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A Study on Information Need and Information Seeking Behaviour of College Students in Guwahati Metro

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Abstract

Objectives: College libraries are prominent information organizations and play a crucial role fulfilling the information needs of its users, so the use of technological information emanating from these libraries contribute not only to business development but also to the technical manpower development in the collegiate education field. The objective of the study is to find out the facilities available in the college libraries for the library users for seeking information

Purpose: The purpose of the study is to identify a comparative trend of information use pattern and to evaluate the existing information environment of the college libraries of Guwahati Metro and to find out the ways and means of better information related situation

Methodology: A survey has been conducted through a simple random sampling method for the collection of data. Structured questionnaires have been designed for the purpose. The study has been proposed to utilize an appropriate statistical technique to make the work statically significant for the effective and efficient use of management libraries as a whole.

Findings: OPAC is the most useful IT-based library sources and facilities, Google search engine is a high source of seeking information. Preparing assignment, notes and preparation of the competitive exam is the main purpose of seeking information. The main problem faced by the respondents is non-availability of proper study materials, poor internet connectivity and information sources are not located properly.

Keywords: Information need, Information seeking behaviour, College library, OPAC, Library users, College library.

INTRODUCTION

Background of the study

The present era is the era of information and knowledge revolution. many electronic resources are available in the library. The impact of electronic resources and the World Wide Web has affected information-seeking behaviour in every sphere of a human being. In modern society, the print and publication media has made the information contents manifold and multifarious offering the user society a vast selection. There is a universal assumption that man was born innocent or ignorant and should actively seek knowledge. Information seeking is thus a natural and necessary mechanism of human existence. The library, therefore, is the most widely used source of information available to literate society. The librarian should be aware of what kind of information is being sought, and how it can be obtained. Due to the rapidly escalating cost of purchasing and achieving printed scholarly journals and electronic media.

College libraries are prominent information organizations and play a crucial role fulfilling the information needs of its users, so the use of technological information emanating from these libraries contribute not only to business development but also to the technical manpower development in the collegiate education field. Research is another academic necessity that most faculties used to undertake, for that purpose, they used to heavily depend on the essence of libraries. This phenomenon gives rise to the need for assessing their status, use of libraries, information requirements, knowledge of information resources, need for providing relevant information systems and services they use.

Information Needs

Users' information needs are studied to promote the use of information. The current age of information explosion has resulted in the tremendous growth of micro documents/electronic resources vis-à-vis the information need of users has become multidimensional, dynamic and varied. The users are the ultimate recipients of the information. The individual as a user may differ concerning:

- a. Attitudes believe, values ;
- b. Goals ;
- c. Capabilities ;

- d. Communication attitudes ;
- e. Experience and habit; and
- f. Cultural background.

Main Characteristics of Information Needs

- a. Information needs are subjective as well as objective with the inter-relationship between the two;
- b. Needs differ from individual-to-individual, group to group, institution to institution, society to society, environment to environment, and from time to time.

Information Seeking Behaviour (ISB)

Information Seeking Behaviour (ISB) indicates human activity to satisfy his/her information needs. ISB includes all activities comprising information seeking, information gathering and information retrieving and communication activities performed in the library environment. According to Krikelas (1983), Information Seeking Behaviour begins with a 'perceived need' which is like 'anomalous state of knowledge'. Belkin (1980) identified Information-seeking Behaviour as 'a vague dissatisfaction'. Information Seeking is a goal-driven activity in which needs are satisfied through problem-solving (Brown 1991).

Statement of the Problem

In the research activity, many problems are being faced in practical. The research plan or design are generally adopted preparing information to the relevant aims and objectives of the study. The main aim of the study is to fulfil the users' satisfaction of college students of Guwahati Metro. Problems always arise but solutions are also possible to overcome these problems. Some problems are-

- a. Lack of availability of ICT applications in libraries.
- b. Hesitate to introduce new innovative library services.
- c. Lack of mindset of the professionals.
- d. Financial constraints are also problems.

Study Area

This dissertation aims to make an extensive and exhaustive study on the existing. Library services and systems in terms of information needs and seeking behaviour of college students of Guwahati Metro.

