not a new creation but a continuation adapted to new requirements of research and academic transmission of knowledge. The true creation and phenomenon of our time is the public library. This kind of library was unknown in the west and only sporadically did it appear as a civic institution. The increase in utility, which is acquired for the community at trifling cost, is the rationale of free public libraries. If a man possesses a library of a few thousand volumes, the greatest part of them must lie untouched upon the shelves. But a library of five or ten thousand volumes thrown open for free access to the public of a town may be used a thousand times. The attempts to interpret the library as a social institution have centered around the public library, although the public library emerged much later in the long history of libraries. Certainly the 19th century leaders of the public library movement were well aware that they were implementing one of the greatest organizational changes in human history - the attempt to qualify an entire population to participate in the control of the political and hence the economic and social system in which they are living. In the past, a system of government which included the library in its cultural programmes or which founded and controlled it as an instrument of public education, did not exist, except during the Roman Empire. But after the fall of the empire the library disappeared from the code of duties of public authorities.

Delhi Public Library is an autonomous organization under the Ministry of Tourism & Culture and governed by Delhi Library Board, fully financed by the Government of India. Delhi Public Library has a network of Zonal Libraries, Branches and Sub-branches, R.C. Libraries, Community Libraries, Deposit Stations, Sports Libraries, Mobile Library, Braille library, etc. spread all over Delhi. The library is well stocked with collection of over 14 lakh books in Hindi, English, Urdu, Punjabi & other Indian Languages- almost all subjects are represented in its collection. The Delhi Public Library is also one of the 4th recipient library under the provision of Delivery of Books & Newspaper (Public Libraries) Act 1954. The Library provides free library services to the residents of Delhi. Circulation of books is one of the major activities of the library. The library offers services to children and also organizes cultural activities such as lectures, debates, exhibitions etc. Some of the outstanding features of the library activities are services to Blind, Prisoners and offers Mobile Library service also. Delhi Public Library is the biggest Public Library System in India and the busiest Public Library in South East Asia. Delhi Public Library has started automation of library activities in the year 1995 by installing Computers. From the year 1997 onwards Computer Division has started creating Database of books received under D B Act using CDS/ISIS Software. Up to November 2005 about 38650 records are created in English Language and 26,918 records are created in Hindi language. The list of new arrivals is generated through computers in English & Hindi languages every month. During this year 9309 records were created in the Computer database. E-mail &Internet facilities are also available for resource sharing. DPL is also a member of DELNET (Delhi Library Network). The Retrospective conversion of cataloguing data will be taken up shortly. Regular computer training is provided to the library staff. In house training also organized in CDS/ISIS library software for our library professionals. Library collection is obviously one of the most important basic resources upon which the utility of library depends. Library collection is precious treasure of library. Delhi Public Library provides a wide range of books, journals and other reading materials in Hindi, English, Urdu, Punjabi & other Indian Languages for every one, whatever your reading taste. Library stock consists of 15 lakh books on variety of subjects including Books for competitive examinations, computer science, information technology, philosophy, religion, hinduism, social science, economics, political

science, international relations, language and linguistics, science, physics, chemistry, zoology, botany, medical science, engineering, literature, fiction, history, geography etc. Every year New books and other reading materials are added to the library through acquisition. The library has centralized purchasing system to acquire books and other reading materials published in English, Hindi, Urdu and Punjabi, Indian as well as foreign publications. The budget for this purpose is approximately one crore per annum. The Book Purchase and Processing Division (BPPD) of DPL is responsible to acquire the books and other reading materials for the entire system of DPL, under the provision of Book Acquisition Policy and on the basis of selection done by Book Advisory Committee in English, Hindi, Urdu and Punjabi. The net book stock of the library as on 31-12-2005 is 14,26,319. All the Popular Journals, Magazines and Newspapers are subscribed for the readers use in the Reading Room of the library. Presently, 292 Journals and 32 Newspapers are subscribed and 100 Journals received as gratis.

