

## **Use and Non Use of Public Library Services in the Digital Age: a Study of Kurukshetra District Library (Haryana)**

Poonam Bhardwaj\* and Dharmesh Kumar\*\*

\*M.Phil. Research Scholar, Deptt. of Lib. & Inf. Sc., Kurukshetra University

\*\*Ph.D. Research Scholar, Deptt. of Lib. & Inf. Sc., Kurukshetra University

### **ABSTRACT**

The present study investigates the use and non use of public library services in the digital age with special reference to Kurukshetra district library. A survey method was used to collect the primary data. It was found that 93.44% were male respondents. It was observed that most of the respondents 42.62% were using the library less than one hour. A majority of respondents were using the library for reading newspapers/magazines purpose and most of the respondents were facing problem such as lack of time to use the library services.

**Keywords:** Public Library; Kurukshetra District Library; Digital age

### **0 INTRODUCTION**

Public libraries exist in most places in the world and are often considered an essential part of having an educated and literate population. Public Libraries provide free services such as preschool story times to encourage early literacy. Public libraries are typically lending libraries, allowing users to take books and other materials off the premises temporarily; they also have non-circulating reference collections. Public libraries primarily focus on popular materials such as popular fiction and movies, as well as educational and nonfiction materials of interest to the general public; computer and internet access are also often offered.

### **1 PUBLIC LIBRARY**

A public library is an organization established, supported and funded by the community, either through local, regional or national government or through some other form of community organization. It provides access to knowledge, information and works of the imagination through a range of resources and services and is equally available to all members of the community regardless of race, nationality, age, gender, religion, language, disability, economic and employment status and educational attainment (Philip Gill, 2001). Different people define information public library in different terms. According to IFLA (1994) "The public library, the local gateway to knowledge, provides a basic condition for lifelong learning, independent decision-making and cultural development of the individual and social groups". Johan (2001) defines "A public library is a library which is accessible by the public and is generally funded from public sources and may be operated by civil servants" .

## **2 History of Public library**

The establishment of the public library at Calcutta in 1835 was the most significant. This was the library which later developed into the National Library of India. Almost simultaneous, subscription libraries were started in many Indian cities. These were, of course, not public libraries in the true sense of the term, and did not provide free books for all. Founded in imitation of their western counterparts, the use of these libraries was confined to small, affluent portion of society (Jagdish, 1979)

## **3 Review of Related literature**

The public library services are an area of active interest among library/ information professional worldwide. Bhatt (2010) conducted a study on “The impact of public library use on reading, television, and academic outcomes.” He found that library use increases the amount of time an individual spends reading by approximately 27 min on an average day. Moreover, it increases the amount of time parents spend reading to/with young children by 14 min. This increase in reading was more than offset by a 59 min decrease in time spent watching television, and there is no significant change in time spent on other activities. For children in school, library use positively impacts homework completion rates. Sin & Kim (2008) conducted a study on “Use and non-use of public libraries in the information age: A logistic regression analysis of household characteristics and library services variables.” This study examined the characteristics of users and non-users of the public libraries using socio-demographic data from the Current Population Survey, a nationally representative survey of over 50,000 households conducted during October 13---19, 2002, and library services data from the Public Libraries Survey 2002. The study found 34 variables to be significant. These variables including factors that have not often been studied, such as distance from the library, age/school attendance status, use of other types of library, and public library expenditure per state capita. Japzon (2005) conducted a study on “A Neighborhood analysis of public library use in New York city.” The use of 200 public libraries in New York City was analyzed according to their neighborhood characteristics. In addition to demographic, economic, and cultural factors traditionally considered, the social and spatial interactions within a neighborhood were related to public library use. Correlation and regression analyses were implemented for all the libraries. The research found that traditional factors are not enough to explain public library use, especially in a cosmopolitan area such as New York City. Social connections and racial diversity and integration stimulate public library use. Collins and Chandler (1997) conducted a study on “Use of Public Library Services by Households in the United States: 1996.” In 44 percent of households in the United States, one or more members used public library services in the month prior to the NHES: 96 interview, and 65 percent of households had members who had used public library services in the past year. Households with children under age 18 were more likely than those without children to use library services in most of the ways and for most of the purposes asked about in this survey. Some of the areas of additional research that maybe fruitful include an analysis of the relationship between household use of public library services.

