

AN EMPIRICAL STUDY OF ACCESSIBILITY AND USAGE OF LIBRARY RESOURCES BY MANAGEMENT STUDENTS – A CASE OF LJ INSTITUTE OF MANAGEMENT STUDIES, AHMEDABAD

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Abstract Libraries contribute in variety of ways to student learning and success. Academic libraries establish connection between different aspects of the library and academic processes, like, instruction, reference, collections, space & facilities etc. that further give augment to the students' engagement level and career preparedness. This becomes all the more important in case of business schools where constant business and economy updates are crucial for the students' for their final placements and skill development. With this background, the present paper is an attempt to underline the perception and attitude of the management graduates towards the knowledge resources available in their library. The study is carried out in the LJ Institute of Management Studies (LJIMS) campus having huge intake of around 420 students every year in regular MBA program. A list of Likert statements are framed for the measurement of opinion on 3 and/or 5 point scale. Such statements are designed in a way to assess the library resources effectiveness on the basis of AAAUI parameters, viz., a) Awareness b) Availability c) Accessibility d) Utilization, and, e) Infrastructure for eliciting information on library resources. The key findings indicate that major chunk of students are satisfied with the availability and usage of information sources at their institute's library. Their library provides access to specific course material and supports in development of study notes, research projects and global country reports. Computers and Book Bank facility has provided a special edge to the students in the integration of electronic and print resources into their academic pursuits.

Keyword: Awareness, Availability, Accessibility, Utilization, Book Bank, Library Resources

INTRODUCTION

Library is always represented as the heart of the institute, the 'Campus' Treasure'. It is an essential resource center of an academic institution. The main function of a professional institute library is to hold up teaching, learning and research in ways consistent with the goals, mission and vision of the institute. Besides, the library sources and services should be ample in quality, depth and diversity to support the institution's curriculum. The library has to collect all print & non-print, published & unpublished material in some depth in all areas of knowledge, especially in the courses offered by the institute. Nwalo (2002) summarized the basic materials needed in most institutional libraries, as:

- Reference books of a general nature and reference books in the subject areas including in the institutional programme.
- Books which relates to and supplement each curriculum offered.

- Important general books not relating to a specific subject area and important books in subject field not included in the curriculum.
- Books for voluntary and recreational reading.
- Government publications
- CDs
- Archival materials pertaining to the instruction.
- Newspapers/magazines/Journals

The size and type of the collection is used as an indicator of academic quality of the institute. LJIMS has well equipped full-fledged processed library having a reservoir of more than 20,000 books, 150 dictionaries, and subscription to more than 100 magazines and journals and around 1,800 special category books on different subjects. Besides enriching other sources of information, every year a new lot of books are added to the pool from National Book Fair organized at New Delhi.

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The institute is one amongst the pioneering institute of management in Ahmedabad which was established in 2001 under the aegis of Lok Jagruti Kendra Trust. It is affiliated to Gujarat Technological University and approved by the All India Council of Technical Education (AICTE).

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

- To study the level of awareness, accessibility and the usage of library resources by management graduates of LJIMS.
- To examine perceptions of LJIMS graduates towards the knowledge resources in the library.
- To check the level of availability & utilization of various resources for the students as per their academic & research requirements.
- To investigate the problems encountered by students in the provision of library services and determine the suitable strategies for enhancing the same.

SELECTION OF POPULATION

The present survey research incorporates the students of first and second year MBA students of LJIMS who use library resources. There was approximately equal representation of both year students. This showed that around 40% of the students access the library services at least once in a week during non-peak period (prior to examination period).

RESEARCH INSTRUMENT

A structured User's Questionnaire (questionnaire administered to users or students, aimed to collect data on their preferences for different type of reading material and helpfulness of other library services) was used for the study. It was divided into two parts. The first part deals with the basic information of the students which included the semester of the respondents and frequency of their visit to the library. While the second part contains Yes/No questions or Likert statements for the measurement of opinion on 3 and/or 5 point scale. Such statements are designed in a way to assess the library resources effectiveness on the basis of AAAUI parameters, viz., a) Awareness b) Availability c) Accessibility d) Utilization, and, e) Infrastructure for eliciting information on library resources.

SAMPLING

The simple random sampling technique is used for the study where all students who use library services have an equal chance of being selected as a member of the sample. A total of 437 respondents were selected to represent the minimum number of students that visits the library. It was ensured

while carrying out survey that no respondent is given the questionnaire twice. To accomplish the same, during the survey, the questionnaire was distributed randomly and an identification number is used for each user semester-wise.

