

Library Resources: Utilization by Teachers and Students

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Abstract

Aim of this study was to investigate the availability and utilizations of existing resources of the libraries of those universities and GCETs where ADE and B.Ed. (Hons) elementary programs were launched during the year 2010 – 2011. Total 70% GCETs and 80% universities were included in the study. Teachers and students were selected as sample on the basis of their availability. The data for this survey was collected through a checklist and questionnaires for both teachers and students. The results revealed that libraries are underutilized despite teachers' and students' expressed willingness to use libraries. Lack of human and material resources was the main reason for underutilization. Student mostly visit library for reading books, preparation of assignment and consume spare time. Library staff needed professional training, procedures for purchase of library resources need simplification for timely procurement, virtual linkage with national and international libraries needs to be addressed, and enhanced funding and proper utilization of funding is required for improved efficiency. The libraries in GCETs were comparatively more dilapidated than libraries in Universities. It is concluded that improved library services and provisions can enhance the relevance and utilization of libraries.

Keywords: libraries, library resources for teachers and students, elementary teacher training program

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Introduction

In August, 2008 the USAID funded Pre-STEP (Pre Service Teacher Education Program) launched the two year Associate Degree in Education (ADE) and the four year B. Ed. (Hons.) elementary program in collaboration with the Higher Education Commission (HEC) and Ministry of Education (MoE). The aim was to set a new standard for teacher education and produce better qualified teachers (USAID's Teacher Education Program, 2011) trained using student-centered pedagogies and for extended duration. There had been a lot of emphasis on preparation of new curricula, training of faculty of teacher training institutions, provision of supplementary teaching materials in the form of teacher guides and resources etc. There was hardly any explicit plan to support library provisions when these teacher education reforms were unfolded and implemented. Libraries are one of the important resources, if not the most important, in securing maximum from a well-designed academic program.

Library is one of those resources which are essential to support and strengthen the educational quality. Over the centuries, libraries are the source of keeping and distributing the information through books, journals, maps and other resources that are used by students in their learning process. Unfortunately, library resources are the most ignored area in institutions of teacher education. There is hardly any disagreement that libraries in our institutions are deficient in trained professional staff and material available for supporting student learning. By linking Schamber and Siddiqui, it is clear that library resources i.e., human resources (strength of library officials, their qualifications and experiences), physical resources (library study space, chairs, tables, books and books selves, etc), printed and e-resources are essentially important in preparing teaching activities, lecture notes, students' assignment, conducting their research work, accessing e-journals and web sites, subscription to online journals by teachers and students of ADE (Associate Degree in Education) and B. Ed. (Hons.). Therefore, it seemed worthwhile to explore and identify the current resources of libraries in the light of teachers and students requirements of those universities and affiliated colleges which are offering ADE (Associate Degree in Education) and B. Ed. (Hons.) programs.

Therefore, this research focused to understand whether libraries in teacher education institutions are ready to support and promote ADE (Associate Degree in Education) and B. Ed. (Hons.) programs successfully or require improvement. Moreover, the research will not be limited to identify the available resources but also analyze whether these resources are being utilized by teachers and students or not, if

available. If these are not available then through which resources they are getting required knowledge and information.

Purpose of the Research

The main objective of the study was to determine the existing resources from the departmental/academic libraries of universities and affiliated colleges offering ADE (Associate Degree in Education) and B. Ed (Hons.) programs and also the utilization of these resources by teachers and students of the ADE/B.Ed. programs.

Literature Review

Successful educational system depends exhaustively on the accessibility and utilization of information sources and services. In this regard, academic libraries are providing knowledge and information resources for teaching, learning and research. Academic libraries are rapidly supporting and encouraging adapting new form of teaching and learning exercises. For example group projects, group study, team work and activity-based learning and assignments (Edward and Fisher, 2002). According to Ezeala and Yusuff (2011) 'it is natural for human beings to evaluate things, events and other people around them. Libraries are also included in this practice. They have the need to periodically measure the resources and services of their libraries as a way of ensuring that they are meeting the set objectives of the library'. Regarding the accessibility and utilization of library resources, authors highlighted that libraries must ensure about the required and relevant resources, adequate storage for the collection, and strategies for accessibility of these resources through classification, cataloguing and other arrangements. Efficient and effective provision of library resources can have positive impact on academic achievement (Williams, Wavell and Coles, 2001).

