Active Librarian Saving Users' Time

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ABSTRACT

A proactive librarian has a significant role to provide effective library service as well as saving users' time. This study aimed to explore the mechanism applied to save the time of the user, and to describe users' perspectives on time saving library services from Gyan Bikas Community library (GBCL). This research is based on primary data collected from the users, who had visited the library. The questionnaires and field observations tools were used. GBCL had provided different kinds of library services, particularly categorized as library service and community service. During both services, this study found that the time saving mechanisms of GCBL are proactive librarian, GBCL executive members along with field experts. The librarian was aware to internalize the value and importance of the Fourth Law of Library Science 'Save the time of the reader and practice them while offering the library services.

Keywords: Libraries and community, Time saving mechanism, Gyan Bikas Community Library & Learning Center, Proactive librarian

Introduction

Gyan Bikas Community library and Learning Center has been providing different library services to peoples with reading materials, for instance providing informal education class, ICT training, skill development training, health camp, and agricultural training. Gyan Bikas Community Library aims to provide those library extension services for the community members to make them self-dependent and to utilize their leisure.

Time is a very important thing to every person. Therefore, librarians should care about library users' time. In the light of this argument, this study examined the ways to provide time saving, and effective services to the library patrons and community members. This study mainly focused on the time saving mechanism of the Panauti Community while using library services and library activities.

Students, teachers, scholars, scientists, business executives, government officials, farmers, housewives and others are users of community libraries. The large numbers of users come to the library to fulfill their information needs and to use their leisure time. GBCL is one of such community libraries that is providing varieties of information services and community services. It does not focus on gathering and storing resources but delivering information and social services to the community (Patil & Pradhan, 2014).

Library users have limited time within which they have to complete a lot of tasks. The GBCL is active in the community. This library's working principle is to provide different kinds of services. It provides services as per users' need and their time. Community libraries provide services to enthusiastic users at one hand and at other, it is playing a role in different social activities. It helped all members of the community.

Community's members are very busy with their own homely tasks, professional tasks, and so on. So to the community library, their prime concern was to receive required information promptly. In this condition, GBCL's service delivery is worth exploring on how promptly it is serving effectively to its community members like-professionals, students, group of farmers, group of women, housewife, child, youth, old people and others.

GBCL is saving the time of the users while providing documents and other services. Following are the tools of saving time applied by GBCL:

1. Quality service

2. Quick service

3. Self service

4. On time service

5. Service delivery out of library walls (Besides library hours)

    a. Community's Professional need

    b. Healthy environmental need

    c. Public health

    d. Agricultural needs, etc.

These are the tools of the methods applied by GBCL to save users' time. In the library field, saving time is recognized as one major law defined by Dr. S. R. Ranganathan. GBCL applied this law in providing other services for saving user's time (Dhiman, 2005).

Statement of the problem

Community's members are very busy with their own work and they do not have leisure time. Therefore, their prime concern was to receive required information promptly. In this condition, GBCL's service delivery is worth exploring on how promptly it is serving effectively to its community members like- professionals, students, group of farmers, group of women, housewife, child, youth, old people and others. Since, the users are a variety of and so their needs are also different kinds of services. In such a diverse situation, how GBCL is providing services by saving their time. For the community library, users always come to the center. Similarly, the fourth law of library science, 'save the time of the users' also puts users at a nucleus position. This is why the study identified the research problem to find out how GBCL followed the fourth law of library science. Therefore, this study has focused on how the library's service is helping to save the time of their different users and what are the major methods applied to provide effective services. For finding out the solution of statement of problem this research questions are as following:

a) What are the mechanisms applied to save the time of the user?

b) How to provide varieties of services to the users effectively?

c) What are users' feedback for the library›s efforts in saving their time?

Objectives of the Study

This research aims to examine the application of the fourth law of library science in GBCL. The specific objectives of the study are:

i)   To find out the mechanism to save the time of the user.

ii) To evaluate users' perspectives on receiving prompt library servicesare satisfaction from GBCL service system.

