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Faculty Perception on Library Facilities: A Survey on NAAC Accredited Autonomous Arts and Science Colleges in Coimbatore City

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Abstract
The present article has made an attempt to study the faculty perception on Library faculties in Autonomous Arts and Science Colleges in one of the biggest cities in Tamil Nadu, India. There colleges got accredited by National Assessment and Accreditation Council of India, hence the standard of education and faculties in these colleges are generally behind to be the best. The study used a questionnaire and the results revealed that faculty have a low perception on the collection, services, ICT facilities, manpower and infrastructure facilities of libraries in these colleges.

Higher Education in India
India's higher education system is the second largest in the world, after the United States. The main governing body at the tertiary level is the University Grants Commission, which enforces its standards, advises the government, and helps coordinate between the Centre and the State. Accreditation for higher learning is overseen by 12 autonomous institutions established by the University Grants Commission.
Indian higher education system has expanded at a fast pace by adding nearly 20,000 colleges and more than 8 million students in a decade from 2000-01 to 2010- 11. As of 2011, India has 42 central universities, 275 state universities, 130 deemed universities, 90 private institution, 5 institutions established and functioning under the State Act, and 33government degree colleges and private degree colleges, including 1800 exclusive women's colleges, functioning under these universities and institutions as reported by the UGC in 2012.

Autonomous System in Higher Education
Highlighting the importance of autonomous colleges, the UGC document on the XI Plan profile of higher education in India clearly states that: "The only safe and better way to improve the quality of undergraduate education is to the link most of the colleges from the affiliating structure. Colleges with academic and operative freedom are doing better and have more credibility. The financial support to such colleges boosts the concept of autonomy. It is proposed to increase the number of autonomous colleges to spread the culture of autonomy, and the target is to make 10 per cent of eligible colleges autonomous by the end of the XI Plan period.

Objectives of Autonomy
  The National Policy on Education (1986-92) formulated the following objectives for autonomous colleges. An autonomous college will have the freedom to:
  • determine and prescribe its own courses of study and syllabi, and restructure and redesign the courses to suit local needs; and
  • prescribe rules for admission in consonance with the reservation policy of the state government;

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- evolve methods of assessment of students performance, the conduct of examinations and notification of results;
- use modern tools of educational technology to achieve higher standards and greater creativity; and
- promote healthy practices such as community service, extension activities projects for the benefits of the society at large, neighbourhood programmes etc.

Role of College Libraries in Higher Education
A college is considered as an academic institution of higher learning. In colleges, library occupies a prominent position and it is an important and integral part of the teaching programme. It is not merely a depository of books, but an active workshop instruments in the production of original thinking. The aim of college education and college libraries is inter-related. These libraries develop in each student a sense of responsibility in the pursuit of knowledge and stimulate the student to obtain, evaluate and recognize knowledge and to familiarize them with the trends of knowledge for further education and learning. Usually the classes comprise a large number of students and unlike school education, the college students get less individual attention from the teacher. The students therefore have to depend much more on the self-learning. Therefore the college library is the ultimate place for the students to supplement their class room learning. Therefore, it is essential that a college library should provide modern facilities, resources and services for comfortable reading and learning process in an academic institution. Not only the students, the faculty at large in autonomous colleges, where new, innovative courses are taught and the syllabi undergo frequent changes to suit the needs of industry are also dependent on libraries for their teaching and research.

National Assessment and Accreditation Council
The National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) is an organization that assesses and accredits institutions of higher education in India. It is an autonomous body funded by University Grants Commission of Government of India headquartered in Bangalore. A bill - National Accreditation Regulatory Authority for Higher Educational Institutions Bill, 2010has been introduced in Parliament of India to make it mandatory for every higher educational institution in the country (other than institutions engaged in agricultural education) to be accredited by an independent accreditation agency.

Aim of the study: The present study made an attempt to analyse faculty perception on Library facilities in NAAC accredited Autonomous Colleges in Coimbatore city

Research Design

Methodology
The methodology of this research is based on the exploratory design.

Sources of the Data
The required data for the study was collected from the primary and secondary sources. The primary data was collected from the questionnaires. The secondary data was collected from various sources like books, journals and websites.

Data Collection Instrument
The primary data was collected through questionnaire tool which was carefully designed and tested to analyse the use of library resources by faculty members.

