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A study on Book Bank service of select college libraries in Assam

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A study on Book Bank service of select college libraries in Assam

Abstract:

Purpose: The present study aims to acquire depth knowledge about the Book Bank services of select college libraries in Assam, India.

Methodology: This study covers sixteen select college libraries in three districts of Assam, India. Data are collected through a structured questionnaire, interview method, and personal visit of the select college libraries.

Findings: Majority of college libraries have Book Bank Service but are not well-organized. There is lack of uniformity in organization and management of the Book Banks in the college libraries.

Value: This study will help the LIS professionals to know about Book Bank service in depth. They will come across the collection, users and usage patterns, problem of Book Banks through the results of this study.

Keywords: Book Bank, Book Bank-Assam, Library Service, College Library, Academic Library- Assam

Introduction:

Library provides a platform for collaborative learning, creativity, explore research, experience new ideas, building reading habit by a flexible space with a wide range of resources to support teaching and learning process. Services like Circulation service, Reference service, SDI, CAS, Internet service, Inter Library loan, Book Bank services *etc.* are some common services practices in most of libraries to provide educational as well as informational support to its users. Providing more than existing resources to users at a time is a very challenging task for librarians of traditional libraries. In most of the time, because of limited resources users are deprived of their needs in appropriate time. To overcome this type of challenges, most of libraries are practicing some services which are reserved for special category members of a library. These type services can be used to overcome challenges of providing resources to needy users when there is need. Book Bank service is one of the best example which is offered for the members of special categories.

Book Bank:

Book Bank is a separate section in a library, where text book, reference books and other miscellaneous books can be reserved for some special categories of users. Main aim of setting up Book Bank is to encourage the meritorious students by providing informational and educational assistance from the institute itself. In an academic institute, every user may not be economically rich. User with sound finance can buy the books from their own but user with poor economic background can't afford to buy their required information sources. So, for their study materials, they have to totally rely on the library. But 'Limited collection of library' reason which prevents issuing a particular document to a few students at a time. Practicing book bank services in library can help to overcome such a situation to some extent. Book Banks are developed for the upliftment of the economically backward, differently abled, backward class students and to reduce the rate of failure among them. We know that half of the India's population is not in a position to afford each and every sources of Information by their own. Since India is developing country, majority of India's population is not economically rich and to support all the economically backward students Book Bank is a much demanded service.

Users of book bank:

Different organizations provide Book Bank facilities to different groups of users. It varies from libraries to libraries. Most of the college libraries provide this service to economically backward students, backward classes like Scheduled Tribes, Scheduled Castes, and Other Backward Classes *etc.* Some of the institutes provide these services to the differently abled students to encourage their merits and in some institutions there is a rule to provide this service to the students who achieve rank. The philosophy behind Book Bank service is *Poverty shouldn't draw a limit for the education*. In most of the libraries, needy users have to show their Below Poverty Line card, caste certificate, differently abled certificate or mark sheets as an evident of their special category to get their Book Bank card, with which they can borrow their required book for a long period of time.

Review of Literature:

A lot of efforts are noticed to provide study related materials to economically backward students in India besides the academic libraries. The Ankuram Vidya Vikasa Kendram, a town-based non-governmental organization set up a book bank at Bodepudi Vignana Kendram on the premises of Sundaraiah Bhavanto, in Telengana, India which provide notebooks and study material free of cost to underprivileged students of State-run schools (Sridhar, 2017). A door to door campaign and social media campaign is carried out to motivate the people of the region to donate the useful study materials and notebooks on their birthdays and wedding anniversary.

The increasing prices of engineering books, lack of qualified teachers in many colleges and need for more reference books are the reasons of dependence of students on book banks in Tamil Nadu. Some paid book bank services are also providing services to the students. The owners of book banks allows students to take as many reference books as they can because that will help students to gain more knowledge and will help in keeping a track of the results. (**Venugopal, 2016**)

A Special Correspondent (2016) of Times of India states that the Sumathi Vishal Jain Book bank was launched in 1991 in Chennai, Tamil Nadu as a part of Sri Sumathi Vishal Educational Trust which allows students to borrow expensive books for engineering studies free of cost and has added arts and science books to its kitty. The Book Bank has been helping students for the past 25 years.

Again another Special Correspondent (2016) of The Hindu reported that the book bank scheme was introduced by Rock city Welfare Association, Tiruchi, Tamil Nadu in 1998 is supporting the book needs of under-graduate courses and now it has spread its roots to professional courses like engineering. The main purpose of establishing book banks is to support scheduled caste and scheduled tribe students who cannot afford expensive education.