Review of the Literature

Time is the most important thing to people. Students or teachers, farmers or housewives, general daily waged workers and business people, are always busy with their work. For such a busy community, a library is supposed to provide service to them. Therefore, libraries should care about users' time while providing services (Connaway & Faniel, 2014). Connaway and Faniel (2014) research suggested that time is the most important thing to the users then other things. Therefore, researchers had reordered Ranganathan's five laws of library science and had shifted forth law 'save the time of user' in first.

Community people visit community libraries because they get information according to their needs. Gyan Bikas Community library provides different services to community people. The training programs were targeted for unemployed and at another hand, it was targeted to utilize the leisure time of the community people. Karmacharya (2018) said that people come to community libraries to keep interest to gain knowledge and to learn new things. Moreover, they come to the library to utilize their leisure time too. Thus, community libraries should provide information to users according to their need. Furthermore, she said that nowadays, some libraries provide different services except document services. It has managed different fruitful training and programs targeted housewives, farmers, and illiterate people of the community. Its aim is to utilize their leisure to enable them in their life(Karmacharya, 2018).

Community library's users are all members of the community. Many users cannot use library-opening hours but they need library's information. Therefore, the community library provides service except library opening hours(10 to 05 is usual working time in Nepal) and library open morning and evening time for these users. Public library is for the community. It fulfills the user requirements. So that the public library provides services according to users' demand and requirement, interest and library should open at a suitable time for the user. The opening time might be morning or evening according to the needs of community people. Its opening time of the library helps to save the time of community people and they get library service at their suitable time (Sharma, 2019).

Thus, Time is the most important thing to users. It is to clarify the article of Connaway and Faniel (2014). Those researchers shifted forth law 'save the time of the reader' as the first law. Therefore, after above different related literature reviewed, the researcher found that different time saving mechanisms of community library, like as the proper management of library, arrangement of library materials in scientific method (cataloging and classification), convenience to receive information, and library-opening hours as well service time of community service (service delivery out of library walls).

Research Methodology

The purpose of this study is to find out what was the mechanism used to save the time of users to this community library. This research was based on quantitative analysis. The questionnaire was employed to collect data on Gyan Bikas Community Library. For this research purpose, the researcher had considered all library users who come to the library for information use and for evaluating time saving mechanisms during community service.

The researcher had categorized GBCL service into library service and community service and collected data users of both services separately. Total sample size of the study was 68 respondents. Among them 42 were in library service and 26 were in community service. After that, the researcher analyzed the data in table and graphic representation as well as interpreted the data of library services and community services comparatively.

Discussion and results
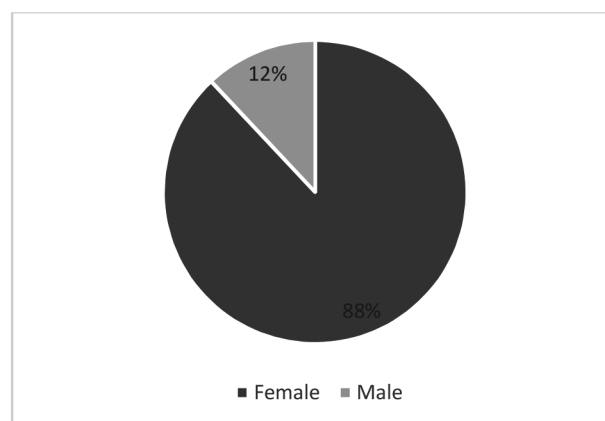
I. Demographic information

