Users' Perception about Library Service Quality at Texila American University, Guyana, South America: A LibQUAL+^{TM} Study

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Abstract

This article is designed to measure the library service quality on library usage and user satisfaction. The LibQUAL+^{TM} was used in this study, which is a valid tool and implemented across the world to measure the users' satisfaction in academic, special and public libraries. The data was collected from the students through online questionnaire was uploaded to Learning Management System (LMS) portal of Texila American University in the month of January and November, 2018. The data was analyzed through SPSS. The findings indicate that library service quality has a significant positive effect on library usage and direct significant effect on user satisfaction services.

Keywords: *LibQUAL^{+TM}, library service quality, library usage, user's perception and user's satisfaction.*

Introduction

Library is a service-oriented and user-centered academic learning environment; library assessment is a required process to measure a library's performance quality and service improvement while supporting the missions and the needs of an academic institution of higher education.

Matthews et al, indicated that ranges and scopes of an academic library assessment have been expanded to include student learning outcomes[6] (i.e. student's achievements, experiences, and retention), teaching effectiveness, research environment, library as a place, and impacts on a college or a university's reputation.

Measuring users' perception about service quality in libraries through LibQUAL+^{TM} approach. LibQUAL+^{TM} similar to ServQual are designed[1], but it is more focused and pertinent to Libraries, designed on the basis of the "Gap Theory of Service Quality[2].

LibQUAL+^{TM} give library users a chance to tell where services need improvement so that they can respond to and better manage their expectations. Libraries can develop services that better meet users' expectations by comparing library's data with that of peer institutions and examining the practices of those libraries that are evaluated highly by their users. It allows seeing relationship to the other academic libraries. It is a starting point to identify best practices improving library services with the help of LibQUAL+^{TM}. In this article, LibQUAL^{+TM} instrument was used to assess the level of service provided at Texila American University, Guyana, South America on "Effect of Service, Information Control and Library as Place dimension.

Objectives of the study

The objectives of the study are:
1. To find out the differences between level of services amongst the students.
2. To determine students' satisfaction and comparative study about the library services.
3. To propose solutions for improving the library's level of service.

Methodology

Students of Texila American University have actively participated in the LibQUAL^{+TM} survey. The LibQUAL^{+TM} questionnaire was uploaded in Learning Management System (LMS) portal on random sampling technique to obtain student satisfaction/perception on library services. The data was analyzed by using statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) 16 version.

Results

The library service satisfaction response was received from students (Table – 1) of Texila American University, Guyana, South America through TAU Learning Management System Portal.

<p align="center">**Table – 1.** Sampling</p>

S.No.	Category	January, 2018	November, 2018	Total
1.	Male students	24	41	**65**
2.	Female students	48	63	**111**

The LibQUAL^{+TM} survey conducted in the months of January and November, 2018. The comparative data analysis shows that, overall 76% of the users were satisfied in the month of January, 2018 and compare with November, 2018 shows that, 83% of the students were satisfied with our Library Services on each individual item. The results show in the following Table – 2.

<p align="center">**Table – 2.** Users' perception about library service quality</p>

S.No.	Questions	January, 2018	October, 2018
	Affect of Service Dimension		
1	Employee who instill confidence in users	72%	80%
2	Giving users individual attention	76%	85%
3	Employees who are consistently courteous	74%	82%
4	Readiness to respond to users' questions	79%	84%
5	Employees who have the knowledge to answer user questions	77%	86%
6	Employees who deal with users in a caring fashion	75%	83%
7	Employees who understand the needs of their users	74%	83%
8	Willingness to help users	80%	85%
9	Dependability in handling users' service problems	74%	81%
	Library as Place Dimension		
10	Library space that inspires study and learning	78%	87%
11	Quiet space for individual activities	76%	87%
12	A comfortable and inviting location	80%	83%
13	A gateway for study, learning, or research	77%	83%
14	Community space for group learning and group study	73%	80%
	Access to Information Control Dimension		
15	How often do you use resources on library premises?	77%	79%
16	Making electronic resources accessible from my home or campus	I did not include these questions in the month of January, 2018	82%
17	The printed library materials I need for my work		82%
18	The electronic information resources I need for my work		83%
19	Easy-to-use access tools that allow me to find things on my own		83%
20	Making information easily accessible for independent use		82%

21	A Library Homepage enabling me to locate information on my own		77%
22	A modern equipment that lets me easily access needed information		80%
	TOTAL USER SATISFACTION (Average)	**76%**	**83%**

From the above table, with reference to Q, No.1"Employee who instill confidence in users", 72% were satisfied in the month of January, 2018 and there is a tremendous improvement by 80% in the month of October, 2018.

