An Assessment of User Satisfaction in Academic Libraries: a case study of the Fiji National University Library

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Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to examine the degree of user satisfaction regarding the Fiji National University library services through library user surveys. The paper elaborates how these user surveys play a significant role in library service quality enhancement for students and academic to conduct their research and advance their knowledge. The FNU Library is ISO 9001:2008 certified and is the only library in the South Pacific holding ISO certification which therefore plays a vital role in carrying out the survey. The survey was carried out from 3rd September to 1st October 2015 with a vision to obtain valuable feedback from the users and to provide high quality and responsive one-stop service at all 16 FNU libraries. The paper describes these surveys, including the end results and the improvements to be adopted. Responses gathered from user surveys provide literally important information for improving library services. Through these user surveys, the library received a large amount of data to be analyzed. A summary of user surveys, including ways of doing things, and putting into use as well as data analysis, might offer reference and practical experience for the FNU libraries. User survey plays an important role in the library's service quality improvement. The paper provides a valuable summary and practical knowledge of the topic.

Introduction

The Fiji National University (FNU) bestows prodigious importance to gathering data on a steady basis to enlighten its service improvements. The acumen spawned is used internally in the Library to shape how it moves forward strategically. In the current higher education climate where financial constraints, technology, student population and research are changing quickly, it is essential that Library continues this practice. Along with these drivers, it is also imperative for the Library to measure its performance longitudinally to certify it endures to advance and progress (Jayasundara, Ngulube, and Minishi-Majanja, 2010). Identifying the problems, weakness, strength and importance in these services will help the University management to set a direction for future development and provide better services for the University community. The Fiji National University Library system serves the informational needs of students, staff, researchers, visitors, alumni and the general public. The FNU Library is the first ISO 9001:2008 certified library in the South

Pacific. The University has a total of 16 libraries located in FNU Campuses and Centers throughout Fiji. Scholarly journals and other serial publications continue to be converted from print to electronic format. Nearly all of FNU library's journal and database subscriptions are now available online. The library currently comprises of more than 64,340 e-journal titles. Despite the financial and technical limitations of converting the print to e-book, the library now provides access to almost 180,767 e-books. In general, use of the library's major packages of electronic journals has increased in the last three years

It is likely for human beings to derive out the outlay, approach, or situation of things, events and distinctive people around them (Jayasundara, 2009). Librarians likewise too do this practice. They have the need to occasionally measure the complacent things/valuable materials and services of their library as a practice of making sure of that they are meeting the set goals of the library. In providing useful resources and services to its user community, a process of figuring out the quality of those resources is needed to understand the strengths and weaknesses of entire services (Pinto, Fernández-Marcial, Gómez-Camarero, 2010; Somaratna, Peiris, and Jayasundara, 2010). There are different ways of figuring out the quality of information services, including user studies that are literally effective in assessing the quality of libraries, the things they occupy and its information services. As a result, libraries have are often challenged of continuously providing valid and valuable reasoning for their work's that are carried out to meet the challenges and align themselves with the parent organizations' goals.

Evaluation is carried out to defend and measure benefits of library resources and services to users' reference use for research and related to school and learning purposes (Jayasundara, 2004). Questions about how appropriately all library resources and services meet users' needs are answered during library survey. Lancaster, Ezeala and Yusuff (2011) stated that the way of figuring out the status of user satisfaction and happiness from meeting a need or reaching a goal can be checked at three feasible levels. They are effectiveness evaluation, cost-effectiveness evaluation and cost-benefit evaluation. User happiness is defined as the emotive reaction to a particular transaction or service meeting and the happiness may or may not be directly related to the performance of the library on particular occasion (Pinto, Fernández-Marcial, Gómez-Camarero, 2010; Jayasundara, Ngulube, and Minishi-Majanja, 2010). Customers can receive an answer to a question but be dissatisfied because of a disturbing or angry confrontation. Contrariwise, although the question might remain unanswered, another patron might feel lucrative because the meeting was satisfying, and the helper was interested and polite (Somarathne, Peiris & Jayasundara 2010). This helps to shepherd how the library is meeting its users' needs and also what decision to take and those to be reviewed. This is the reason why library survey has been referred to by some scholars as a management activity (Jayasundara, 2009).

The scholarly library has been described as the "heart" of the learning community, providing a place for students and teachers/professors to do their research and advance their knowledge (Mashroofa and Jayasundara, 2010). Competitive pressures from divergent information providers; generally available information resources; rising costs of

books, serials and electronic resources; and transpiring technologies and services providing information to prospective library users raise questions about the role of scholarly libraries in present times. There has been contemplation about the need to better understand and define the needs and expectations of library users to provide the appropriate kind and levels of service to provide gratification and service quality (Kaur, Verma, 2006; Shoeb, 2011; Pinto, Fernández-Marcial, Gómez-Camarero, 2010).

A scholarly Library is a part of a University which delivers product personally to the customers. The key purpose of it is to support teaching, learning, research and other intellectual programs of its parent organization. In a manufacturing concern, the customer is isolated whereas in a service organization like a University library, service producer and customers approach face to face. Here the customer is not an outsider, but part of the scholarly community (Kaur, Verma, 2006; Shoeb, 2011).

Objectives

The objectives of the study are:
- To measure the level of user satisfaction of Library collections, resources, services, facilities, equipment and management.
- To measure the success of library in meeting users' needs
- To provide the means to measure and monitor the performance of FNU libraries.
- To use the data to prioritize the continuous improvement initiatives by the library.
- To identify the areas of improvements

Methodology

A Library User Satisfaction Survey was conducted from 3 September to 1 October, 2015. The survey sought information on users' views of the Library's collections, resources, equipment, facilities, services and management.

Administration

The FNU has 5 colleges and National Training and Productivity Centre with more than 300 programmes. The FNU Library comprises of a Central Library and 15 branch libraries. The target population for this study is community of users of the academic staff and students in all colleges.

Student Headcounts by College

Table 1 below depicts the total number of students at FNU in the 5 colleges and National Training and Productivity Centre for the year 2014 and 2015.

Table 1: Student headcounts by College

College	2015
National Training and Productivity Centre	12,024
Agriculture, Fisheries & Forestry	1,219
Engineering, Science & Technology	5,180
Business, Hospitality & Tourism Studies	5,331
Humanities & Education	2,788
Medicine, Nursing & Health Science	2,493
Total	**29,035**

(Source: Fiji National University Annual Report 2015)

Academic Staff

Table 2 below presents the total number of academic staff in 2014 and 2015 in the 5 colleges and National Training and Productivity Centre at FNU.

Table 2: Academic Staffs

College Academic Staff	2015
National Training and Productivity Centre	154
Agriculture, Fisheries & Forestry	48
Engineering, Science & Technology	231
Business, Hospitality & Tourism Studies	105
Humanities & Education	104
Medicine, Nursing & Health Science	192
Total	**865**

(Source: Fiji National University Annual Report 2015)

The administration of the survey was done through questionnaires which were distributed to library users by the help of the University library staff. Numbers of printed questionnaires distributed to each FNU library were as follows:

Table 3: Distribution List of Questionnaires

	Libraries	Number of Questionnaires Distributed
1	Nasinu	60
2	Koronivia	60
3	NTPC Narere	30
4	Nabua	30
5	FSM Tamavua	30
6	FSN Tamavua	30
7	Samabula	60
8	Pasifika	60
9	Raiwai	30
10	Maritime	30
11	Nasese	30
12	Nadi	60
13	Lautoka	60
14	NTPC Lautoka	30
15	Ba	30
16	Labasa	60

User studies, which have often been criticized for appearing to produce little in the way of useful results, are of great importance since they provide a substantial body of specific knowledge, facts and conclusions that are of great value for the development of new facilities.