Figure 1: Distribution of respondents by gender in library services

Figure 1 showed that there were more female users visiting the library than male users. In this study, there are 42 respondents, among them 37 (88%) female and 5 (12%) male. The reason behind the higher number of female users is due to different library programs targeted to women, for instance, informal education class, skill development training, and ICT training. Besides book service, female users were more interested to take part in above-mentioned services and they wanted to use their leisure time and take benefit from these services. Hence, higher numbers of female users were interested to participate in other library services besides book service.
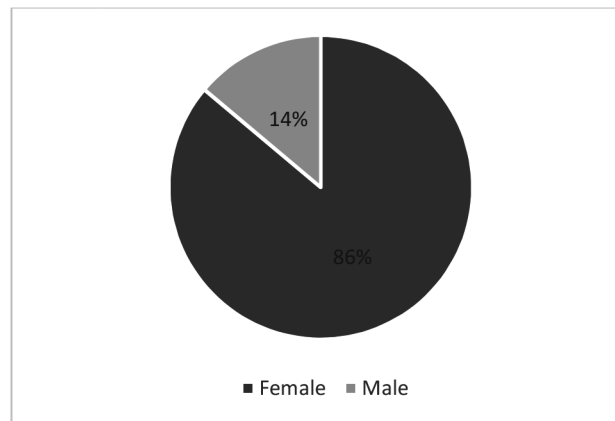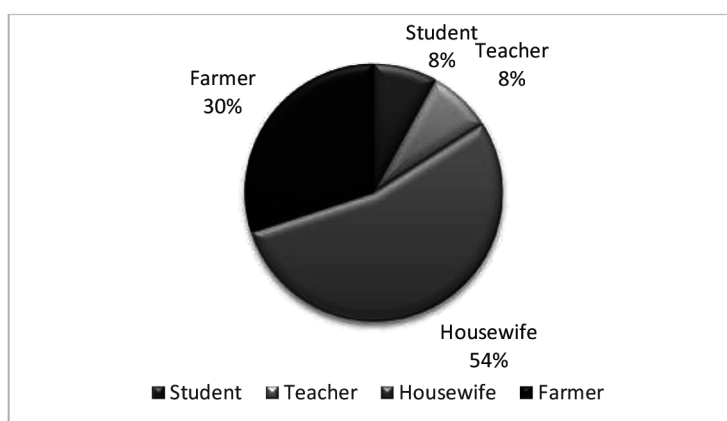

Figure 2: Distribution of respondents by gender in community services

GBCL organized different programs aimed to serve community service to the community people. In this study, 26 respondents were selected from users who have already participated in community services. Among them, 16 (62%) respondents were female and 10 (38%) were male, which was shown in figure 2. In community service, higher numbers of users were housewives and farmers; they were generally women. They wanted to use their leisure time meaningfully so they used the community services.
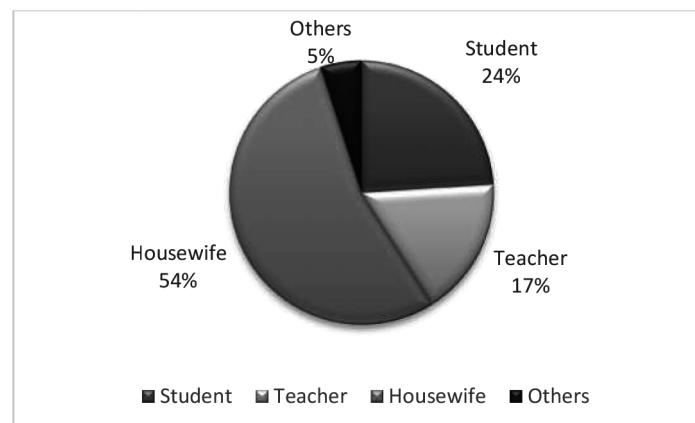
Figure 3: Distribution of respondents by professional status in library services

GBCL had provided different library services to community members, for instance book service, ICT training, skill development training, and informal class. Students, teachers, housewives and others users who belong to have participated in those services. Figure 3 showed that 24% were students, 17% were teachers, 54% were housewives, and 5% were others.

Figure 4: Distribution of respondents by professional status in community services

GBCL had organized a program to provide community service with social workers. It helped the GBCL to provide community service. Moreover, the librarian provided the community service to the community people as a facilitator. They had provided the right information at the right time to the community people. Figure 4 showed that 54% were housewives, 30% were farmers, 8% were students, 8% were teachers.