In the same context, Oyewusi and Oyeboade (2009) conducted a study at Ladoks Akintola University, Ogbomosa Nigeria to investigate the accessibility and use of library resources by undergraduates. A questionnaire was distributed among 600 students in the university, out of which, 393 were found appropriate for data analysis and conclusion. The respondents were asked to indicate the reasons for using the library. In the response, it was found that 76.8% respondents use the library as a place where they can read and study, 7.9% used it for research, 4.3% visit the library when they want to borrow the book, while 7.4% sleep and socialize in the library. Results indicated that Nigerian students perceive library as a place where serious academic work can be done.

Adeoye and Popoola (2011) highlighted the effectiveness, availability, accessibility and use of library and information resources in their study. They explained that, for effective learning process, learners must have access to necessary information materials and resources. These resources might be in tangible (i.e., printed resources) and intangible (i.e., electronic resources) format. They express that librarian is responsible for providing the right information to the right person at the right time. Regarding the accessibility of library resources, authors added that the more accessible information sources that require the least effort to access. User may encounter five possible types of inaccessibility problems i.e., conceptual, linguistic, critical, bibliographic, and physical.

Siu-Runyan (2011) added that higher quality school and public libraries correlate with higher scores on reading test done at the US state level, at national level, and at international level. School libraries are important source of books. Previous studies provided evidence that when children have access to books, they read them, and when they read a lot, all aspect of literacy improved. She further explained that books not only has positive effect on achievement but also that the positive impact of access is as large as the negative impact of poverty.

A library is a collection of sources, resources, and services, and the structure in which it is housed. Ogbebor (2011) defined library as an 'organized collection of published and unpublished books and audiovisual materials with the aid of services of staff who are able to provide and interpret such material as required, to meet the informative research, educational and recreational needs of its users'. In the same context Adeoye and Popoola (2011) added that library information resources can be in both printed and electronic formats including textbooks, journals, indexes, abstracts, newspapers, magazines, reports, CD-ROM databases, internet, email, video tapes/cassettes, diskettes, computers and microforms. Ezeala and Yusuff (2011) added the electronic resources as: functional computers, photocopying machines, CD-ROM, microforms, microform readers, fax machines, internet, local area network, radio messages, telephone, lighting and computer workstations for library users which must have to be measured periodically by librarians to ensure that the resources and services of their libraries as a way of ensuring that they are meeting the set objectives of the library. Based on the above information, we can divide library resources into two categories i.e., traditional printed material or resources and non-printed or electronic resources (Lance, Rodney & Pennell, 2005).

Lee (2005) explained that latest information technology should be used to build library infrastructures, which includes upgraded intranet, extranet, and Internet, and available software programs to facilitate the capture, analysis, organization, storage, and sharing of internal and external information resources for effective knowledge exchange among users, resource persons (faculty, researchers, and subjects specialists, etc.), publishers, government agencies, businesses and industries, and other organizations via multiple channels and layers. In recent years, many of the newly developed information technologies for database and information/document management can be utilized in knowledge management; such as, data warehousing, data mining, text mining, content management, knowledge extraction, knowledge mapping, groupware, and information visualization, etc.

By comparing digital libraries with traditional libraries Geisler, Giersch, McArthur and McClelland (2002) and Asamoah-Hassan (2011) believe that digital library help its users in several ways. For example, a user who may be intimidated by a digital library's search interface or the number of results returned by a query might be better in terms of easily explore-able portioned set of resources in a virtual collection; digital libraries not only duplicate the services provided by traditional library but also extend them; traditional libraries are limited in terms of space while digital libraries may have unlimited access of online available resources; traditional libraries may need extended funding for improving the resources for a vast amount of users but in case of digital libraries, which can support many users at a time within the range of available resources.

It can be concluded from literature that the notion of library has considerably changed over years and modes and forms of library resources and means of accessibility has drastically expanded over years. Provision of modern libraries and acquaintance with skills to use libraries is unavoidable for students in higher education and academia.

Research Questions

Following research questions were formulated to conclude the results:

1. Do the teachers and students of ADE and B. Ed (Hons.) programs use the library resources?

If "YES" then

How do teachers and students access these resources?

If “NO” then

- A. Reasons for not using library resources.
 - B. Which alternate resources were used by the students to collect or get required knowledge and information?
2. What they suggest to maximize the utilization of library resources?

