

Millennials' expectations of service quality from academic libraries

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Today academic libraries are used by millennials who are socially and culturally more diverse than previous generations, Internet savvy, always connected to social media and leaning to multitasking. The purpose of this study was to explore the millennials' expectations of service quality of academic libraries and specific objectives were set; to assess millennials' expectations of service quality, to identify the most important service quality attributes and to identify millennials' anticipation of managing the limited library allocation. A user survey was conducted among the first year students of the Faculty of Science in February 2018. 250 questionnaires were distributed among the students and the response rate was 100%. All the students were aged between 20 to 22 years with birth years ranging from 1995 to 1997. The survey questionnaire was designed taking inputs from SERVQUAL and LibQUAL models and included questions on user expectations of the service quality (physical facilities, library resource, library services and staff), the most important service quality attributes and user anticipation of spending of library allocation. In addition, open questions were included on the additional expectations of library service quality. Students rated their expectations in a five point Likert scale ranging from strongly disagree (lowest) to strongly agree (highest). All the service quality attributes were selected by millennials with more than 80% expectation level except three attributes "electronic security system in the library" (41%), "coffee shop in the library" (45%) and "networking with other libraries for interlibrary lending" (68%). "Internet connectivity and Wi-Fi facilities in the library" (80%) was ranked number one among the three most important attributes for each student followed by "comprehensive printed resources" (78.2%) , "convenient library opening hours"(76.9%), "self-study areas" (76.5%), "group study areas" (76.3%) and "subscription to e-journals and e-books" (75.2%). When considering the millennials' anticipation of limited library allocation, 87% of the students selected the library collection development as the most important factor over the improvement of physical facilities (13%). Further 52% of students selected the development of the printed collection over the electronic collection (48%) and 84% of the students selected library learning space expansion over the improvement of library equipment (14%). Library administration needs to discuss these specific needs of "always connected" generation and address them very carefully to build up a strong relationship between the millennials and the academic library.

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