COLLECTION OF DATA

The data was gathered by randomly distributing the questionnaire to the business management students that used LJIMS library. The entire data was collected in a week's time. Around 437 (from both, first & second year students) questionnaires were distributed but a total of 400 questionnaires were filled completely and analyzed, and, thus, gave a response rate of 91.5%.

DATA ANALYSIS

Descriptive statistics has been used to analyze the data. The analysis includes the use of frequencies, bar figures, tables and percentages.

LITERATURE REVIEW

The university library is considered as the academic heart of a university system with the fundamental purpose of providing necessary material and environment to the students, teachers and researchers to ensure proper teaching learning process. According to Whitmire (2002) academic library resources are considered as good quality measure of an institution's excellence. Popoola (2008) established that the information resources and services available in institutional information systems must be capable of supporting research activities among the students and faculty members.

Plunket et. al (2013) surveyed Boston university undergraduate students to determine their use of and satisfaction with library services and resources. In the survey, the general comments related to the physical aspects of the libraries imply the importance of these aspects to many of the undergraduates who were a part of the survey. The search engines, like, Google and library databases like JSTOR and EBSCO are considered most important tools for academic work by undergraduates.

The Library Assessment Committee recommended the following steps to be taken by the library administration to improve the quality of life and academic success of the undergraduates: persistent renovation of the library facilities, e.g., proper lighting, extending library hours, installation of additional computers in the libraries, reconfiguration of spaces to provide additional group work areas in the libraries, improved student assistance and communication by library staff, increased outreach of availability of library instruction to undergraduate classes.

University of Bolton (2009) carried out an Academic Staff survey. The survey was intended to canvas the views of Academic staff (as a distinct customer group) on Library Services. The findings pointed out that the library facilities were very impressive and excellent. Staff had been always helpful and areas were pretty clean. However the team also suggested that more resources such as texts with more supplies of main text are required so that several copies are available for the students to use it. However, cost factor should be kept in mind before implementation. Longer opening timings on Fridays & weekends was also suggested.

British Columbia Institute of Technology (2014) carried out research of BCIT faculty and staff members perceptions of library services on a range of areas. Overall survey results focus the library's attention where user awareness, practices, satisfaction, and expectations are especially high or low. The survey findings were that respondents were overall satisfied with all collections, services, and facilities provided by the library services however when importance and or frequency of usage ratings were considered in light of satisfaction ratings, respondents also indicated opportunities of improvement in a number of areas. Results suggest an awareness gap when it comes to library services resources training and instruction activities, collections and certain services and facilities. Respondents use resources more often for teaching related activities than for research or personal development purposes.

Riester, M. (2015) conducted a survey for Library users about services, collection, facilities and access tools is essential to document and analyzing how users of the campus view and make use of the Library. Respondents were asked to assess their level of awareness of various library materials. The overall level of awareness of the library material in general is very good and almost all of the respondents know what resources they can use from the Library. Only half of the respondents were somewhat aware that they have access to past internship reports or to online databases. The users also rated their level of overall satisfaction with the collection provided by the Library. A very high percentage 72% of respondents expressed satisfaction with the library collection overall. One of the objective of the research was to check the extent to which library users associate electronic resources with library resources. The majority of the respondents are using electronic resources on a monthly basis and only one third of them are using electronic resources on a weekly or more often than once a week basis. A very high percentage 86% of respondents expressed satisfaction with the library services overall.

Chow, J. (2013) an online user survey was conducted of the Working Library. Responses were invited from all students and Fellows of the College. More than one half of the total respondents use the Library at least once a week, and about a quarter visit it two or three times a week.

The most common Library services used by students and Fellows are borrowing/returning/renewing items (68%), followed by studying or revising (65%), and consulting books or journals (64%). Library lockers were least used (95% of respondents did not use them). Respondents had to indicate their level of satisfaction/dissatisfaction with the Library's current provision of resources, equipment and facilities. Undergraduate and postgraduate respondents were differentiated.

In regard to undergraduate responses, more than two-thirds are either 'very satisfied' or 'satisfied' with the self-borrowing machine (69%), and with the availability of individual desk space 69%. This is followed by satisfaction with the wireless facility i.e. 68%. It is worth noting that nearly one half of the respondents i.e. 45% were 'very satisfied' with the self-borrowing machine. In contrast, while dissatisfaction is generally minimal, the highest level of dissatisfaction is with 'availability of core texts and course books' i.e. 15%.