Methodology

Following procedure was adopted to compile the study:

Population & Sample: There were 12 institutions (i.e., 7 Government College for Elementary Teachers (GCET) and 5 Institute of Education and Research/Department of Education in Universities) offering ADE (Associate Degree in Education) and/or B.Ed. program at the time of data collection in January 2012. Therefore, the population of the study comprised all teachers and students of teacher training institutions in Punjab province, including Institute of Education and Research, Department of Education and Colleges of Education offering ADE/B.Ed. program on their campus.

Considering the limited number of institutions offering ADE/B.Ed. program when research was conducted, it was decided to include at least 70% of the institutions from both GCETs and Universities in the sample. The institutions were divided into two strata i.e. GCETs and Universities. 70% (5 out of 7) GCETs and 80% (4 out of 5) universities were selected in the sample to ensure maximum representation from already limited population. Another rationale for stratification was that in GCETs only ADE was offered and universities offered B.Ed (hons.) only, except Institute of Education and Research (IER), university of the Punjab where both ADE and B.Ed. (hons.) were offered. Later on one GCET was dropped because they were just going through their admission for ADE program and there was practically no class available for survey, thus leaving on 4 GCETs in the sample which was 57% (4 out of 7) of the population. From the selected GCETs and universities three types of stakeholders were selected for survey in the next phase of sampling as described below.

The sample comprised a total of 66 (26 male and 40 female) teachers from all selected GCETs and universities. There were only 6-7 teachers in each selected GCET engaged in teaching ADE program except in one GCET having 10 teachers; therefore it was decided to include all available teachers from GCETs on convenient

basis considering parametric data analysis requirements. Universities have relatively larger number of faculty members teaching ADE and/or B.Ed. (Hons.) classes. The teachers' from universities were selected on volunteer basis among those who taught any subject to students of semester I.

Moreover, the sample comprised 234 (31 male and 203 female) students from all selected institutions. The selected institutions included those in which piloting of the instruments was carried out. During data collection all students available on the day of data collection responded to questionnaire but it was assured that students who were already part of data collection during piloting, from institution involved in pilot phase, were excluded from data collection.

Instruments & Validation: By keeping the instructions of Creswell (2012) for constructing a questionnaire and objectives of the study in mind, an initial draft of the questionnaire for teachers was constructed comprising 4 major parts. Part -1 was related to the demographic information, i.e., program in which they were teaching, gender, and name of the course they are/have to teach. It was also asked in this section about whether they use library. It was required to respond in terms of Yes/No. If they mark Yes then they will fill in Part – 2 and 4 of the questionnaire otherwise Part – 3 and 4. In Part – 2, they were requested to give FIVE reasons for using it and a list of possible or actual library resources were given to them. In this list it was required to know which resources they were using oftenly, sometimes, usually and never. Part – 3 was related to the reasons for not using the library resources. And in Part – 4, problems faced by teachers for using library resources and suggestions to maximize its utilization was asked to fill. Like the pattern of Questionnaire for Teachers, another Questionnaire for the Students was designed with minor changes in the demographic data and language of some statements.

To validate the tools, a panel of five professors and the chief librarian of Bahauddin Zakariya University, Multan were requested to give their expert opinion about constructs forming the base of the research tools used in this study. The requisite changes in the vocabulary, language, structure, format and constructs were carried out in the light of the expert opinion. After validation by experts, pilot study was conducted for research tools.

For the purpose of pilot study, the Head of the Department of Education, Fatimah Jinnah Women University, Rawalpindi and the Principal, GCET Dera Ghazi Khan were consulted and the tools were administered on scheduled dates to three relevant teachers, fifteen students of Semester – III (Odd Roll Nos only) of ADE or B. Ed (Hons) of each institution. In the light of the results of pilot study, major

alterations in the sequence of the items of questionnaires were made before the final administration of the questionnaires..

Results and Discussions

Resources Utilized by Teachers: The data was collected from 66 (26 male and 40 female) teacher educators. They were asked to list up to three reasons for visiting library. Collectively, teacher educators provided 130 reasons for visiting library.

Figure 1 shows the frequency of teacher educators' visit to library. Majority of teacher educators visit once a week followed by daily visits. Females tend to visit more frequently as compared to male teacher educators.

