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Mammadova V. M.,

PhD student, Baku State University, Circulation
Services Specialist, Library and Information Services,
ADA University (Azerbaijan, Baku), vafa.mag@gmail.com,
vmammadova@ada.edu.az

LIBRARY INFORMATION SERVICES PROVIDED TO EXTERNAL USERS AT THE ADA UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

The article lists the modern types of the library–information services with the usage of theoretical thoughts on this issue, and defines the role and place of the participants (users and information specialists) of this library activity. Later the data retrieved in the result of statistical and analytical study of the services provided to the external users at the ADA University Library is described graphically.

Keywords: modern libraries, library information services, new types of the services, information literacy, library user, user categories, information specialist.

(стаття друкується мовою оригіналу)

Introduction. Libraries and other information institutions are gaining more vitality and importance in the age of information that our current century with its high technologies is characterized with, and the daily life of people cannot be imagined without information.

The history of libraries can be traced back five thousand years, and ancient libraries can be categorized into four groups: government, religious, commercial, and private or family libraries [2].

Though the libraries in ancient times were created only as places for storing and preserving the books and manuscripts, as the time passed these missions evolved and the new library functions were created and added to the primary ones.

Main functions of modern library and information services provided to users are as follows:

Bibliographic/archival function – includes the processes, such as identification, selection, acquisition, organization, storage, retrieval, and preservation of information to provide access to society's records;

Educational function – of libraries and information agencies supports learning by individuals and groups or classes and is one of the oldest forms of service provided by the profession. Librarians and other information professionals have become more engaged in the teaching/learning process. Sometimes called «bibliographic instruction» or «information literacy», information professionals teach people those skills that enable clients to locate, evaluate, and use information effectively;

Cultural function – includes the sharing of cultures – the music, motion pictures, literature and customs of various ethnic groups and international cultures, and it encompasses a variety of formats: books, periodicals, audio recordings in various formats, and video recordings;

Research function – equates to creating new social knowledge unlike the educational function. The use of «research» here means that systematic, formal process which requires (1) a review of literature to determine what is state of the art in an area of inquiry, (2) a careful articulation of research questions or hypothesis, (3) a systematic plan and effort to collect data, (4) the analysis of the data, and (5) a report of the results, including generalizations extrapolated from the data;

Informational function – is usually called «reference service» or «information service» in today's libraries and information centers. The reference or information function

of the library was formally introduced by Melvil Dewey at the Columbia University Library in the 1880s by creation of reference department, and assigning staff to this function. This service includes the teaching of information skills, ready reference, and regular reference service. If a service requires an extraordinary amount of a professional's time, the client may be charged, especially in special libraries;

Recreational function – is concerned with the use of information resources during leisure time. These resources include novels, poetry, periodicals, nonfiction, audio recordings, video recordings, and games to support leisure time interests [2].

The listed functions are very essential in terms of improvement of service activities in a library and lead to development of different kinds of library information services.

- Library information services
- Modern types of library–information services include, but are not limited to:
 - Circulation and renewal of the books and other physical library materials;
 - Reference and information services;
 - Building course reserves collection (in academic libraries);
 - Interlibrary loan (ILL) services;
 - Organization and holding of information literacy sessions;
 - Online consultation services;
 - Managing the use of group study rooms;
 - Computer and internet/wi–fi services;
 - Printing, copying and scanning services;
 - Digitizing services;
 - Binding services;
 - Membership services for external users (mostly in academic libraries);
 - Organizing meetings with famous writers and poets;
 - Organizing book discussion clubs;
 - Holding book presentation events, etc. [5].

The digital age is transforming the field of library and information science and is redefining the profession of librarianship, creating a new generation of librarians who are embracing a new world of career opportunities in our information–rich society. And the world is starting to notice this new breed of librarian. Main soft skills and abilities that are important for success in the field of library and information services are as follows:

- Ability to communicate (both written and verbal);
- Flexibility/adaptability;
- Problem–solving/ analytical skills;
- Customer service skills;
- Ability to work in collaboration/be a team player;
- Motivated/enthusiastic approach to work;
- Ability to be innovative/creative;
- Leadership capability [4].

The listed skills and abilities are essential in meeting user needs and expectations, which is broad and deep in terms of diversity, especially in academic libraries, one of the main libraries by type.

- The user segments of an academic library cover:
 - Undergraduates and taught postgraduates;
 - Support staff;
 - International students;
 - Students with disabilities;

- Collaborative provision users;
- Academics and researchers;
- External customers [1].

