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2019

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Reyes, Sheryl, "Library Patrons' Satisfaction and Information Need Assessment of Maritime Students" (2019). *Library Philosophy and Practice (e-journal)*. 3772.
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Library Patrons' Satisfaction and Information Need Assessment of Maritime Students

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Abstract:

Library satisfaction survey is conducted on a regular basis to determine the strengths and weaknesses of its services and collections. It is believed that the result becomes baselines in the planning of library activities to include collection development programs, orientation programs, and promotional enhancements. Specifically, this survey made use of 5 Likert scales to determine the satisfaction level of the library patrons particularly in Maritime Academy. All faculty and students were encouraged to participate in the survey through an online link. Data was collected a week after and generated a total of 587 responses. The survey intends to know the satisfaction level of its patrons with the different type of collections, the organization of materials, facilities, personnel, and services the library has to offer. Further, the survey explored the information need of its patrons for the academic year 2016-2017. Results showed that the library patrons, from faculty, staff, and students are extremely satisfied with the library and its services. The library collection has a weighted average of 4.40 which verbally indicates that the library users are very satisfied. The organization of materials and the library personnel have a weighted average of 4.58 and 4.63 respectively which indicates that the users are extremely satisfied. Finally, the users expressed that they are extremely satisfied with the physical facilities of the library as evident by a weighted average of 4.52.

Overall, it is gratifying to learn from this survey that most of the services and collections are satisfying to both the faculty and maritime students as library patrons.

Keywords:

Information Needs, Library Resources, Library Services, Library User Satisfaction, Utilization, Maritime Students, Maritime Academy, Maritime Library, Special Library, Library Management

1. Introduction

Library evaluation is carried out to check and balance library activities. This greatly helps the management to see how the library is meeting its patrons' needs and what decision to take (Ezeala and Yusuff, 2011). There are various aspects that require a librarian to evaluate, starting from the collection down to its services. On other hands, meeting

patron's needs is another library management pursuit, and it is often referred to as user satisfaction.

Academic libraries as considered service organizations should not stop developing and improving. MAAP Library as one service unit in the academy finds its importance to the patrons. Its existence and level of importance are indicated by how the patrons recognize and use its different collections and services. With the emerging technology, various online resources, and changing the information-seeking behavior of students nowadays, it is highly important to be closer to them, to reach them out, and learn from them. Facing the threats of the digital environment and the increasing competition with the global availability of online resources, academic libraries need to continuously improve the quality of their services to survive. In this context, MAAP Library recognizes the benefits of surveys. In general, library satisfaction surveys are conducted to evaluate the performances of various services it offers.

As a strong point in the study of Bhatti, 2013, the successful library services depend mainly on the satisfaction level of its users.

MAAP Library survey is conducted annually as a means of evaluation of its services and collections as perceived by its primary users, the faculty, and students. Results from surveys were taken into consideration and greatly contributed to the collection development and modernization of some services. Further, through this survey, MAAP Library expects to learn what particular needs should be given priority.

This survey aimed to assess the satisfaction level of the library patrons with the library collections, services, personnel, and facilities. It sought to find answers to the following questions:

1. How often does the library patrons visit the library?
2. What is the satisfaction level of the library patrons with the collections, services, personnel, and facilities of the library?
3. What is the needed information of the library patrons at present?

2. Methodology

An online survey was made available through Google forms (Appendix 1). It was made available between 13th March 2017 and 23rd June 2017. The Library staff made a schedule of the respondents.

Respondents were grouped by section and by class. This arrangement was made since the respondents were asked to answer the online survey through the computers in the study room to be assisted by library staff during study calls.

The MAAP Library Survey was conducted for the faculty and staff and for the classes of 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, and 2020. There is a total of 587 respondents, 97.1 % or 574 students, 0.6% or 4 of the staff, and 2.2% or 13 of the faculty group. Majority of the respondents belongs to Class 2020 with a total of 57.5% or 339, followed by the Class of 2019 with 30% or 177 respondents, and 5.8 % or 35 are from Class of 2017.

