

Enhancing library services through student feedback: a case study

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The role of academic libraries is to support teaching, learning, and research of the parent institute and mainly focus on user services. User feedback is important in the scenario to understand the requirements of library patrons and improve its services accordingly. It is vital to develop a continuous responding mechanism for user feedback to better serve the patrons. This study aims to develop a robust mechanism to get students' feedback and improve library services of University of Colombo to enhance the quality. A user survey was conducted to get the undergraduates' feedback and the population comprises 12,000 registered library users from faculties: Arts, Management & Finance, Law and Education. Sample size (373) was calculated based on the Krejcie and Morgan table. Data were collected using Google Form-based questionnaires during the period from March to July 2023. Data were analyzed using descriptive statistics and thematic analysis. 365 (97.85%) students responded to the questionnaire and the majority were from the Faculty of Arts (63.3%) studying in the Level-I. According to the results, 73% of students received services for reading material requests. Also, they are satisfied with the support / services given by the staff of the library in different sections. The majority of the students were satisfied with e-resources provided by the library: e-journals and e-databases 78% (n=285); E- books 42% (n=153); and library website resources 57% (n=208). According to the feedback obtained for overall user experience on the library, only 68% (n=248) were satisfied. Inadequate number of copies of some books, access restrictions to borrow books from some specific sections, insufficient books in Tamil, and lack of updated collection were identified as drawbacks of the library's physical collection and services. The respondents suggested adding more e-books and e-journals to the collection. Furthermore, the respondents expected a user-friendly, content-rich website, and they have requested to conduct more training sessions, especially on e-resources and alert services for new additions. The importance of having a plagiarism-detecting service through the library was also identified. However, undergraduates appreciated the support given by the library staff. The findings of the present study led the library to provide up-to-date scholarly communications for the undergraduates through social networking sites and monthly meetings with student representatives which enable two-way communication to enhance the quality of library services. This feedback mechanism should be continued, and the library management should address the user requirements to enhance the quality of the library services.

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