University of St Andrews Students' Association. (2013) analyzed the results of the Student Library Survey organized by the University of St Andrews Students' Association Education Committee. The survey results suggest that students very narrowly prefer longer opening hours during weekdays rather than have them open on weekends. However, the Students' Association believes that the situation could be solved by installing an unmanned swipe in entry into these Library facilities after regular closing time. While e-books and e-journals are among the third and the second most used Library resources, it is still print books that most students use for their studies. It has also been inquired whether the Library should invest more money into buying print copies or e-books. With 505 responses favoring e-books and 497 responses favoring print copies, the nearly 50:50 split suggests that the Library should continue investing into both.

Gresham, K., Bennett, H., Block, J., Dawes, T., & Popescu, A. (2010) assessed the level of awareness of various library services, grouped into three major service categories: 1) research help; 2) tools and methods for finding and obtaining library materials; and 3) collections. Respondents' awareness level of library services overall is quite high, but when compared to services in the other two categories, services in the research help category tend to cluster toward the lower end of the awareness spectrum. Regarding level of overall satisfaction with the University Library, a very high percentage (90%) of respondents expressed satisfaction with the library overall (Respondents were asked to gauge their levels of satisfaction with the various library buildings and spaces. Overall, High to medium-high rates of satisfaction exist for all locations, perhaps with the exception of the Architecture Library (53%). A majority of respondents are very satisfied with Lewis, Engineering, and Marquand libraries. The highest levels of dissatisfaction occur with Architecture (18%) and Firestone (13%) libraries.

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

The primary concern in the feedback is the frequency of the student's visit to the library. The frequency of visit to the LJ

library by second year and first year is shown respectively in Figure -1 below. More often a student visits the library greater will be his/her awareness of the library services, and he/she will be in a better position to assess them.

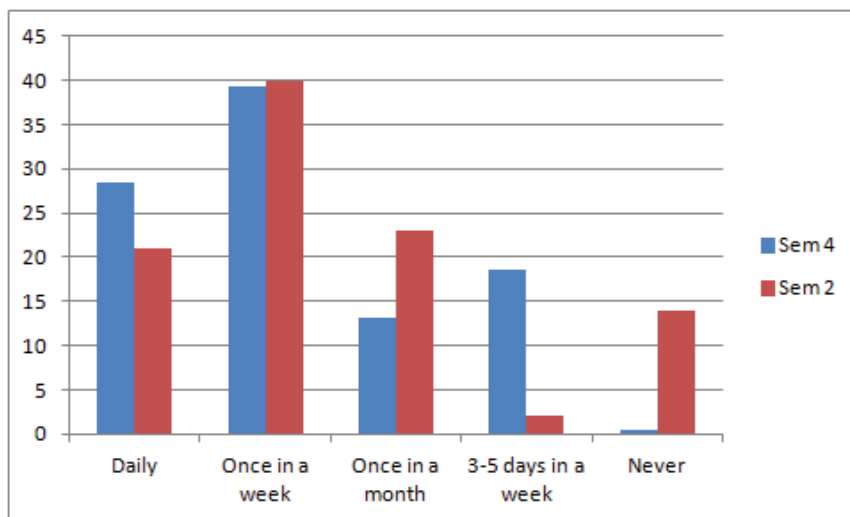


Figure 1 . Percentage of Students' Visit to Library

The common trend in the Figure makes it clear that majority (40%) of the students access the library services at least once in a week. And, approx. 28% students go to library on daily basis. A negligible number of students are found to be not accessing the library at all.

Students' Awareness

The first step towards using library services is being aware of it. Table - 1 is related to awareness level of second year and first year students respectively, about various library services. Around 70-80% of students are aware of the main services of LJ MBA including, LJ Book Bank, Past CP, SIP and GCSR Reports along with the text books and reference books of GTU of different subjects. A good number of students are aware of Mid sem and GTU exam papers as well along with books on soft skills and case studies. Lack of knowledge among library users of CDs, Xeroxed books and bounded old volumes of magazines/journals is a main concern in academic librarianship.