It is important to assess the quality of the provided library and information services when it comes to evaluating the results of the spent resources, efforts and funds.

Library assessment involves a variety of methods including user satisfaction surveys, observation, focus groups, and usability studies, as well as routine collection of operational data. Library metrics are measurements of inputs and outputs of facilities, collections, and services: how many, how much do they cost, and how well are they used. Statistics can provide a sound basis, if collected and reported accurately, upon which to make informed decisions [7].

ADA University Library, being an academic by type renders different kinds of library and information services to its internal and external users.

External users' segmentation of an academic library includes visiting professors, research scholars, and students of the other universities, members of the community and other users who need resources for their research papers and/or studies.

Analysis of external users and academic library information services

As a result of analysis of the data described on the visitor request forms of the external users of ADA University Library, quite interesting statistical information has been retrieved. The request form has been compiled in a form of questionnaire containing questions about the users' library usage skills, previously visited libraries and browsed online databases and e-libraries, users' research areas by specifying the title of their research topics, etc.

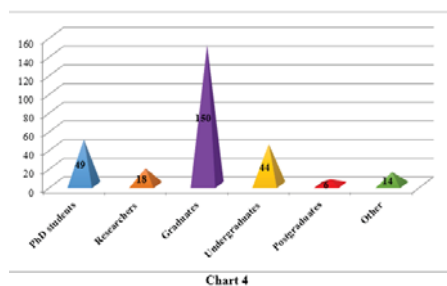
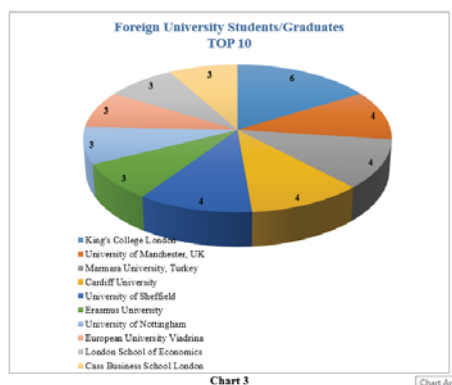
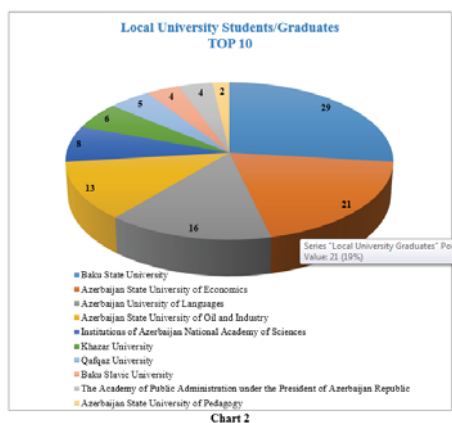
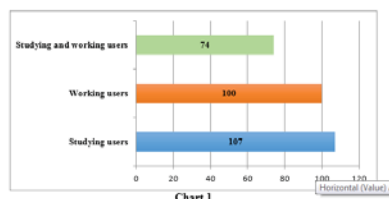
External Users' Policy and Procedures, as well as the external users request form for online submission are available through the website of the ADA University Library: ada.edu.az/library [3].

After online submission of the visitor request form, the requestors are contacted for further procedures and invited to the library for finalizing their membership registrations. They are required to submit the copy of their national ID cards or passports.

Generally, memberships cover the period of 3 months, in the end of which the users may ask for renewal, if needed.

During 2015–2016 academic year, ADA University Library provided library and information services to 281 external users, 75 out of which were renewed memberships. 25 of the served users were the citizens of different foreign countries, while the rest were the Azerbaijani citizens with different educational background studying in the local and international universities.

Not all of the visitors were students or researchers of different universities, but also some of them, who were working in various organizations, used the library services in order to develop their professional skills. Some users were both studying and working at the same time (See the chart 1) [6].

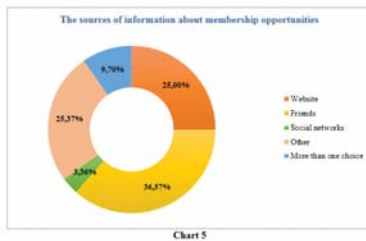


The top 10 ranking of the local and international universities where the visitors of the ADA University Library were studying or had graduated from, have been determined according to the data derived from the request forms (See the charts 2, 3).

