Use of Information Sources by the Users of Delhi Public Library: A Survey

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the use of information sources by the users of Delhi Public Library, Delhi (India). A well structured 120 questionnaires were distributed among DPL users during the academic session 2009-10, to find out the users of information resources being provided by DPL. The present study demonstrates and elaborates the various aspects of use of collections and services, purpose of visit to the library; time spent in the library, physical facilities, use and collections of documents. The paper also identifies the levels of use of various services provided, special library services, and modern techniques applied by the library. Highlights satisfactions with services and rules and regulations of the library. Suggestions have been given to make the collections and services more beneficial for the public library users' community in India as well as abroad.

Keywords: Users Studies, Information Resources, Delhi Public Library, Delhi, India.

INTRODUCTION

A library is not a building stacked with books, it is a repository and source of information and idea, a place for learning and enquiry, and for the generation of thought and the creation of new knowledge. Public libraries in particular have the potential to bridge the gap between the information poor and the information rich by ensuring that people from all sectors and settings of society and the economy across India have easy access to knowledge to seek. Delhi Public Library is an autonomous organization under the Ministry of Tourism & Culture and governed by Delhi Library Board, fully financed by the Government of India. Delhi Public Library was started as a UNESCO project in the year 1951 by the Govt. of India. It was inaugurated by first Prime Minister of India Hon'ble Pandit Jawaharlal Nehru, started as small unitary library in old Delhi, Opp. Old Delhi Railway Station. It has since developed into a premier Public Library System in the metropolitan city of Delhi.

Delhi Public Library has a network of Zonal Libraries, Branches & Sub-branches, R.C.Libraries, Community Libraries, Deposit Stations, Sports Libraries, Mobile Library, Braille library, etc. spread all over Delhi. The Delhi Public Library is also one of the 4th recipient libraries under the provision of Delivery of Books & Newspaper (Public Libraries)

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Act 1954. The Library provides free library services to the residents of Delhi. Circulation of books is one of the major activities of the library. The library offers services to children and also organizes cultural activities such as lectures, debates, exhibitions etc. Some of the outstanding features of the library activities are services to Blind, Prisoners and offers Mobile Library service also. Delhi Public Library is the biggest Public Library System in India and the busiest Public Library in South East Asia.

Library collection is obviously one of the most important basic resources upon which the utility of library depends. Library collection is precious treasure of library. Delhi Public Library provides a wide range of books, journals and other reading materials in Hindi, English, Urdu, Punjabi & other Indian Languages for everyone, whatever your readings taste. Library stock consists of 15 lakhs books on variety of subjects including Books for competitive examinations, computer science, information technology, philosophy, religion, Hinduism, social science, economics, political science, international relations, language and linguistics, science, physics, chemistry, zoology, botany, medical science, engineering, literature, fiction, history, geography etc.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of the present study are:

1. To study the user approach to the Delhi Public Library.
2. To study the users and the patterns of documents usage in libraries.
3. To examine the institutional, economies and other support systems of libraries.
4. To examine the degree of awareness of users in understanding the availability of documents.
5. To assess the changing attitudes users of in using library and information materials.

METHODOLOGY

Questionnaire and personal interview methods were used for data collection. A total of 120 questionnaires were administered and 109 filled in questionnaires were obtained from the faculty members, unemployed person, Retired Person and students. Out of 109 questionnaires, only 105(96.33%) questionnaires were selected for analysis of data and 4(3.71%) questionnaires were rejected because of incomplete response from the respondents.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The literature of library and information services is vast. General treatments of library collection and services include. Naushad Ali (2005) [1] studied the use of electronic resources at IIT (Indian Institute of Technology) Delhi library. His main findings were: 1) Boolean logic and truncation were the most-often-used search techniques employed by IIT users; 2.) Lack of printing facilities, terminals and trained staff were the major reasons that discouraged users from accessing electronic resources; 3) 60% of users had difficulties in browsing e-resources.

Hussain and Kumar (2006) [2] conducted a survey on the use, collection and services of IIRS (Indian Institute of Remote Sensing) Library. Their major findings were: 1) 41.25% of the respondents used the library services daily; 2) 81.25% of the respondents used the library mainly to borrow books or other materials; 3) 87.50% of the respondents preferred the print collection over the electronic collection (68.75%), and 86.25% of the respondents use current periodicals; 4) Most of the respondents were satisfied with the library services.