This survey used the 5-Likert scale to determine the level of satisfaction of the library users. Below is the table used in the survey and also serves to guide the interpretation of the result.

Numerical Value	Range	Verbal Interpretation
5	4.5-5.00	Extremely Satisfied
4	3.5-4.49	Very Satisfied
3	2.5-3.49	Moderately Satisfied
2	1.5-2.49	Slightly Satisfied
1	1-1.49	Not Satisfied

3. Results and Discussions

1. How often does the library patrons visit the library?

Table 1. The frequency of library visit

The frequency of library visit		
Daily	442	75%
3 times a week	122	21%
Once a week	17	3%
Monthly	10	2%
Total	591	100%

Respondents were asked how often they visit the library. This is to ascertain the utilization of the library by the faculty and students.

Table 1 shows that 442 or 75% of the respondents visit the library daily while 10 or 2% visit the library monthly. Data revealed that majority of the respondents frequently visits the library giving the library administration a positive indication that the library is always utilized. A similar result was noted by Shafique, F., Rehman, S. U., & Mahmood, (2012) where they found that majority of their respondents uses the libraries due to the implementation of semester system in universities of Pakistan.

This finding is not surprising because of the set up of the fleet and the library hours. Students in the Academy are in-house and they are required to

conduct study hours between 1900H to 2130H. The library hours, on the other hand, is suiting to this schedules as it opens 10.5 hours a day to serve the patrons.

2. What is the satisfaction level of the library patrons with the collections, services, personnel, and facilities of the library?

The survey seeks to find out the satisfaction level of the library patrons on the library's four major aspects. These include the collections, organization of materials, personnel, and the physical facilities.

I. Library collection

Figure 1 shows the satisfaction level of the respondents on the library's collection specifically on books, periodicals, e-Journals, e-Books, and CD/DVDs. Data below shows that majority of the respondents expressed that they are *Extremely Satisfied* with the books with an average of 4.50. This is true in terms of book library collection, as this has the most numbered collection.

It can also be noted in Figure 1 that CD/DVD collections have the lowest mean score that is 4.05 and this is verbally interpreted as *Very Satisfied*. This remark could be a positive indicator for the library, however, it can be noted in the satisfaction table that some respondents expressed slightly satisfaction. It is noted in the comments section that four (4) respondents have not used such materials due to lack of information on it.

Overall, the respondents expressed that they are *Very Satisfied* with the library's collections. This finding construed that the library collection is good enough for the present library patrons. It can be good enough in terms of its availability but a further study should be done to assess its adequacy. This result is similar to the study conducted by Bhatti, 2013 where a majority of her respondents are satisfied with their library collections.

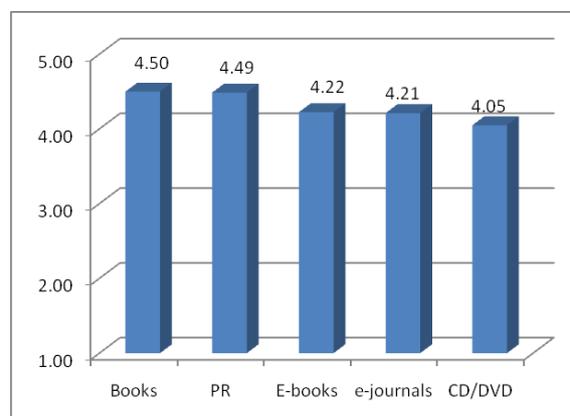


Figure 1. Satisfaction level on library collections

II. Organization of library materials

Figure 2 reveals the satisfaction level of the library patrons on the organization of library

materials. The respondents were asked to rate their satisfaction level on the organization and location of materials. With a mean score of 4.59, verbally interpreted as *Extremely Satisfied*, the respondents find the materials organized and in proper order.

