

The relationship between university library usage and educational performance in university of Kelaniya

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Abstract

University libraries all over the world provide an excellent service for their users. Therefore it's important to find out the relationship between the library usage and educational performance. Several studies have claimed that usage of library affects educational performance in a positive way. A questionnaire based survey was conducted to measure the relationship between university library usage and educational performance. Hence this study was mainly undertaken to explore the impact of library usage on undergraduate's GPA. The questionnaires were distributed among 160 undergraduates using cluster sampling method. Responses received from the survey were turned into data that could be analyzed. The result of the study reveals that there is a positive relationship between university library usage and educational performance.

Key words: User survey, Undergraduates, Library usage, university library

Introduction

University libraries are the treasure houses of knowledge. Many have been described them as the "heart" of the learning community. A well-stocked university library is an asset to the undergraduates. It helps the spread of knowledge. Therefore it's no doubt that university library play an important role in the education of undergraduates.

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It is a great tragedy for all most all university librarians that their libraries become a “Deserted Library” due to the decline in the usage of their libraries (Carlson, 2001). A decline in use of the physical university library is seen as an inevitable result of changes in the information landscape and in students, particularly undergraduates’ information-seeking habits (Applegate, 2007). Further decline in the use of physical collections and services make it difficult to justify additional space, staffing and other traditional resources (Martell, 2008). According to these findings the decline in the use of library will definitely affect the knowledge background of the students.

There are several reasons for the decline of the library use. Due to the development of technology, students prefer to search information via internet and also a variety of electronic resources have widened the potential resource base for all students. These developments have reduced face-to-face teaching in the library and the need to visit the library. Further less motivation by traditional lecture based learning session is another reason. Sometimes students have been provided with handful of notes and sometimes students are encouraged to use a particular text for a subject. This reduces the needs for students for further on particular subject.

Therefore its worth to explore whether it directly interferes undergraduate’s academic performances. In our study we demonstrate the relationship between library usage and educational performance of undergraduates in University of Kelaniya.

Objectives of the study

The primary objective of the study;

- To examine the relationship between university library usage and undergraduate’s GPA

The secondary objectives of the study;

- find purposes of visit to the library

- Identify the percentage of students' involvement to the library is pleasurable.
- Find who uses the library the most (Special/General undergraduates)
- Identify how undergraduates use library facilities.

Methodology

The research was conducted among a sample of 160 students in Social Sciences, Humanities, Commerce and Science faculties. In order to meet the objectives of the study, survey methodology was used. The main research instrument was a validated questionnaire. All data collection procedures were designed to ensure the anonymity. To collect data cluster sampling method was used. The primary and secondary data were collected for the study. Primary data were collected through questionnaires and secondary data were collected from books, journals, and magazines, research reports etc.

Analysis of data

The relationship between University library usage and undergraduate's GPA

Correlation analysis has been carried out to identify the relationship between library usage and undergraduate's GPA. To calculate the correlation it was used the hours that students stayed in the library per week and their GPA value. The result is presented in table 1.

Table 1: Correlation between library usage and GPA

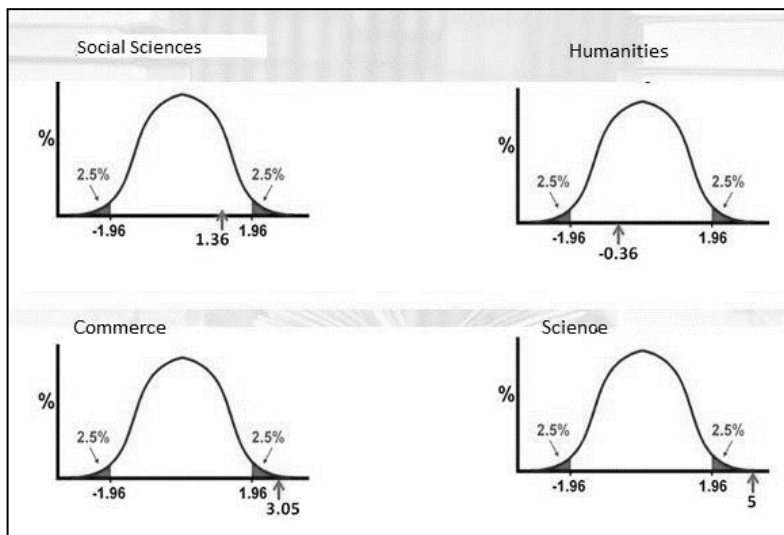
Faculty	Correlation
Social Sciences	0.23
Humanities	-0.124
Commerce	0.13
Science	0.34

Source: Sample Survey, 2015

According to the results of the Pearson's correlation shown in the Table 1, the correlation value between the faculty of Humanities and the GPA was -0.124 . It means that library usage was negatively associated with the undergraduate's performance. Further, other faculties such as Social Sciences, Commerce and Science are positively associated with the undergraduate's performance.

Using above variables we could analyze the normal distribution for the faculties. As a common practice, our null hypothesis is that the two variables have a zero correlation in the population ($H_0: P=0$), where P represents the correlation coefficient of the population. The alternative hypothesis is that the two variables are related ($H_A: P \neq 0$). We set the significance criterion (α) as 0.05, which is a widely used standard in behavioral sciences.