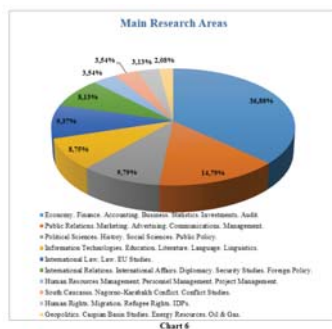
The academic statuses of the external users sharply differ from each other. They comprise the various ranges of degrees. During the report year the academic statuses of the external users were: Postgraduate students – 6; PhD students – 49; Researchers – 18; Graduate students – 150; Undergraduate students – 44; Others (this category includes the users not falling under the above-mentioned categories, such as high school pupils, students on academic leave (mainly ADA University students) and others) – 14 (See the chart 4) [6].

To the question «Where did you get information about ADA University Library?» approximately 36.57% of the respondents answered that they heard about the library from their friends, 25% indicated that they got the information from the library website, 3.36% of the users knew about the library from the social networks, mainly from Facebook, and the

25.37% of the users chose the «other» option by specifying the source of information, great share of which is owned by the ADA University trainings, as well as ADA Executive Education training courses held for the individuals and/or for corporate employees. About 9.70% of the respondents chose more than one option (See the chart 5) [6].

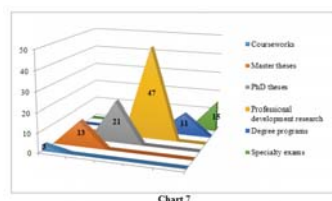


The second page of the External Visitor Request Form is in the form of questionnaire and includes questions about main aspects of the library usage activity, such as what library resources and services are required, the possessed library usage skills, e-library and e-database usage habits, the area of research, the title of the research topic, needed period of time for the current research, etc. The main areas of the conducted researches have been grouped and ranked by percentage according to the data retrieved from the submitted request forms (See the chart 6):

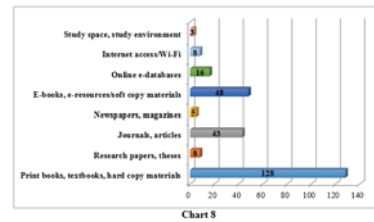


The researches on the above-mentioned generalized subjects have been differentiated with various research categories, which were marked by the users according their needs: Master or PhD theses researches, professional development researches inspired by the career development opportunities, preparations for degree programs, i.e. preparation for IELTS, TOEFL, GRE, GMAT and other exams; or preparation for specialty exams, such as, ACCA, CFA, FRM, CIMA certification exams, and etc.

Approximately 43% of the respondents (47 out of 110) expressed their need for library resources by indicating that they had researches related with their professional development projects. The PhD students, who were conducting thesis researches, took the second respectable place with 19%. The next places were distributed among other categories with slight differences in number (See the chart 7).

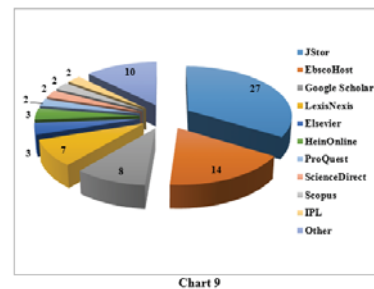


The library resources required by the visitors cover the different types of information sources and service ranges (See the chart 8).

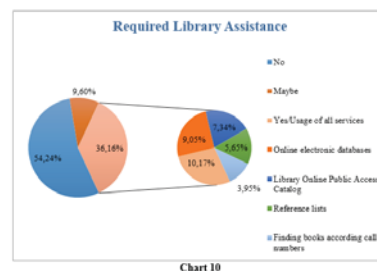


To the question about resource-searching skills and e-library, e-catalog using habits the 75% of the respondents replied positively by specifying the names of e-catalogs and e-databases that they had used, while the 25% of the users indicated that they had no e-resource searching and using skills. Taking into account that most libraries in Azerbaijan do not offer subscribed e-database and e-resource services to their users, this fact doesn't seem as an extraordinary case.

Among the more popular electronic databases, familiar to the outside visitors, the first place is owned by JStor online e-database, later come EbscoHost, Google Scholar, LexisNexis, Elsevier, HeinOnline, ProQuest, Science Direct, Scopus and others (Springer, SAGE, Emerald, Taylor & Francis, Web of Science, ACM, IEEE, Ebrary, EBL, etc.) (See the chart 9).