A user study yields conclusions that can be used in improving the administrative process since they can be converted into indicators of successes and shortcomings in the planning and development of services.

User studies show the different channels employed by users in the information acquisition process and also the different types of information sources and the frequency with which they are used.

Another indication of the importance of user studies is the fact that they clearly reveal that the flow of information is not a simple process and that a whole range of factors help to determine the nature of the individual information collection process.

This study will help to improve the quality of the library services. The main objective of the user survey is to identify the usage rate of academic staff attached to the Faculty of Management. The other objectives are to identify the factors affecting to user satisfaction,
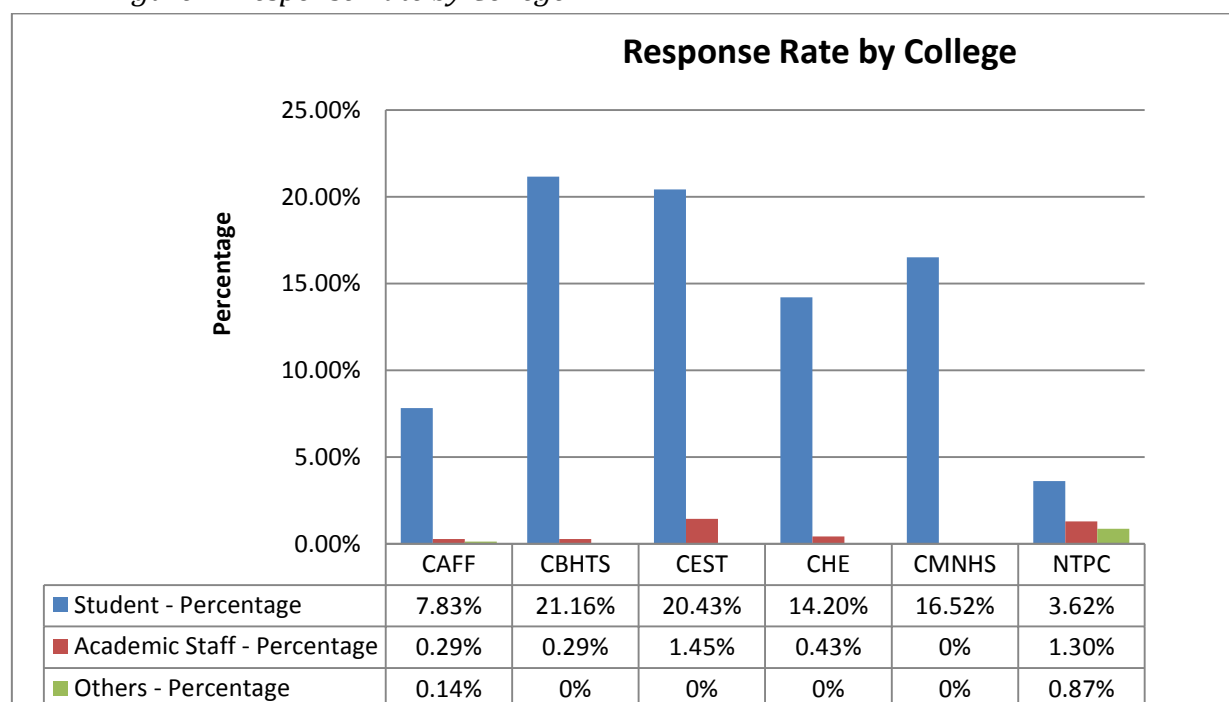
identify the user perceptions towards the factors which affect user satisfaction, analyze the relationship between usage rate and user perceptions, and analyze the effectiveness of marketing strategies of the library in relation to user satisfaction.

Findings and Analysis

The findings are presented as a percentage based on the number of respondents to each question. Upon the identification of library collections, resources, services, facilities, equipment and management needing improvement, actions or possible solutions are provided for consideration and for possible implementation by the Library to address the areas of concerns identified from the survey.

1. *Response rate by academic staff, students and others*

Figure 1: Response Rate by College

	CAFF	CBHTS	CEST	CHE	CMNHS	NTPC
■ Student - Percentage	7.83%	21.16%	20.43%	14.20%	16.52%	3.62%
■ Academic Staff - Percentage	0.29%	0.29%	1.45%	0.43%	0%	1.30%
■ Others - Percentage	0.14%	0%	0%	0%	0%	0.87%

There were 690 respondents to the survey; Figure 1 shows percentage of respondents by college. The most frequent uses of library services were students; comprising of 83.77%, while 3.77% of the respondents were academic staff and there were few respondents classified as others (1.01%).

2. *Frequency of Use by Campus*

Figure 2: Response Rate by College

Response Rate by College

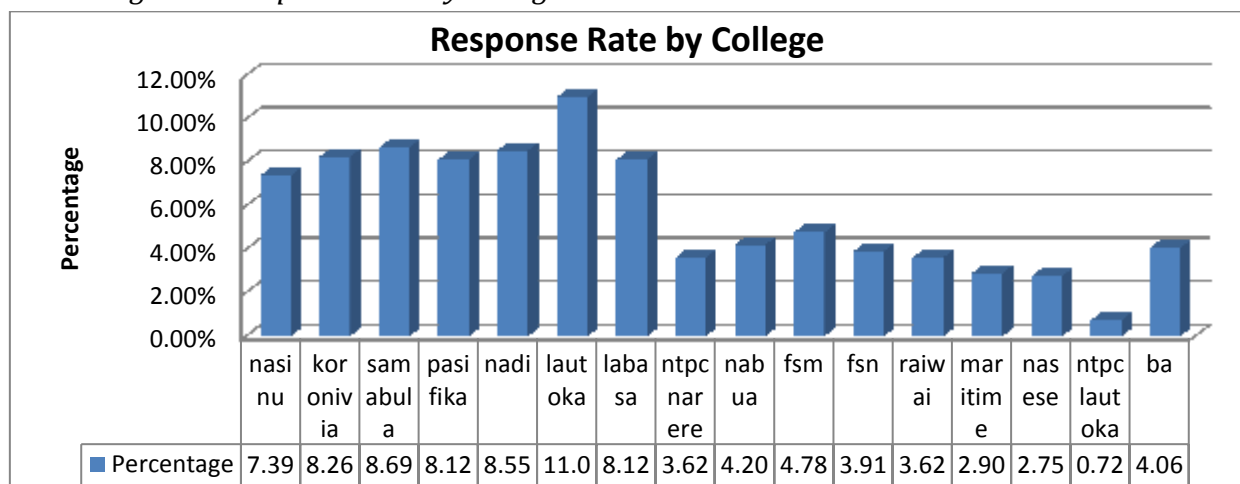| Percentage	nasinu	koronivia	samabula	pasifika	nadi	lautoka	labasa	ntpcnarere	nabua	fsm	fsn	raiwai	maritime	nasese	ntpclautoka	ba
Percentage	7.39	8.26	8.69	8.12	8.55	11.0	8.12	3.62	4.20	4.78	3.91	3.62	2.90	2.75	0.72	4.06

Figure 2 shows the response rate received from FNU campus, the highest response was received from Lautoka campus. Figure 2 also displays that Samabula, Nadi, Koronivia, Pasifika, Labasa and Nasinu were the most frequently visited libraries by users during the week of survey.