Table 1. Awareness of Various Library Facilities among Students

Library facilities	1st year		IInd year		Total
	Yes	No	Yes	No	
Book Bank	173	44	140	43	400
Past CP Reports	130	87	156	27	400
Past SIP Reports	135	82	153	30	400
Past GCSR Reports	111	106	149	34	400
CDs of textbooks	75	142	49	134	400
Bound volumes of magazines/ journals	100	117	93	90	400
Mid Sem Question-papers	133	84	122	61	400
GTU Q-papers	145	72	135	48	400
Dictionaries	162	55	126	57	400
Subject Dictionaries	126	91	122	61	400
Xeroxed Books	87	130	75	108	400
General Books	150	67	141	42	400
Case Studies	146	71	127	56	400
Soft skill Books	131	86	117	66	400

Availability of Library Facilities

To facilitate academic success, library services to postgraduates must provide access to a broad range of information resources. Such information is made available either in print or electronic form. These resources include not only traditional print-on-paper media like books, journals, newspapers, old project reports and encyclopedias but also

CD-ROMs, electronic data base of past year university question papers and mid-sem question papers. Figure -2 and Figure – 3 are drawn on the basis of 5 point scale and highlights that though overall students are happy with the availability with various resources, around a quarter of students of both the years have shown disagreement towards text books and reference books availability.

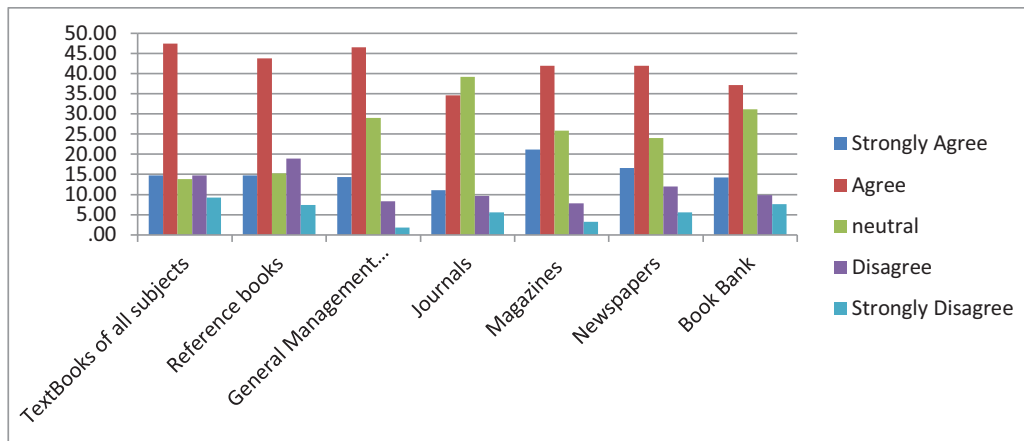


Figure 2. Availability of Library Resources – First Year Students

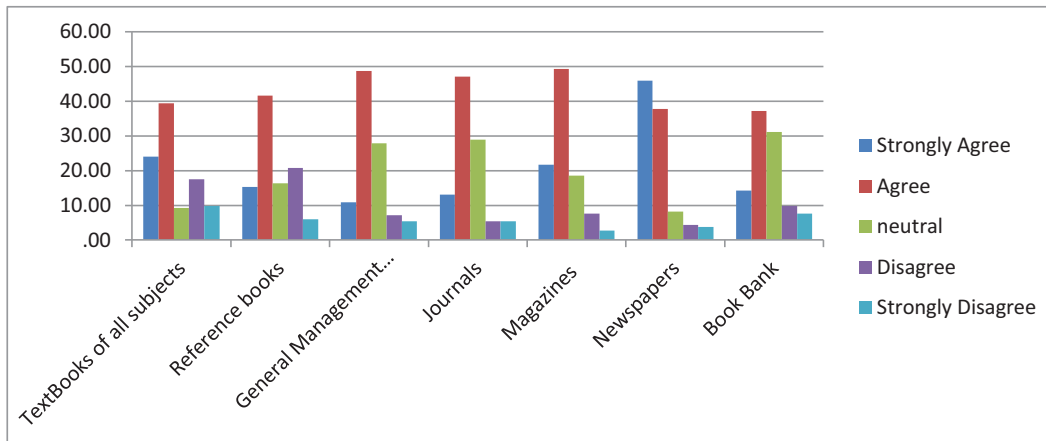


Figure 3. Availability of Library Resources – Second Year Students

This draws an attention on increasing the availability of such books of different subjects. Around 30-40% students are also found undecided regarding the satisfactory status of availability of referred research journals and LJ Book Bank facility. On the other hand, students are satisfied with the availability of newspapers and magazines in the library.