To fulfill the academic needs of students especially those belonging to SCs and STs, the government of Andhra Pradesh through its Ministry of Social Welfare is providing grants for the purchase of subject oriented text books (**Rani, 2011**).

Special Correspondent (2009) of Kalvimalar reported that many economically backward students find it difficult to purchase relevant academic books to pursue their education. In the recent days, a novel venture termed 'book bank' has been coming up that has facilitated the students from poor economic background in Kuddalore, Tamil Nadu. These banks help the students to pursue higher education in a cost-effective manner, without imposing much of economic burden on their families. 'Book Bank' acts as a cushion to avert such burden. The prime objective of the book bank was to provide service to the needy students to successfully complete their educational pursuit.

Objectives of the study:

India's higher education system is the third largest in the world, next to the United States and China. The main monitoring body is the University Grants Commission (UGC) which enforces its standards, recommends the government and helps in coordinating between centre and the state. As on 31st March 2018, there are 851 universities, 41012 colleges in India, as per the statistics UGC Annual Report of 2017-2018. As per the statistical data given on the website of Directorate of higher education of Assam, there are 12 Universities and 305 colleges in Assam. Academic library refers to a library that supports a college, university and a school. The importance of college

library is inevitable in every teaching and academic program. College library provide a good opportunity for self-education to the students. Book bank is a service provided by most of the college libraries of Assam to support meritorious economically backward students. In this study, 16 college libraries from three districts, namely Kamrup (Metro), Kamrup (Rural) and Darrang district have selected to bring out various factors of Book Bank into notices. Some of the well-defined objectives were formulated. These are as follows:

- i. To know about the available Book Bank collection of selected college libraries.
- ii. To know about the user and usage pattern of the Book Bank of surveyed libraries.
- iii. To know about the problems related to Book Banks of surveyed libraries.
- iv. To know about the availability of information related to Book Bank facilities in websites of selected college libraries.

Methodology:

To meet the requirements of all the objectives that have stated, data are gathered through questionnaire method; interview method and personal observation. Two different sets of structured questionnaires were prepared and distributed among the librarians and users of book bank facility. Personal interview with the library staff was taken to collect required data for this study. Book Bank sections of different colleges were visited personally to collect the appropriate data in order to make this survey a fruitful one. The data obtained through various methods are tabulated, analyzed and interpreted based on the responses of the respondents.

Analysis of Data:

Basic information of libraries:

Table 1: Basic information of surveyed library

Name of the Library	Name of the College	Year of Library establishment	URL of library websites/ webpages
Rajabala Das Library (RDL)	Handique Girl's College	1939	http://www.hgcollege.org/library.php
Hem Barua Library (HBL)	B. Baruah College	1943	http://www.hembarualibrary.org/
Mangaldoi	Mangaldoi	1951	http://www.mangaldaicollege.org/library.php

College (MCL)	Library	College			
Pandit Sarma (PTSL)	Tirthanath Library	Pragjyotish College	1954		http://www.pragjyotishcollege.org.in/index.php/library/
Arya College (AVCL)	Vidyapith Library	Arya Vidyapith College	1958		http://www.avcollege.ac.in/infrastructure/library/
Dr. Kumar Library(DBKBL)	Birinchi Baruah	Gauhati Commerce College	1962		http://www.gauhaticommercecollege.in/?q=college-library
Rangia Library(RCL)	College	Rangia College	1963		https://www.rangiacollege.in/Library/Library.html
SBMS (SBMSCL)	Library	SBMS College	1963		http://www.dlsbmscollege.org/index.htm
J.N Library (JNBCL)	Boko College	J.N Boko College	1964		http://jncollegeboko.com/library/
Lalit Bharali (LCBCL)	Chandra Library	Lalit Chandra BharaliCollege	1971		http://lcbcollege.co.in/library.php
Sipajhar Library(SCL)	College	Sipajhar College	1971		http://www.sipajharcollege.org/student.php#8
Pub-Kamrup College (PKCL)	Library	Pub-Kamrup College	1972		https://sites.google.com/site/pkclibrary/home
Chayygaon College (CCL)	Library	Chayygaon College	1974		www.chaygaoncollege1974.in/faq/
Puthimari College (PCL)	Library	Puthimari College	1981		www.puthimaricollege.in/library.php
KC Commerce College (KCDCL)	Das Library	K.C Commerce College	1983		http://www.kcdcollege.com/library.html
S.B College (SBDCL)	Deorah Library	S.B Deorah College	1989		Sbdeorahcollege.org.in/facility/

Book bank collection: The collection of library forms a sound foundation to provide efficient services to its users. All the libraries have accession register for overall collection of the library and from the total collection of the library; they separately reserve some books for Book bank section.