Respondents were also asked to rate the ease of access to the collection and the result showed that they are *Extremely Satisfied* as evident by the mean score of 4.52. Ideally, the library is located within the academic building where the patrons could easily proceed to and access their library. In addition, the library practices an open shelf system to make it easier for the patrons to browse their reference needs.

In terms of the classification of materials, the respondents expressed that they are *Extremely Satisfied* with a mean score of 4.55. The library adopts the Dewey Decimal Scheme in classifying its collection and this was always discussed fully every library orientation. This made the patrons knowledgeable enough that they could easily identify and locate their materials needed. During the library orientation, the arrangement of the library collections was also discussed. MAAP library has a special section of the professional materials distinctively for Marine Engineering and Marine Transportation. Such arrangement of materials could also ease out the research activity of the library patrons. Data on Figure 2 shows that the respondents are *Extremely Satisfied* with it as indicated by the mean score 4.61. Overall, result shows that the patrons are *Extremely Satisfied* with how the library collections are organized and classified.

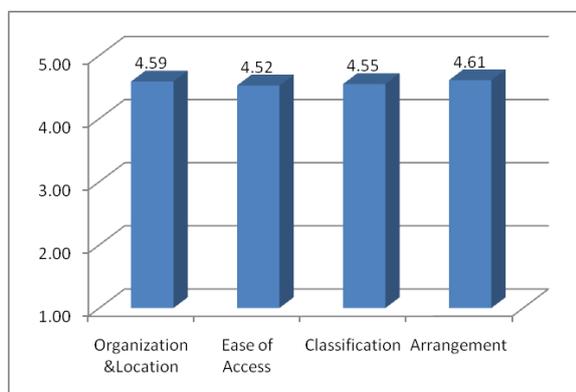


Figure 2. Satisfaction level on the organization of materials

III. Library personnel:

Respondents were asked to rate their satisfaction level in terms of assistance, knowledge, approachability, and adequacy of the library personnel. Figure 3 shows that respondents are *Extremely Satisfied* as an evident by the mean scores of 4.53 for the assistance rendered by the library personnel and their knowledge in providing reference needed. In terms of approachability by the library personnel, respondents find them *Extremely Satisfying* as evident by their mean score of 4.59. While with a mean score of 4.62 which is verbally

interpreted as *Extremely Satisfied*, the respondents find the number of library personnel adequate. This finding is true enough since the MAAP library complies with the standard in terms of student-librarian ratio.

It is so gratifying to know that the patrons are *Extremely Satisfied* with the library personnel's professional attributes. The mean scores were also supported by the comments given by the respondents. Majority of the comments are "the library personnel are approachable/ easy to approach, and good,".

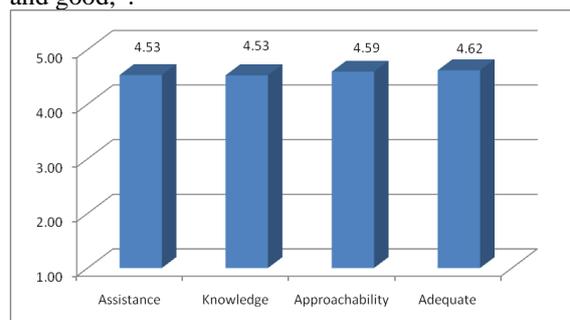


Figure 3. Satisfaction level on library personnel

IV. Library physical facilities

In terms of library physical facilities to include computers, printers, Internet, air-conditioning units, lightings, tables and chairs, the respondents expressed that they are *Extremely Satisfied* except for printer and Internet in which they expressed lesser satisfaction. With a mean score of 3.24 or verbally interpreted as *Moderately Satisfied*, the printer has the lowest satisfaction rate as revealed in Figure 4. This finding is sufficed by the respondents' remarks as they always have something to comment on the provision of printer in the library. This is the result of the recently established policy on the printer at the library. It was decided by the management to relocate it in the office of Department of Midshipmen Affairs (DMA) to be fully supervise by the duty officers. However, on the point of the students, as they mentioned in the comment section of the survey, they find it time consuming to proceed at the barracks building to print their academic-related papers. Comparing it when it was available in the library that is easily accessible.