#### **4 Significance of the Study**

The public library, therefore, is the most widely used source of information available to literate societies. The librarian should be aware of what kind of information is being sought, and how it can be obtained. Due to the rapidly escalating cost of purchasing and archiving printed scholarly journals and electronic media, the public libraries has the duty to provide and maintain efficient services.

#### **5 Statement of the Problem**

Today, information technology has developed rapidly and has a huge impact on access to information. Though librarians and information specialists do possess knowledge about these issues, there is still much to learn in this area. During the time of frequent change in technology, it is becoming increasingly important to keep pace with the constant fluctuation in user information needs. The present study examines the prevailing situation the different public libraries of different places with reference to money, man power, material resources and information services. The major goal of this research is to acquire insights relative into how information age has changed the public libraries.

#### **6 Scope**

The scope of the study has been restricted to the public library services with special reference to district library situated at Kurukshetra.

#### **7 Objectives**

The objectives of the present study are to examine the above stated problem on the basis of survey of the user's public library at Kurukshetra (Haryana). The objectives of the present study are as under:

- To find out how to provide opportunity, encouragement and assistance for public library users;
- To find out how extensively the digital information sources and services are used
- To explore the use of information technology;
- To find out the availability of different digital information sources used by the library users and
- To find out the common problems faced by the Library users to access the digital information sources.

#### **8 Methodology**

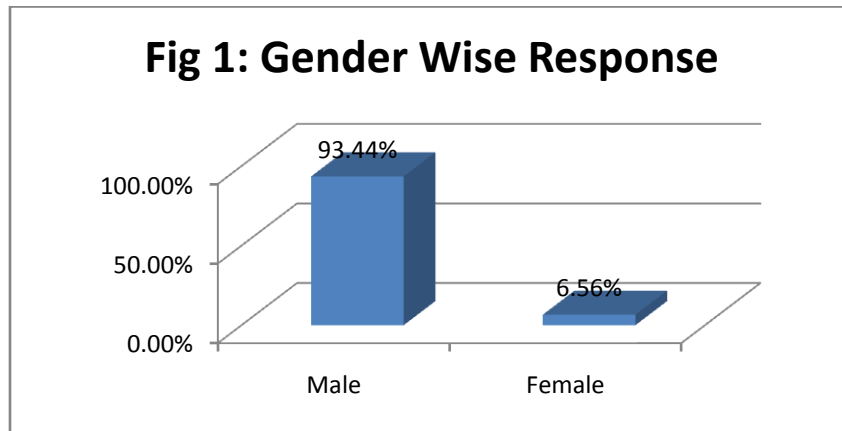
A survey method was used to collect the primary data. A total of 150 questionnaires were distributed randomly among the public library users. Out of 150, 122 filled in questionnaires were returned by the respondents with 81.33% response rate.

**9 Data analysis**

The collected data were analyzed to understand the use and non use of library services in the digital mode and the extent to which these needs have been fulfilled by the public library system and its services and presents in the form of tables and figures.

**Table: 1  
 Gender Wise Response**

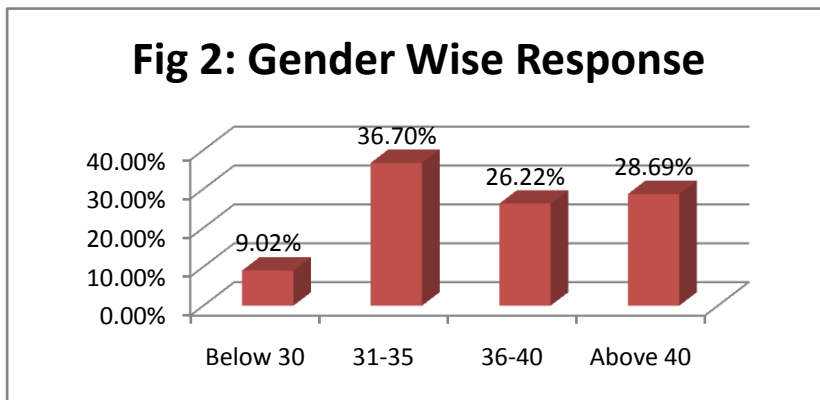
<b>Gender</b>	<b>Response</b>	<b>Percentages</b>
Male	114	93.44%
Female	8	6.56%
Total	122	100%



**Table1 and fig no. 1** shows the percentage of male and female who have utilized the library services. It was found that 114(93.44%) were male respondents followed by the female with the very small response 8(6.56%).