Table 2: Total library collection and Collection of Book Bank		
Name of the Library	Total no of Collection	Collection of Book Bank
PTSL	61000	12000
HBL	60000	2000
MCL	53777	3719
RCL	52112	2500
RDL	51936	542
AVCL	51757	1094
SBMSCL	34000	1500
DBKBL	32957	32957*
JNBCL	24902	206
PKCL	27912	2200
KCDCCL	22700	5400
LCBCL	20152	850
CCL	20000	545
SBDCL	15500	15500*
SCL	15201	800
PCL	13500	500

Note- Collection with * marks are not separately kept especially for Book Bank user. These libraries provide Book Bank service from main library collection.

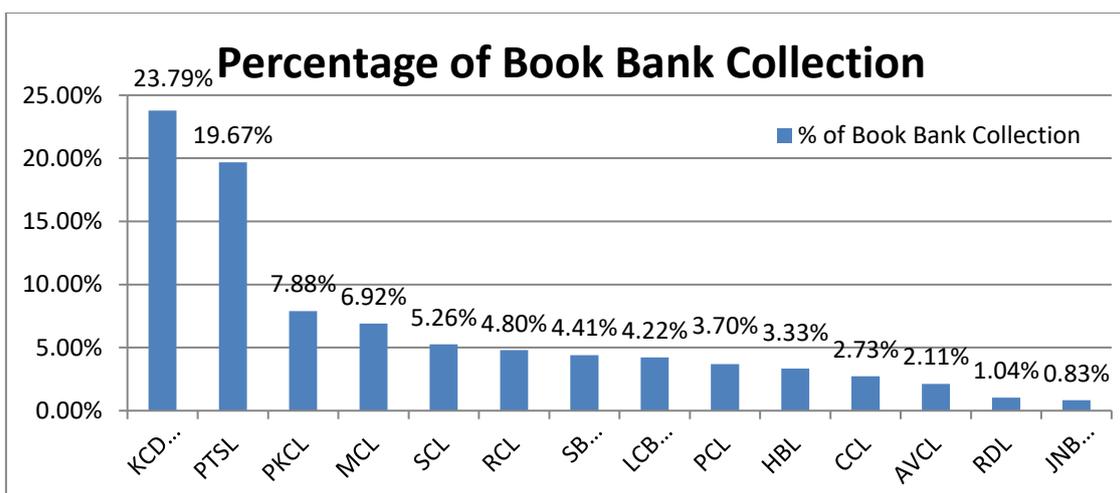


Figure 1: Graph shows the percentage of Book Bank collection in total collection

Note: Collection of DBBKL and SBDCL have not included here in the graph since they don't have separate collection for Book Bank.

Types of Book Bank Documents and mode of acquiring documents: Book Bank collection may be text book, reference book and others like novel, Books on general knowledge *etc.* Some of libraries don't have separate book bank section, so it is mentioned as "All types of document" in the table.

Types of documents	Text Book	81.25%
	Reference Books	25%
	Others(Novel/Gk)	6.25%
	All types of Documents*	12.50%
Mode of acquiring documents for Book Bank.	Only Purchase	56.25%
	Only Donation/Gift	12.5%
	Both	31.25%

Users of Book Bank: Total numbers of library users are divided into three groups, namely teachers, students and other staffs (figure 2). The comparison of percentage of total student user and percentage of book bank user among all the student users is given below (figure 3).