A good number of college libraries are performing services to the student's community. For this study, the researcher has selected a few college libraries of Guwahati Metro.

Aims and Objectives of the Study

The study keeps in its ambit the following aim and objectives:

- a. To find out the relative importance of varied information sources consulted by the college students in Guwahati Metro.
- b. To identify a comparative trend of information use pattern of the respondents.
- c. To find out the different search strategies of the target audience for obtaining relevant references.
- d. To find out the explanation of observed phenomena and prediction of the behaviour of the respondents in seeking information.
- e. To evaluate the existing information environment of the college libraries of Guwahati Metro and to find out the ways and means of better information related situation, and
- f. To provide the clue for the solution of any or all of these problems relating to knowledge updating through the development of libraries for the cause of college education in Guwahati Metro of Assam.

Scope of the Study

The present study is proposed to bring within its confines the students of colleges their use habit of libraries, information requirements, information and communication behaviour, their approach to information, the extent of their awareness of information systems and services in comparative analysis, the study is geographically confined to the city of Guwahati Metro only. The respondents are the students of the colleges of Guwahati Metro. This study is primarily concerned with the behaviour approach to information of faculties of various colleges and to compare their libraries

for the academic community. This study is designed to provide further insight into the college information environment and its impact on the students of various disciplines.

Limitations

The present study is delimited to library users of a few selected college libraries of Guwahati Metro only. The data of the study has been collected through the questionnaires; interview-schedule and personal observation schedule. The socioeconomic status and nature of the library users have not been taken into consideration which might have affected the facts.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Review of related literature is an essential part of social research. A researcher is required to scrutinize the research findings of similar works.

Primary, secondary and tertiary sources of information have been consulted for the study. Related online searches have also been followed.

Bhattacharjee, Sinha and Bhattacharjee (2014) made a study to know the status of information seeking behaviour of college library users of Cachar district, Assam which comprises of undergraduate students faculty members and research scholars. They mentioned that a rapid change in information-seeking behaviour and use of the Internet for On-line access of E-resources has become a vital part of various information.

Chinnasamy (2016) conducted a case study to investigate information need and seeking behaviour of information behaviour of engineering college students in Madurai. The main objective of study seeking behaviour of engineering college students to the information literacy and study the purpose and motives of the students seeking information. Data was collected through a pre-tested questionnaire, using the snowball sampling technique. The paper suggests certain measures for improving information need skills of students to make them more competent information users. needs.

Manjunath and Babu (2018) surveyed information needs and information-seeking behaviour of research scholars in Bangalore University. 150 copies of questionnaires were distributed. Among them, 130 were returned. Majority of the respondents (32.3%) use the Internet for reading purpose. Majority of the respondents (98.5%) prefer to use internet services for E-Mail, Majority of the

respondents (91.5%) frequently used google search engine, Most of the respondents (90.8%) have awareness on electronic information sources. Majority of the respondents (32.3%) are learned electronic resources by self by trial and error method.

Ibrahim and Perumal (2018) conducted a study to investigate the information need and information-seeking behaviour of foreign students studying in the University of Madras. The study adopted the survey method, therefore, data was collected through a structured questionnaire, 43 questionnaires were distributed and 41 questionnaires were filled and returned by the target group. It was found that the respondents need information on academic, daily life, and entertainment purposes etc. As academic entity; student's primary products and services they depend are books, journals and databases for their academic endeavours and sources like newspaper, magazines, multimedia and friends for their day to day current information.

Research Methodology

The present study is based on that information needs and seeking behaviour of college students in Guwahati Metro; in which the comparative phenomenon has determined the distinct approach to information by the students in various disciplines which helped to design the information systems and design the information systems and services. A survey has been conducted through a simple random sampling method for the collection of data. Structured questionnaires have been designed for the purpose. The study has been proposed to utilize an appropriate statistical technique to make the work statically significant for the effective and efficient use of management libraries as a whole.

Sample Size

A questionnaire has been distributed to 300 population (users), out of these 297 responses has been taken into consideration through a random sampling method for the study.