3. *Frequency of Use*

Table 4: Frequency of Use

Frequency of Use	How often do you visit the library?	Percentage
A few times per semester/ trimester/penster	33	4.78%
A few times per week	265	38.41%
Daily	381	55.22%
Never	0	0.00%
Once a month	11	1.59%
Grand Total	**690**	**100.0%**

Figure 3: Frequency of Use
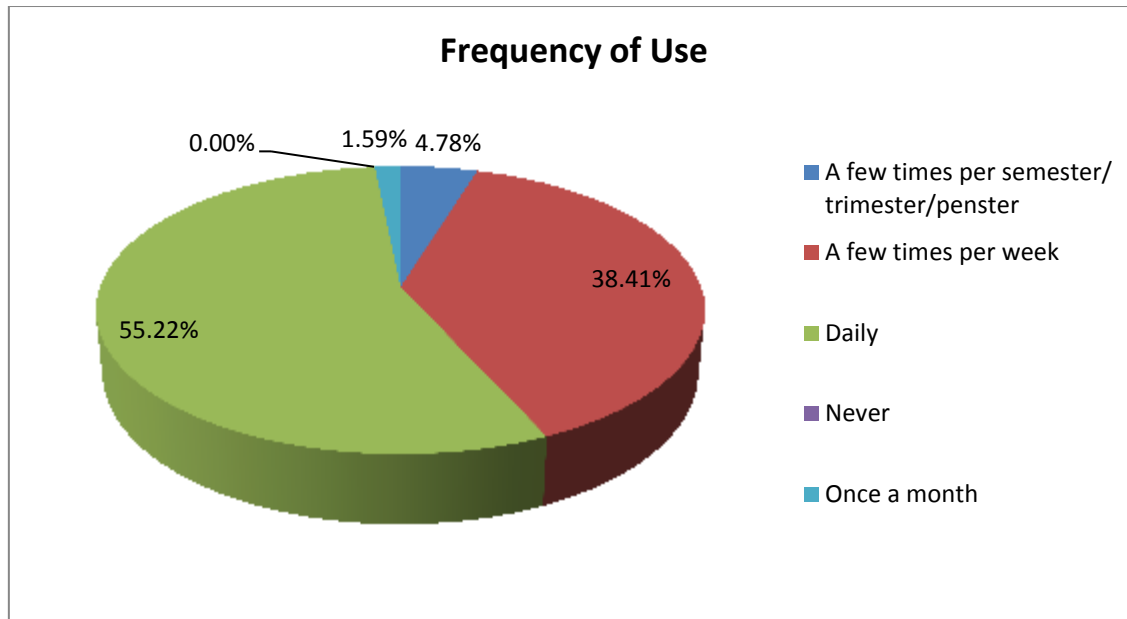
Out of 690 respondents, 55.22% stated that they visited the library daily, while 38.41% responded that they visited the library a few times per week. However, there were few users who stated that they visited the library once a month or never.

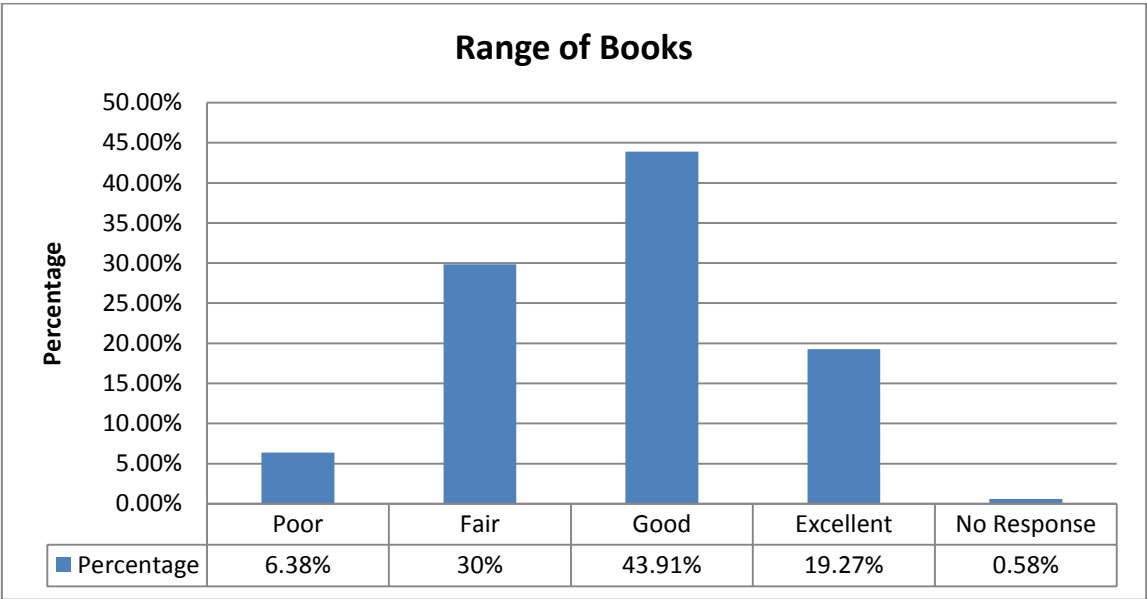## 4. *What do you usually use the library for?*

Library users are basically interested in improving research efficiency by exploring new materials and improving their research skills as majority of the respondents stated that they mostly used the library for study and research purposes.

Most of the users find library as a conductive environment to study either alone or in groups. Furthermost, number of respondents chose multiple options as what they mostly use the library for, the highest number of respondents stated that they use the library for studying, researching, using computers, printers, photocopiers, scanners and to check in and check out library materials.
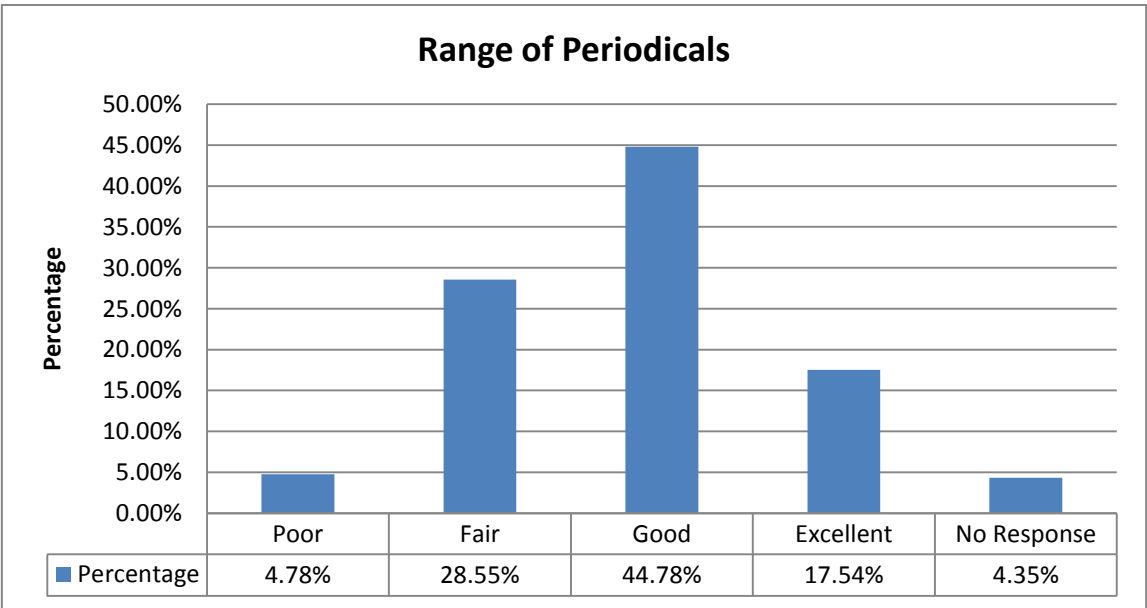
5. *How would you rate each of the following library services?*