**Table: 2**  
**Gender Wise Response**

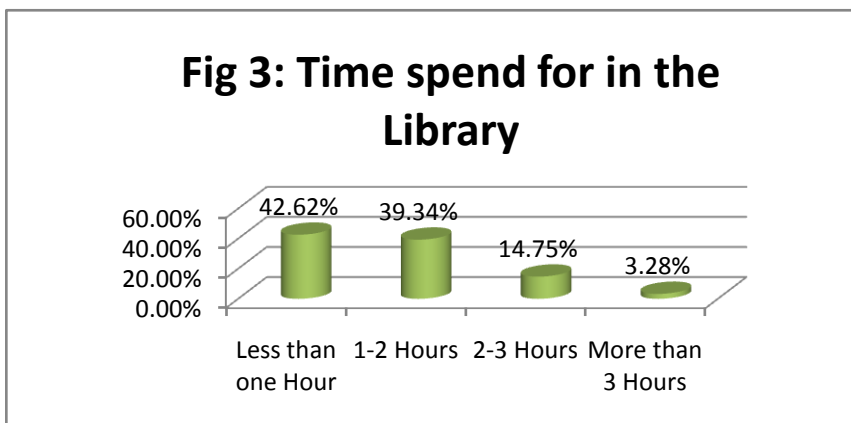
Age Wise Response	Response	Percentages
Below 30	11	9.02%
31-35	44	36.7%
36-40	32	26.22%
Above 40	35	28.69%



It was observed from **Table 2 and fig no 2** that most of the respondents 35(28.69%) were above 40 years day and 32(26.22%) of the respondents were 36-40 years. Only 11(9.02%) of the respondents were below 30 years respectively.

**Table: 3**  
**Time spent in the Library**

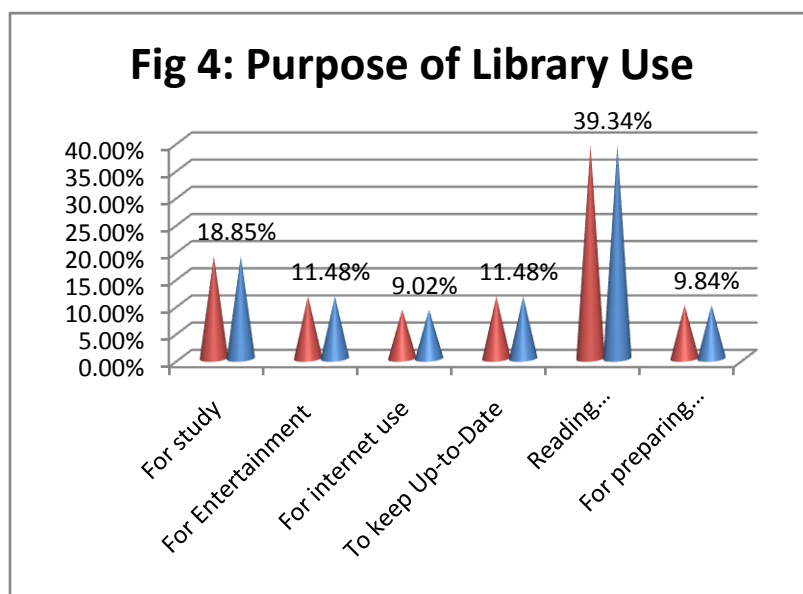
Frequency	Total Response	Percentages
Less than one Hour	52	42.62%
1-2 Hours	48	39.34%
2-3 Hours	18	14.75%
More than 3 Hours	4	3.28%



The respondents were asked how often they spend time in the library for the library use in a day. It was observed from the table and fig that most of the respondents 52(42.62%) were using the library less than one hour followed by 1-2 hours with the response 48(39.34%). On the other hand, 18(14.75%) 2-3 hours and only 4(3.28%) of the respondents were using the library more than 3 hours.