Literature Review

A large number of earlier studies of use of information sources and services in Public Library have appeared in the last few years. Biradar [2006][6] has conducted the study was related to “use of information sources by the users of public library: A survey.” He knew the frequency of visits of the users to the library and the among of time spent and how do they get information for their study. He find out use and adequacy of the reading material such as text books and periodicals non-book materials etc. He observe weather the arrangements of books and other materials are helpful to the users in the city central library. He adopted Interview Method for the collection of data. After analyzing the data it is found that less no of the users visit the library occasionally. Majority of the users spending the time more than two hours. Majority of the users read the newspapers. Majority of the users locate the reading materials directly from the racks. Majority of the users do not use the catalogue cards. Majority of the users refers the information sources like newspapers, books, periodicals etc. Majority of the users are more satisfied with the arrangements of books. Majority of the users are satisfied with the co-operation of the staff were found out . Chopra And Banerjee [2005][7] has conducted the study was related to “utilization of library and information services of public libraries in Punjab : A case study” He obtained data about the usage of the public library services by different age group of users and users from different level of qualification. He identified their needs and assess the quality of library services provided by the public libraries in the state of Punjab. The Questionnaire Method was adopted for the collection of data. The number of users surveyed is 383, comprising of 227 male and 156 female. Out of 383 users, 212 users belong to the age group of 18-30 years, 67 there of from 31-40 years, 31 of them are from are from 41-50 years another 36 of them are from 51-60 years, while 37 there of are from more than 60 years of age. He identified their needs and assess the quality of library services provided by the public libraries. The author highlighted that the usage of public library services by the female users is significantly low and needs serious attention by the library authorities of the state were found out.

Objectives

The survey objective for the Delhi Public Library (DPL), was communication with the user population. Having solicited user input, library staff had a responsibility to provide answers to the library staff.

1. To study the users ability and their think.

2. To study the user approach to the library/public library.

3. To study the users and the patterns of documents usage in libraries.

4. To examine the institutional, economies and other support systems of libraries.

5. To analyze the phases of library growth.

6. To examine the degree of awareness of users in understanding the availability of documents.

7. To assess the changing attitudes of users of in using library and information materials.

8. To assess the collection usage in various types of libraries.

9. To evaluate the nature and volume of different types of documents and information usage.

10. To develop a theoretical model for assessment of libraries and users.

An important goal for the Delhi Public Library, New Delhi survey was communication with the user population. Having solicited user input, library staff had a responsibility to provide feedback to the library staff.

Methodology

Questionnaire and personal interview methods were used to collect the data. In designing the survey, an attempt was made to over come some of the known obstacles to user surveys, Doris J. Schlicter and Michael Prem berton have identified the number of reasons why libraries, specifically, are reluctant to undertake user surveys: a lack of skilled staff to design and implement a large scale survey, survey, costs, difficulty of translating data into actionable items, and an inherent distrust of survey research methodology. Of particular concern to our study was that survey data would result in actionable items.

A further objective for the DPL was to ensure that library management recognized the "tacit contract" between the library and its users. Once a survey is commissioned, ultimately it will require action by management. In any survey, the respondents need to perceive a return for their invested time. If actions do not occur as a result of a survey, or if actions do occur but no feedback is provided, occur as a result of a survey, or if actions do occur but no feedback is provided, the desire of users to participate in future survey will be seriously jeopardized. It is important to convey to users the changes made as a result of survey feed back and especially important to explain why some requested needs could not be met. Methods were used for data collection Questionnaire and Personal Interview. A total 120 questionnaires. were administered and 109 filled in questionnaires were obtained from the users. Out of 109 questionnaires, only 105 questionnaires were selected for analysis of data and four questionnaires were rejected because of incomplete response from the respondents.

Analysis and Interpretation of Data

Here an attempt has been made to interpret and analyze the "Use of Information Resources and Services at Delhi Public Library (DPL): A survey" with the primary objectives of studying pattern of use of library services and the way of use of information sources. Distributed the questionnaires among 120 users of Delhi Public Library and were asked to go thorough each set of question. The users comprising of Students, teachers, Retired persons etc. Who were expected to answer each and every question along with their opinion towards the same. Among the total of 120 users 105 of them responded and returned the duty completed questionnaire.

Distributed Questionnaires by Researcher = 120

Total Respondents gived the Response = 105

Although it is not our intention to discuss the data collected in detail, since they relate to specific institution, it might be insightful to consider a few represented live examples of both information collected and action plans.

Sample Design

A major objective for the DPL library survey was to included all primary clientele initially, the user populations were defined, Teachers, students, unemployed and Retired Persons

To ensure external valid results without incurring the time and cost to interview all members of the target population, developed protocols for drawing a sample of individuals that adequately represents the entire population and from which conclusions about the sample may be drawn with known level of reliability. The simplest of these protocols is simple Random Sampling, a type of probability sampling, in which each subject has an equal and known chance of inclusion and the selection of one case does not influence the selection of another.

