Learning Odyssey: Assessing User Satisfaction through Library Guided Tour

Rathnayaka R.M.D.P.[1]

Abstract

The libraries provide User education to help users develop the necessary skills and knowledge to access, evaluate, and use information effectively. Library guided tours are an effective way to introduce new users to the library and its resources and offer tips on using them effectively. This research aimed to evaluate newcomers' ability to use library services after participation in the guided library tour of the Library at the University of Kelaniya and to determine the level of satisfaction with the guided library tour, compare satisfaction between faculties and genders, and collect feedback from users on the tour experience. The research employed mixed method. The population was two thousand nine hundred sixty-five first-year students (2965) who participated in a library tour. The questionnaire was distributed among students via a Google Form. IBM SPSS 26 package was used to analyze the gathered data. Out of 2965 participants, only 343 responded. Both male and female students from various faculties exhibited intense satisfaction with the library tour, resulting in a test score of 1.4922 (M=1.4922; SD=0.76625). In conclusion, newcomers effectively acquired abilities through the library-guided tour, and their high satisfaction was evident.

Keywords: Library user education impact, Library guided tours, User satisfaction, Skills enhancement, User proficiency

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[1] Assistant Librarian, University of Kelaniya,
Email: dhammikapr@kln.ac.lk https://orcid.org/0000-0002-9384-3394

Introduction

Through library user education, users are taught how to access, assess, and use library resources. It covers finding information online, using databases, citing sources, and comprehending how libraries are organised. In line with the broader concept of information literacy for lifelong learning, the objective is to increase users' confidence in using library resources, provided through workshops, tutorials, and more, to assist them in conducting research freely and responsibly (Oling & Mach, 2002).

Library user education is essential to help users develop the skills and knowledge needed to access, assess, and use information effectively. Library user education promotes critical thinking, problem-solving, and lifelong learning skills. Library user education programs can be offered to meet the needs of the different user communities. (Aderibigbe & Ajiboye, 2013). Also, library user education imparts research skills and fosters lifelong learning. It empowers users to utilize library resources effectively for learning and research, extending beyond classrooms. Additionally, it enhances users' awareness of available library resources (Wadasinghe & Dilhani, 2023).

Information literacy is one of the most basic types of library users' education. Information literacy is defined as "a set of skills that individuals need to recognize when information is needed and have the ability to find, evaluate, and effectively use the information they need" by the American Library Association (American Library Association, 2023).

Information literacy education includes the ability of users to navigate library catalogues, databases, and search engines and to evaluate source credibility and relevance. Choosing the right approach to teaching information literacy is crucial because effective communication is equally important as the content itself. Walsh (2011) discusses various methods of information literacy instruction (ILI) in his book, including:

- Conventional Lecture vs Active Learning

- Traditional Lecture vs Learner-Centered Instruction

- Traditional Approach vs Self Directed Independent Learning

Technology training is another important type of library user education. With the growing dependence on technology in everyday life, libraries ensure that users have the skills to use technology effectively. Technology training includes courses on how specific software and hardware are used, how to stay safe on the web, and how to protect personal information (Zhu & Tianhui, 2009).

Reader advisory, a form of library user education, concentrates on aiding users in discovering books and materials aligned with their interests and requirements. This encompasses organizing book clubs and literary activities, along with providing book recommendations, curating reading lists, and suggesting other literary pursuits (Trott, 2009).

Another essential aspect of library user education is research support, which assists in guiding users through difficult study assignments. This can involve a private conversation with a librarian, workshops on research techniques, and help with citation management software (Hensley et al., 2014).

As libraries increasingly offer access to digital resources, including electronic books, online journals, and databases, digital literacy has become a more critical aspect of user education. Through digital literacy education, users can be taught how to use digital resources efficiently, evaluate digital sources, and safeguard their privacy and online security (Mulat & Natarajan, 2020).