**Table: 4**  
**Purpose of Library Use**

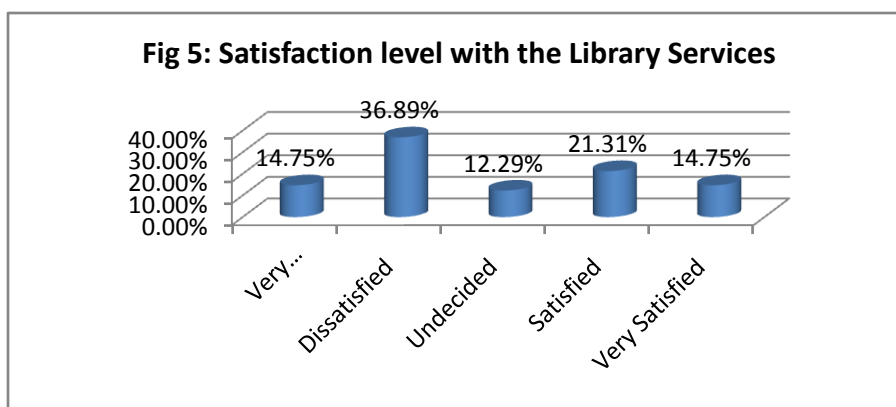
Purpose of using E-resources	Total Response	Percentages
For study	23	18.85%
For Entertainment	14	11.48%
For internet use	11	9.02%
To keep Up-to-Date	14	11.48%
Reading newspapers/magazines	48	39.34%
For preparing comparative exams	12	9.84%



**Table 4 and fig 4** shows that a majority of respondents 48(39.34%) were using the library for reading newspapers/magazines purpose and 23(18.85%) were using for research, 60(53%) were using the library for study. Whereas more than 10% for entertainment and less than 10% for internet use and preparing comparative exams purpose were using the library by the respondents.

**Table: 5**  
**Use of Digital Services for Information**

Use of Digital Services	Total Response	Percentages
E-mails	46	37.70%
Blog	14	11.48%
E-Journals	9	7.38%
E-Books	16	13.11%
E-Databases	29	23.77%
E-newspapers	8	6.56%



**Table 5 and fig 5** identified the use of digital services by the respondents. A majority of the respondents 46(37.70%) use E-mails, 29(23.77%) e-databases, 16(13.11%) e-books, 14(11.48%) blogs, 9(7.38%) e-journals and 8(6.56%) e-newspapers were use library digital services.

**Table: 6**  
**Satisfaction level with the Library Services**

Satisfaction about the Library Services	Total Response	Percentages
Very Dissatisfied	18	14.75%
Dissatisfied	45	36.89%
Undecided	15	12.29%
Satisfied	26	21.31%
Very Satisfied	18	14.75%

**Table 6 and fig 6** shows the satisfaction level of library services by the respondents. Mostly 45(36.89%) of the respondents were dissatisfied with the library services followed by

26(21.31%) with satisfied. The same response i.e. 18(14.75%) of the respondents were very dissatisfied and very satisfied with the library services respectively.

**Table: 7**  
**Problems faced while library use**

<b>Problem Faced</b>	<b>Response</b>	<b>Percentages</b>
Reading materials is not available	22	18.03%
Reading materials is old	10	8.20%
Poor resolution	15	12.29%
lack of skill in loading information	11	9.02%
Frequent power cuts	13	10.66%
Lack of time	51	41.80%

The above table and figure indicates the problem faced while the using the library services. A majority of the respondents 51(41.80%) respondents faced problem as lack of time. Reading materials is not available problem faced by the respondents with 22(18.03%). Less than 10% of the respondents were faced as reading materials and lack of skill in loading information while the use the library services.

**10 Findings and Conclusion**

In this present study it is concluded that more percentage of males were using the library to fulfill their required information as compared to females users. It was observed that most of the respondents were above 40 years. A majority of the respondents were use E-mails; e-databases etc. library digital services. The main problem faced while the using the library services was lack of time. Besides this, the problem of non-availability of reading materials was also cited as significant by the respondents. The findings of this study suggest that public libraries should play a more active role in serving the public and to survive in today’s competitive world.

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