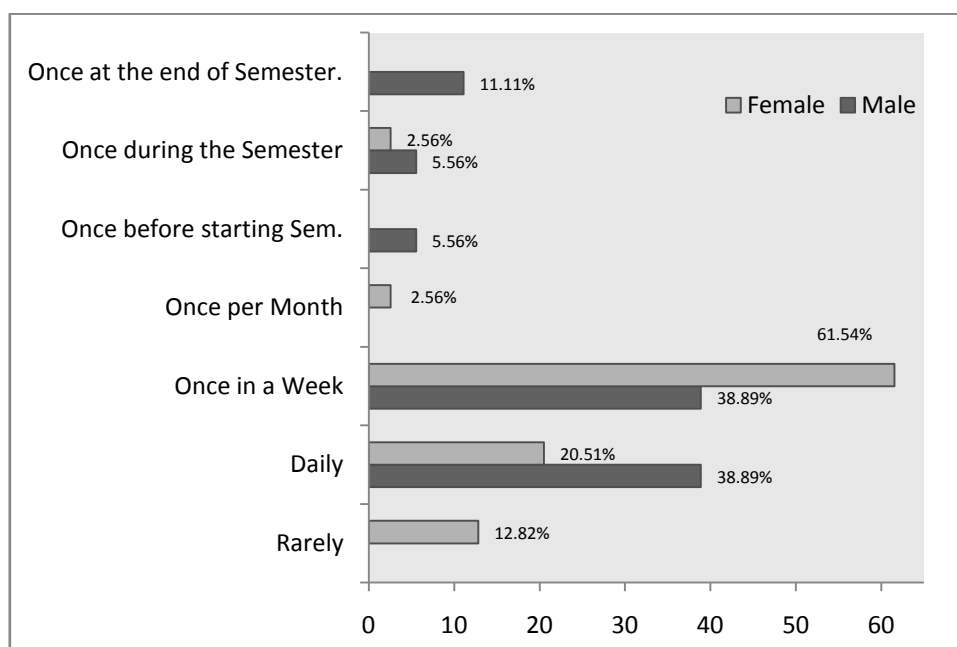


Figure 1: Frequency of library visit by teacher educators

It is quite encouraging that despite scarcity of library resources many teacher educators visit library for preparation of course material. The teacher educators considered searching of material for developing course outline, preparing lectures, searching topic for giving assignments/projects, preparation of handouts for students, looking for supplementary reading material and knowing variety of material available in library to guide students.

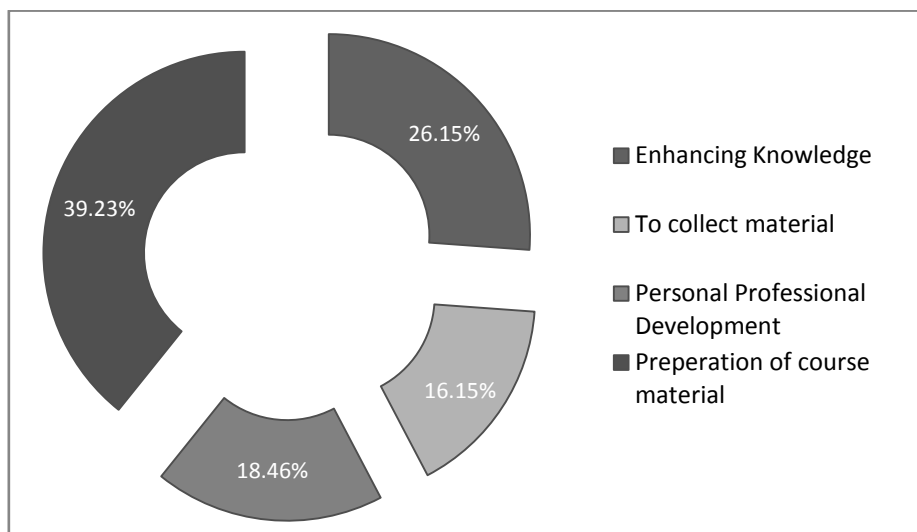


Figure 2: Distribution of reasons of visiting library by teacher educators

Figure 2 reflects the reasons of visiting library by teacher educators. Teacher educators visit library for enhancing their knowledge by reading newspaper, reading books other than academic books and reading on-line information. The third major reason to visit library was personal professional development. Teacher educators visit library for writing research paper, update themselves about developments in their subject, read about teaching pedagogies and learn variety of teaching strategies. Teacher educators also visit library for collecting material for various purposes. They bring required material and use it at convenience in their offices. Collection of material was also out of pure interest to keep updated about any new material added in the library.