ANALYSIS AND DATA INTERPRETATION

After the collection of questionnaire data and their necessary recording has been tabulated and discussed. Some of the key issues respond by the respondents has been provided significant insights to the library professionals for their future development in the college/institutions.

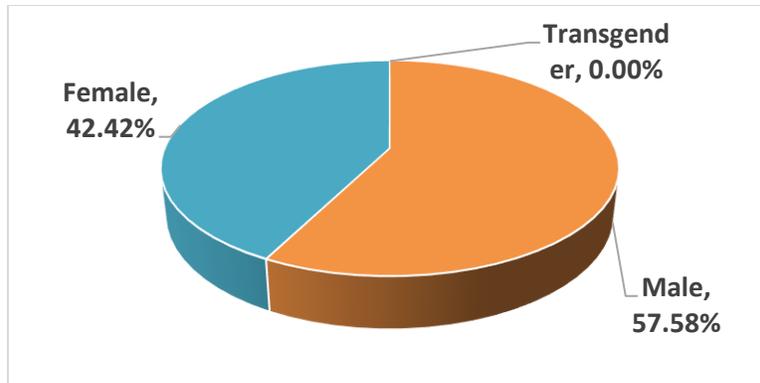


Figure 1. Gender wise respondents

Out of total respondents, 57.58% are male and 42.42% are female, there are no transgender respondents.

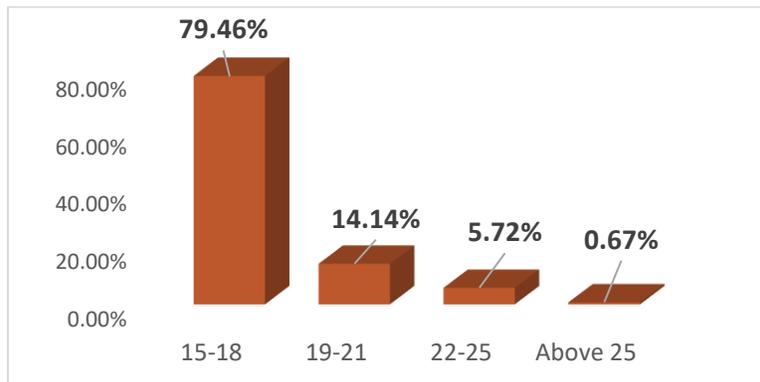


Figure 2. Age-wise respondents

The above figure shows that 79.46% of respondents are from the age group of 15-18 years, followed by 14.14% of respondents are from the age group of 19-21 years. A very few respondents are belonging to the age group of above 25 years.

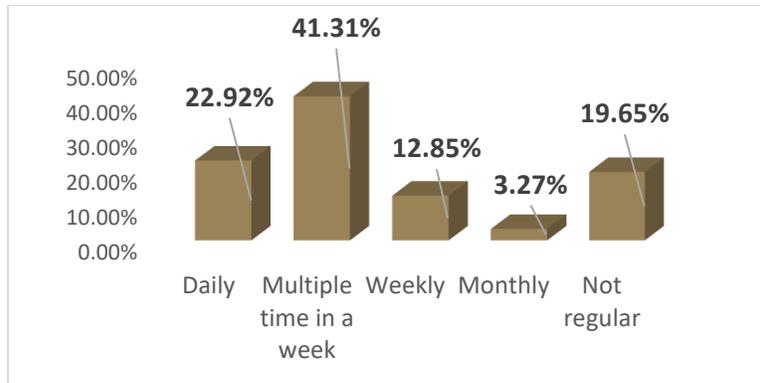


Figure 3. Library visit pattern

41.31% of respondents replied that they visit the library multiple times in a week followed by 22.92% of respondents visit the library on daily basis, surprisingly 19.65% replied that they are not a regular visitor of library. A very few i.e. 3.27% replied that they visit the library once in a month and 12.85% replied that they visit the library once in a week.

