

Factors Affecting the Utilization of the Graduate Library Resources of the Leyte Normal University (LNU)

L.F. Alcober

ABSTRACT

This study delved into the factors that affect the utilization of the graduate school library resources by the graduate students during the academic year 2018 and 2019. The conceptual a conceptual analysis was used as its design and the feedback provided by the students placed in the feedback box served as the data source. Results of the findings showed that updated, current, and relevant library materials, fast and easy internet connection, e-books, and other electronic resources that are accessible at home, conducive space for reading (spacious and well ventilated), updated Library System/ OPAC, friendly, accommodating, and competent library staff, availability of other relevant, accurate information for research, and more theses and dissertations are among the factors that affect the utilization of the resources piled in the library. Taking things holistically, data from this finding maybe utilized as baseline data to further improve the services of the library.

Keywords: Access, Graduate School, Library Resources

Published Online: January 28, 2022

ISSN: 2736-4534

DOI: 10.24018/ejedu.2022.3.1.219

L.F. Alcober
Leyte Normal University, Philippines.
(luzvimindaalcober@lnu.edu.ph)

I. INTRODUCTION

The fundamental laws of library science guide library operations. These laws were advanced by S.R. Ranganathan in the early 1930s. These laws include 1.) Books are for use - library resources must be utilized by its users. These resources must not be kept idle as they are meant to acquire knowledge and information. 2.) Every book its reader-resources stored in the library must be valuable and accessible to the users. 3.) Every reader has his book- library resources must be rich enough to respond to the needs of all its immediate users. 4.) Save the readers' time - constant upgrading and reviewing of the guidelines, policies, and procedures to ensure that its services are attuned to the needs of its patrons. 5.) The library is a growing organism- libraries must continue to grow in their collection, space, staff, and library services.

These five laws remain the basis for the librarians in managing the libraries and serving the library users even though these were conceptualized before the technology era. Arguably, libraries exist in order to serve students, teachers, and researchers. As such, libraries must pile multiple resources they need and make them accessible. In this way, they can complement effective teaching and learning. Additionally, these resources must be designed to facilitate the users' easy access and retrieval of needed information through its effective system and technology.

One of the hallmarks of the best practices of a library is through the encouragement of the users' feedback. According to Mohanan (2020), users' feedback is collected from library

users in different formats and at a regular interval. This system enables library managers to assess and consequently increase the quality of services delivered by the library. In addition, the university management is responsible for assessing, evaluating, and implementing actions based on the feedbacks collectively.

The Learning Resource Center for the graduate students of Leyte Normal University is mandated to support the university's mission of providing utmost customers satisfaction through the provision of valuable resources and organized library programs and services. These resources must be made accessible through its circulation section. In addition, these library-related services must be delivered in-person and with the aid of technologies such as social media platforms. Arguably, students' feedback is a fertile source of data useful for an empirical investigation. With this contention in mind, it is thus imperative to investigate whether graduate school students are satisfied or dissatisfied with the library services offered. Specifically, this paper wants to know the factors that affect the utilization of the resources piled in the graduate school library as utilization is significantly correlated to service satisfaction.

This study used the Drury's principle as its theoretical anchor. The principle states "to provide the right book to the right reader at the right time." In this principle, the main focus are the readers in the library. A resource in the library will be considered valuable if it satisfies library readers' information need. The librarian who will choose and acquire library materials must have knowledge of the library clients and their necessity regarding library resources. Materials to be

acquired must meet the “information, education, and recreation needs” of library clients (LIS MCQs Practice, 2020).

II. REVIEW OF THE RELATED LITERATURE

Library users perceive the library as a better place to visit when the atmosphere is conducive to study, noise-free, state-of-the-art facilities and equipment, access to the internet, relevant and updated information resources. Therefore, the factors like availability of a rich and relevant source of information, internet connection, and e-resources and databases which the users can access anywhere and anytime affect utilization. Additionally, the organization of information is also significant for easy access and retrieval of information. Hence updated, current and relevant library materials mentioned earlier will encourage the library users to use the library (Jotwani, 2008).

Academic libraries can also enhance their services by embracing the best practices recognized around the world. Mohanan (2020) enumerated the attributes of libraries that promote best practices. These are: 1) documentation - these are official information or pieces of evidence that has to be recorded and maintained. Library professionals should keep books and other non-book resources, costs, records, service records, reader's records, visitor's records, among others. User statistics of the library should also be maintained as this is needed for accreditation. All these are needed for the development of the system; 2) benchmarking activities - library staff members should visit other institutional libraries to learn about their library services, activities, and methodologies to provide better services; 3) hands-on training program- helps enhance their skills and competency level in all library services and operations such as automation, e-library services software management, and professional human behavior; 4) staff promotional policy- recognition and rewards serve as motivation to better performance; 5) maintenance of service areas- providing a suitable atmosphere for reading, space for group discussions, brainstorming sections for teachers, students, and research scholars; 6) resource sharing - a facility for sharing documents and resources with outsiders to enhance the optimum use of its resources; 7) student internship program - training Library and Information Science students in the different sections of the library will make them learn about library management and be proficient; 8) library book exhibition- libraries can conduct book exhibitions for users to be aware of the latest books available in the markets in the different areas of the discipline; 9) library best user award- giving the best user award to students and teachers who frequently use the library will attract more library users and increase user statistics; 10) users' feedback. “Collect user feedback at regular intervals in different formats (print/digital) should be done to identify the gaps in library services.” Through this feedback system, we can assess and “increase the quality of services delivered by the library.” Users should give comments and suggestions about the collection and services offered by the library through a suggestion box.