Kumar (2009) [3] found that most users visit the library to borrow books, study, search for information, or reading. The purpose of their visits depends on time available and needs. Most users depend on publisher catalogues, bibliographies, indexes, abstracts, or book reviews to keep current in their area of study. Internet, e-journals, or CD-ROMs are used less often due to the lack of availability of these resources as well as personal skill to use them.

DATA ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

Data collected from the questionnaires were analyzed using frequency counts and simple percentage.

The table 3 shows that 13.33% of the total population under study consists of Teachers, 53.33% Students, 11.43% Unemployed and other persons, 10.48% of those who are using the library as Retired persons

The table 4 shows that 35 (33.33) of the users visited the library 'almost daily', while 30 (28.57%) users visited the library as several times in a week. There are only 20(19.05%) users who visit the library once in a month. Only small percentages of users.i.e.9 (8.57%) are rarely visiting the library.

So, it is clear that 80.95% of the users are regular visitors of the Library, while the remaining 19.05% are not regular visitors of the Library.

The table 5 shows that maximum percentage of the users are using the library for reading newspapers i.e. 42 (40%), whereas 17 (16.19%) users are using the library for reading subject books and magazines. There are 16 (15.24%) users who are using the Delhi Public Library as a recreational purpose, while 15 (14.28%) users are using for borrow and return the books .Only a small percentage of users who are using the library for research materials, reference books, for assignment and others purposes.

So, it is clear from analysis that majority of users who are using newspaper after that magazines and books.

On analyzing the data in Table 6, it has been found that 33 (31.42) are not a majority of users who spent time in the library for an hour, whereas 27 (25.71%) of users who spent time in the library for 2-3 hours. There are only 22 (20.95%) of users who spent time less than an hour, whereas 19 (18.09%) of users spent time in the library more than three hours. Only small percentage of users who have not determined the time spent in the library i.e.3.83%.

Though, it clearly indicates that 33(31.42%) of the majority of users spent time in the library for an hour, whereas 27(25.71%) of users who spent time in the library for 2-3 hours.

The table 7 reveals that 31 (29.52%) users who have mostly used textbooks, whereas 29 (27.61%) users who uses general books in the library. There were only 17 (16.19%) total percentages of users are using periodicals/journals, but 16(15.23%) and 9 (6.87%) users are using reference books as well as newspapers. Only few percentages of users were using others (recreational books) and newspaper clippings services similarly.

As a result, it has been noticed that 31(29.52%) users who have mostly used textbooks, whereas 29(27.61%) users who uses general books in the library.

The table 8 reveals that the percentages of users are satisfied with physical facilities of the library. This table indicates that 73 (69.53%) users are satisfied with working hours, whereas 57 (54.28%) users are satisfied with the reading room facilities provided of the library premises. There are only 38 (36.19%) and 55 (52.38%) users are satisfied with the conducive environment and general facilities (air, water, lighting) of the library.

As a result, it is observed that 73(69.53%) users are satisfied with the working hours, whereas 57(54.28%) users are satisfied with the pleasing reading room facilities provided of the library premise.

The data analysis reveals in Table 9 that the lending of books is known maximum number of users' i.e. 59(56.19%), whereas 31(29.52%) users are using reference service available in the library. Only 15(14.29%) percentage of users (children's) are using library services.

Hence, it is noticed that maximum number of users are using lending of books in the Delhi Public Library.

In Table 10 Users' awareness about the library services is prerequisite for proper utilization of the library and its resources. Therefore the responses of the users in this regard have been analyzed in the above table regarding specialized library services. The data given in the above table reveals that 33(31.42%) of the large number of users are using in Deposit Station Services, while 31(29.52%) users are using Braille Library Service available in the library. 29(27.61%) users who uses Mobile Library Service. There are 17(16.19%) of users are using R.C.Library Service and Reprography Service, but 16(15.23%) and 15(14.29%) users are using Reading Room and Service to prisoners and as well as Guidance and Training services. Only small percentages of users are using Community Library and Social Education Services.