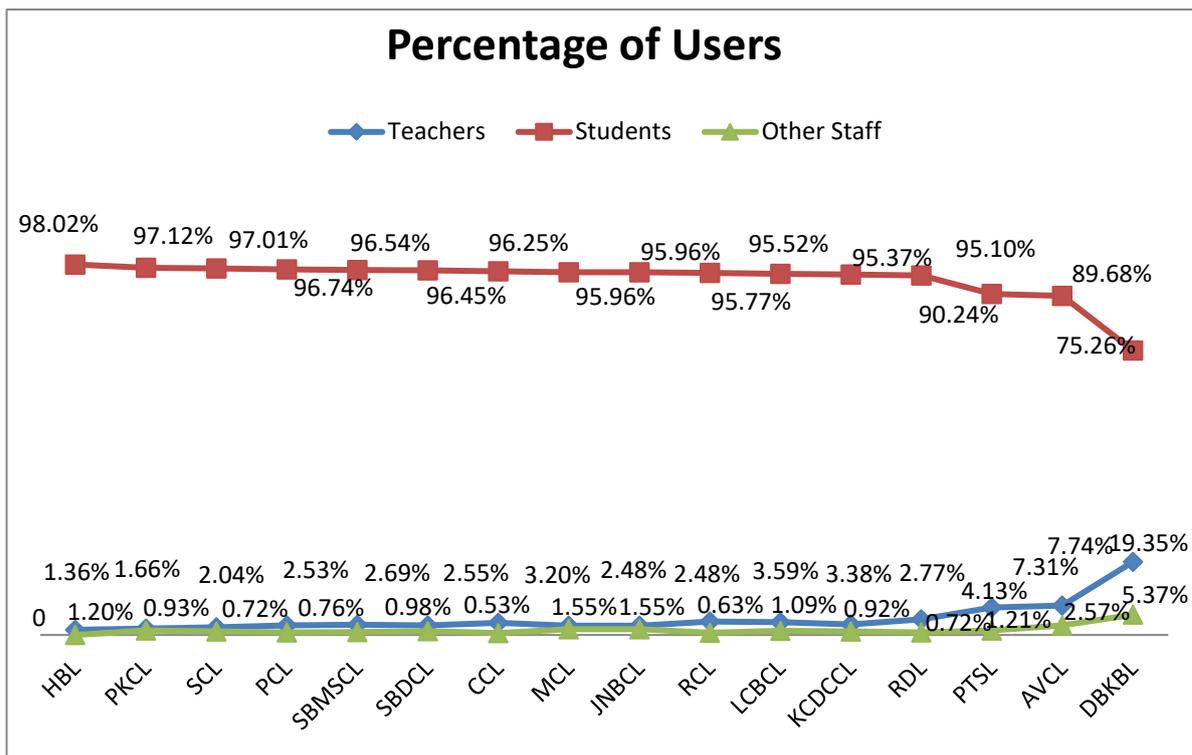


Figure 2: Number of Users

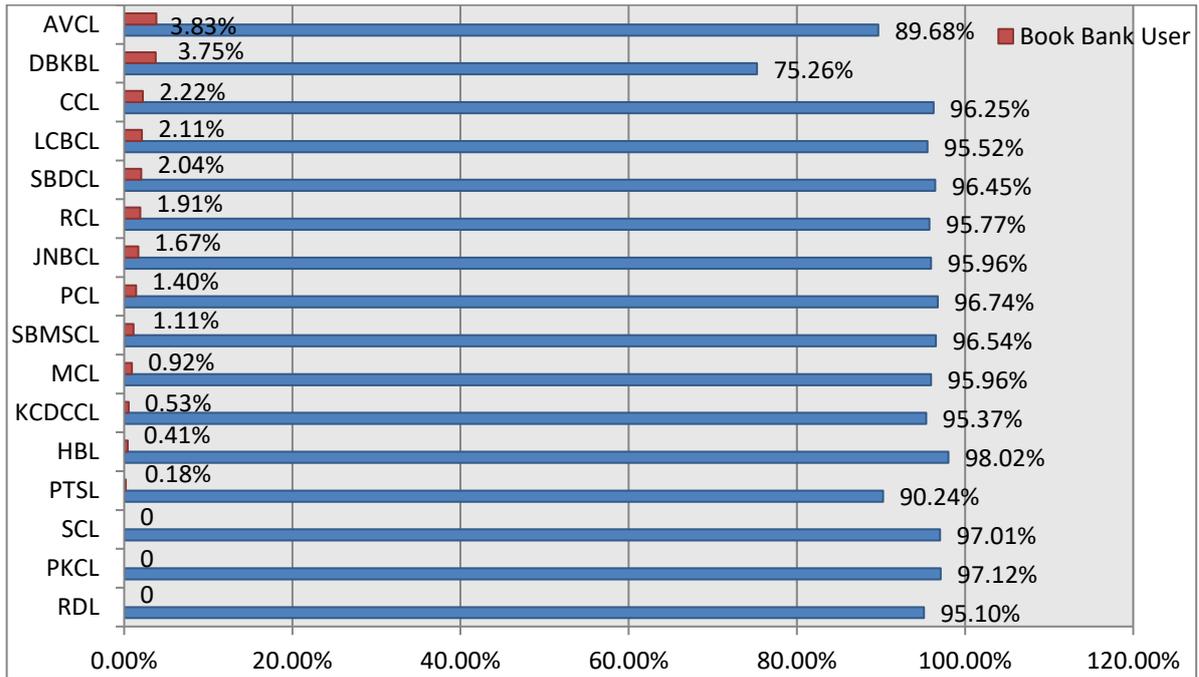


Figure 3: Percentage of book bank user in total student user

Book Bank User in last five years: Figure 5 shows the total number of book bank user in last five years. RDL is not included here in the graph because they have started this facility from the session 2018-19 only.

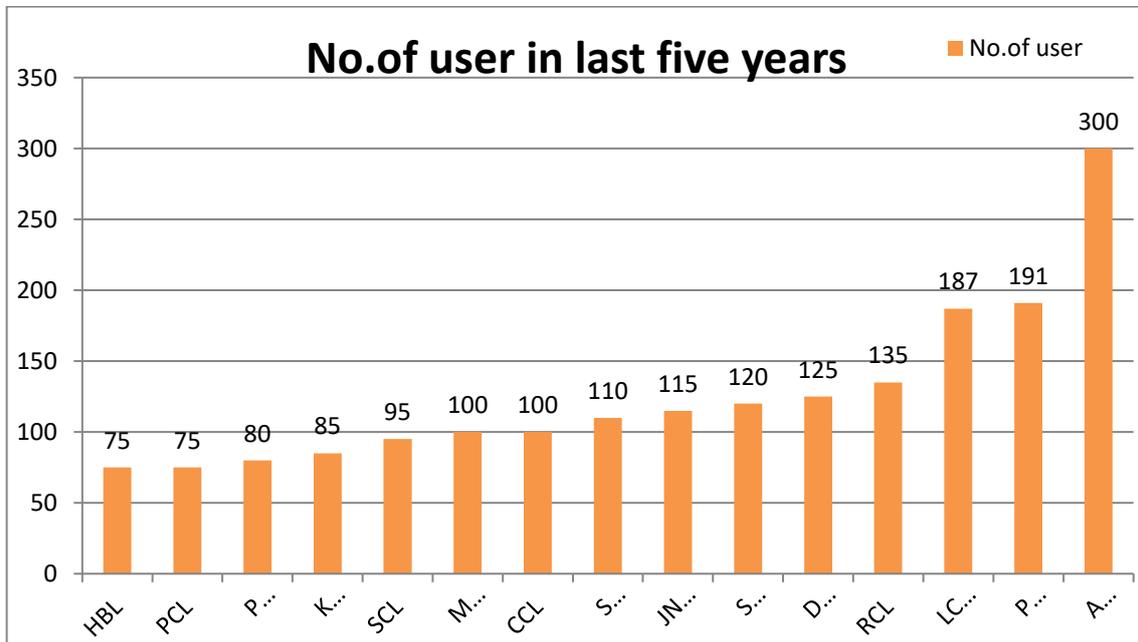


Figure4: No. of book bank users in last five year

Usage pattern: Different criteria's are adopted for the selection of Book Bank user by all the sixteen libraries. Most of libraries check BPL card or income certificate to select user from economically poor family, Caste certificate to select user from backward classes, PWD certificate to select user from differently abled category and marksheets for the selection of user from highly meritorious groups. A college may have HS Level student, UG level student and PG level student. Here students are divided into the three mentioned groups to show which group of students are receiving book bank facility more. Most of the libraries provide this book bank collection to its user for a long period of time. Very less number of library provide this service for very short period of time. Depending upon the responses in the questionnaire, time periods are divided into five groups. Criteria's adopted for the selection of Book Bank user, percentage of libraries providing this service to different group of user, issue period of book bank documents for HS, UG and PG students are described below in the table.