Figure 4: Range of Books

Range of Books

| Percentage	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	No Response
Percentage	6.38%	30%	43.91%	19.27%	0.58%

Out of 690 respondents, 43.91% stated that range of books are good, 30% stated that it is fair, while 6.38% of the total respondents indicated that it was poor. Students specified that there are not enough copies of text books; moreover there is a need for all latest edition books to be available in the library.

Figure 5: Range of periodicals

Range of Periodicals

| Percentage	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	No Response
Percentage	4.78%	28.55%	44.78%	17.54%	4.35%

The highest percentage (44.78%) of the respondents indicated that the range of periodicals are good, 28.55% indicated that it is fair, while 17.54% indicated that it is excellent. 4.78% stated that it was poor, since they faced difficulties in locating latest (updated) periodicals.

Figure 6: Range of e- resources

Range of e-resources

|	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	No Response
Percentage	4.20%	28.11%	42.61%	17.54%	7.54%
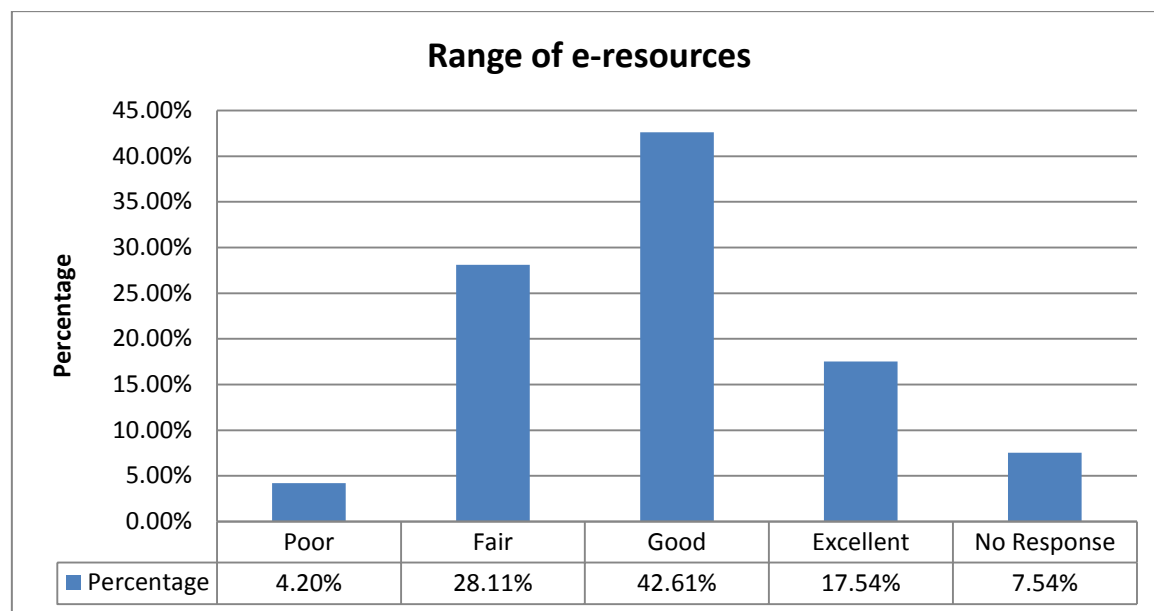
Most of the respondents indicated that range of e- resources was good there were almost 4.2% of who stated that range of e-resources is poor. Respondents specified that there is a need to increase the collection of resources.

Figure 7: Course books and essential texts

Course books and essential texts

|	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	No Response
Percentage	7.10%	25.36%	43.04%	19.57%	4.93%
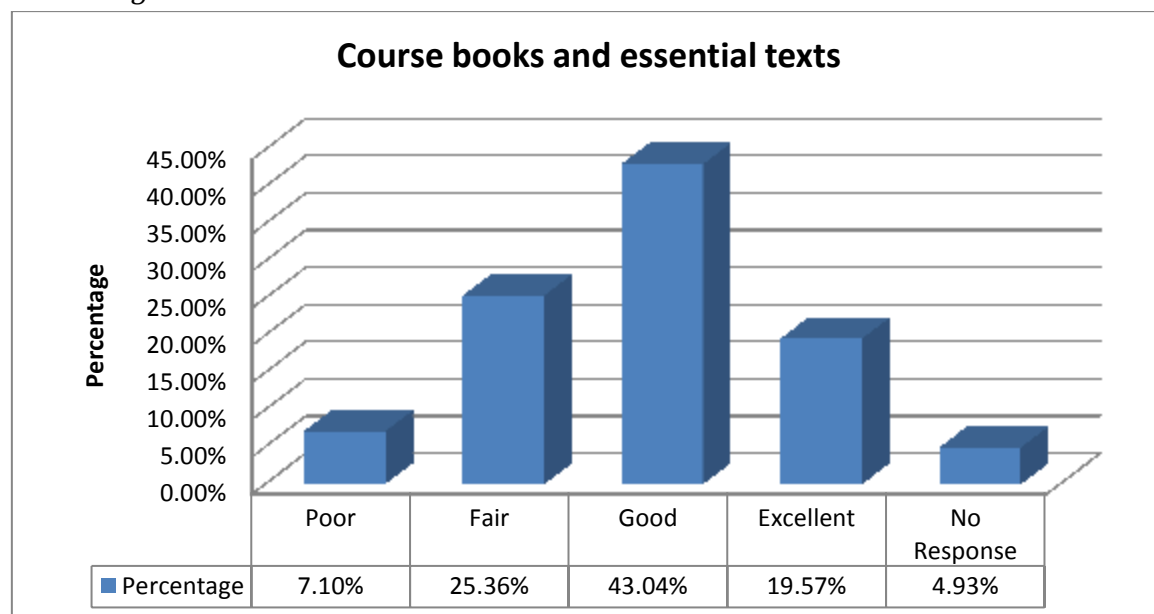
Out of 690 respondents, 43.04% stated that there was a good collection of range of course books and essential texts where else 7.10% stated that this service was poor. Students specified that there was a need for more course text books to cater for student demand.