Therefore, it is observed that 33(31.42%) of the users are using in Deposit Station Services, while 31(29.52%) users are using Braille Library Service available in the library.

On analyzing the data in table 11 shows that 72(68.57%) users who have to find appropriate books by personal assistance, while 26(24.76%) users who have to search journals/periodicals. There were very little percentages of both users have taken personal assistance to consult reference sources.

So, it has found that 68.57% of the users who have utilized personal assistance to find appropriate books in the library.

Table 12 show that user satisfaction is very important in any library because users' dissatisfaction means that the service provided by the library is not good and perhaps staff is in efficient to handle the reference queries. The above table reveals that the majority of users 54.28% (57 users out of 105 users) are satisfy with library services while 45.72% (48 users out of 105 users) users are not satisfy with library services.

Hence, it is clearly indicated that 54.28% of the users are satisfy with library services.

The table 13 shows that the 100% (105) users have given response; library is computerized and provided us computer facilities (like Internet, CD/DVD, Online catalogue etc.).

Consequently, it is analyzed that majority of users are aware about library modernization.

After analyzing the data in table 14 shows that 80% (84 users out of 105 users) users are satisfied whereas 20% (21 users out of 105 users) users are not satisfied with the library cards service available in the library. There are 58.09% (61 users out of 105 users) users are satisfied with the period loan of books facility, while 42% (44 users out of 105 users) are not satisfied with period loan of books facility.

Thus, it is found that majority of users are satisfied with the rules and regulation of the Delhi Public Library.

Table 3. Status of the Users

S.N.	Category	No. of Response	%age of users
A.	Teachers	14	13.33
B.	Students	56	53.33
C.	Unemployed	12	11.43
D.	Retired persons	11	10.48
E.	Any other	12	11.43
	Total	105	100.00
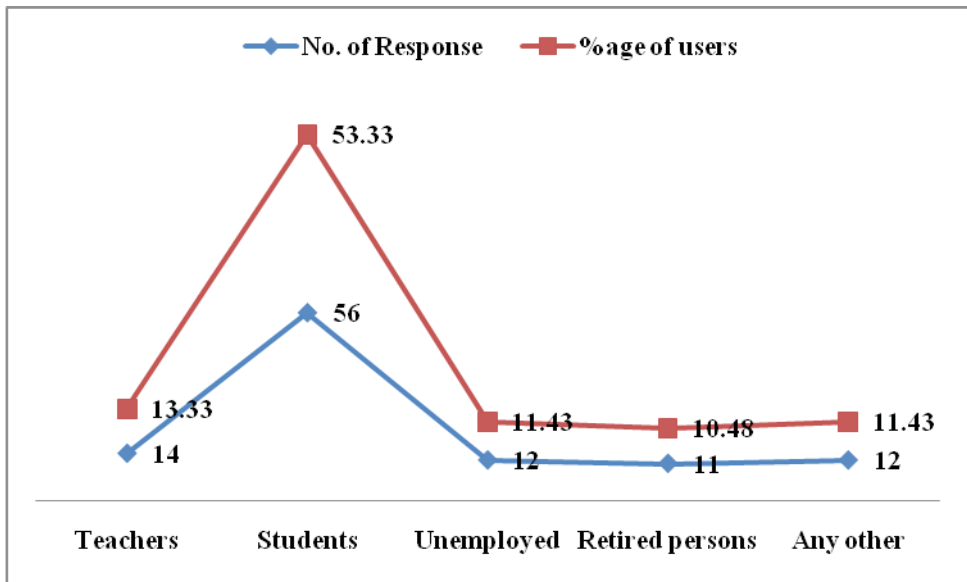
Fig. 2. Status of the Users