To introduce new users to libraries and their resources, library orientation is essential. Library orientation aims to acclimatise users to the space and familiarise them with its policies, services, and resources. To serve the various requirements of their user group, libraries offer a variety of library orientations. Online orientation is the most common kind of library orientation. Due to the growing reliance on digital resources, the library is responsible for ensuring users can access these materials efficiently. Online tutorials on using library websites, gaining access to electronic materials, and using cite management software are also available (Alperin et al., 2020).

Library tours are fun and interactive ways of introducing users to libraries and their resources. The library's tours include information on library services and collections and a brief overview of library policies and procedures. (Reed & Miller, 2020) One of the most important aspects of library services is library user education, which assists users in developing the abilities needed to access and use information efficiently. Libraries can meet users' needs and encourage critical thinking and lifelong learning by providing various programs.

Library tour
Common library orientations that give a general overview of the physical area and resources of the library are guided tours. Typically, librarians or trained volunteers provide library tours, which can be tailored to meet the requirements of various user groups. Library tours help users feel at ease while giving them a general grasp of the institution's collections, services, and policies.

During library tours, users tend to be introduced to the library's physical layout, including the locations of various collections, services, and resources. They also explain online catalogues and other electronic resources and give an overview of library policies, including those governing borrowing and access. Moreover, librarians can provide valuable assistance in navigating library resources, offering guidance on research methodologies and source evaluation. They can also help users develop effective search strategies and refine their information-seeking skills. Librarians may offer workshops or individual consultations to support users in utilizing library materials most efficiently. Additionally, they can provide insights on proper citation techniques and plagiarism avoidance.

An expert person, frequently a librarian or staff member, conducts guided tours. The tour guide explains the many sections, resources, and services as they lead the group through the library (Oling & Mach, 2002). New users are efficiently introduced to libraries and their resources through guided library tours. It has been discovered that library tours significantly raise patrons' satisfaction with the facilities' offerings. According to the study, visitors who

took part in library tours were more likely than those who did not feel at ease using the library and its services (Chiya et al., 2022).

Some librarians can offer special tours and routine library visits to serve a particular user group better. For instance, tours might be tailored to individuals with research interests or for children and adolescents. Specialized tours can inform visitors about the library's resources and services and help them become more interested in the ones most relevant to their needs.

Overall, library-guided tours are a valuable part of library orientation programs and can assist patrons in using library resources more comfortably and securely. A library tour can increase users' satisfaction with its offerings and encourage lifelong learning by giving them an overview of its services, resources, and advice on making the most of them.

Problem Statement

"Freshers" mean newcomers or first-year students who came to the university to start their higher studies. The library must organize extensive library orientation programs to meet the needs of newcomers and to introduce services and facilities for the newcomers to assist with their information requirements.

The orientation program at the University of Kelaniya, Library (UoKL) is divided into three stages.

1. **Main Orientation Lecture:** To begin, the University conducts the primary orientation session to introduce students to the university. During the event, the Librarian of the University of Kelaniya delivers an introductory library orientation lecture about the library.

2. **Faculty-Level Lectures:** Recognizing the need for in-depth understanding, the second stage includes additional workshops by faculty-level Subject Liaison Librarians. The content is intended to present library resources and services to students, ensuring they receive guided assistance.

3. **Guided Library Tours:** The Reader Service Division and Subject Liaison Librarians collaborate to conduct Guided Library Tours designed to provide a hands-on experience. These tours acquaint students with the library's facilities and services engagingly and interactively.

The guided library tour underwent modifications to enhance its success and efficiency. The primary purpose was to provide information about the library and its services. It also sought to improve user efficiency by improving processes and providing a library tour experience improved by digital technologies to save users' time. A Google form was provided to registered users on a first-come, first-served basis to increase demand for our library tour and spread the word among users. That was aimed at reducing the user registration queue and the workload of the library employees. All user information was uploaded to the library administration system before the tour.