Sampling Instrument
The sampling technique used here is simple random sampling method.

Sample Size
The sample size of this study comprises of 200 faculty members working in 10 NAAC accrediated autonomous colleges in the city.

Sampling Population
This study is conducted among 200 faculty members of the NAAC accredited Autonomous Arts and Science Colleges in Coimbatore city. The response was received from 151 faculties which constitute 75.5% of response rate.

Objectives of the Study
The primary objective of the study is to identify the faculty perception on library facilities in Autonomous Arts and Science Colleges in Coimbatore City.
The specific objectives of the study are:
1. To identify the demographic details.
2. To identify the perception of the faculty on library collection.
3. To identify the perception of services of the libraries.
4. To identify the perception of staff of the libraries.
5. To identify the perception of ICT facilities of the libraries.
6. To identify the perception of physical infrastructure of the college libraries.

Hypothesis
1. There is a significant association between designation and perception on collection.
2. There is a significant association between gender and perception on services.
3. There is a significant association between experience and perception on services.

Analysis and Interpretation

AGE, GENDER AND MARITAL STATUS

AGE			Gender			Marital Status		
	F	**%**		**F**	**%**		**F**	**%**
25-30	23	15.2	Male	49	32.5	Married	140	92.7
31-40	43	28.5	Female	102	67.5	Unmarried	11	7.3
41-50	65	43.0						
>50	20	13.2	Total	151	100.0	Total	151	100.0
Total	151	100.0						

From the table it is observed that the age of 43% of respondents fall between 41-50 years. 28.5% are in 31-40 age group, 15.2% are in 25-30 years of age group, the remaining 13.2% fall above 50 years of age. In the case of gender, majority are female faculty members (67.5%). The remaining are males (32.5%). From marital status majority of respondents are married (92.7%). The remaining are unmarried (7.3%).

EXPERIENCE, DESIGNATION AND NATIVITY

Experience			Designation			Nativity		
	Frequency	**%**		**Frequency**	**%**		**Frequency**	**%**
2-10 yrs	41	27.2	Associate Professor	79	49.0	Rural	57	37.7
11-20 yrs	73	48.3	Assistant Professor	77	51.0	Urban	28	18.5
21-30 yrs	36	23.8				Semi-urban	66	43.7
>30 yrs	1	.7						
Total	151	100.0	Total	151	100.0	Total	151	100.0

The analysis based on the experience, designation and nativity of respondents indicate the following: 48.3% have 11-20 years of working experience, 51% are Assistant Professor by designation, 43.7% are semi urban dwellers.

PERCEPTION ON COLLECTION

	Frequency	Percent
Low Level	123	81.5
High Level	28	18.5
Total	151	100.0

The perception of maximum faculty members (81.5%) on the collection of library resources is low, 18.5% perceived it as high.

PERCEPTION ON SERVICES

	Frequency	Percent
Low Level	91	60.3
High Level	60	39.7
Total	151	100.0

More than half of the respondents perceived the services provided by the library as low (60.3%). The remaining 39.7% are perceived the services in the library as high.

PERCEPTION ON LIBRARY STAFF

	Frequency	Percent
Low Level	97	64.2
High Level	54	35.8
Total	151	100.0

More than half of the respondents perceived the role of the staff in the library as low (64.2%). The remaining 35.8% perceived that the staff in the library and services rendered by them as high.

PERCEPTION OF FACULTY ICT FACILITY IN THE LIBRARY

	Frequency	Percent
Low Level	84	55.6
High Level	67	44.4
Total	151	100.0

More than half of the respondents perceived ICT facilities provided by the library as low (55.6%). The remaining (44.4%) perceived the ICT facilities provided by the library as high.

PHYSICAL INFRASTRUCTURE

	Frequency	Percent
Low Level	92	60.9
High Level	59	39.1
Total	151	100.0

More than half of the respondents perceived that the physical infrastructure of the library is low (60.9%). The remaining 39.1% viewedthat the physical infrastructure of the library is high.

DESIGNATION Vs COLLECTION

		I. Collection		Total	Statistical Inference
		Low Level	High Level		
Designation	Associate Professor	66	8	74	X2=5.744 P<0.05 Significant
	Assistant Professor	57	20	77	
	Total	123	28	151	

The demographic variable designation was tested against the research variable collection of the library. The result reveals that there is a significant association among them, thus proving that designation has an impact on collections of the library.