Table 4. Frequency of Visit the Library

S. N.	Frequency	No. of Response	%age
A.	Daily	35	33.33
B.	Several times in a week	30	28.57
C.	Once in a week	20	19.05
D.	Once in a month	11	10.48
E.	Rarely	9	8.57
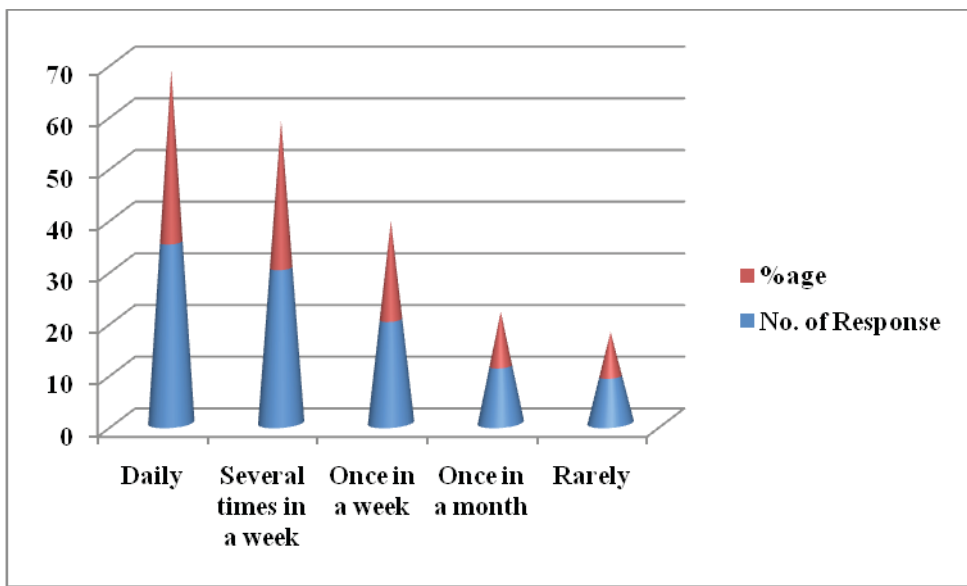
Fig. 3. Frequency of Visit the Library

Table 5. Purpose of visit to the Library

S.N.	Purpose	No. of Response	%age
A.	To read subject related books	17	16.19
B.	For borrow and return the books	15	14.28
C.	To consult reference materials	3	2.85
D.	To recreational purpose	16	15.24
E.	For research purpose	2	1.90
F.	To read newspapers	42	40.00
G.	To read magazines	17	16.19
H.	To complete assignments	4	3.80
I.	Other purposes	4	3.80
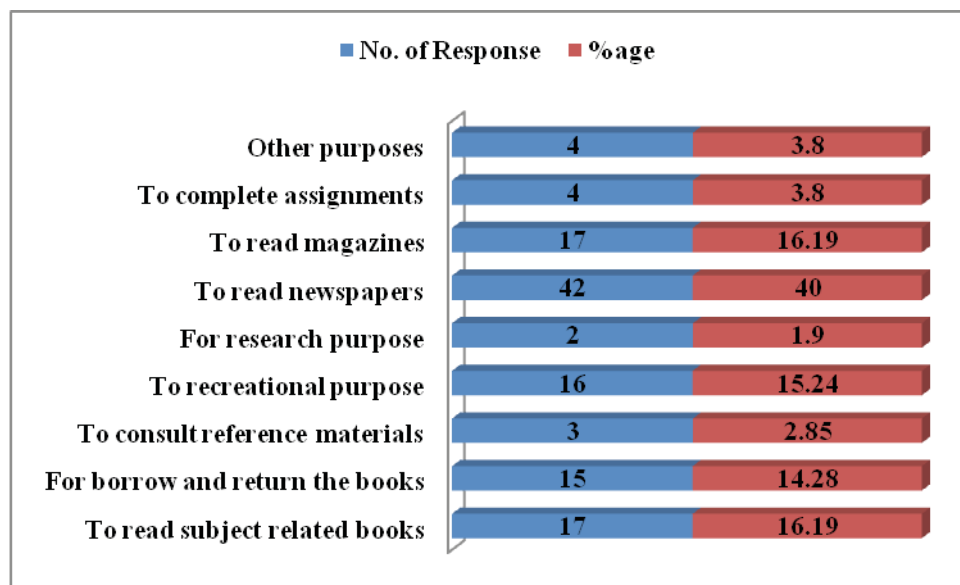
Fig. 4. Purpose of visit to the Library