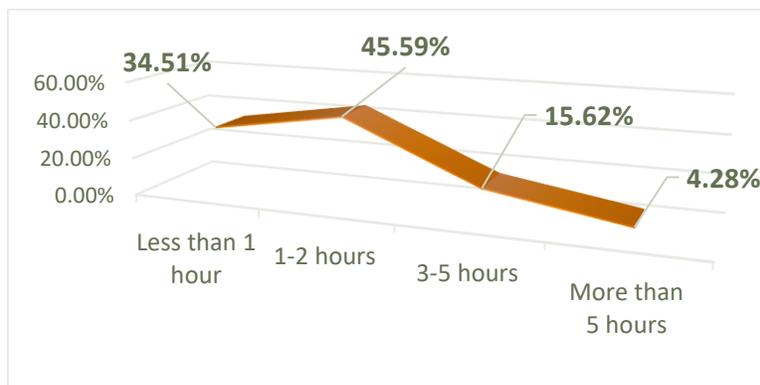


Figure 4. Time spent in the library (on average)

While asking question about the time spent in the library, 45.59% replied that they spent 1-2 hours in the library, 34.51% replied that they spent less than 1 hour in the library, 15.62% replied that they spent 3-5 hours in the library, lastly only 4.28% replied that they spent more than 5 hours in an average in the library.

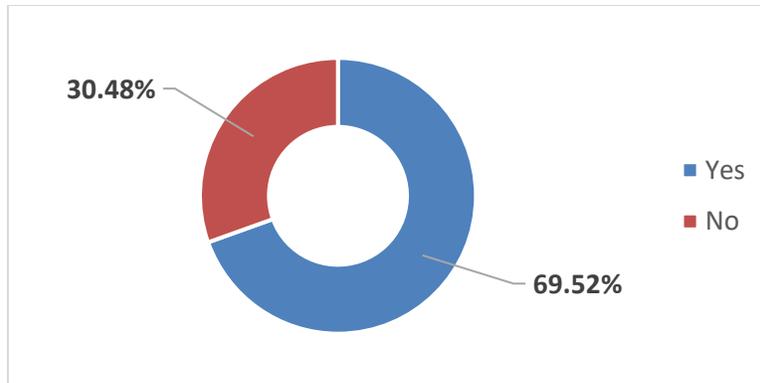


Figure 5. Library automation status

69.52% replied that their college library is automated while 30.48% replied that their college library is still running manual system or after starting automation right now it is not in working condition.

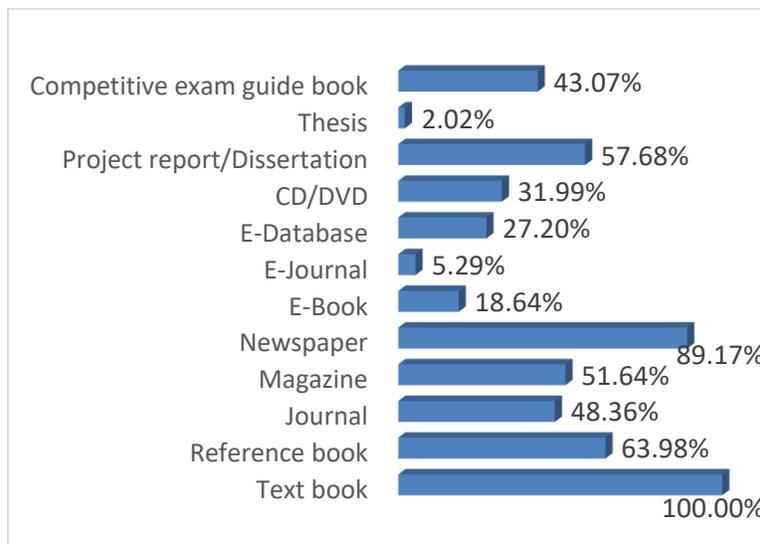


Figure 6. Availability of library resources (Multiple responses allowed)

Textbook is available in all the libraries as per the responses received from the respondents, 89.17% replied that newspaper is available in their library, 63.98% replied that reference book is available in the library, There are very fewer responses received regarding the availability of e-books, e-journal and e-databases. Only 2.02% replied that in their library thesis is available. Competitive exam guide book is also available in many libraries as per the responses received.