There were only 9 (13.6%) teachers' from among 66 teachers who have reported to not visit library. They had their own reasons for not using library and it is interesting to read those reasons as well. Majority of the teacher educators from among not visiting library do this due to non-availability of the required material in the library. Although very few teacher educators have pointed this reason but it is important to notice that our libraries are in need of immediate updating. There is need to add more books, journals and electronic resources in libraries of GCETs especially and universities generally.

There is also need to provide orientation to the teacher educators about the effective and efficient use of libraries to enable them in using the libraries proficiently. Many teacher educators who use libraries regularly can make better out of it if they know their libraries better.

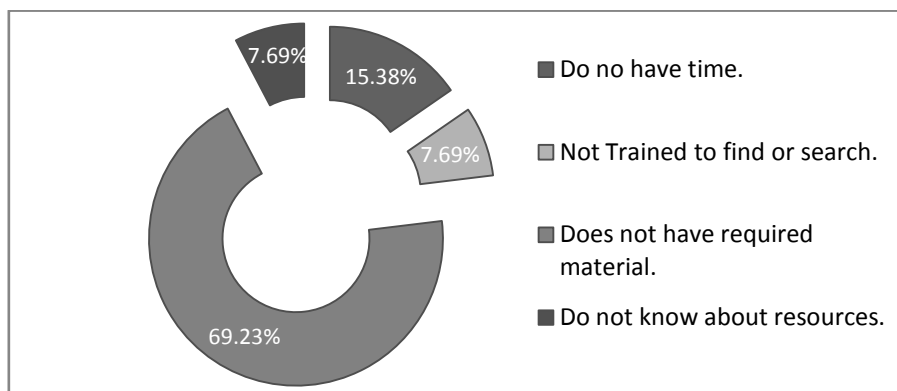


Figure 3: Reasons for not visiting library by teacher educators

Figure 3 explains the reasons for not visiting library by teacher educators. Teacher educators not using library resources reported to collect material they require from internet, their personal library and course material /books provided by the institutions they work in.

Teacher educators were asked about the problem they faced in using library. This was a multiple response item where respondent were free to select more than one response. The response was given by 51 (29 female and 22 male) teacher educators. The total number of responses received was 123 (70 female and 53 male), the distribution is provided by gender in figure 3.