Table 6. Time Spent in the Library

S. N.	Time	No. of Response	%age
A.	Less than hour	22	20.95
B.	One hour	33	31.42
C.	Two-three hours	27	25.71
D.	More than three hours	19	18.09
E.	Not ascertain	4	3.83
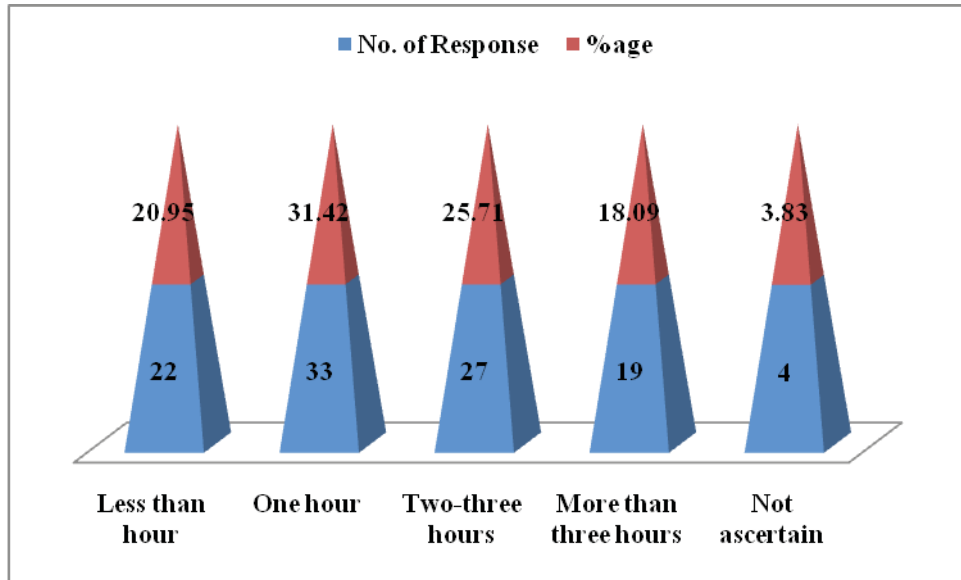
Fig. 5. Time Spent in the Library

Table 7. Use of Information Resources

S. N.	Resources	No. of Response	%age
A.	General books	29	27.61
B.	Textbooks	31	29.52
C.	Reference books	10	9.52
D.	Periodicals/Journals	17	16.19
E.	General magazines	16	15.23
F.	News paper	9	6.87
G.	News paper clipping	7	6.66
H.	Any other	7	6.66
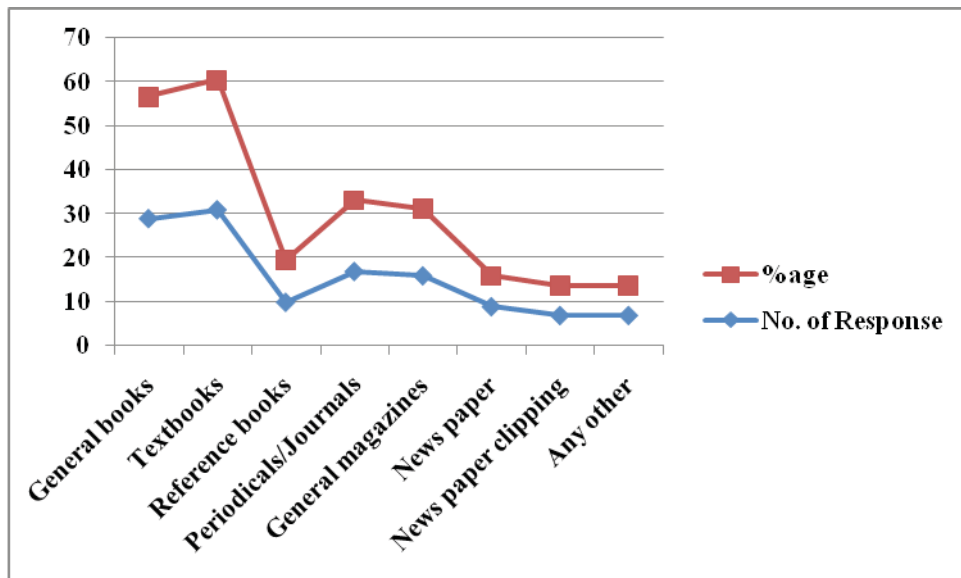
Fig. 6. Use of Information Resources