Figure 8: Photocopying

|	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	No Response
■ Percentage	4.06%	16.52%	39.57%	37.68%	2.17%
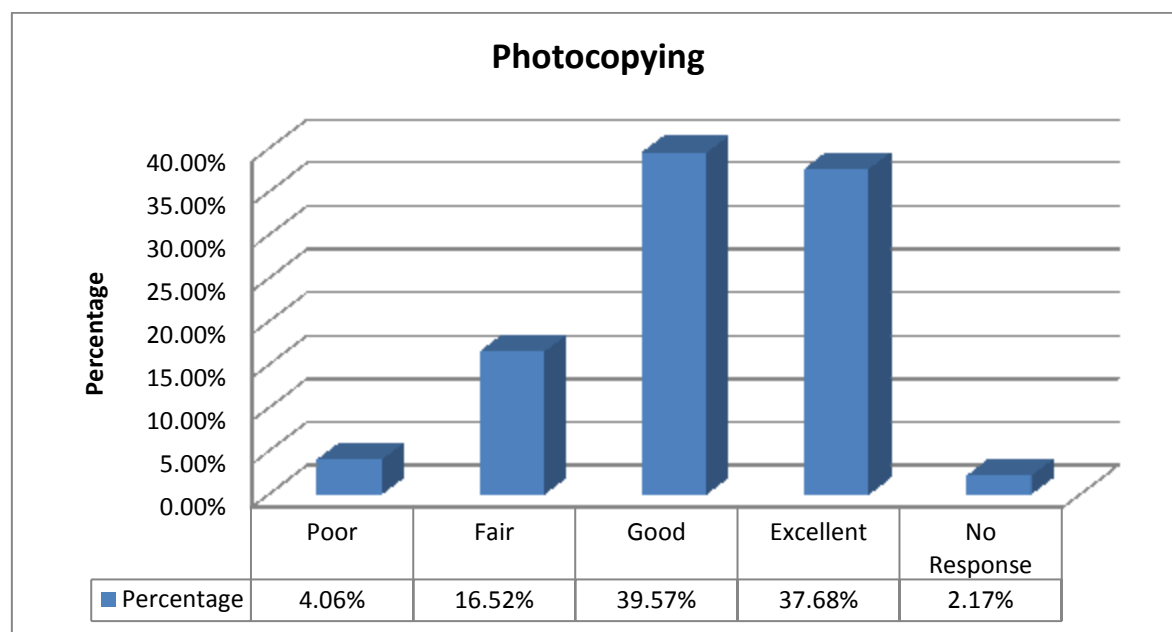
The highest number of the respondents (39.57%) indicated that photocopying services were good; 37.68% stated it as being excellent while 4.06% rated it as being poor. Students specified that the reason for it being poor was because the photocopying machines were mostly out of service. Moreover, the photocopied output is not in dark prints.

Figure 9: Printing

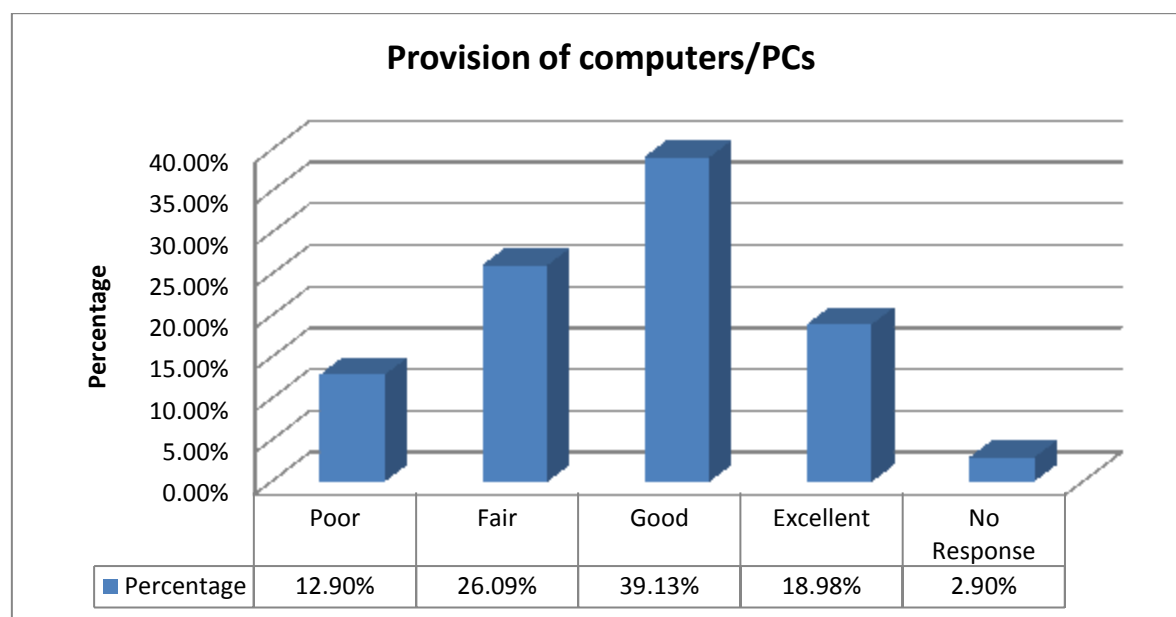|	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	No Response
■ Percentage	4.93%	14.35%	41.01%	37.10%	2.61%
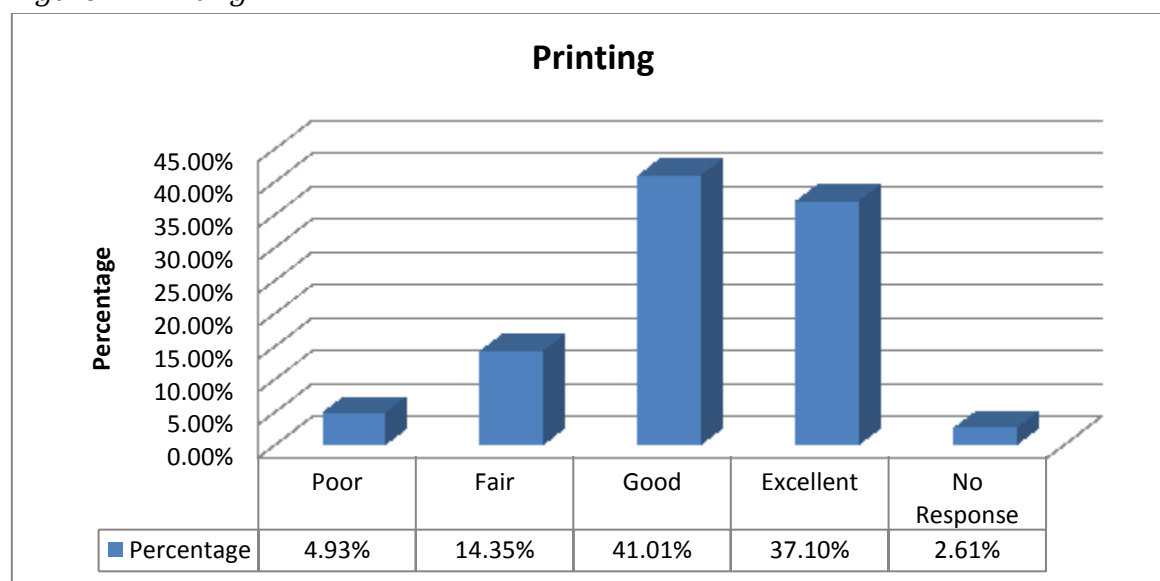
An overall 41.01% of the respondents rated the printing services in the library as being good, 37.10% indicated excellent service while 4.93% claimed it to be poor. The negative rating by students is due to the printing cost being high and few printers in the library which causes cues when one printing machine fails. In addition, students complained about the quality of the printed document as being unreadable, some requested for colored printing services as well and some stated that coloured printing is expensive.