The study focused on addressing two primary concerns: first, evaluating the skills and knowledge acquired by readers through the library's resources and services after completing the tour; and second, measuring participant satisfaction with the library tour. Furthermore, the study aimed to gather valuable insights into readers' perspectives and suggestions regarding the library trip. This thorough examination was undertaken to effectively address and comprehend these crucial aspects.

Research Questions

The study aimed to answer the following questions through data collection and analysis:

a. After undergoing a library tour, what abilities did newcomers acquire in using the services?

b. To what extent were newcomers satisfied with the library tour?

c. What were the reactions of newcomers to the library tour?

Objectives

In the academic year 2021/2022, the main library organized and performed a library tour as a part of the library orientation program. After the library tour, our goal was to evaluate the newcomers' skills and gauge their satisfaction with the experience.

The main goals of this survey were;
    I.   To evaluate newcomers' abilities in using library services following the guided library tour;
    II.   To evaluate the overall satisfaction of newcomers with the guided library tour;
    III.   To compare satisfaction levels among different faculties and genders.
    IV.   To solicit user comments on the library tour as students' reactions to the guided library tour.

Significance of the Study

The study aimed to assess newcomers' abilities in using library services following the library tour and their overall satisfaction with the tour. The survey results will be essential for anyone involved in reader services, providing valuable insights for planning, developing, conducting, and assessing future library tours.

Methodology

Mixed qualitative and quantitative approaches were used in the study. The research population comprised two thousand nine hundred sixty-five first-year students (2965) from all the faculties in the university who took part in the library tour. According to SurveyMonkey, the recommended sample size was 341 first-year students (Sample Size Calculator: Understanding Sample Sizes | SurveyMonkey, 2023).

The structured survey aimed at gathering information from participants who took part in the library tour utilized a Google Form. This form was distributed via student institutional emails to the entire population, resulting in a total of 343 responses. Open-ended questions were employed to capture qualitative data, which was later assessed and interpreted using IBM SPSS 26. On the

other hand, closed-ended questions were utilized to gather quantitative data. The qualitative data obtained from open-ended questions was summarized and presented in the Feedback and Suggestions section of the survey report.

Results and Discussion: Responses by gender and faculty

The assessed data encompassed a total of 343 responses; in terms of faculty distribution, participation was as follows: Faculty of Commerce and Management Studies garnered 93 responses (27.1%), the Faculty of Humanities saw 87 responses (25.4%), the Faculty of Science received 81 responses (23.6%), Faculty of Social Sciences collected 78 responses (22.7%), and lastly, the Faculty of Computing and Technology accounted for four responses (1.2%) via the Google Form.

Table 1: Responses of the study by gender and faculties
Descriptive Statistics N= 343

Gender	Social Sciences	Humanities	Commerce and Management Studies	Science	Computing and Technology	Total
Male	10	8	35	42	2	97
Female	68	79	58	39	2	246
Total	78	87	93	81	4	343

Among these, 97 responses (28.3%) were from male students, while 246 (71.7%) were provided by their female counterparts via the Google form.

Abilities that they have taken after the library tour

The survey assessed newcomers' competence in utilizing library services after the tour. Essential abilities, specifically chosen to be acquired by participants through library tours, were employed as benchmarks to analyze newcomers' proficiencies. Individuals navigated the Online Public Access Catalog (OPAC), utilising criteria such as author and title to locate diverse books and library materials. Their capacity to access information sources that bolstered research and assignments was notable. Appropriate databases aligned with assignments were identified to precisely retrieve relevant information.