Table 1. Availability of appropriate library services

What is your main purpose ofvisiting the library?	
Book service	48%
Informal education class	24%
Skill development training	19%
ICT training	9%
42 respondents	

The library had provided different library services because its main objective is to let a higher number of community people in the library to visit and attempt the different library activities. It helped to utilize the leisure time of community people. In this work, GBCL had success in providing the right information at the right time to the users and the highest number of people visited to use the book service with other services. Table 1 showed that 48% of respondents visited the library for book service, 24% came to take informal education classes, 19% participated in skill development training, and 9% came to learn ICT.

Table 2. Types of community services of GBCL

Which community service have you mostly used from the GBCL?	
Health camp	54%
Agricultural training	30%
Programs and social gathering	8%
Animal farming	8%
26 respondents	

GBCL had served the different community services to the community. Such as training about agriculture, animal farming, and health camp etc. Only the executive person of GBCL did not provide community service to the community of Panauti. Therefore, GBCL cooperated with the community worker for provide its own community service. In addition, librarians had provided community service as a facilitator to provide right information at the right time to users. Table 2 showed that 54% of respondents participated in a health camp, 30% users founded an agricultural program, 8% visited a library to participate in a program about animal farming, and 8% involved different programs and social gathering. The health camps program seems to attract the majority of community people. Community people are interested in health related programs organized by the GBCL.

II. Librarian's assistance to all library users

Table 3. Getting right information at right time from the library service

How often do you get right information at right time?	Most of the time	Sometime	Frequently
42 respondents	62%	24%	14%

Above table showed how often respondents got the right information at the right time in library services. Among the respondents, 62% of users got the right information at the right time most of the time, 24% said that they got it sometimes, and only 14% said they got information frequently. This study reveals that, highest number of users got the right information at the right time through library service. However, for the majority of users, the frequency of getting the right information happened to be most of the time. The frequent chance of getting the right information is only for 14% of respondents. However, it is notable that the majority of users got information most of the time. There is not any other mechanism developed to provide information. However, users are dependent on librarians' active support for providing right information to right users.

Table 4. Frequency of respondents gets community services

How often do you get right information at right time?	Most of the time	Sometime	Frequently
26 respondents	8%	69%	23%

In regards to community service of GBCL, the people of the community had participation from community people in different ways when, library had organized the training or programs, and they visited the library whenever they had some questions to ask. Otherwise, they were busy with their own daily work, for instance in agriculture farming, animal farming and other works apart from their daily jobs. Therefore, they participated in community services for some time, which they were getting through GBCL. It helped the user to increase the agricultural product and to be healthy. Table 4 showed that 69% of respondents answered they received community services sometime, which was according to their need, 23% told that they got information frequently, and 8% said they got information most of the time. This data indicated that the majority of community people did not participate in all the training programs rather they have participated in some of the training programs as per their needs. In other meaning, the information about all the training programs did not disseminate to all of the community people.

III. Community workers' cooperation with the library/ Librarian as a facilitator for the community services

The service facilitator has a very significant role to play for providing either library services or community services. Nevertheless, this study showed the library visitors have already been well familiar with the library collections. Hence, they are able to help themselves in finding their needed books. While in the case of community services, experts and community service mobilizers have played an important role.

Table5. Respondents get Librarian's assistance help during book service

How do you get librarian's help during the book service?	
I can easily get book and retrieve self	40%
The Librarian helps me for choosing book	25%
The Librarian shows the rack for entire book	25%
The Librarian searches books for me him/ herself	10%
20 respondents	

Table 5 showed only 20 respondents had participated in this question because this question was related to book service and other users who participated in other library services did not respond to this question. The users, who participated in other library services, need not respond to this question. While in book service, the librarian assisted users to search and retrieve books. Due to the librarian's assistance, users got the right information at the right time. Librarian's active service is very important for users since there was no library technical system developed, for example cataloguing or any other information searching system. This data showed that 40% of respondents told could easily get book and retrieve self, 25% answered the librarian helps me for choosing book, 25% told the librarian shows the rack for entire book, only 10% said that librarian searches books for me him/herself.