Accessibility to the Library Resources

Accessing knowledge resources by the students become crucial when the students are aware of and the availability is in sufficient number. Iyoro (2004) in his study identified accessibility as one of the pre-requisites of information use. Ugah (2008) opined that the more accessible information

sources are, the more likely they are to be used and readers tend to use information sources that require the least effort to access.

As seen in Table 2, the results indicate that majority students of both semesters are not satisfied with the book issue and book renewal process. This dissatisfaction is derives mainly from less issue and return days (mean 3.8 & 3.4, being the highest end) and high library fine (mean 2.59 & 2.54). The mean (2.75) is found same in case of both semester students, signifying towards their unhappiness with the behavior of library staff. They rank (mean average 2.74) them on the lower side in context of help and support.

The developments in Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) have impact on the functioning of academic libraries and the users' expectation from the academic libraries in different ways. The respondents were asked to indicate the IT facilities that were available and accessible in the library, the results (mean 2.84 & 2.65) indicate that they are not sure of the proper implementation of ICT tools in the library. The students are also not at ease in finding SIP/CP reports with Accession No.s. Also, the computers facility in the library also need an overhauling as the student's response is undecided about the proper utilization of computer facilities and access tools in the library.

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Table 2. Accessibility of Library Resources by Students

Library Resource	Mean (1st year)	Mean (IInd year)
Book Bank	2.51	2.46
Book issue	2.74	2.69
Issue & Return days	3.34	3.38
Renewal process	2.76	2.66
Librarian Behavior	2.75	2.75
Library staff assistance	2.84	2.62
Ease of Accession No. in finding books	2.52	2.56
High library fine	2.54	2.59
Ease of Accession No. in finding SIP/CP/GCSR reports	2.82	2.37
Question papers	2.71	2.48
Library Working hours	2.50	2.10
Computer facilities	3.09	2.75
Access tools	2.84	2.65

Utilization of Library Resources

The resource utilization is a crucial factor as it correlates with the library expenditure with the benefit derived from the same for all the user groups. Figure-4 clears that though awareness level of Book Bank facility is high among students of second year; the utilization is still not done by around 20%. The main reason behind this observation is that there are no books in Book Bank for second year subjects. However, the same is not observed in first year students (Figure-5). Next, the usage of CDs is also quite less among students of both the years owing to low awareness level for the same. The utilization of SIP/CP/GCSR reports is quite good as the usage of dictionaries and Question papers are also found equally popular among students.