Table 4: Usage pattern			
Selection criteria for Book Bank user	Economically Backward students	100%	100%
	Backward class students	62.50%	
	Differently abled students	25%	
	Highly meritorious students	25%	
Different groups of Book Bank user	HS Level	68.75%	100%
	UG Level	100%	
	PG Level	12.25%	
	HS and UG	68.75%	
	HS and PG	12.25%	
	UG and PG	12.25%	
Issued period of Book Bank for HS students	One week	6.25%	100%
	One Month	12.25%	
	Three Month	18.75%	
	Six Month	31.25%	
	One Year	31.25%	
Issued period of Book Bank for UG and PG students	One week	6.25%	100%
	One Month	12.50%	
	Three Month	12.50%	
	Six Month	62.50%	
	One Year	6.25%	

Problem faced by libraries for development of Book Bank: During the implementation and development of Book bank service, all the libraries have to face some of the problems. Based on the responses from libraries, problems faced by them for the development of the service are categorized as follows:

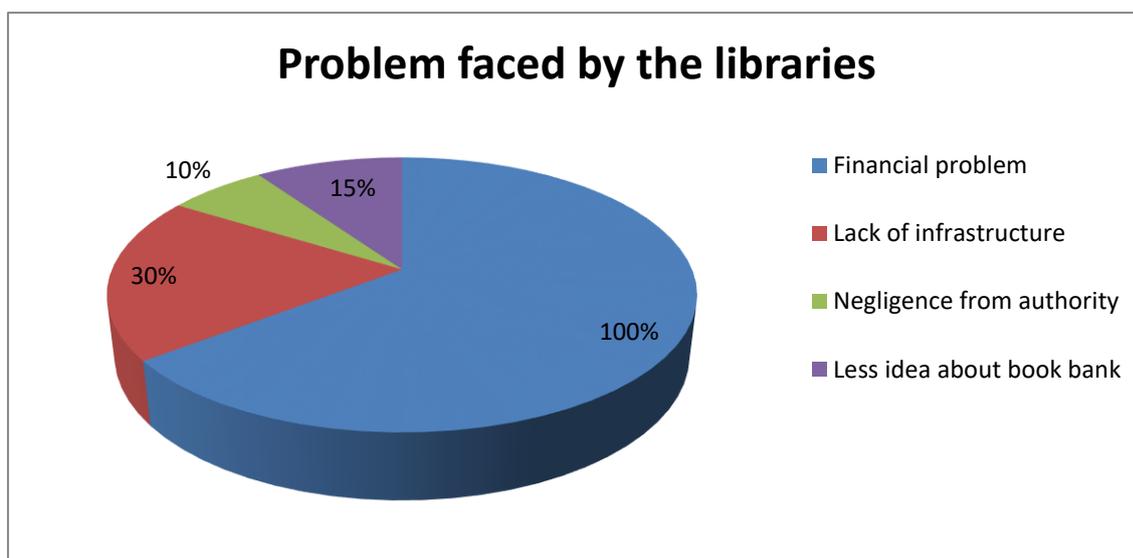


Figure 5: Problems faced by the libraries for development of book bank

Information about book Bank in website: Library websites are main sources of information from where students can come to know about which are the services provided by the library. Here a study was made on library websites also. It is given below:

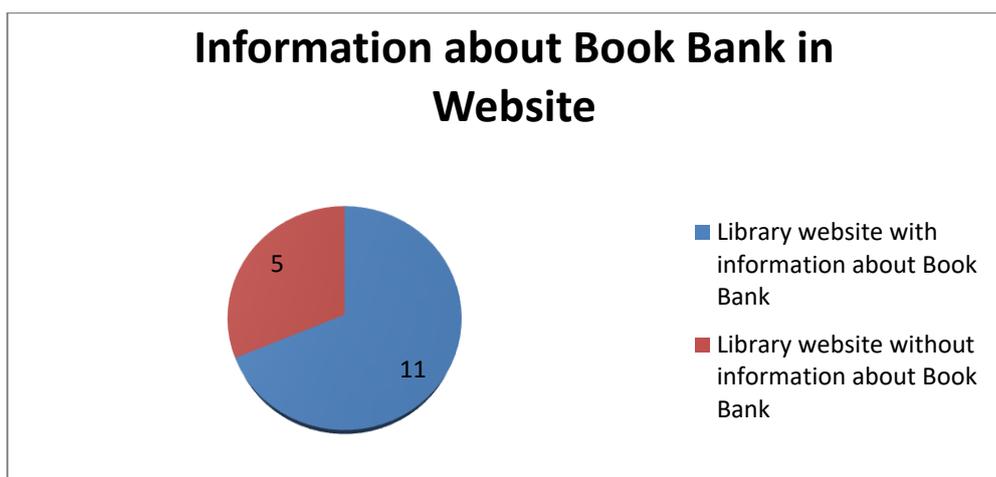


Figure 6: Information about Book Bank in library website

B)Analysis of Users Responses: A separate questionnaire was prepared for the users of book bank. The study was made on 150 book bank users of thirteen libraries. Users from three libraries, namely Rajabala Das Library (RDL), Sipajhar College Library (SCL) and Pub-

Kamrup College Library (PKCL) were excluded in this study, due to non-availability of book bank users. The major factors discussed with the student respondent are described below with some tables and figures.