The selection of a particular sample design attempted to maximize reliability and external validity, subject to cost and feasibility constraints.

Sample population and response rate The study covers all the respondents in all categories of users making use the libraries, yet, here, users imply different categories as registered members- 59 questionnaire distributed and 56 correct filed questionnaire are obtained for analysis of data in the case of students. The response rate is 105 questionnaire are obtained from the users out of total 1000 registered members of the library and the overall response rate is 66.24%.

S. No.	Category	Total	Response & %
1	Teacher	120 (11.66%)	14 (13.33)
2	Students	390 (14.35%)	56 (53.33)
3	Unemployed	240 (5%)	12 (11.42)
4	Retired Person	210 (5.23%)	11 (10.47)
5	Any Other	40 (30%)	12 (11.42)
	Total	1000 (66.24%)	105 (100%)

Status of the Users

Table 1 shows that, out of the total 105 respondents were 14 teachers, 56 students, 12 unemployed, 11 retired persons and 12 any other.

Table 1. Status of the Users

S.N.	Category	Response	Percentage of total
1.	Teacher	14	13.33%

2.	Student	56	53.33%
3.	Unemployed	12	11.43%
4.	Retired persons	11	10.48%
5.	Any other	12	11.43%
Total		105	100%

Fig. 1 Status of the users.

Visiting Purpose

Table 2 shows that the majority of the users 35% (42) use the library for reading news paper, 14.16% (17) users the library for reading subject related books and magazines and the majority of the users 1.66% (2) use the library for research purpose.

Table 2. Visiting Purpose

S.N.	Purpose	Response	%
1.	To read subject related books	17	14.16%
2.	For braining and returning the books	15	12.50%
3.	To consult reference materials	3	2.5%
4.	To keep up to date	16	13.33%
5.	For research purpose	2	1.66%
6.	To read news papers	42	35%
7.	To read magazines	17	14.16%
8.	To complete assignments	4	3.33%
9.	Other purpose	4	3.33%

Frequency of Visits

Table 3 reveals that among percentage of users about 33.33% (35 users out of 105 users) visit the library daily, while 28.58% (30 users out of 105 users) users visit the library several times a week. and least no. of the users 8.57% (9 users out of 105 users). Use the library rarely.

Table 3. Frequency of Visit the Library

S. N.	Frequency	Response	%
1.	Daily	35	33.33%
2.	Several times a week	30	28.58%
3.	Once in a week	20	19.05%
4.	Once in a month	11	10.47%
5.	Rarely	9	8.57%

Fig. 2 Frequency of visit the library.

Time Spent

Table 4 reveals that the users 31.42% (33 users out of 105 users) users use the library for one hour, while 25.71% (27 users out of 105 users) users use the library 2 - 3 hours and 3.83% (4 users out of 105 users) not ascertain.

Table 4. Time Spending

S. N.	Time	Response	%
1.	Less than hour	22	20.95%
2.	One hour	33	31.42%
3.	Two-three hours	27	25.71%
4.	More than three hours	19	18.09%
5.	Not ascertain	4	3.83%

Materials Used

Table 5. Materials Used by the Users

S. N.	Resources	Response	%
1.	General books	9	6.87%
2.	Subjective books	29	22.13%
3.	Reference books	10	7.63%
4.	Periodicals	17	12.97%
5.	General magazines	16	12.21%

6.	News paper	31	23.66%
7.	News paper clipping	7	5.34%
8.	Any other	7	5.34%

Fig. 3 Materials used by the users.

Status of Reading Material.

Table 6. Status of Reading Materials

S. N.	Status of reading material Adequate/Not adequate.	Response	%
1.	Yes	70	66.66%
2.	No	35	33.34%

Fig. 4. Status of reading materials

Library Catalogue

Table 7. Library Catalogue

S. N.	Do you use library catalogue?	Response	%
1.	Yes	24	22.85%
2.	No	81	77.15%

Reason for Not Usind the Catalogue

Table 7.1. Library Users Says “No”

S. N.	Reasons	Response	%
1.	Catalogue is in complete	-	-
2.	Consumed much time	17	20.98%
3.	Don't require	40	49.38%
4.	Don't know how to use cartage	24	29.64%
Total		81 (105)	

Physical Facilities

Table 8. Physical Facilities

S.N.	Physical Facilities	Yes	%	No	%
1.	Working hours	73	69.53%	32	30.47%
2.	Reading room facilities	57	54.28%	48	45.72%
3.	Environment	38	36.19%	67	63.81%
4.	General facilities (air, water lighting)	55	52.38%	50	47.62%