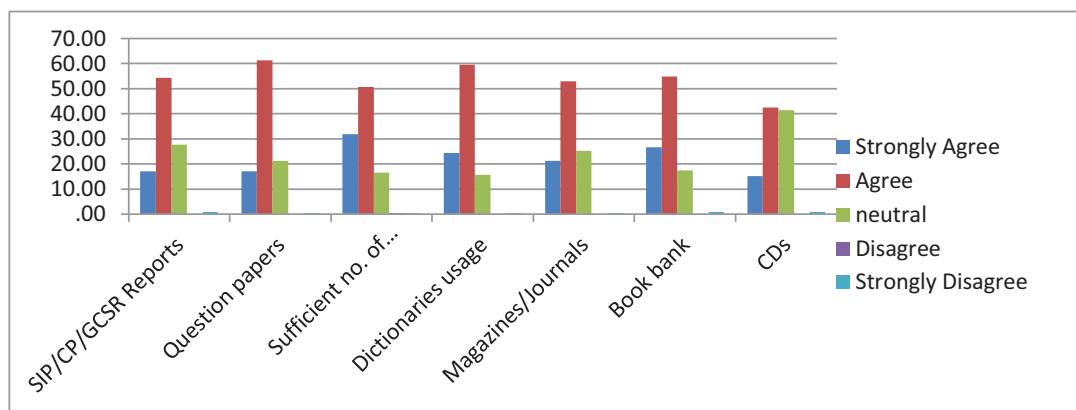


Figure 4. Utilization of Library Resources – First Year Students

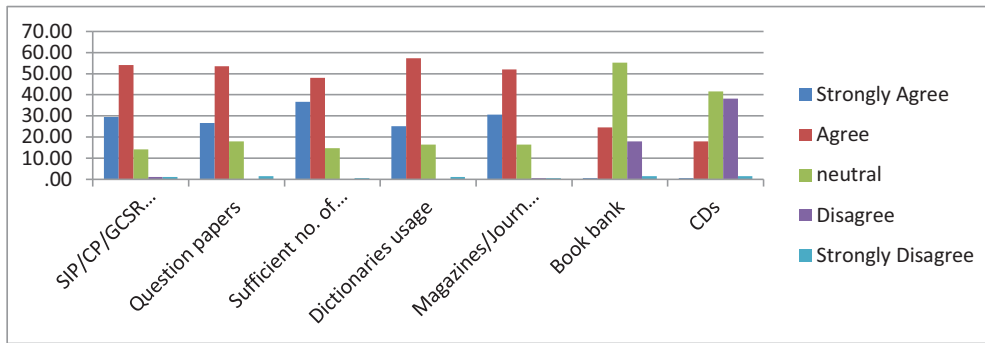


Figure 5. Utilization of Library Resources – Second Year Students

Library Infrastructure

As observed from Figure 6 and Figure 7, the students of both the years feel that the racks outside the library are inadequate. Around 40% students have a sense of insecurity of their personal belongings. The library environment is also non-friendly in terms of practice of silence. The factors of display plan and physical ambience has accorded acceptance and satisfaction among students.

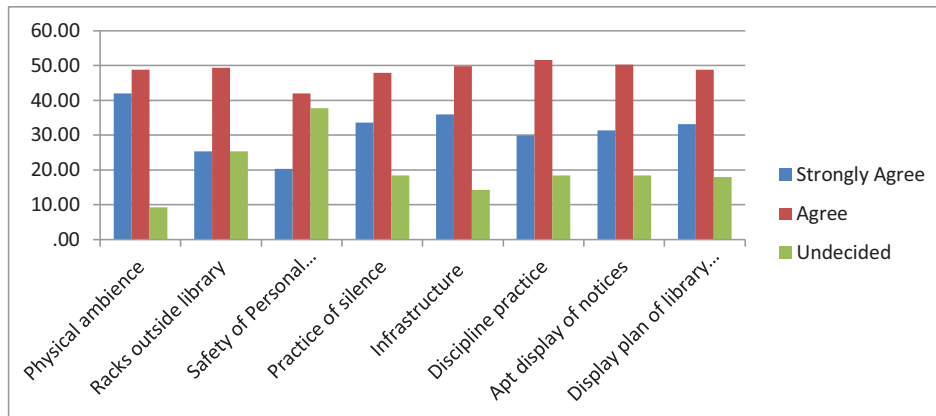


Figure 6. Library Infrastructure – First Year Students

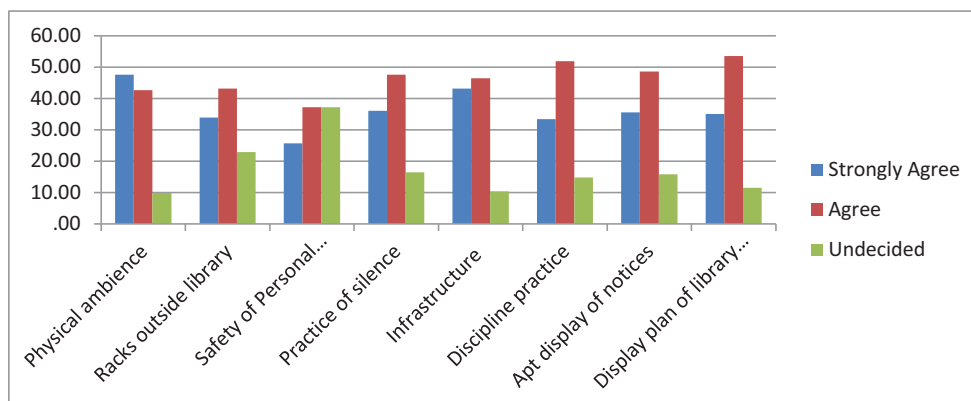


Figure 7. Library Infrastructure – Second Year Students

SUGGESTIONS

The students have tendered certain suggestions depicted in pie chart (Figure 8):