Total Number of User Respondent: Book bank users were selected from thirteen colleges; other three colleges were excluded from this study, since these three colleges don't have any book bank users. An emphasis was given on the selection of user responses, so that the response includes HS, UG and PG level users of Book bank. Total 150 responses were received. Number of respondents from different colleges varies on the basis of total no. of Book bank users.

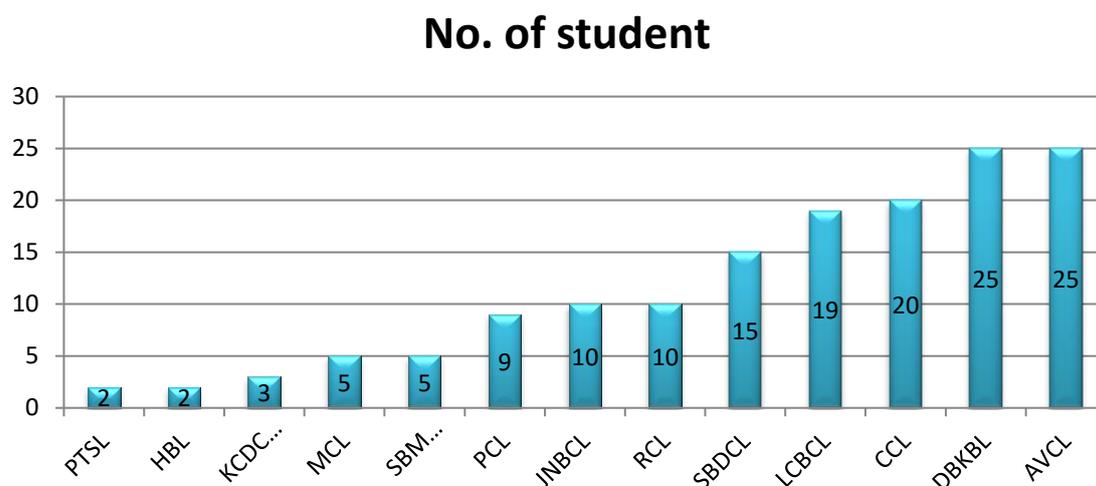


Figure 7: Graphs shows no. of user respondent

Usage pattern: Category of uses, types of documents used by the students from Book Bank, number and percentage of students along with the number of documents borrowed by them at a time along with issue period of books are described in the table given below.

Table 5: Usage pattern of document		
Category of students	Economically Backward	40%
	Backward Classes	25%
	Differently Abled	20%
	Merit	15%
Types of document	Text Book	75%
	Reference Book	20%
	Others	5%
No. of document issued at a time	One	35%
	Two	55%
	Three	10%
Issue period of document	One Year	10%
	Six Month	50%
	Three Month	30%
	One week	10%

User satisfaction: The percentage of students who are satisfied with the book bank service and of those which are not satisfied with the book bank service are presented below.