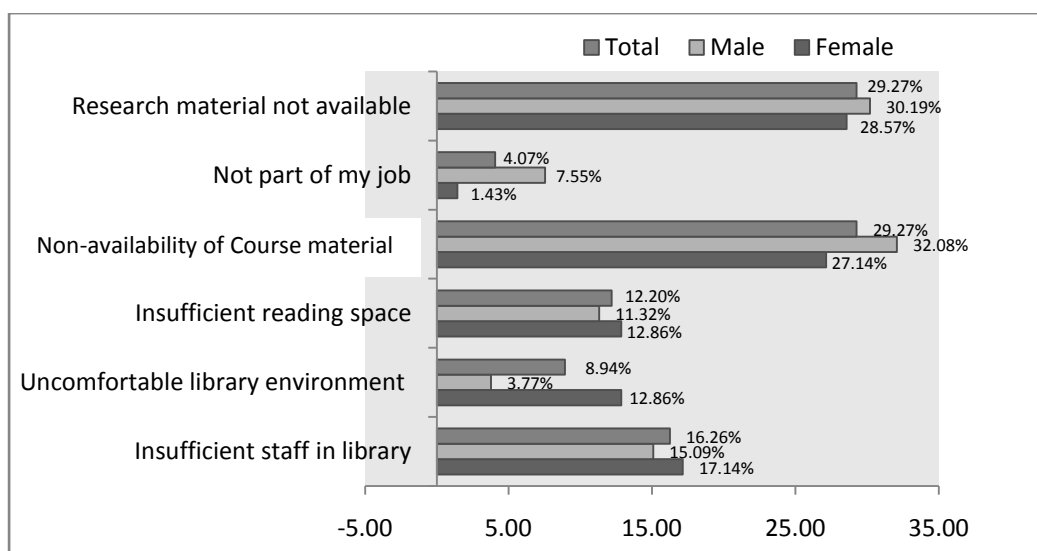


Figure 4: Problem faced by teacher educators in using library

Figure 4 highlight the problems faced by teacher educators in using library. Teachers stated the reason of unavailability of course material related to the course taught in ADE/B.Ed (Hons.) program. Almost 65% of both, male and female teacher educated complaint about non-availability of even the basic reading text. The situation is even alarming in GCETs as compared to libraries in universities. Non-availability of material and lack of research related resources were the main problems faced by teacher educators in use of library. They also reported insufficient space/ inadequate environment and lack of trained staff in library to support them were also reported by reasonable number of teacher educators.

Resources utilized by Students: This was a multiple response question and every student was asked to give three reasons for using library. One hundred and sixty (160) students responded to the questions and registered 454 reasons. The given reasons were synthesized in groups on the basis of same theme. The most frequently reported reason was using library for enhancing knowledge. Different forms of enhancing knowledge included reading books other than courses, reading magazines, reading newspapers, improving vocabulary, for using internet for checking e-mails & reading news and reading comfortably with concentration.

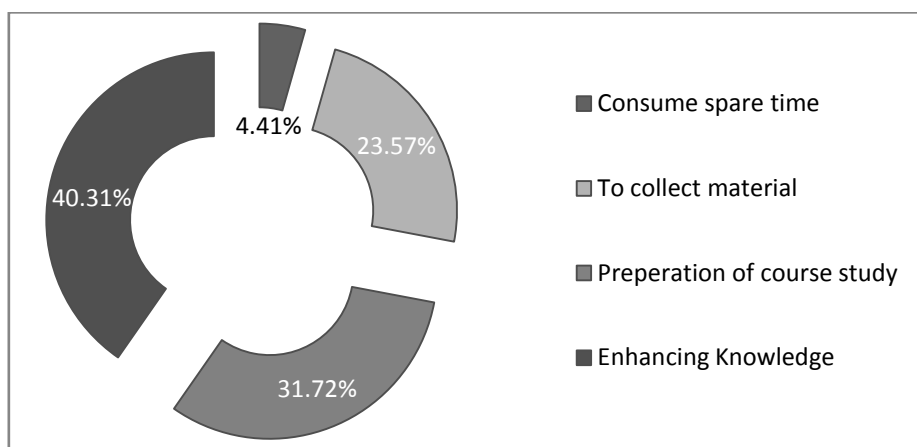


Figure 5: Reason for visiting library by students

There were a reasonable number of students visiting library for work related to courses taught and work assigned by teachers. The visits for this purpose included work like searching course material through internet, preparing notes, prepare assignments, preparing presentation and preparing for examinations.

There was a group of students visiting library only for collecting material required for academic and non-academic work. The stated reasons were getting

needed books issued, collecting information & material, consulting reference books and borrowing material to improve English reading skill. A few students use library for spending their free time and consume their wait time between the classes. Girl students assume library as safe place for using their free time as compared to other places in the university.

Table 1: Students' Opinion Regarding Utilization of Library Resources

Sr. #	Resources	Sex	Availability		Percentage of Students, who utilized Library			
			Yes	No	Frequent	Usually	Sometimes	Never
1.	Books	M	23	-	07	10	06	-
		F	131	-	23	66	42	-
2.	Reference Books	M	20	-	04	07	09	-
		F	74	-	10	42	19	03
3.	Journals	M	09	11	02	04	03	-
		F	43	31	06	19	16	02
4.	Magazines	M	12	08	04	05	03	-
		F	47	26	08	21	15	03
5.	News Paper	M	16	04	02	07	07	-
		F	70	04	07	42	19	02
6.	e-mail	M	07	13	02	02	03	-
		F	46	28	07	23	15	01
7.	Online Books	M	05	15	01	02	02	-
		F	41	33	06	19	15	01
8.	Photocopying	M	03	17	01	01	01	-
		F	29	45	06	09	13	01
9.	Printing	M	03	17	02	-	01	-
		F	32	42	05	13	13	01
10.	Scanning	M	03	17	02	-	01	-
		F	28	46	04	13	10	01
11.	Audio Cassettes	M	02	18	01	-	01	-
		F	19	55	02	09	07	01
12.	Video Cassettes	M	02	18	01	-	01	-
		F	19	55	02	09	07	01
13.	Submitted Theses	M	05	15	01	02	02	-
		F	30	44	05	12	11	02
14.	Internet	M	10	10	02	04	04	-
		F	42	32	06	17	16	03

Table 1 showed students' opinion regarding utilization of library resources. Maximum frequencies highlighted that all male and female students were aware about the availability of books in library and they usually Maximum percentages

i.e. 55% (06) male and 42% (50) female students responded that they did not visit library because there was 'NO' required material.