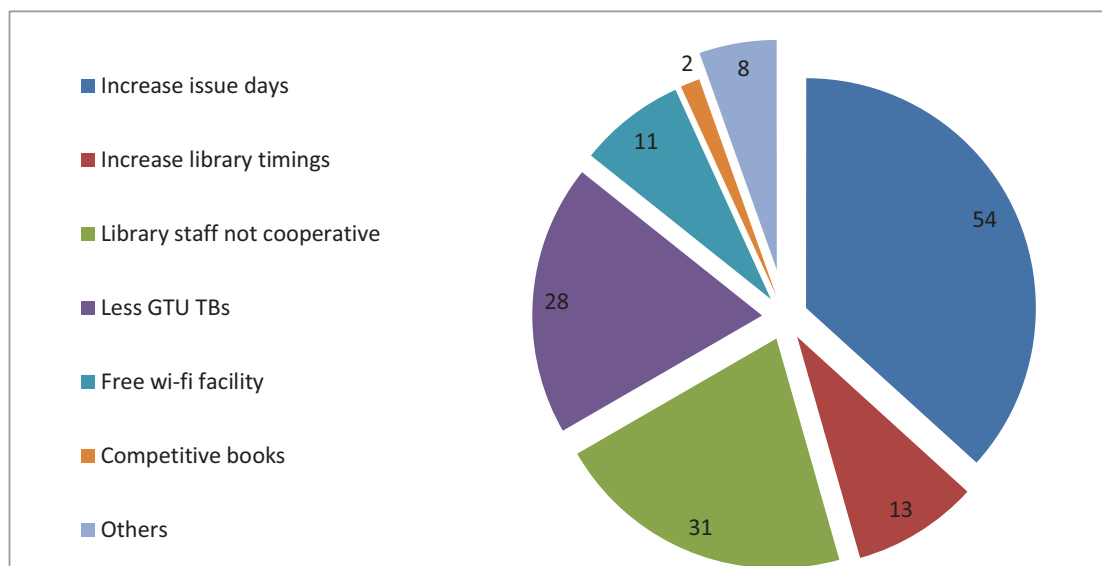


Figure 8. Suggestions to Improve Library Facilities

Increase issue days: Presently text books are issued for 1 day and reference books are issued for 7 days. Students suggested increasing the number of days of issuance and therefore it is proposed that text books will be issued for 2 days and for reference books there will be no change.

Library Timings: At present, the library timings are from 8.00 to 4.00 PM. Students of both the years have opined that library timings should be extended up to 5:00 pm but no change is proposed because now the institute timings has changed and all the session end by 2.45, so no need to extend the timings.

GTU Text books: The students suggested to have more copies of text books in the elective subjects as they face a difficulty in getting these books issued because of less in number. It is also suggested to frame a policy as how many text books should be maintained for each core & elective subject in the library as per the number of students opting that subject or student-book ratio is to be determined.

Wifi Facility: Looking at ICT developments, students also wish to improve the computer facilities in the library with free internet or free Wi-Fi facility in the library. This point is not justified because students already have computer lab with internet facility.

CCTV cameras: Students have proposed to install CCTV cameras and the same is already installed at the library entrance.

Suggestion Box: It is proposed that a general suggestion box for all purposes be installed in the corridor.

Competitive Books: In the present competitive scenario, there is need of more competitive books to prepare for the competitive exams in banks and aptitude tests for placement purposes in various reputed organizations.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that LJIMS library is instrumental in teaching, learning, and research in ways consistent with, and supportive of, the institution's mission and goals. In addition, library resources and services should be sufficient in quality, depth, diversity, and currency to support the institution's curriculum. The results depicted that majority of the students are aware of the major services of library. Overall the students are happy with the availability of various library resources, around a quarter of students of both the years have shown disagreement towards text books and reference books availability. Though the awareness level of Book Bank facility is high among students of second year; the utilization is still not done. The utilization of SIP/CP/GCSR reports is quite good as the usage of dictionaries and Question papers are also found equally popular among students. The results indicate that majority students of both semesters are not satisfied with the book issue and book renewal process. With regard to library infrastructure the

factors of display plan and physical ambience has accorded acceptance and satisfaction among students. Around 40% students have a sense of insecurity of their personal belongings. The library environment is also non-friendly in terms of practice of silence. Thus, it can be said that LJ MBA library resources are sufficient in quality, depth, and diversity to support the institution's curriculum and is consistent with the institution's mission & goals. Though there are certain parameters found in the research on which the institute needs to work upon, the students have access to materials for inclusion in reading assignments and thus contributing to strengthen the conceptual framework of different subjects or courses in the institute.

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