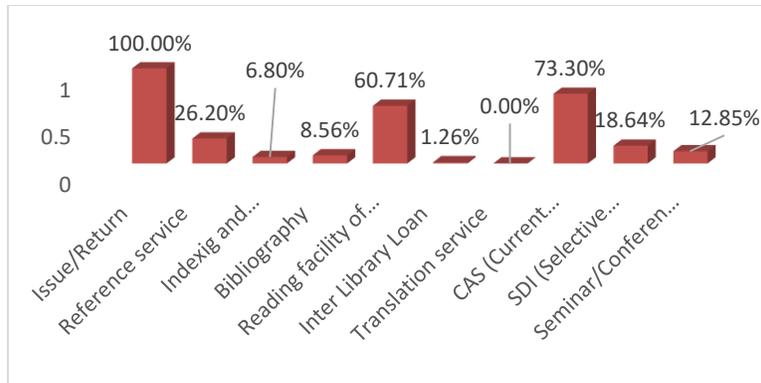


Figure 7. Use of library sources and services (Multiple responses allowed)

Issue and return are the common services provided by all the library, it is the primary services of a library, so 100% of the respondents replied that they use issue/reture services. The reading facility of newspaper/magazine/journal is also a popular service provided by the library and 60.71% replied that they avail this service. While 73.30% replied that they use the CAS services provided by the library. Indexing and Abstracting, Bibliography, Inter-Library Loan and Translation service are very rarely provided by the library. Reference service, SDI and Seminar/Conference services are also provided by few libraries.

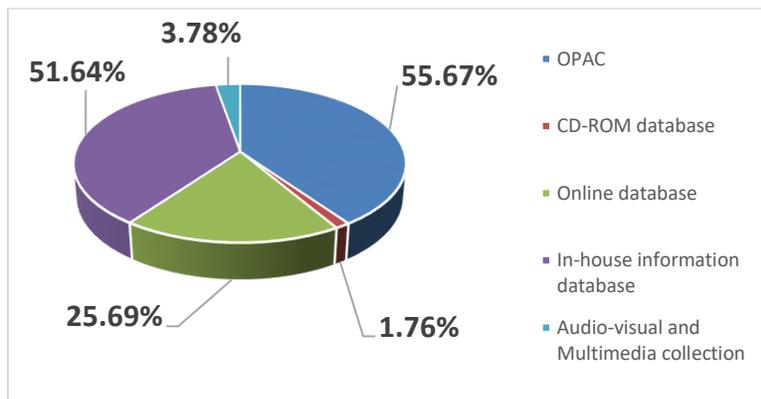


Figure 8. IT-based library sources and facilities (Multiple responses allowed)

55.67% of respondents replied that the OPAC facility is available in their library, 51.64% replied that the in-house information database facility is available in their library. Only 25.69% replied that they have the online database facility available in their library, while fewer replied about the CD-ROM database and audio-visual and multimedia collection facility available in their library.

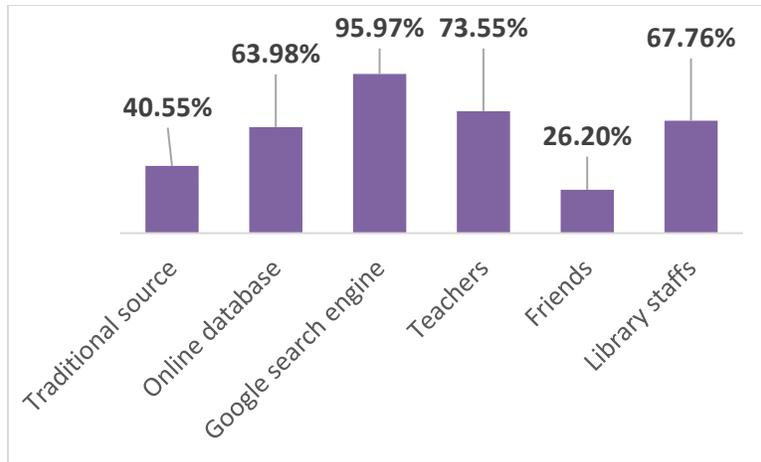


Figure 9. Sources using in seeking information (Multiple responses allowed)

Google search engine is the most useful source for seeking the information as 95.97% replied in favour of it. Followed by 73.55% responds to teachers as their source of seeking information, 67.76% replied library staffs are their source of seeking information, the online database is also a popular source of seeking the information as 63.98% replied in favour of it. Traditional source like printed book, manuscripts is also a reliable source of seeking information. Surprisingly a very few people replied in favour of their friends as a source of seeking information.