Figure 10: Information/ reference enquiries

Information/Reference enquiries

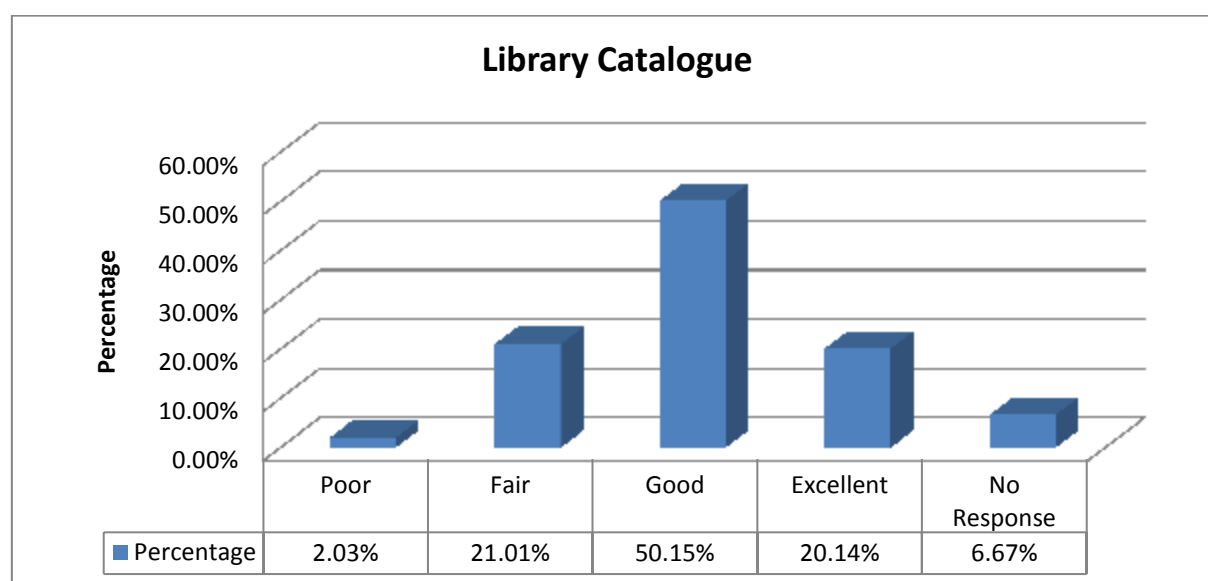|	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	No Response
■ Percentage	1.59%	19.42%	47.25%	28.41%	3.33%
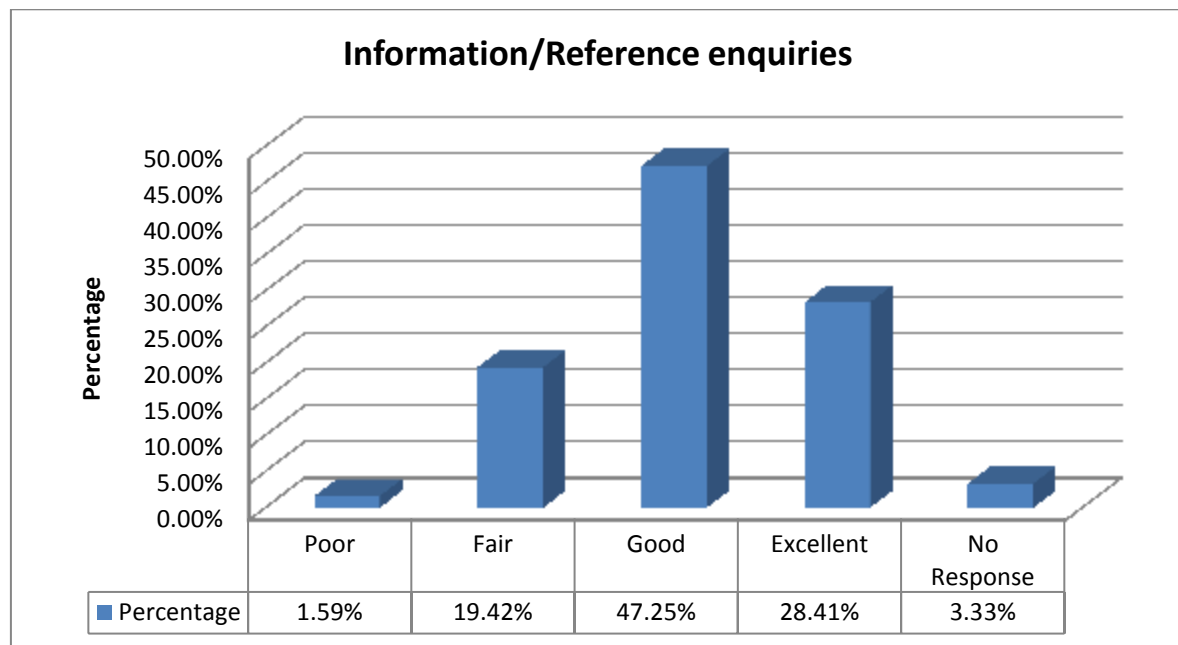
47.10% of the respondents expressed good satisfaction regarding enquiries on information and reference, 28.41% stated as being excellent, however, 1.59% specified it as being poor. This 1.59% who were dissatisfied with this service provided reasons of staff being stubborn, rude and unhelpful

Figure 11: Provision of computers/ PCs

Provision of computers/PCs

Percentage	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	No Response
Percentage	12.90%	26.09%	39.13%	18.98%	2.90%

Out of the 690 respondents, 39.13% specified that computers provided were good in range, 26.09% sated it as being fair. However, 12.90% said that computers provided were poor. The reasons for this were that some computers were not working, some were very slow, and others had some equipment / part missing. Moreover, respondents expressed disappointment on the quantity of the computers provided, on the installation of the antivirus software, internet being slow and log in issues with the computers.

Figure 12: Library Catalogue

Library Catalogue

Percentage	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	No Response
Percentage	2.03%	21.01%	50.15%	20.14%	6.67%

A higher number of the respondents (50.15%) stated that the FNU library catalogue provided good service, 20.14% considered it as being fair and 20.14% thought that the catalogue is excellent. On the other hand, 2.03% claimed it to be poor. Respondents'

displeasure was because of the server going down at times and them not being able to access the catalogue. Consequently, they conveyed that some books had no proper labels thus caused frustration while searching for books.

Figure 13: Range of Electronic Information services (e.g. Emerald, Internet etc.)