Table 8. Physical Facilities of the Library

S.N.	Physical Facilities	Yes	%age	No	%age
A.	Working hours	73	69.53	32	30.47
B.	Reading room facilities	57	54.28	48	45.72
C.	Environment	38	36.19	67	63.81
D.	General facilities (air, water lighting)	55	52.38	50	47.62
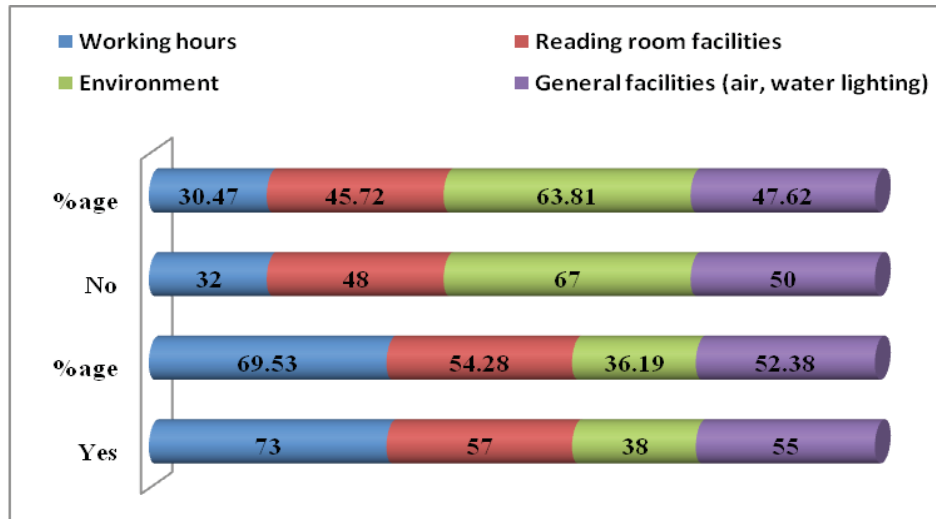
Fig. 7. Physical Facilities of the Library

Table 9. Library Services

S. N.	Service	No. of Response	%age
A.	Lending of Books	59	56.19
B.	Reference Services	31	29.52
C.	Services for Children	15	14.29

Table 10. Special Library Services

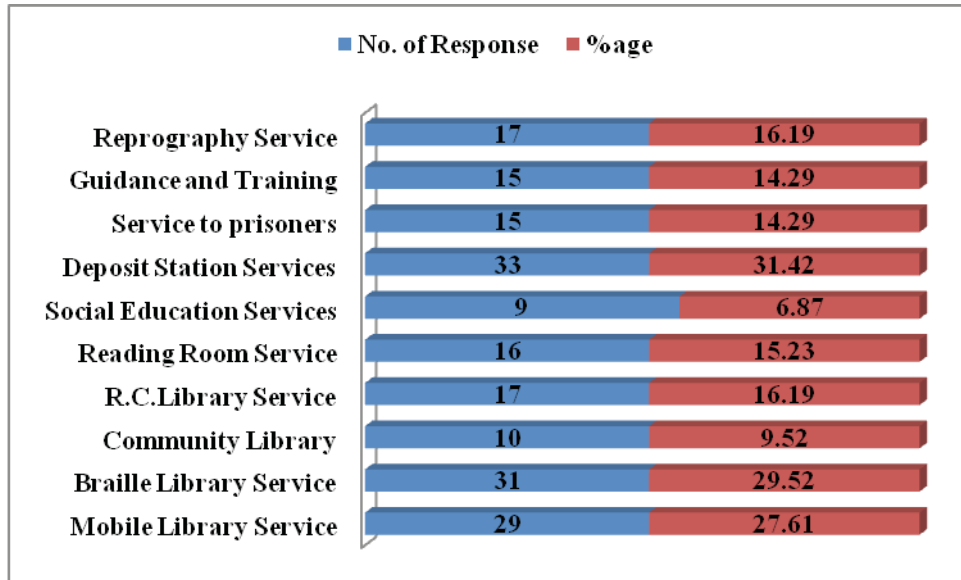| S. N.	Service	No. of Response	%age
A.	Mobile Library Service	29	27.61
B.	Braille Library Service	31	29.52
C.	Community Library	10	9.52
D.	R.C.Library Service	17	16.19
E.	Reading Room Service	16	15.23
F.	Social Education Services	9	6.87
G.	Deposit Station Services	33	31.42
H.	Service to prisoners	15	14.29
I.	Guidance and Training	15	14.29
J.	Reprography Service	17	16.19