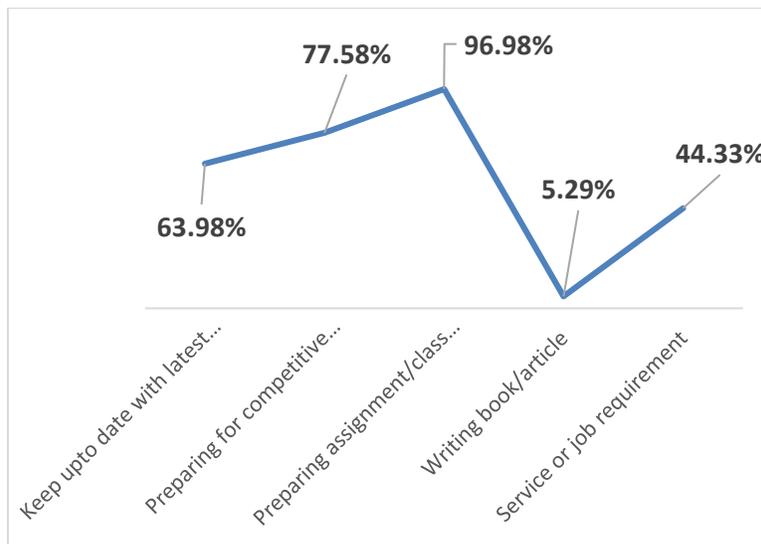


Figure 10. Purpose of information seeking (Multiple responses allowed)

Preparing assignments and class notes is the main purpose of information seeking as replied by 96.98% of the respondents, followed by 77.58% replied as preparation of competitive exam is their

main purpose of information seeking. Keep upto date with latest information is the main purpose of seeking information as per the replied received from 63.98% respondents, while a very less replied that writing books/articles is the purpose of seeking information.

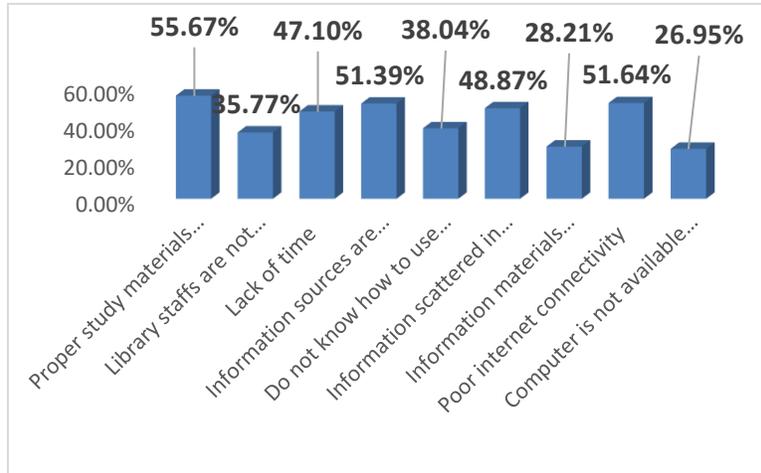


Figure 11. Problems to seek information (Multiple responses allowed)

Availability of proper study material is the major problem to seek information replied by 55.67% of the respondents, followed by poor internet connectivity (51.64%) and information sources are not properly located (51.39%). 28.21% replied that information materials are very old, 26.95% replied that the computer is not available for users and 35.77% replied that library staffs are not willing to provide services.