Range of Electronic Information Services

|	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	No Response
Percentage	10.43%	28.55%	38.70%	15.80%	6.52%
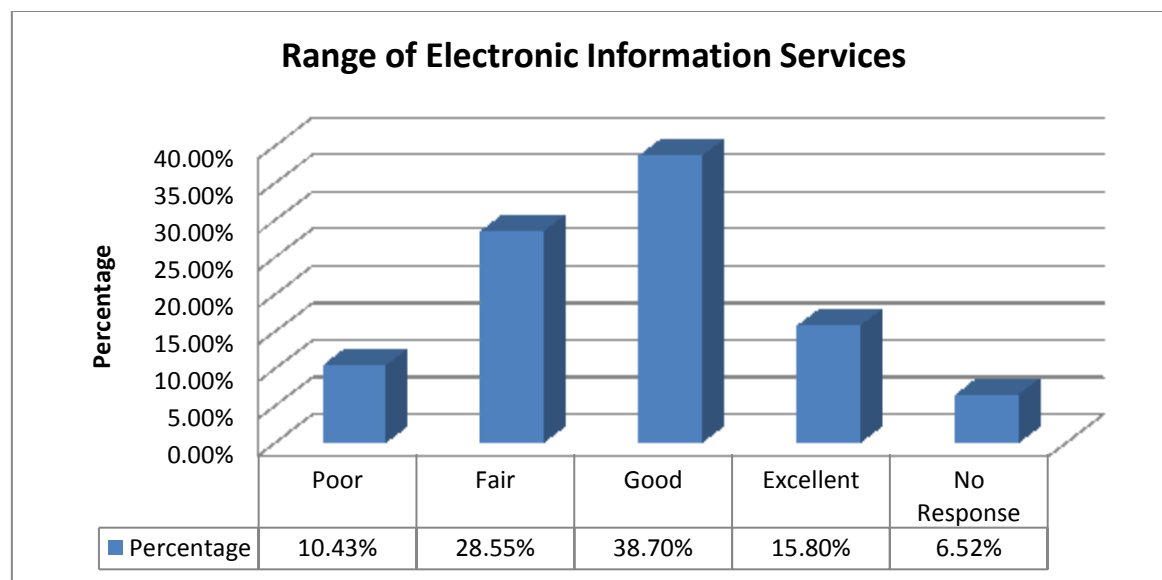
The range of electronic services in the library was indicated as being good by most (38.70%) of the respondents, 28.55% stated it being fair while 15.80% said it was excellent. Conversely, 10.43% said that electronic information services were poor. This negative rating is due to poor access to the internet, some educational websites being blocked and not enough electronic facilities.

Figure 14: Accessing Library Services Electronically Off Campus

Accessing Library Services Off Campus

|	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	No Response
Percentage	9.71%	24.78%	41.01%	15.94%	8.55%
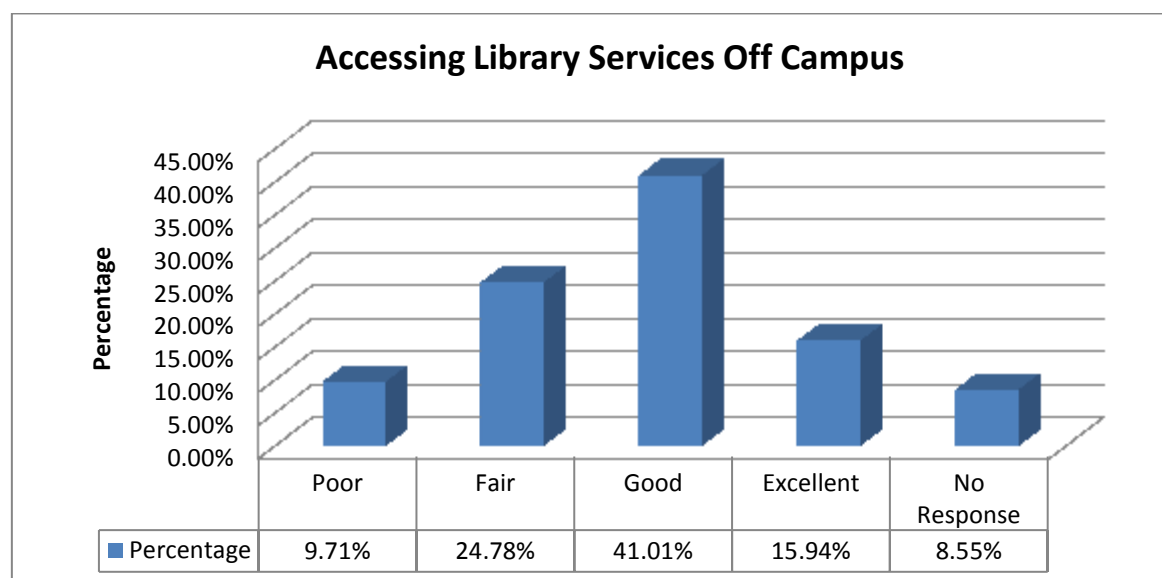
41.01% of the respondents expressed that accessing the library services electronically off campus was good, 24.78% stated it as being fair and 15.94% said it was excellent. The least number of respondents (9.71%) said that it was poor. The reasons conveyed by these 9.71% respondents were that pages took time to load, would not get displayed. Others said that they were not aware of the processes of accessing the library services off campus.

Figure 15: Opening Hours

Opening Hours

|	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	No Response
Percentage	4.93%	14.93%	38.40%	40.73%	1.01%
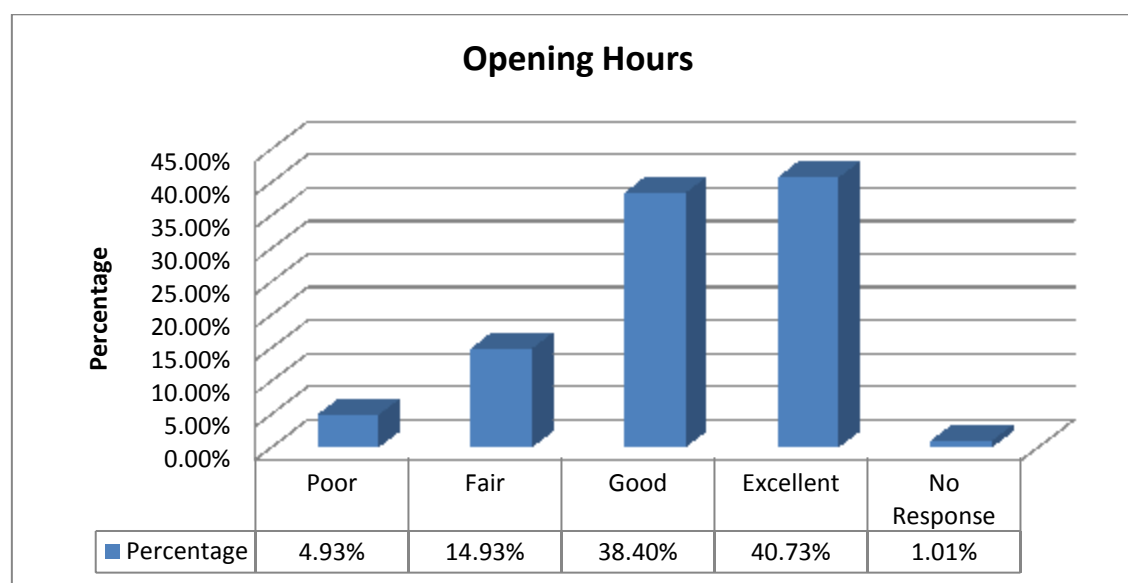
Out of the 690 respondents, 40.73% stated that the library opening hours were excellent, 38.40% indicated that it was good and 14.93% said that it was fair. On the other hand, 4.93% said that it is poor. Some students were discontent with the library hours because they want the library to be open 24 hours so that they could get their assignments ready on time.

