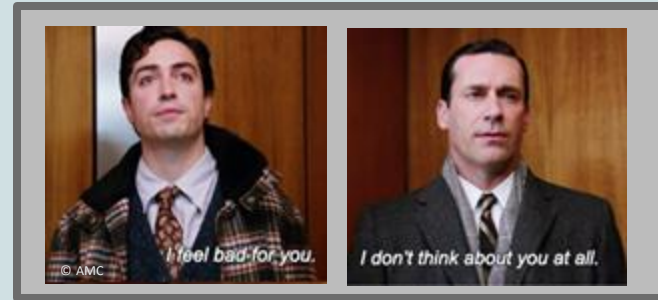


“Vital”: Perceptions and use of the institutional library by faculty in Irish higher education institutions



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Introduction



- centrality of physical resources
- indispensability of the library building
- visibility of the librarian
- obvious value of the institutional library

Aims

- **Investigate** how faculty engage with library resources and services, what they are aware of and whether they are utilising what is available to them
- **Identify** factors that may influence academic library use and non-use such as awareness, time, location, age, or type of employment
- **Examine** whether there are differences in the frequency and extent of engagement with library services along disciplinary lines
- **Collect** information on the attitudes and opinions of faculty on the library

Objectives

- **Conduct** a literature review of the current state of research on academic library use and perception
- **Create and administer** a research instrument to collect data on how faculty use and perceive the library
- **Analyse** the data collected to identify trends and factors in library use and perception by faculty
- **Recommend** how academic libraries can better support the needs of their faculty users

Online questionnaire

Faculty use and perception of the library in Irish higher education institutions

Dear participant,

Thank you for taking the time to fill out this survey on how you use and perceive the library in your institution. There are 21 questions in this survey and it is estimated that it will take you 6-7 minutes to complete.

You are being asked to take this survey because you teach and research in an Irish higher education institution. Please note that all submissions are anonymous and all data will be anonymised.

The data recorded from this survey will be stored in the cloud on a password-protected account. You may decide to stop being a part of this research study at any time and you have the right to ask that any data you have supplied to that point be withdrawn/destroyed.

Do you teach
at third level
in Ireland?

6-7 mins
survey

Please make time
for this short
survey about
how you use and
perceive your
academic library

Thank
you!



→ **5 sections**

- Basic information
- Collaboration with the library
- Library training/instruction
- Your use of the library
- Your perception of the library

→ **21 questions**

16 closed multiple-choice questions

1 open multiple-choice question

2 Likert scales

2 freetext boxes

→ **Designed** according to UDL principles

→ **Structured** for harmony and flow to reduce mental lode and time burden

→ **Piloted** and revised before rollout

Recruitment / response

- vital
- crucial
- integral
- hugely beneficial
- invaluable
- central

- **Institutions** drawn from HEA website
- **Access difficulties** through institutional channels
- **identified** two routes for recruitment
- **Emailed** individual units (faculties, schools, departments)
- **Social media** via Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn

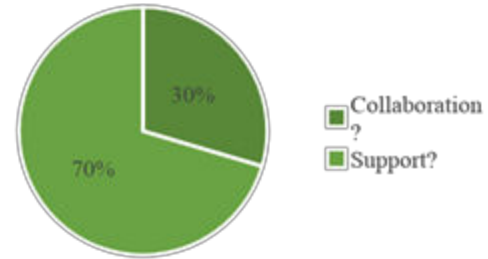
Perception of the library

- Library training is more important for students than for faculty
- The library is both proactive and reactive
- Overwhelming disagreement that the library is becoming less relevant
- The library is the main gateway – but maybe *only* a gateway
- Enthusiasm for the continued use of physical library infrastructure
- Awareness of funding issues and support for increased investment

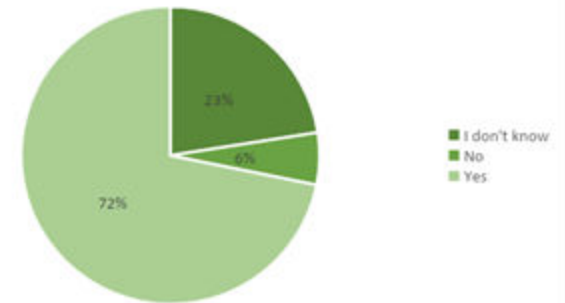
Collaboration

- No strong evidence of move towards a functional librarianship model in Irish institutions
- Little evidence of a move away from a service provider model towards a trusted partner model
- Library staff overwhelmingly viewed as support staff rather than as equal collaborative partners
- 74% said that there was no representation, or they were unaware of any representation, of the library in faculty meetings

Collaboration or support?



Is there a subject/liaison librarian for your field?



Use of the library

Library instruction and training for faculty

- 94% not part of CPD
- 26% had never attended

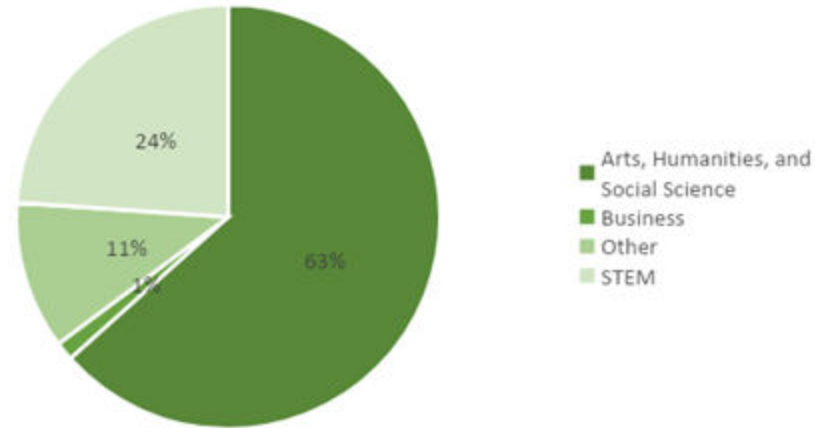
Regret and self-deprecation

- “I could do more”
- “I probably underutilise [the library]”
- “I don’t think I engage as much with [...] the library services as much as I should do”

Disciplinary differences

- STEM faculty were more likely to say that there was no library representation in their faculty meetings
- AHSS faculty were more aware of the existence of a subject/liaison librarian in their field
- AHSS faculty made more frequent visits to the physical library
- Both groups made equal use of online resources by weekly frequency

Discipline of respondents



Conclusions and recommendations

Low awareness and lack of visibility

More aggressive marketing outside the library

Move to online only engagement

Discipline-specific, needs more research

Individual library surveys

Could benefit from sharing data

Support/partner?

Development of a collaborative framework

Thank you



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