Table6.Method adopted by GBCL for providing community services to users

How do you get social mobilizers' help during the community service?	Through the expert	Through home to home service
26 respondents	77%	23%

The aim of asking this question was to know how GBCL was giving service to the community. Library service had been broadened to community service. A community library, GBCL had a hybrid nature. Hence, GBCL had cooperated with the social workers and professional experts. The library provided different community service to community members. Some examples of community services are such as health camp, agriculture farming, and animal farming for the community. The specialist of related field and social mobilizer had direct contribution for these services. Table 6 showed that 20 (77%) respondents got help during community service time through the expert, and 6 (23%) said through home-to-home service. GBCL had organized a program to provide different community service with cooperation specialists of related fields. Thus, respondents got right information at time from GBCL.

Table7. Impression of librarian on respondents

How do you impress librarians/executive members/ social mobilizers?	
Most friendly and helpful for me	58%
They informed about programs timely	23%
They manages programs effectively	19%
68 respondents	

There is not any other mechanism developed to provide information. Users are depended on active and friendly librarians/executive members/ social mobilizers to support getting the right information at the right time. However, the results showed that 58% of respondents were friendly and helpful Librarians, 23% of respondents said they were informed about programs timely and 19% respondents said they managed programs effectively.

Table 8. Time saving mechanisms adopted by GBCL

How is your time saved through various services of the library?	
The services of library saved my time	42%
The Librarian/executive members/ social mobilize answered my queries	39%
The frequent gatherings helped them to fulfill my information needs	19%
68 respondents	

The Librarian and social mobilizer were active in a community to save time of users and to utilize their leisure time. The result showed different library services save the time of 42% users, Librarian/executive members/ social mobilizer answered users' queries to save the time of the 39% users and 19% respondents said the frequent gatherings helped them to fulfill my information.

Conclusions

Gyan Bikas Community Library provided valuable services to community people in different ways. It provided information to users and learning opportunities for different skills. Likewise, it had properly maintained library spaces to serve different kinds of services to users comfortably. GBCL library collections had been classified and arranged properly to provide prompt services and save time of users, so GBCL users were satisfied with book service. In other library services and community services, GBCL provided quality service to users in cooperation with professional experts, quick service by proactive librarian and facilitator, service delivery beyond library walls except flexible library hours so that it could save users' time and to provide right information at right time. So, the huge part of responsibility fell upon the library staff and social facilitators rather than any system inside or outside of the library for fulfilling the need to save users' time. Hence, this study concluded the human factor is the main reason behind GBCL's time saving mechanism. But, there was no automated library system, nor any information system was brought into play for the community services. However, users were found satisfied for saving their time during their retrieval of information because of the prompt response of librarians and facilitators to them.

Users achieved benefits from services provided by GBCL. For instance, students from different faculties got their needed course books from the library. GBCL had changed illiterate women into literate people and women also benefited by skill development training. Which helped them to utilize leisure time as well as it also helped them to increase their income. Likewise, farmers were benefited by agricultural training, which helped them to increase the agricultural products, and health camps organized by GBCL served the whole community people, it helped community people to be healthy. Similarly, services of GBCL fulfilled the professional information needed to help community people to solve academic and professional problems, to be healthy and to increase agricultural products.

In the present situation of the GBCL, the collection size and the users' number are still small, that's why the librarian can memorize the locations of each source of information. While for community services, it has provisions of different groups formed which made the library work properly. As the social groups were formed, so do the broad classification of documents were categorized, but there was absence of cataloguing service. Although, most of the users were familiar with library documents. They could retrieve documents easily according to their own desires. Due to limited users' direct approach to the library, the present librarian's support is sufficient for giving prompt service, which can in future be insufficient. In addition, time is changing as well as this is the age of science and technology. Therefore, users wanted for technology-based services. Hence, Library services based on modern library technology provide pinpointed, exhaustive and expeditious library services in future, which will make GBCL a more popular library and role model library.

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