With regard to the Q.No.2 "Giving users' individual attention" and Q.No.11 "Quiet space for individual activities", the respondents were shows as 76% were satisfied on these items and 85% and 87% were satisfied with our services respectively.

With respective to the Q.Nos.3. "Employees who are consistently courteous", 7. "Employees who understands the needs of their users" and 9. "Dependability in handling users' problems", it is observed that, 74% were satisfied on all these items and 82%, 83% and 81% were satisfied with our services.

From the above table on Q.No.4, "Readiness to respond to users' questions" it shows that, 70% were satisfied in the month of January, 2018 and compare with October, 2018 is 84%. It shows that, library staff is able to respond to their queries.

It is observed on Q.No.5 "Employees who have the knowledge to answer user questions" and Q.No.13 "A gateway for study, learning, or research", it shows that 77% were satisfied on these items in January, 2018 and compare with November, 2018 is 86% and 83% respectively.

With reference to Q.No.6 "Employees who deal with users in a caring fashion", it shows that 75% and 83% were satisfied on these items in January, 2018 and November, 2018 respectively.

With respect to Q.No.8 "Willingness to help users" and Q.No.12 "A comfortable and inviting location", 80% users express their staff will help them and Library is an inviting premise by 80% on these two items and 85% and 83% respectively in November, 2018.

With regard to Q.No.10 "Library space that inspires study and learning", the users were felt that, 78% were satisfied with the library space in January, 2018 and 87% were expressed that they were satisfied with the Library space will inspires for the study.

As regards to the Q.No.14 "Community space for group learning and group study" 73% and 80% users were Community space for group learning and group study in January, 2018 and November, 2018 respectively. It means, Library space is encouraging the users in learning and group study activities for their research and assignments.

With reference to the Q.No.15 "How often do you use resources on library premises? On Access to Information Dimension, it is observed that, 77% and 80% of the users were access to the resources on library premises in the months of January 2018 and November 2018 respectively.

With reference to the "Access to Information Dimension", Q.No.16 "Making electronic resources accessible from my home or campus, Q.No.17 "The printed library materials I need for my work" and Q.no.18 "Making information easily accessible for independent use", it shows that 82% of the respondents were satisfied on each item in the month of November, 2018.

From the above mentioned table, it is observed on Q.No.18 "The electronic information resources I need for my work" and Q.No.19 "Easy-to-use access tools that allow me to find things on my own", 83% of the users were able to access the information on their own either from home or campus.

Similarly, the above table shows on Q.No.21 "A Library homepage enabling me to locate information on my own", 77% were felt that, they can able to find whatever information required through Library Homepage. Still we will strive to improve the performance to reach more than 80% in the next LibQUAL^{+TM} survey.

With reference to Q.No.22 "modern equipment that lets me easily access needed information 80% of the users felt that, modern equipment's are helpful to access the needed information.

Discussions and conclusion

Satisfaction of academic library users and their subsequent utilization of library resources are important for quality teaching, research and learning. Many libraries adopt a concept of service quality to better serve the user. Service quality; a term commonly defined in business and marketing from the customer perspective, has recently been a concern within library and information services sector[8]. This is because the extent to which the library succeeds is dependent on the assessment made by the user as a judge of quality[9]. Aware of the need to create a culture of continuous improvement, many academic libraries use LibQUAL+TM as a primary tool for fostering the culture of assessment and improvement[10].

Ruth M. Swan, (2004) in Florida A & M University Libraries conducted LibQUAL^{+TM} survey. They measured on three dimensions of Library service: Effect of Service, Access to information Control and Library as Place. The total Respondents completed the LibQUAL^{+TM} survey around 777 users. Respondents have very high expectations for library service quality. Mean values of minimal service quality for the group is 6.67 on a scale of 1-9. The desired mean is a mere 7.83, not far from the minimal. The perceived mean is 6.10, representing an overall service gap of 0.47. Respondents indicate that, they are satisfied with the willingness of staff to provide help, as needed, the functionality of the library web page, and the provision of a comfortable study environment. They also seek more funds for development of staff and improve customer relations and implement them in future period[7].

The current study analysis shows that, overall 76% of the users were satisfied in the month of January, 2018 and compare with November, 2018 shows that, 83% of the students were satisfied with our Library Services on each individual item. Which helped us to identify the issues requiring some extensive reorganization, but also it has provided us with a tool to measure how successful we are instituting changes to address to the user's community. Out involvement in this program has communicated to our students, our commitment to involving them in our process of continuous service improvement.

Limitations

The study is confined to the students of Texila American University. Therefore, the results will be generalized only to this University. In this survey, the Online Questionnaire was served to the user community through LMS portal. Hence, the sample is not absolutely representation. Besides the time, the mindset of the students of the library might also have affected the data collection and data processing,

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