Table 2: Abilities that they have taken after the library tour Descriptive Statistics   N=343

	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation
To search the Online Public Access Catalogue - OPAC (by author, title, etc.) and to find books and other library materials.	343	1	5	1.66	1.013
To use the website of the UoKL to access information sources for their assignments	343	1	5	1.70	1.042
To choose the suitable databases for their assignments	343	1	5	1.80	1.026
To limit database search results (by date, author name, book title, document type, full text, etc.)	343	1	5	1.84	1.106
To differ between library databases and an Internet search engine (Google, etc.)	343	1	5	1.71	0.993
To understand the number of books that can be lent and the time that can be kept close through the lending and reference sections.	343	1	5	1.43	0.845
To get an understanding of using permanent reference books and Textbooks.	343	1	5	1.64	0.944
To differ between a printed journal and an electronic/ digital journal.	343	1	5	1.66	0.978
To get an understanding of research theses and rare books	343	1	5	1.65	0.931

Note: 1 Strongly Agreed, 2 Agreed, 3 Neutral, 4 Disagreed, 5 Strongly Disagreed

Application of filters like date, author, and document type led to streamlined and efficient database search results. A clear distinction was drawn between library databases, known for offering meticulously curated academic content, and prominent internet search engines like Google. A comprehensive understanding of borrowing limits and loan durations for materials within lending and reference sections was attained.

Proficiency was demonstrated in effectively utilising permanent reference books for swift information retrieval and optimising textbooks to enhance coursework engagement. Their ability to differentiate between conventional printed journals and their electronic counterparts regarding access and content format was evident. Furthermore, a robust comprehension of research theses as substantial academic contributions and rare books of exceptional significance marked their expertise.

Table 3: Average value of the ability with the library tour
One sample statistics N=343

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Abilities with Library Tour	343	1.6767	.83387

Note: 1 Strongly Agreed, 2 Agreed, 3 Neutral, 4 Disagreed, 5 Strongly Disagreed

Individuals who participated in the guided library tour achieved a significant average ability test score of 1.6767 (M=1.6767; SD=0.83387). This indicated a high degree of understanding that will lead to higher abilities of the library and its services.

Satisfaction with the library tour

The survey objected to making freshers aware of their overall satisfaction with the library tour, this survey was done, and questions were asked of newcomers, and the findings are shown in Table 4. Accordingly, newcomers were delighted with the guided Library tours, which began smoothly and on time from the sessions' beginning places. The inaugural presenter was educational and engaging, skillfully communicating clear and understandable facts about the library.

**Table 4: Satisfaction that they have taken after the library tour
Descriptive Statistics   N=343**

	N	Min	Max	Mean	Std. Deviation
Library tours were properly guided from the starting point of the sessions	343	1	5	1.40	0.882
The session started as scheduled	343	1	5	1.49	0.939
The lecturer who delivered the introductory lecture was informative and attractive	343	1	5	1.51	0.895
The information presented about the library was clear and understandable	343	1	5	1.47	0.888
The amount of information presented is sufficient.	343	1	5	1.59	0.916
The library tour informed me about library user services, facilities and rules.	343	1	5	1.36	0.808
Knowledgeable with conducting studies and research in the Information Commons Area.	343	1	5	1.44	0.846
About the technical tools used for the library tour	343	1	5	1.55	0.912
About the Google Form used to register students for the library tour	343	1	5	1.50	0.952
After joining the library tour, their overall satisfaction with the library tour conducted by the library	343	1	5	1.50	0.865

Note: 1 Strongly Satisfied, 2 Satisfied, 3 Neutral, 4 Dissatisfied, 5 Strongly Dissatisfied

Participants thought the information presented was adequate. The library tour effectively familiarised them with different areas, such as library user services, facilities, and rules, while improving their understanding of conducting studies and research in the Information Commons Area. The tour's technical tools were also highlighted, as was the use of the Google Form for student registration. Their overall satisfaction with the library's well-organized and conducted tour increased after participating.

The average value of satisfaction with the library tour test score was 1.4922 (M=1.4922; SD=.76625).