The lowest mean score is followed by the Internet for having a mean score of 4.07, however, it is verbally interpreted as *Very Satisfied*. It came to be the second lowest because of the experience of the students as they mentioned in the comments that the Internet is at times slow.

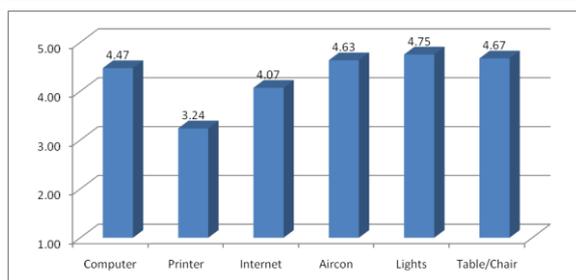


Figure 4. Satisfaction level on physical facilities

Other aspects of concerns for the library in terms of its physical attribute is the environment as user-friendly. In this survey conducted, the respondents were also asked to rate their satisfaction with the library's accessibility, enticing for study, good signages, and overall cleanliness.

Figure 5 shows that the respondents are *Extremely Satisfied* with these attributes of the library environment. Having a mean score ranging from 4.60- 4.71, this implies that the library is accessible to the library users, it has clear signages, and clean making an enticing environment for study.

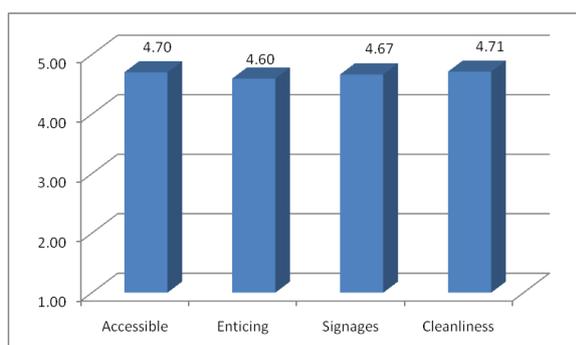


Figure 5. Satisfaction level on library environment

3. What is the needed information from the library patrons at present?

It is necessary for libraries to identify the needs of the community it serves (González, 2016). When a library has a view of the information need of its academic community, the library management will have a clear guide in planning collection development. As asserted by Negrete and Gonzalez, 2016 in their papers, development of collection has its objectives, that is to collect documental materials whose contents effectively respond to the information needs of the community. In this paper, it includes assessing the information need of the library patrons by an open-ended question. The respondents were asked to write down what information they need during the course of the survey.

Table 1. Students' information needs.

COURSE/TOPICS	WEST	MAIN	TOTAL
Calculus	10	10	20
General Interest	10	8	18

Statistics/Research	12	1	13
Mechanics	11		11
AuxMach/PASGT	5	5	10
Seamanship	5	5	10
Solid Mens	7	1	8
Seam2/4A	3	4	7
Steam, PP1	5	2	7
Seam3-Cargo Handling	3		3
Psycho	2		2
Nav2		2	2
MarLaw	1		1
PersMan	1		1
IT	1		1
Dwatch		1	1
Total	76	39	115

Having tallied their responses, most of the respondents wrote information topic related to their enrolled courses for the semester. The topics that ranked as top five information needs are focused on Calculus, General Interest, Statistics & research, Mechanics, Auxiliary machinery & PASGT. Among the 115 topics that they have expressed as their need, Calculus ranked as their deemed information need. Having checked the course offering, it appeared that this course was offered during the semester when the survey was conducted, however it is quite surprising to know that this tops the information needed because there is a textbook received individually by the students taking the course. Out of 115 information that the respondents wrote, there were 18 mentions about motivational books, fiction, literary materials, and Bible which was categorized in this study as general interest. This gives the library an opportunity to expand its collection by considering materials that could satisfy the information need of the students on general knowledge. This imply as well that the library should not focus alone on the maritime and academic references.