Fig. 8. Special Library Services

Table 11. Personal Assistance used by the respondents

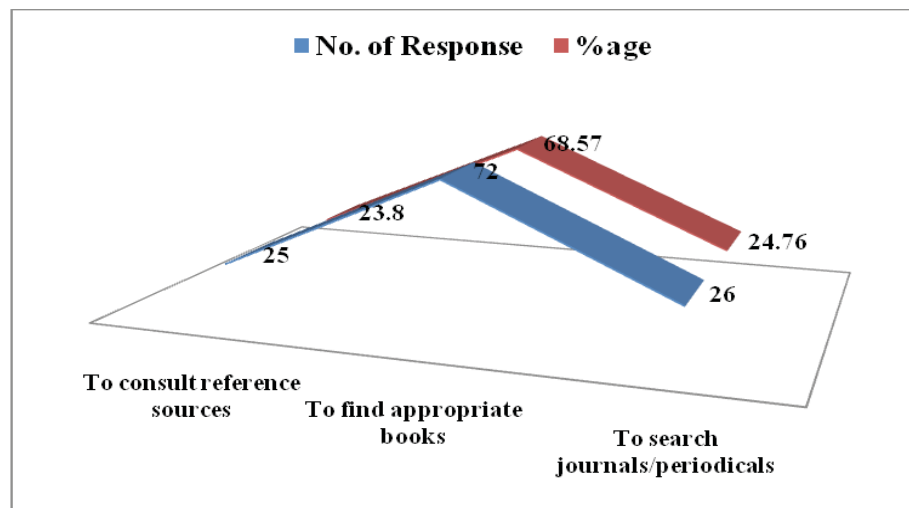| S.N.	Personal assistance	No. of Response	%age
A.	To consult reference sources	25	23.80
B.	To find appropriate books	72	68.57
C.	To search journals/periodicals	26	24.76

Fig. 9. Personal Assistance used by the respondents

Table 12. Satisfaction with the Services

S.N.	Satisfactions	No. of Response	%age
A.	Yes	57	54.28
B.	No	48	45.72

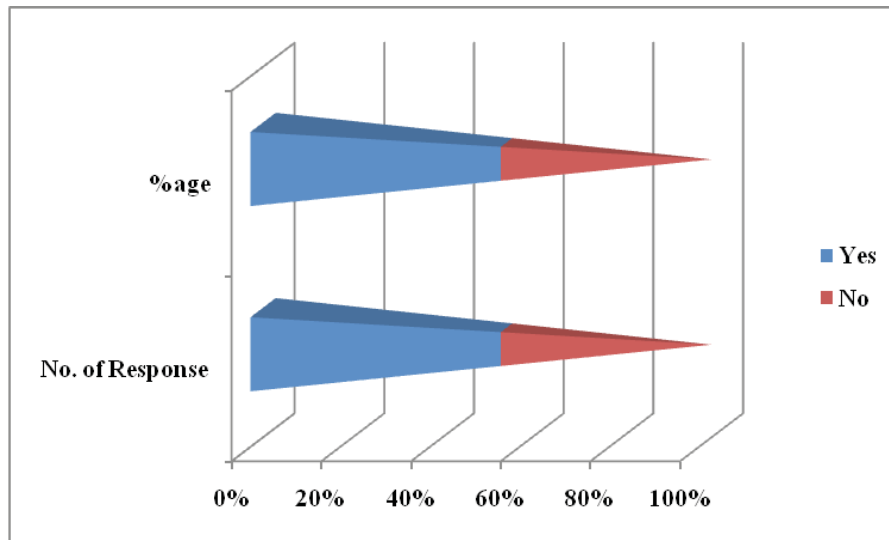**Fig. 10. Satisfaction with the Services**