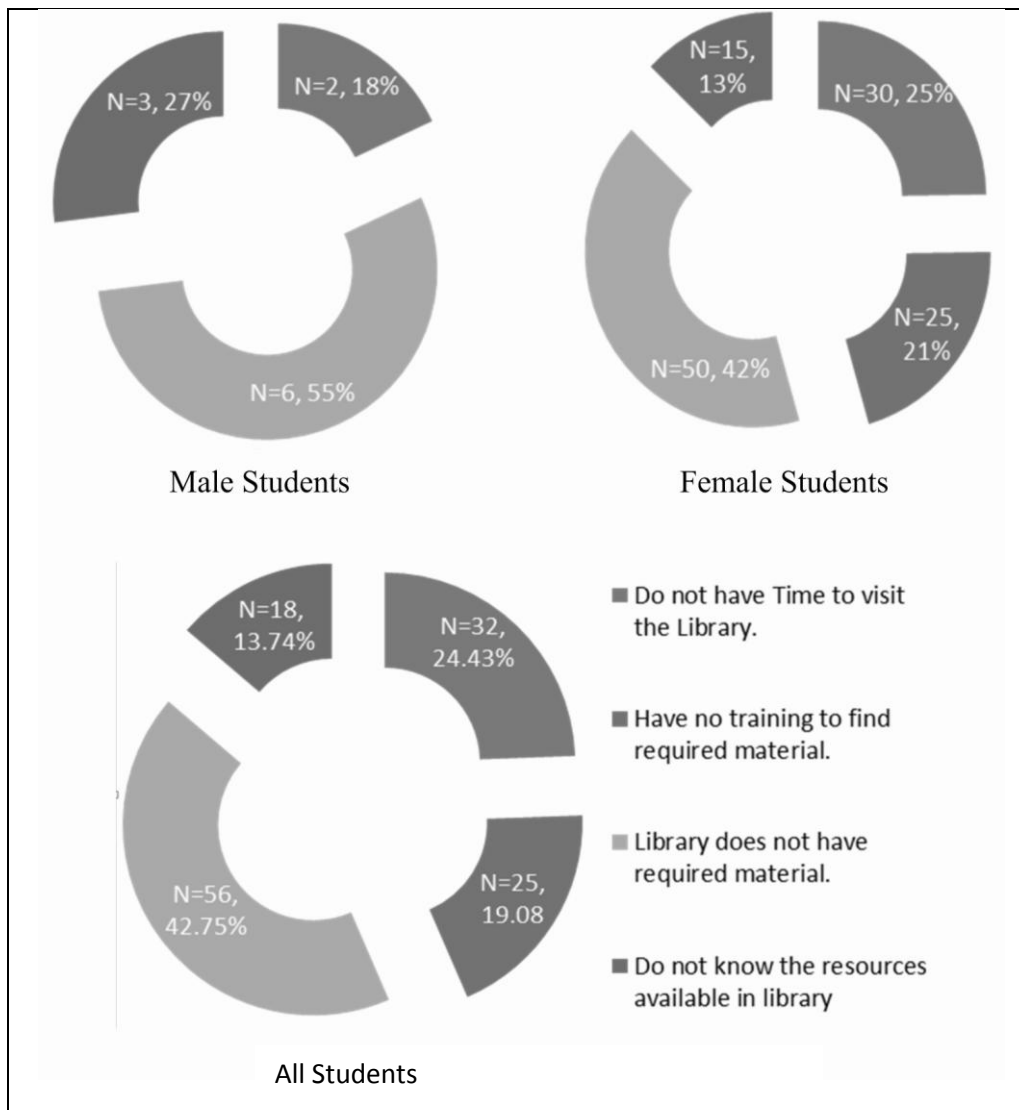


Figure 6: Reasons for not visiting library by students

Figure 6 shows that Contrary to teachers, there is large number (N=131) number of students not visiting library reportedly. Majority of student did not visit library because they could not find their required material in the library. This reiterates the need of adding resources in our libraries. The need is quite pressing for GCETs as compared to libraries in universities. It is also evident that students (especially

female) need orientation about the various resources in the libraries. Alongside this training, it is also required to educate students about the importance of libraries and urging them to visit library regularly. There is reasonable number of students who claim to have no time to visit library. This in itself shows the attitude of students towards potential contribution of library in their studies. This shows need from libraries to arrange programs for students to elicit importance of libraries in academic life of university students.