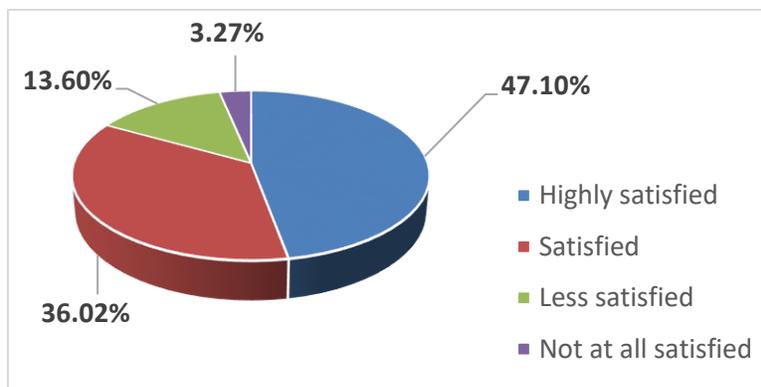


Figure 12. Level of satisfaction of seeking information from the library

47.10% replied that they are highly satisfied with seeking information from the library, 36.02% replied that they are satisfied followed by 13.60% replied they are less satisfied. A few i.e. 3.27% replied that they are not at all satisfied with the information seeking process of library.

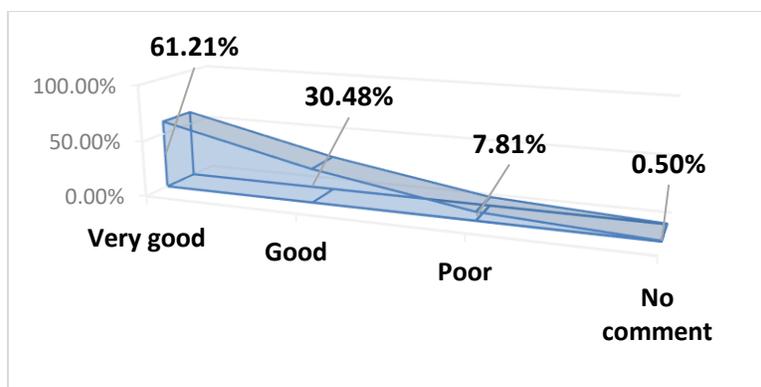


Figure 13. User opinion about the library facilities

Opinion about the library facility provided by the library is very satisfactory, as 61.21% of the respondents feels the library facility is very good, followed by 30.48% replied it as good. A very less respondents replied that they found the library facility poor. Only 0.50% replied as no comment. It can be said that the overall library facility provided by the libraries are very good.

FINDINGS

After the collection of data and their proper analysis, the major findings are as follows:

- Most of the respondents are male with an age group of 15-18 years.
- Library visit pattern of most of the responses are multiple time in a week and they spent 1-2 hours on an average.
- A big number of libraries are automated and they have proper computer facility.
- Textbooks are available in all the libraries, few have reference books, competitive guide books, journal, magazine and newspapers available in the library.
- Issue/return is the highly used library services, followed by CAS and reading facility of newspaper, magazine and journals.
- OPAC is the most useful IT-based library sources and facilities, followed by in-house information database.
- Google search engine is a highly source of seeking information. Teachers, library staffs, online databases are also useful sources of seeking information.
- Preparing assignment, notes and preparation of competitive exam is the main purpose of seeking information.

- The main problem faced by the respondents is non-availability of proper study materials, poor internet connectivity and information sources are not located properly.
- Most of the library users are highly satisfied with the services provided by the library for seeking information.
- User opinion about the library is very good as per the responses received from the users.

CONCLUSION

College libraries play a key role in higher education. Currently, it has witnessed drastic changes in collegiate education and learning systems in India. Nowadays college libraries are prominent information centres which play a crucial role in fulfilling the information needs faces a lot of limitation for its users wants full support from every sphere. To build a good library suitable to the educational environment like other developed countries, it is essential to make further studies with overcoming all its limitation found in the study of information needs and seeking behaviour. As a result, it is the topmost role of the government and authority to solve the poor library management policy and the librarian also should be more conscious about the complex day-to-day needs of its users.

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