Table 13. Library Modernizations

S.N.	Is the library modernized?	No. of Response	%age
A.	Yes	105	100%
B.	No	0	0

Table 13. Library Rules and Regulations

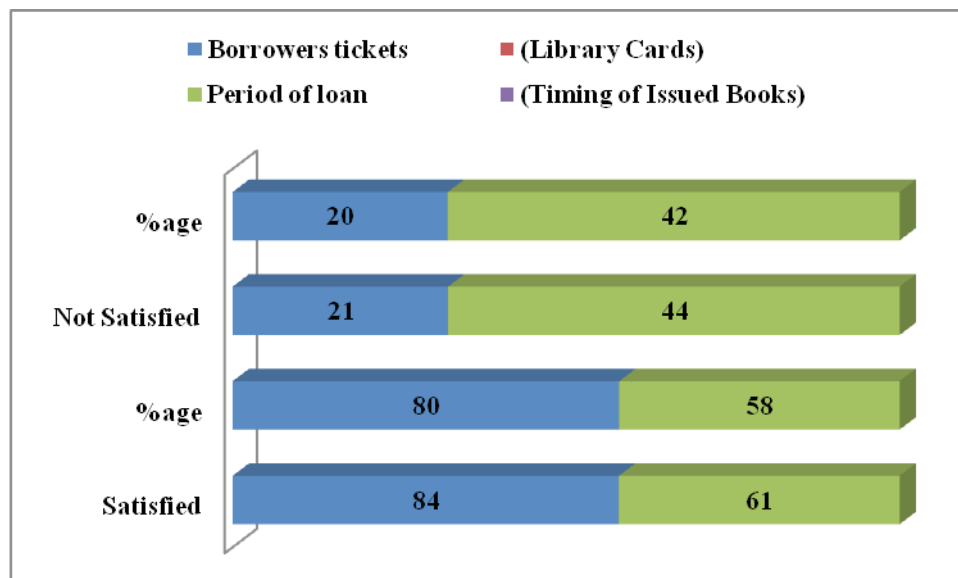| S.N.	Rules & Regulations	Satisfied	%age	Not Satisfied	%age
A.	Borrowers tickets (Library Cards)	84	80.00	21	20.00
B.	Period of loan (Timing of Issued Books)	61	58.00	44	42.00

Fig. 11. Library Rules and Regulations

CONCLUSION

The study sought to analyze the library Resources and services by the users: a user survey, the study has taken the user as a sample. This study is only related to Delhi Public Library, S. P. Mukharjee Marg, Delhi. There were two important issues to address. First, the input from the survey needed to result in tangible change. Since the users were intimately involved in the process their feedback needed to be not only taken seriously, but also acted upon. If not, the trustworthiness of the organization would be significantly jeopardized. Second, the staff needed to understand that some of the feedback would be negative. They had to be open to constructive criticism.

The library also needed branch marking date, only obtainable through a carefully administered research tool. These data would assess the current level of satisfaction with awareness and expectation for the library's collections, services, programs, staff and facilities.

SUGGESTIONS

There are following important suggestions for the study:

1. Acquisition policy should change and extend the collection of the library.
2. Acquiring multiple copies of most demanded books.
3. More subjective encyclopedias may be extended and dictionaries also.
4. Improvement on shelving turn-around time and training of missing items.
5. The library professional should be trained to help the student use the library services.
6. New editions of books should be added.
7. The status of maps/charts/diagrams requires improvement.
8. The user of DPL is not satisfied with reprographic service so reprographic service facility should require improvement.
9. About 50% users of DPL says that the reading room facility is not good of this library so the DPL should be improve the reading room facilities.
10. Provision of mineral drinking water, sanitation and toilet facilities should be improved.
11. Alternate arrangement for electricity like electric generator/inverter should be provided in the library.
12. The DPL should be organize social and recreational activities like Drama/Nukkad Natak general knowledge competition, debates, antakshari with the title of books, exhibition of books etc. important juncture in every year, and;
13. The library should have big suggestion box to get the views of persons interacting with the library. Their suggestions should also be considered for selection of books and other reading material.

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