Table 2: Alternate Resources of Library as reported by students

S. #	Resources	Male Students		Female Students	
		N	%	N	%
1.	Internet	08	35	64	44
2.	Buy Books	02	09	16	11
3.	From Teachers	04	17	22	15
4.	Discussion: with Peers	03	13	17	12
5.	Through Family Members	03	13	13	09
6.	Other Books (PTC, CT, MA, etc)	03	13	12	08

Table 2 disclosed the alternate resources of library by those students which already marked that they do not use library. Maximum percentages showed that 44% (64) female and 35% (08) male students use internet as an alternative resource of library. Students reported that insufficient resource material available in libraries related to the specific courses offered in ADE/B.Ed. program. Moreover, if some material was available it was irrelevant, outdated and insufficient considering the number of students enrolled. Students suggested adding latest books, course specific books in number sufficient for enrolled students, ICTs i.e., Computer Systems, Internet, Photocopier, etc. to enhance the use of library.

Conclusions

In the light of results, following conclusions were made:

Teachers and students, which utilized library resources: A good majority of female teachers and female students participated in study. Despite of limited number of library resources, two-third of the overall teachers but majority of them were from

female teachers accepted that they were using library. Maximum female teachers' visits library once in a week while about one-half of the male teachers, each expressed once in week and sometimes daily. Their visit consumes less than one hour because librarians support them to search for the required material and they issue the required one rather than sit there for reading them.

They were using library for searching of material for developing course outline, preparing lectures, searching topic for giving assignments/projects, preparation of handouts for students, looking for supplementary reading material and knowing variety of material available in library to guide students. Regarding the utilization of library resources, it was observed and concluded that teachers prefer printed resources over electronic resources but modern resources were also very scarce in most of the libraries included in the sample.

In case of students, slightly greater than one-half of the students, where majority of them were male, agreed regarding the library visit. Maximum percentages showed that students were visiting their libraries once in a week and spend 1 – 2 hours in library for reading books to prepare assignments and enhancing their knowledge. Moreover, they visit libraries to spend spare time and reading in a comfortable place. Same as teachers, students were also found to be interested in reading printed material in the library because of limited resources available in the library.

Teachers and students, which do not utilize library resources: Very few majority of the sampled teachers and students responded that they do not visit library because of the not availability of the required material and do not have sufficient time to search for it. Some of the students expressed that they were trained to search the required material. It is important to notice that our libraries are in need of immediate updating. There is need to add more books, journals and electronic resources in libraries of GCETs especially and universities generally.

Teacher educators not using library resources reported to collect material they require from internet, their personal library and course material /books provided by the institutions they work in. while students added that they collect the required from the notes provided by their teachers, buy their personal books, and get help from their family members. Non-availability of material and lack of research related resources were the main problems faced by teacher educators and students in use of library. They also reported insufficient space/ inadequate environment and lack of trained staff in library to support them were also reported by reasonable number of teacher educators.

Unavailability of course material related to the course taught in ADE/B.Ed (Hons.) program. Almost 65% of both, male and female teacher educated and 55% of male and female students complaint about non-availability of even the basic reading text. The situation is even alarming in GCETs as compared to libraries in universities.

Suggestions to maximize the library resources: Overall but majority of the GCETs teachers suggested that it will be helpful to develop interest among students for visiting library by providing them latest and course related books, assign activities through which they took interest in reading books, for this online resources and providing them a spacious and furnished library would be more helpful to bring their interest in book reading.

Students suggested for increasing course related books, provision of spacious and furnished libraries along with ICT tools prominently including computer, internet, printer, scanner and photocopier machines must be provided to them to maximize the library utilizations. University students also demanded that library hours should be mentioned in their timetable and students must be encouraged by teachers for visiting libraries.

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