Assessment, evaluation, and action are taken based on this feedback are the responsibility of the management; 11) free

browsing center - a free navigation center for accessing electronic resources will help students prepare assignments, project reports and take notes from the internet, among others; 12) library website - a well-designed and informative library website is essential for any library system. It should contain all the services and activities of the library like membership, functioning hours, e-resources, space for users' queries, virtual tours, OPAC, Library Advisory Committee, among others; 13) 24/7 access to e-resources- a well-organized library should provide uninterrupted worldwide availability of materials e-books, e-journals, electronic databases are the most valuable library resources; 14) group discussions/peer group/brainstorming sessions-most modern libraries provide space for group discussions/peer group/brainstorming sessions inside the library, irrespective of subject areas, conference labs, etc.; and, 15) digital repositories - it is used to make in-house generated publications and other information resources in a digital format for extensive access where students can upload their assignments, project reports, dissertations, and others into the digital repositories.

III. METHODOLOGY

This study used the conceptual analysis as its research design. Historically, the conceptual analysis started in Cambridge during the first half of the twentieth century and flourished at Oxford and several other American universities in the 1950s and early 1960s. An analysis of concept means the process of distinguishing terminologies, analyzing their embedded meanings, and creating a representation of these meanings. Theoretically, a concept is a nomenclature that refers to a property or construct of the phenomenon under investigation related to a theory or related concepts commonly represented by a term. When used in an empirical undertaking, one should remember that concept does not bear any meaning outside a bigger thought or a framework. Concepts are usually expressed in language to generate a framework for understanding and, in turn, create sense meaning (Myburgh & Tammamaro, 2013). The concepts that will be subjected to analyses are the feedback from the graduate students of LNU regarding the factors that affect the utilization of the resources in the graduate school library.

IV. RESULTS

Analyses of the data showed that the factors that affect the utilization of the resources in the graduate school library of the Leyte Normal University as reflected in the feedback found in the feedback box provided by the students during the academic year of 2018-2019. Over two hundred feedbacks were conceptually analyzed.

Results of the findings suggest that updated, current, and relevant library materials, fast and easy internet connection, e-books, and other electronic resources that are accessible at home, conducive space for reading (spacious and well ventilated), updated Library System/ OPAC, friendly, accommodating, and competent library staff, availability of other relevant, accurate information for research, and more theses and dissertations are among the factors that affect the

utilization of the resources piled in the library. Shrestha (2008), in her study, concluded that students used the library regularly for “studying purposes”, considered the library as part of the educational institution, inquired about the books that could be borrowed and returned. The students also visited the library to use electronic resources.

However, there were insufficient networking computers and inadequate tools, which discouraged students from using the library. This finding implies that the library as an academic institution must ensure that it is fully equipped with updated and relevant resources. The library is the main center when somebody looks for information. Therefore, library users will use them extensively when the library has a rich, updated, and suitable collection.

V. DISCUSSIONS

The utilization of library materials is a crucial activity that determines if a library user is loyal to the library and if the library materials/resources are utilized. This study averred that the library users of Leyte Normal University Graduate School library used the resources available in the library in spite of the factors that they consider to impede the maximum utilization of its resources.

To encourage graduate school students to maximize the utilization of all the library resources, the library staffs need to extend the promotion, advertising, and marketing of its reading/library materials. The primary purpose of promoting the resources is to educate the students and other library-goers regarding library utilization and its resources for knowledge upgrade through information awareness.

These activities may be channeled through the library’s website and popular digital platforms such as Facebook. A list of recent books, journals, and magazines will be posted there and will be regularly updated. It is hoped that this finding may serve as baseline data that the LNU management could refer to when upgrading the resources in the library. In this way, all the concerns of the users will be addressed, and in turn, more students will be enticed to utilize its resources.

VI. CONCLUSION

The study is able to conclude that library resources in the Graduate School are underutilized by graduate students of the Leyte Normal University. It is therefore important for the management of the university to devise ways to encourage the students to use the available resources to maximize its benefits to the intended users. One of the ways to do this is to escalate the number of resources that they could utilize for their academic preparations and research undertakings.

REFERENCES

- Jotwani, D. (2008). Best practices in a modern library and information center: the case of Central Library, IIT Bombay. *6th International CALIBER -2008*, University of Allahabad, Allahabad. <https://ir.inflibnet.ac.in:8443/ir/bitstream/1944/1223/1/1.pdf>
- LISBDNETWORK. (2018, June 6). *Library collection development policy: Brief information*. [https://www.lisbdnetwork.com/library-collection-development/#:~:text=Collection%20Development%20Policy%20is%20a,exchange%20\(Reitz%2C%202004\)](https://www.lisbdnetwork.com/library-collection-development/#:~:text=Collection%20Development%20Policy%20is%20a,exchange%20(Reitz%2C%202004))
- Myburgh, S. & Tamaro, A.M. (2013). *Exploring Education for Digital Librarians: Meanings, Modes, and Models*. Chandos Publishing. USA.
- Mohanan, N. (2020). *Best practices in library resources and services in academic libraries*. <https://www.researchgate.net/publication/339353735>.
- Shrestha, N. (2008). *A study on student's use of library resources and self-efficacy* [Unpublished Master's thesis]. Tribhuvan University. <http://eprints.rclis.org/22623/1/NinaShrestha.pdf>