On a final note, it is undeniably true that the majority of the expressed information need of the respondents are relative to the courses they are currently taking.

4. Conclusions

On the idea of assessing the frequency of library visit by its patrons, this study revealed that the library is not underutilized. As a significant findings, most of the respondents revealed that they visited the library on a daily basis. This is a good indicator that the library is on demand and should continually exist.

The study also revealed that majority of the respondents are extremely satisfied with the library collections, the organization of materials, personnel, and its physical facilities. This result shows that the library is doing well and is fully supporting the Academy's objectives. However, there are important

things to be taken especially from the comment section. These must serve as an additional guide for the continual improvement of the library. **Specific recommendation for the low mean ranks in this study, that is the Printer followed by Internet facility, that a copy of students' feedback should be furnished to the concerned office. It is also deemed that printer units should be setup in the library for students' use. Thus, a thorough presentation of library development plan that includes the improvement of facilities should be laid to the management for approval.**

Finally, the library should conduct regularly an information need assessment to have a wide perspective on what the library patrons' particular need. Further, the librarians should conduct an assessment of the collection to check its adequacy with the information needs of its academic community. Also, a study to explore faculty's information need and information-seeking behavior could be done to have a fair representation of library patrons towards developing a user-centered library.

5. Acknowledgements

This work was supported by the MAAP Management. The researcher also expresses her acknowledgement to all the MAAP library personnel for the effort bestowed during the administering of the survey until its full collation. Same acknowledgement also to all the respondents who shared their ample time to express their satisfaction and constructively commented. All these would give more direction to the library in its pursuit for improvement and development.

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Appendix 1.

(Printscreen of the online survey form)

MAAP Library Satisfaction Survey

This intends to assess the satisfaction level of the library customers for the period of 2nd Semester AY2016-2017

PART A. Respondent's Category

Faculty
 Staff
 Midshipmen

Which library are you using? *

Main
 West

To what class do you belong? (For Midshipmen Only)

CL2021
 CL2020
 CL2019
 CL2017

I. How satisfied are you with the following library collections? *

	(5) OS	(4) VS	(3) S	(2) US	(1) P
Books	<input type="radio"/>				
Periodicals (Journ...	<input type="radio"/>				
e-Books (www.sci...	<input type="radio"/>				
e-Journals (http://...	<input type="radio"/>				
CDs/ DVDs	<input type="radio"/>				

II. How satisfied are with the library's organization of materials? *

	(5) OS	(4) VS	(3) S	(2) US	(1) P
Organization and L...	<input type="radio"/>				
Ease of access of...	<input type="radio"/>				
Classification of li...	<input type="radio"/>				
Arrangement of pr...	<input type="radio"/>				

III. How satisfied are you with the library personnel's services? *

	(5) OS	(4) VS	(3) S	(2) US	(1) P
Assistance of per...	<input type="radio"/>				
Knowledge ability ...	<input type="radio"/>				
Approachability w...	<input type="radio"/>				
Adequate number ...	<input type="radio"/>				

IV. How satisfied are you with the physical facilities of the library? *

	(5) OS	(4) VS	(3) S	(2) US	(1) P
Computers	<input type="radio"/>				
Printer	<input type="radio"/>				
Internet	<input type="radio"/>				
Air-condition units	<input type="radio"/>				
Lights	<input type="radio"/>				
Reading tables an...	<input type="radio"/>				
Library is access...	<input type="radio"/>				
Enticing environm...	<input type="radio"/>				
Signages are clea...	<input type="radio"/>				
Overall cleanliness	<input type="radio"/>				