Figure 16: Library Environment (e.g. noise, space, heating, ambience, etc.)

Library Environment

	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	No Response
Percentage	9.56%	18.12%	38.70%	32.61%	1.01%

15
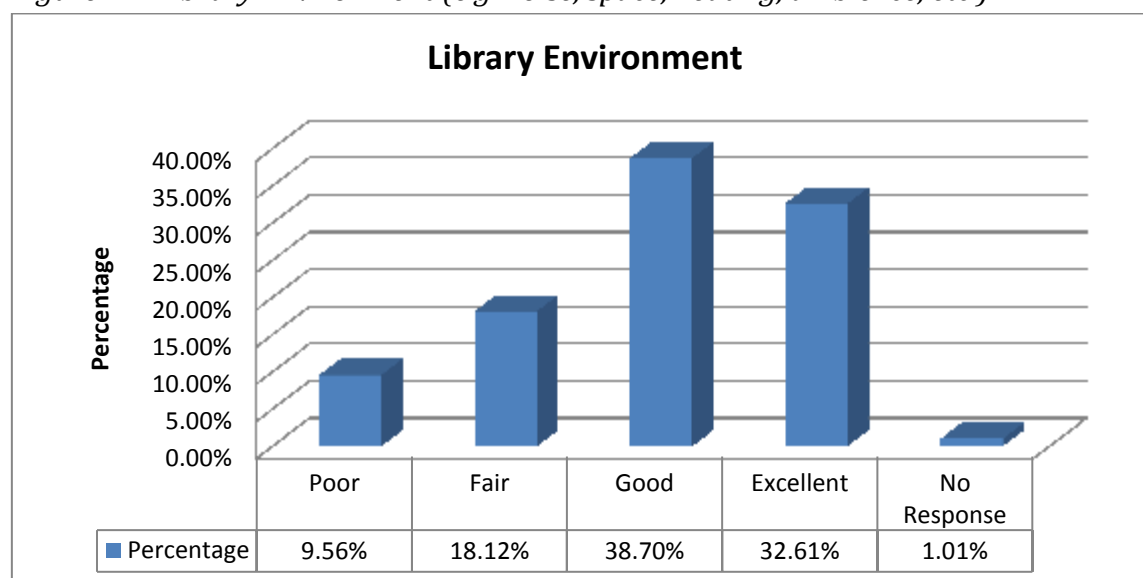
A higher number of respondents (38.70%) stated that the library environment was good, 32.61% said it was excellent while 18.12% specified it as being fair. However, 9.56% claimed it to be poor because there is some noise in the library since the private and discussion study rooms are not separate and students also use mobile phones in the library. Moreover, respondents complained of space problems since they are not able to get a place for them to study during exam times. Others expressed their views on the air condition problems and also of dusty furniture.

Figure 17: Communication with Users (e.g. publicity materials, signage, and user education)

Communication with Users

Percentage	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	No Response
Percentage	2.46%	21.01%	48.55%	24.36%	3.62%
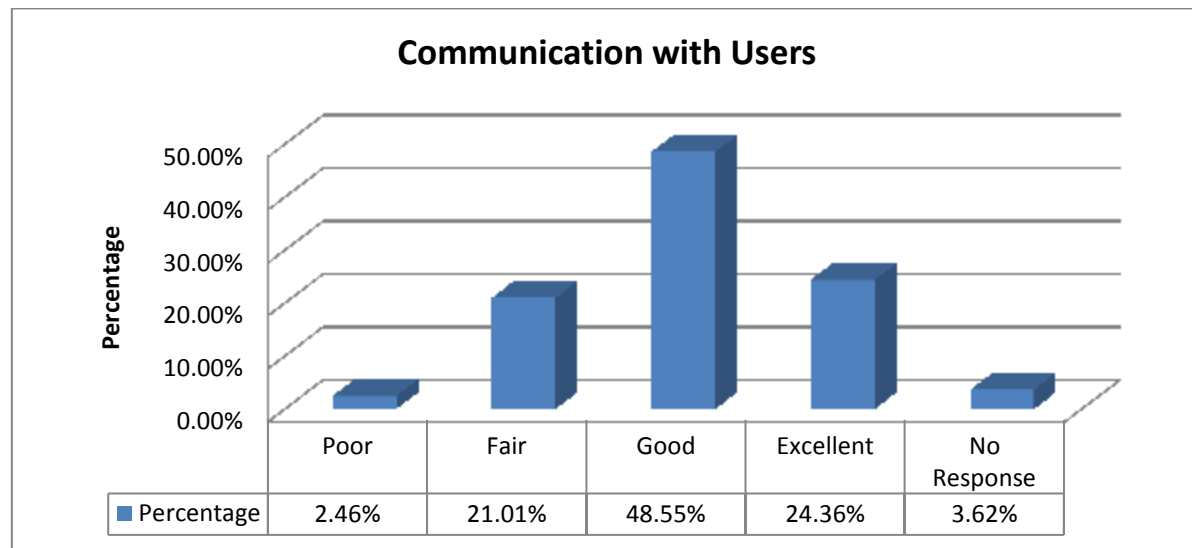
Out of the 690 respondents, 48.55% said that the publicity materials, signage and other communication tools were good, 21.01% indicated it to be fair and 24.36% specified it to be excellent. However, 2.46% stated that the library had poor communication tools because there are too many rules to follow if one wants to use or borrow materials.

Figure 18: Helpfulness of the library staff

Helpfulness of the Library Staff

Percentage	Poor	Fair	Good	Excellent	No Response
Percentage	1.45%	11.01%	31.45%	54.35%	1.74%

A majority number (54.35%) of respondents stated that the staff in the library was excellent with their jobs, 31.45% conveyed it to be good and 11.01% expressed that it was just fair. Only a handful (1.45%) said that the staff was poor. The reasons for claiming the library staff service to be poor were because students often did not receive a welcoming smile and librarians were said to be a little rude, stubborn, and irresponsible and slow with the processes.

Conclusion and Recommendation

The Department of Library Services has conducted a survey of customers' satisfaction so that their views, ideas and suggestions can be considered as an integral part of its commitment to improvement. Overall, the library has received positive response from the participants.

Students came up with a lot of recommendations to enhance the FNU library at various campuses. The most common ones were to provide more computers with faster internet speed. Many respondents requested that library computers be given access to all websites to aid in their research work. Moreover, the library needs to host proper photocopier and printers with cheap cost rates. The installation of more power sockets in the library was also of high priority as students who could not get a computer could use their laptops. Consequently, spacing in the library is also a major concern for the students, thus they have suggested the library be extended and more furniture to be provided to accommodate all students during peak hours. Most students proposed that there be a separate room allocated for group discussions in the library as private study students are disturbed by the noise level. Respondents recommended that new editions of textbooks and course books be provided in the library with extra copies so that everyone could have access to it. Other facilities recommended to be improved by respondents were to install cameras, provide air condition, and get more staff at front desk and to create a proper place for students to leave their bags before entering the library.

Progress for the way forward is not restricted to the recommendations in this report. A number of additional areas may also involve attention. When selecting matters for action, it is endorsed that a mixture of the quantitative analyses and observations, with the alternative of forthcoming target groups, be used to gain a further in-depth understanding of student concerns.

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