GENDER Vs **SERVICES**

		II. Services		Total	Statistical Inference
		Low Level	High Level		
Gender	Male	35	14	49	X2=3.775 P<0.05 Significant
	Female	56	46	102	
	Total	91	60	151	

The demographic variable gender was tested against the research variable services offered by the library. The result reveals that there is a significant association among them, thus proving the hypothesis for the above table.

EXPERIENCE Vs **SERVICES**

		II. Services		Total	Statistical Inference
		Low Level	High Level		
Experience	2-10 yrs	28	13	41	
	11-20 yrs	48	25	73	X2=8.738
	21-30 yrs	15	21	36	P<0.05
	>30 yrs	0	1	1	Significant
	Total	91	60	151	

The demographic variable experience was tested against the research variable services in the library. The result reveals that there is a significant association among them, Thus it is proved that experience and services are correlated to each other.

PERCEPTION ON GENERAL COLLECTION

	Collection of Reading Materials		Acquiring Reading Material		Frequently Required Resources		Adequate E-Resources Access Facilities		Issue of Sufficient Number of E-Resources		Issue E-Resources	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Strongly Agree	111	73.5	56	37.1	68	45.0	78	51.7	39	25.8	33	21.9
Agree	36	23.8	83	55.0	71	47.0	68	45.0	84	55.6	68	45.0
Neither Agree or Disagree	3	2.0	12	7.9	11	7.3	3	2.0	27	17.9	48	31.8
Disagree	1	.7	-	-	1	.7	2	1.3	1	.7	2	1.3
Total	151	100.0	151	100.0	151	100.0	151	100.0	151	100.0	151	100.0

The analysis in the above reveals the following inference
1. Majority of the respondents strongly agreed that the library has adequate collection (73.5).
2. More than half of the respondents agreed that the library consider the needs of the users while acquiring reading materials (55%)
3. 47% respondents agreed that the library always provides required resources.
4. When the respondents were asked for their opinion on the adequate e-resources access facilities, more than half of the respondents strongly agreed that the library has adequate e-resources access facilities (51.7%).
5. More than half of the respondents agreed that the library issue sufficient numbers of e-resources (55.6%).
6. 45% of the respondents agreed that the library has issued many e-resources.

COLLECTION

	Regularly Informed List of New E- Resources		Flexible working Hours	
	F	**%**	**F**	**%**
Strongly Agree	24	15.9	24	15.9
Agree	107	70.9	107	70.9
Neither Agree or Disagree	20	13.2	20	13.2
Disagree	-	-	-	-
Total	151	100.0	151	100.0

From the table it is observed that 70.9% agree that the collection as well as the working hours of the library to be good and flexible.

SERVICES

	Photocopying services		Current content service		Training on e-resources		E-mail alert services		Provides OPAC Services		Circulation services are computerized	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Strongly Agree	54	35.8	29	19.2	14	9.3	26	17.2	73	48.3	53	35.1
Agree	66	43.7	47	31.1	63	41.7	59	39.1	60	39.7	70	46.4
Neither Agree or Disagree	23	15.2	29	19.2	49	32.5	38	25.2	12	7.9	27	17.9
Disagree	6	4.0	14	9.3	22	14.6	20	13.2	3	2.0	1	.7
Strongly Disagree	2	1.3	32	21.2	3	2.0	8	5.3	3	2.0	-	-

Total	151	100.0	151	100.0	151	100.0	151	100.0	151	100.0	151	100.0

The above analysis shows that

1. 43.7% of the respondents agreed that the library has photocopying (Xerox) services.
2. 31.1% of the respondents agreed that the library provide current content services.
3. 41.7% of the respondents agreed that the library provides training on e-resources.
4. 39.1% of the respondents agreed that the library provides e-mail alert services.
5. 46.4% of the respondents agreed that the library circulation services are computerized.