Personal Assistance

Table 9. Personal assistance

S.N.	Do you use personal assistance from the librarian ?	Response	%
1.	Yes	27	25.72%
2.	No	78	74.28%

Reasons for Asking for Assistance

Table 9.1. Library Users Say “Yes”

S.N.		Responses	%
1.	Frequently	13	48.14%
2.	Some time	9	33.33%
3.	Rarely	5	18.53%
4.	Never	-	-
Total		27 (105)	

Reasons for Not Asking for Assistance

Table 9.2. Library Users Say “No”

S.N.		Response	%
1.	Hesitation in asking	9	11.53%

2.	Indifferent attitude of staff	29	37.17%
3.	Do you need help	11	14.1%
4.	Staff is not cooperative	31	39.74%
Total		78 (105)	

Shelving Facility

Table 10. Shelving

S. N.	Are you able to locate the books on the staff?	Response	%
1.	Yes	70	66.66%
2.	No	35	33.34%

User Satisfaction

Table 11. Satisfaction with the Services

S.N.	Are you satisfied with the services you have used?	Response	%
1.	Yes	57	54.28%
2.	No	48	45.72%

Modernization of the Library

Table 12. Modernization (Computerized)

S.N.	Is the library computerized?	Response	%
1.	Yes	105	100%
2.	No	-	-

Library Rules and Regulations

Table 13. Library Rules and Regulations

S.N.	Rules & Regulations	Satisfied	%	Not Satisfied	%
1.	Borrowers tickets (Library Cards)	84	80%	21	20%
2.	Period of loan (Timing of Issued Books)	61	58.09%	44	42%

Findings

1.The library is computerized, including free internet access, CD/DVD, and an online catalogue using KOHA.
2.Most patrons use the library for subject related books, newspapers, and magazines.
3.DPL is a public library and many users are retired and unemployed persons.
4.Students visit the library up to 12th standard and graduate standard.
5.Users such as the retired and unemployed use the library daily.
6.The majority of users spend one to three hours at a time in the library.
7.More than three-quarters of users do not use the library catalogue.
8.Users are generally satisfied with physical facilities, including working hours, reading room, and general facilities.
9.Most users find adequate reading material available in the library.
10.More than half of users are satisfied with reading room facilities.
11.Only about one-quarter use personal service for finding the books.
12.Mostly users are satisfied with the services of library.
13.Delhi Public Library patrons are given three borrower's tickets and 80% of users are satisfied.
14. The period of loan is fifteen days and more than half of users are satisfied with this.
15.About 60% of users are satisfied with the present situation of the library.

Recommendations

The following suggestions are made from the study.

The following suggestions are made from the study.
1. Extend the collection of the library.
2. Acquire multiple copies of heavily demanded books.
3. Improve the attitude of library staff.
4. Acquire more subject encyclopedias and dictionaries.
5. Improve shelving turn-around time and tracking of missing items.
6. Library professionals should be trained to help students use the library services.
7. New editions of books should be added.
8. The status of maps/charts/diagrams requires improvement.
9. The users of DPL are not satisfied with reprographic service. Therefore, the reprographic service facility requires improvement.
10. Improve reading room facilities.
11. Provision of mineral drinking water, sanitation, and toilet facilities requires improvement.
12. Alternate arrangement for electricity such as an electric generator/inverter should be provided in the library.
13. Information may be provided in CD form and reasonable fee may be charged from users.
14. The survey result revealed that a large number of members were neither aware/nor satisfied with the provision of social education and cultural activities of DPL. The library should organize activities like Drama/Nukkad Natak general knowledge competition, debates, antakshari with the title of books, exhibition of books, etc., at least once a year for 2-3 days.
15. The library should have a suggestion box to solicit the views of persons interacting with the library. Their suggestions should also be considered for

selection of books and other reading material.

Conclusion

The study sought to analyze the library resources and services by users. There were two important issues to address. First, the input from the survey had to result in tangible change. Since the users were intimately involved in the process, their feedback had to be taken seriously and acted upon. If not, the credibility of the organization would be significantly jeopardized. Second, the staff had to understand that some of the feedback would be negative. They had to be open to constructive criticism. The results of the survey show areas of strength that can be built upon, as well as areas for improvement, including the collections, staffing, and programming.

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