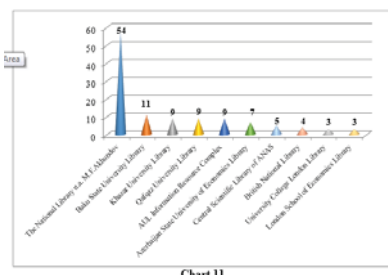


From the assistance services offered by the ADA University Library, some of the visitors refused to take advantage of by thanking and referring to previously possessed skills, but others chose all or some of the listed options to benefit from, or indicated they might need some assistance. In renewed memberships, the library usage skills and habits had been developed in comparison with the first term memberships, which proves that the users had benefited from their first term visits to ADA University Library in large scale [6]. (See the chart 10).



ADA University Library is expressing its desire by various means to contribute to the development of the field of Library Science and Librarianship in the country.

Therefore, one of the interesting questions included in the request form asks: «Which libraries have you visited before coming to ADA University Library?» The main purpose of this question is to identify the usage conditions of the library collections related with the current research areas. The «Top 10» list of the mostly visited libraries by the external users reveals not only the names of the local libraries, but also the libraries of different foreign countries where the users lived or studied in (See the chart 11).



The list of the other local and international libraries includes: the Presidential Library of Azerbaijan Republic, the Library of National Assembly of Azerbaijan Republic, the Westminster Library, George Washington University Library, The Library of University of Amsterdam, Library of the University of Brussels, University of Manchester Library, American Library in France, University of Nottingham Library, University of Sheffield Library, La Sapienza University Library, Marmara University Library, Cass Business School Library, Cardiff University Library, University of York Library, King's College London Library, Hacettepe University Library and other libraries.

ADA University Library delivers on-site and off-site library-information services to the employees of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs of the Republic of Azerbaijan, as well. And the membership registration procedures are the same as for the other external users, but the main difference is that, the users of this category are privileged to benefit from the online electronic resources of the library off-site. They are provided with special accounts in order to get access to the electronic materials, but like other users they cannot check the print books out.

Conclusion. The main aim of this study is to identify the current situation in other local libraries and to determine the role and the place of the ADA University Library among other local and international academic libraries in terms of maintaining research needs of the scientific community.

Being one of the modern and rich libraries in the region with its cutting-edge technologies and rich collections, ADA University Library has gained a vast popularity amongst the researchers both from the Azerbaijani society and foreign guests of the country, and scientists from different academic institutions and organizations are eager to use its resources.

Main part (approximately 95–98%) of the library print (about 45 000 volumes) and electronic resources (more than 500 000 volumes of books and e–articles) collection of the ADA University library is in English language and it gives huge opportunity to English-speaking users and researchers to highly benefit from them. Other academic libraries in the country mainly hold books in Azerbaijani or Russian languages and unfortunately not the recent editions, which affect their collections' usability statistics.

The positive feedbacks received from the different local and international users about the richness and up-to-dateness of the ADA University Library collection, as well as the comfortable academic environment inspire the library staff to work harder and more efficiently in order to meet the requirements of the internal and external users.

The hopes for the future of the academic library environment of the country are positive and we would like to see many more local libraries meeting the international standards, and having high technologies and technological software and tools in their use.

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Мамедова В. М., докторант, Бакинський державний університет, фахівець з бібліотечної сервісу АДА (Азербайджан, Баку), vafa.mag@gmail.com, vmammadova@ada.edu.az

Бібліотечно-інформаційні послуги, що надаються зовнішнім користувачам в Бібліотечі Азербайджанської Дипломатичної Академії

Перераховуються сучасні види бібліотечно-інформаційних послуг з використанням теоретичних основ з цього питання, визначаються роль і місце учасників (користувачів і інформаційних фахівців) в цій сфері бібліотечної діяльності. Графічно описуються дані, отримані в результаті статистичного і аналітичного аналізу обслуговування, наданого зовнішнім користувачам Бібліотеки Університету АДА.

Ключові слова: сучасні бібліотеки, бібліотечно-інформаційне обслуговування, нові види обслуговування, інформаційна грамотність, користувач бібліотеки, категорії користувачів, інформаційний фахівець.

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Гусейнов И., докторант, Институт Истории им. А. Бакиханова НАНА (Азербайджан), matlabm@yandex.ru

СОВРЕМЕННЫЙ ЭТАП И ПЕРСПЕКТИВЫ АЗЕРБАЙДЖАНО–АМЕРИКАНСКИХ ОТНОШЕНИЙ

Рассматриваются некоторые вопросы перспективы связанной с азербайджано–американскими отношениями. Отмечается, что эти отношения имеют надежные корни, т.к. непосредственно связаны с желаниями обеих стран развивать дружеские и взаимовыгодные отношения.

Ключевые слова: Республика Азербайджан, США, прикаспийские страны, энергоресурсы.