PERCEPTION ON LIBRARY STAFF

	Staff always helping needed information		Staff informs availability of online resource requested		Staff immediately responds		Polite and courteous library staff	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Strongly Agree	70	46.4	36	23.8	51	33.8	41	27.2
Agree	55	36.4	89	58.9	83	55.0	65	43.0
Neither Agree or Disagree	23	15.2	23	15.2	14	9.3	40	26.5
Disagree	2	1.3	2	1.3	2	1.3	3	2.0
Strongly Disagree	1	.7	1	.7	1	.7	2	1.3
Total	151	100.0	151	100.0	151	100.0	151	100.0

From the above table it is found out that

1. 46.4% of the respondents strongly agreed that the library staff helps the users to get required information.
2. More than half of the respondents agreed that the library staff informs the availability of the online resources requested (58.9%).
3. More than half of the respondents agreed that the library staff immediately responds the users need (55%).
4. 43% of the respondents agreed that the library staff are polite and courteous.

PERCEPTION ON ICT FACILITIES IN THE LIBRARY

	Provides CD Access		Provides Free Internet Services		Barcode Technologies		Subscribes to E-Journals		Own Website		Printing/CD Facilities		Adequate Number of System	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Strongly Agree	38	25.2	48	31.8	60	39.7	25	16.6	41	27.2	25	16.6	55	36.4
Agree	72	47.7	77	51.0	67	44.4	78	51.7	93	61.6	35	23.2	56	37.1
Neither Agree or Disagree	36	23.8	17	11.3	15	9.9	41	27.2	12	7.9	38	25.2	14	9.3
Disagree	5	3.3	9	6.0	9	6.0	5	3.3	3	2.0	27	17.9	25	16.6
Strongly Disagree	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	1.3	2	1.3	26	17.2	1	.7
Total	151	100.0	151	100.0	151	100.0	1521	100.0	151	100.0	151	100.0	151	100.0

The above table shows that
1. 47.7% of the respondents agreed that the library provides CD access facilities.
2. More than half of the respondents agreed that the library provides free internet services (51%).
3. 44.4% of the respondents agreed that the library has barcode facilities.
4. More than half of the respondents agreed that the library subscribes to e-journals (51.7%).
5. Majority of the respondents agreed that the library has its own website (61.6%).
6. 25.2% neither agree nor agree that the library has printing/CD writing facilities.
7. 37.1% of the respondents agreed that the library has adequate number of system.

PERCEPTION ON INFRASTRUCTURE OF THE LIBRARY

	Well equipped furniture		Air-Conditioned E-Resources Workstation		Better Ventilation and Lighting Facilities		Comfortable Seating Facilities		Excellent Mobile Zone	
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Strongly Agree	53	35.1	46	30.5	40	26.5	54	35.8	14	9.3
Agree	45	29.8	72	47.7	59	39.1	48	31.8	49	32.5
Neither Agree	40	26.5	16	10.6	36	23.8	30	19.9	53	35.1

or Disagree								
Disagree	12	7.9	13	8.6	4	2.6	14	9.3	12	7.9
Strongly Disagree	1	.7	4	2.6	12	7.9	5	3.3	23	15.2
Total	151	100.0	151	100.0	151	100.0	1521	100.0	151	100.0

From the above table it is observed that

1. 36.1% of the respondents strongly agreed that the library has well equipped furniture.
2. 47.7% of the respondents agreed that the library has an air conditioned e-resources workstation.
3. 39.1% of the respondents agreed that the library has better ventilation and lightening facilities.
4. 35.8% of the respondents strongly agreed that the library has comfortable seating facilities.
5. 35.1% of the respondents neither agree nor disagree that the library has excellent mobile zone.

Suggestions

Libraries of higher educational institution play a pivotal role in enhancing the quality of academic and research environment. It is the fulcram of support for the entire range of academic activities in an educational institution. In today's high tech learning environment, the library as a learning source is taking up increasingly more academic space and time in the life of a learner and teacher. In order to improve the library facility in the Autonomous Arts and Science College Libraries the following suggestions are put forth by the researchers

1. Man power is a crucial factor for library effectiveness. Therefore, it is essential to recruit people with ICT skills as librarians in Autonomous Arts and Science College Libraries.
2. It is essential to conduct periodic user surveys to identify the current needs and problem of users in accessing and retrieving library facilities enabled collection and services.
3. It is suggested that, a separate digital library unit may be set up in all the Autonomous Arts and Science College Libraries.
4. Use of electronic resources may be introduced by subscribing relevant e-resources for various programmes offered.

Conclusion

The present study has thrown light on the current status of the library facilities in the Autonomous Arts and Science College Libraries in Coimbatore city.

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