Table 5: Average value of satisfaction with the library tour
One sample statistics N=343

	N	Mean	Std. Deviation
Satisfaction Mean	343	1.4922	.76625

Note: 1 Strongly Satisfied, 2 Satisfied, 3 Neutral, 4 Dissatisfied, 5 Strongly Dissatisfied

Comparison of satisfaction between faculties and gender
The comparison between faculty satisfaction and gender aimed to determine whether there were notable differences in satisfaction levels among different faculties and gender.

Table 6: Comparison of satisfaction between faculties and gender
Compare means N=343

Faculty	Mean	N
Faculty of Social Sciences	1.3415	78
Faculty of Humanities	1.4828	87
Faculty of Commerce and Management Studies	1.4985	93
Faculty of Science	1.5881	81
Faculty of Computing and Technology	2.5455	4
Gender	**Mean**	**N**
Male	1.7385	97
Female	1.3950	246

Note: 1 Strongly Satisfy, 2 Satisfy, 3 Neutral, 4 Dissatisfy, 5 Strongly Dissatisfy

The average satisfaction values for various faculties were as follows: M=1.3415 for the Faculty of Social Sciences, M=1.4828 for the Faculty of Humanities, M=1.4985 for the Faculty of Commerce and Management Studies, M=1.5881 for the Faculty of Science, and M=2.5455 for the Faculty of Computing and Technology. Except for the Faculty of Computing and Technology, students from other faculties expressed high satisfaction. In contrast, Faculty of Computing and Technology students reported being satisfied with the library tour. In terms of gender, both male and female students from the various faculties exhibited strong satisfaction with the library tours. Through the comparison of satisfaction levels among faculties and genders, it was determined that there exists no significant distinction based on either gender or faculties.

Feedback and Suggestions

According to their response, the guided library tour was great, outstanding, incredibly rewarding, helpful, instructive, beneficial, engaging, participatory, and effectively organised. In addition, they suggested improving participant facilities, alleviating time limitations, minimising overall duration, and integrating practical activities.

Conclusion and Recommendations

A study named "User satisfaction on resources and services of academic library: A case of the Library, University of Kelaniya (De Silva et al., 2021) was conducted previously. This study solely looked at library resources and services overall. The outcome was that Most undergraduates were satisfied with the resources and services the library provided to meet their needs. The satisfaction with the library tour was the main emphasis of this study, and it was crucial to identifying the problems that the library should address in the future. This study will be beneficial as the library develops.

A guided library tour is essential for promoting library services and imparting vital insights to newcomers, making it an attainable goal. The tour should include an introduction to the physical arrangement of the library, including its buildings, available services, circulation policies, and associated fines. The library tour should also include instruction on utilising the OPAC and databases for successful searching and browsing, familiarising the library's

resources, addressing user needs, and maximising its utility for studies and research.

During the library tour, they demonstrated skilled abilities such as navigating the OPAC to locate books and materials, using the University of Kelaniya Library's website to access research resources, selecting appropriate databases for research needs, fine-tuning database searches through filters, distinguishing library databases from internet search engines, understanding lending limits and durations for books, and efficiently utilising referees.

Based on the results, it is clear that satisfaction with the library tour was extremely high. This referred to the quality of session guidance, the timely start of sessions, the engaging and informative introductory lecture, the clarity of information about the library, its sufficiency, comprehension of library user services, facilities, and regulations, exploration of various sections, comprehension of the Information Commons Area, the registration process, the length of the library tour, and the adept use of technical tools throughout the tour. After evaluating satisfaction levels across faculties and genders, it was established that no significant differentiation existed based on either gender or faculties.

In conclusion, newcomers effectively acquired abilities through the library-guided tour, and their high satisfaction with the tour was evident. This study encourages the library to enhance tour quality based on user feedback and suggestions, fostering continual improvement in conducting guided library tours. The library found and corrected flaws and errors during the previous library orientations using this survey. As a result, compared to earlier orientations, The library has greatly improved the efficiency of preparing and organizing library tours.

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