Figure 1- Normal distribution of GPA



Source: Sample survey data (2015)

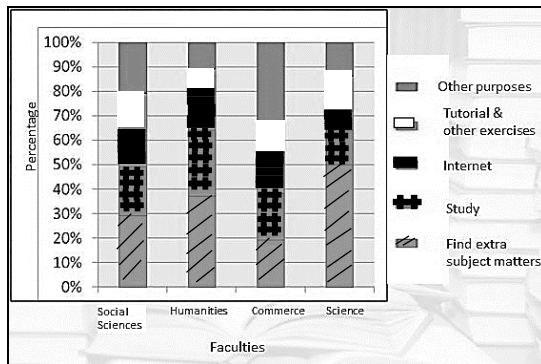
The tabular value is 1.96. Calculated values are 1.36 (Social Sciences), -0.36 (Humanities), 3.05 (Commerce) and 5 (Science). According to these calculations, only Z values of commerce and science faculties were projected to the rejection area. Therefore we

can identify positive relationship between library usage and educational performance in Commerce and Science undergraduates.

Students’ purposes of visit to the library

It was wanted to find out whether the undergraduates use library only for their studies. Figure 2 shows the purpose of visit to the library. According to that 29% of social sciences undergraduates use library to find out extra subject matters. Humanities undergraduates also use library to find out extra subject matters widely. Their percentage to complete tutorials and other exercises is very low. For the Commerce undergraduates, majority of students (33%) use library for other purposes. The lowest purpose used by them is to complete tutorials and other exercises. Apart from that 50% of Science undergraduates use library to find out extra subject matters. They have given the lowest significance in the purpose of browsing internet.

Figure 2- Purposes of visit to the library as faculties



Source: Sample survey, 2015

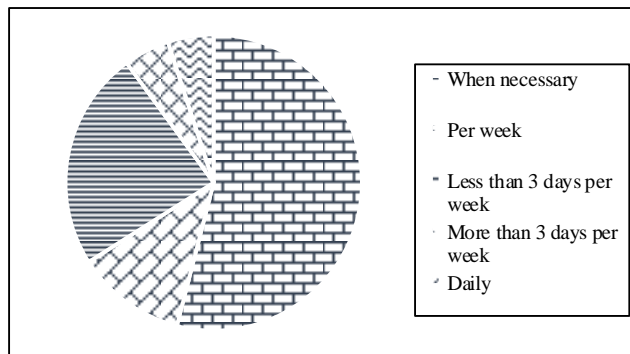
Visit to the library

Another secondary objective of the study is to find out how frequently undergraduates visited the library. Figure 3 indicates the frequency of library visit by undergraduates.

Figure 3 shows that majority of the respondents (54%) visited the library when necessary. It is indicated by 195.5⁰ in the following

graph. Undergraduates who visit daily and more than 3 days per week are equal (5.06%). The percentage of undergraduates who visit less than 3 days per week is represented by 86.60⁰ in the graph.

Figure 3- Students' visit to the library

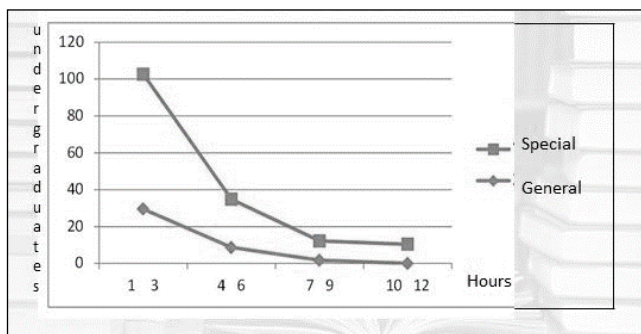


Source: Sample survey, 2015

Library usage and degree type

Basically there are 2 categories of undergraduates as special and general. Among them we examined who use the library most. According to the analysis, figure 4 represents a clear answer for that. Special undergraduates in all four faculties use library most. Most special and general undergraduates stay only 1-3 hours at the library.

Figure 4: Library usage among special and general undergraduates



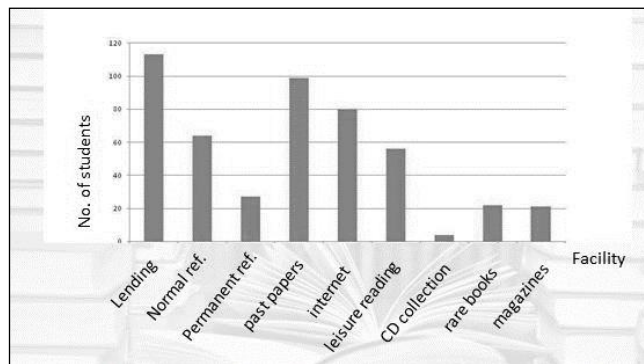
Source: Sample Survey, 2015

Getting information

The respondents were asked to mark about services and facilities they use for getting information for their learning and research activities.

Figure 5 shows that borrowing facility was the most used service and facility by the undergraduates. Nearly 100 respondents refer to the past paper collection. More than half respondents use internet facility. Surprisingly only 5 respondents use the CD collection.

Figure 5- Getting information using library facilities



Source: Sample survey, 2015

Findings of the study

Except commerce and science faculty undergraduates there is no large strength of positive correlation between library usage and educational performances.

Eventhough undergraduates use library mainly for co-curricular activities they do not spend much time in it.

There's more propensity to use library among special undergraduates.

Lending section and past papers facility are more popular among the undergraduates.

Conclusion

Findings of the study show that there is a positive relationship between library usage and educational performances. It can be suggested that other universities should also study the relationship between these two variables. Therefore we can get an idea about the Sri Lankan university libraries and student performance. Behalf of that we suggest to find the relationship between student usage of electronic resources and their GPAs in the near future.

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