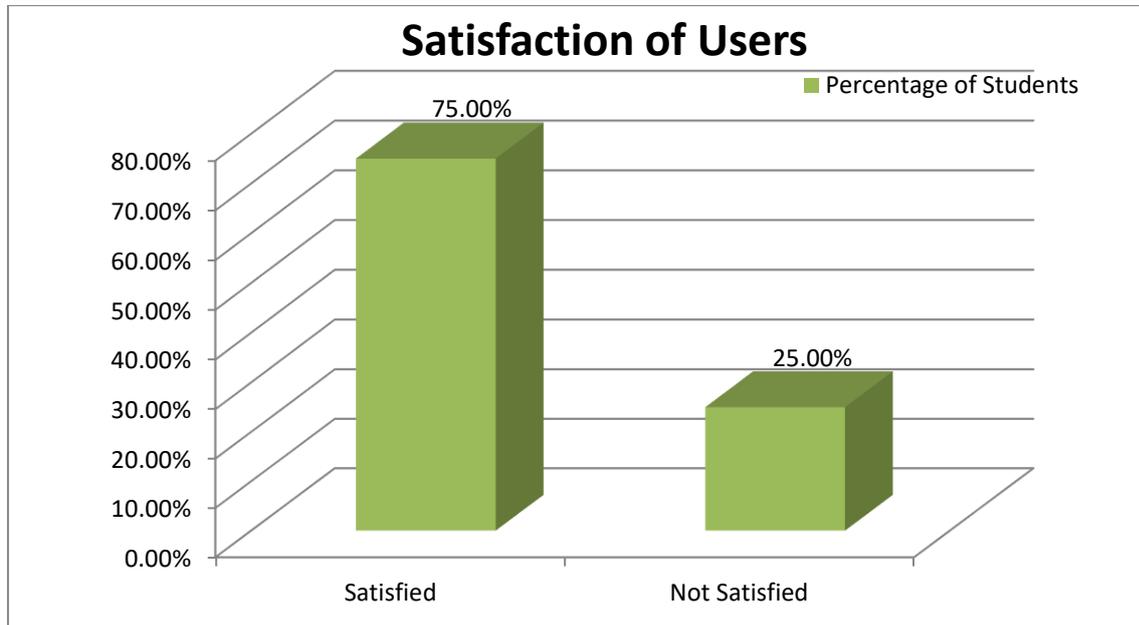


Figure 8: User satisfaction

Major Findings:

During the survey, data were collected in such a way that the findings of the study can fulfil the demands of each and objectives that were formulated before. Major findings are presented below:

- As per the analysis only two libraries have more than 15% collection reserved for book bank from total library collection. Out of surveyed libraries, two libraries are there which provide documents to the book bank user from main library collection because they don't have separate book bank section. (Table 2 and Figure 1)
- There are three libraries that don't have book bank user in 2017-2018 session. As compared to data of Book Bank user in last five year, it seems that most of the libraries are losing user for Book Bank. This may be due to inadequate Book Bank collection or may be due to the lack of proper information about Book Bank. (Figure2, Figure 3 and Figure 4)
- All libraries included in the study provide book bank service to economically backward students. Students have to show their BPL card, Income certificate, caste certificate, PWD certificate or marksheets as evidence to get selected as book bank user in most of the libraries. 100% libraries give the facility to UG students. Only two libraries select its user from PG level also. Most of the libraries allow UG and PG level users to borrow documents for six months and HS level students are allowed to borrow books for whole year. (Table4)

- 13 (81.25%) libraries reserve Text book in Book Bank section. 9 (56.25 %) libraries purchase resources for book bank section by themselves and 2 (12.5%) libraries receive book bank collection as gift and donation.(Table 3)
- Due to the lack of special fund for book bank, Puthimari College Library is adopting a unique and appreciable process as a mode of acquisition for Book Bank resources. Whenever they purchase resources for main library collection from some publishing house or book stalls, those vendors lowers the price of resources as discount. At that time, the library don't take that discount, instead of that they ask the vendor to give some of the books related to course. And those books are especially reserved for Book Bank users.
- All libraries are facing financial problem for the development of book bank service. Some of these are facing problems like lack of proper infrastructure, negligence from authority *etc.*(Figure5)
- Out of the surveyed libraries 11 library have their library website/webpage which holds information about the Book Bank service.(Figure 6)
- 40% of the book bank users were selected on the basis of their family economic condition.75% of them like to borrow text books from library. 55% students are allowed to borrow two books from book bank section at a time. (Table 5)
- 75% users of book bank among the total population are satisfied with this service in their library. (Figure 8)
- As a reason for non-satisfaction, other 25% were mentioning that non availability of required books in book bank section, condition of documents, most of the text books are not related to their present syllabus.

Conclusion

There are so many library services, which are practicing by libraries to direct library users to its available resources. Book Bank is also a library service which helps students to complete their education successfully. This service is not for all users. Users are selected on the basis of economic condition, caste, physical disabilities, merits, *etc.*

Major finding of the survey reveals that most of libraries don't have proper fund for the development of the study. It was come to knowledge from the study that the libraries were receiving some special funds for Book Bank from government under different schemes. But from last few years they are not receiving any special fund for Book Bank.

This is the reason why library can't increase the quantity as well as quality of book banks collection. Because of this reason most of users is not satisfied with the service. The administration of the institute as well as government should give de importance to book bank service instead of announcing some popular scheme for the economically backward students.

