

## Public library users' perceptions of readers' services: Importance, satisfaction, and implications for quality education in Quezon Province

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### Abstract

**Aim:** This study assessed the level of importance and satisfaction of library users regarding the readers' services of selected public libraries in Quezon Province, with the goal of developing an intervention program to improve readers' services for enhanced quality education and lifelong learning in alignment with Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4).

**Methodology:** The study employed a quantitative-descriptive research design involving 380 randomly selected library users. Data were collected using a self-developed bilingual survey questionnaire that underwent pilot testing and expert validation. Statistical tools such as frequency, percentage, mean, ranking, and the Mann-Whitney and Kruskal-Wallis tests were utilized to analyze the data.

**Results:** The findings revealed that all areas of readers' services, including access to collections, service delivery, and library programs, were perceived by library users as highly important and satisfactory. Children's books, use of library space, and library instruction emerged as the most valued services, while children's books, recreational games, and summer reading programs were identified as the most satisfactory. Significant differences in perceived importance and satisfaction were observed based on user profiles. Reference materials, periodicals, library space, and library tours were among the most utilized readers' services, while limited awareness was identified as a major hindrance to the use of other services.

**Conclusion:** The study concludes that the selected public libraries contribute to the achievement of SDG 4 through the provision of readers' services. However, service gaps persist in user awareness, inclusive and specialized programs, regular user assessments, and strategic planning. These findings highlight the need for targeted interventions to guide policymakers, public library administrators, and stakeholders in implementing localized strategies that maximize the educational impact of public libraries within their communities.

**Keywords:** *library user importance, user satisfaction, readers' services, SDG 4, quality education, public libraries*

### INTRODUCTION

Public libraries have long served as pillars of communities, offering free access to information and fostering lifelong learning. Recognized by local government units (LGUs) as educational hubs, these libraries have empowered generations through information and education (Furigay, 2021). Since library users increasingly value these spaces for study and learning, public libraries have come forth and solidified their relevance as vital contributors to global development goals, particularly the United Nations' fourth sustainable development goal (SDG 4) on quality education. However, their potential in addressing educational concerns is often hampered as many developing countries continue to face challenges in accessing education.

Internationally, sub-Saharan Africa faces funding constraints, limited access and inclusion, and challenges in teacher education, all of which hinder the achievement of inclusive and equitable education for everyone. Similarly, the Philippines grapples with persistent issues in its education sector, such as poverty, ongoing armed conflicts, and insufficient resources and infrastructure, which contribute to disparities in learning. At the regional level, the CALABARZON Regional Development Plan 2023-2028 highlights several pressing concerns in basic education, including low learner proficiency, poor reading comprehension, student underperformance, digital connectivity gaps, rising out-of-school youth, and limited support for research and innovation within the educational context. These

problems point to broader pedagogical gaps in literacy development, the cultivation of a reading culture, and the limited integration of informal and community-based learning environments, which are essential to the learning process.

In response, the Philippines has integrated SDG 4 into its national and regional development strategies. The country's long-term vision, *AmBisyon Natin 2040*, along with the Philippine Development Plan and CALABARZON Regional Development Plan 2023-2028, emphasizes the need to improve educational accessibility and quality. However, despite these efforts, the role of public libraries in achieving quality education and addressing educational challenges remains underrepresented. While Quezon Province's Provincial Development and Physical Framework and Executive-Legislative Agenda 2022-2025 include library initiatives, these works are limited to outreach programs, missing the broader potential of public libraries to support education and lifelong learning through the readers' services.

Readers' services are a core function of public libraries, ensuring that the library's resources, services, and programs are accessible to all users throughout different sections of the library. These services provide access to a diverse collection, assist in information retrieval, facilitate efficient use of resources through targeted programs, and offer dedicated spaces that support varied modes of learning—promoting literacy, supporting informal learning, and strengthening local learning ecosystems.

Quezon Province, known as one of the leading provinces with established public libraries in the Philippines, spanning both urban and rural areas, provides an ideal setting for a comprehensive analysis of how public library readers' services contribute to quality education, accentuating their significance in fulfilling the global educational goals.

Ultimately, this analysis aims to not only enhance readers' services and demonstrate their contribution to achieving SDG 4, but also to substantiate their potential in alleviating learning gaps, provide evidence-based insights for policy advocacy, and guide the development of an intervention program to promote quality education and lifelong learning within public libraries. Through this investigation, the study seeks to uphold the core principle of the SDGs, ensuring that no one is left behind in the pursuit of sustainable development.

### Review of Related Literature and Studies

This section reviews international and local studies that provide a comprehensive understanding of the fundamental role of public libraries in achieving quality education, emphasizing how readers' services enrich educational outcomes and how assessing user satisfaction drives service improvements to enhance those learning outcomes.

### Importance of Readers' Services on Quality Education

International studies affirm that public libraries are vital to achieving SDG 4 by ensuring access to knowledge and reducing educational inequalities. Notably, the Pressreader Team (2025) asserts that while libraries advance SDG 4, funding cuts and limited donations threaten their progress towards the goals, urging policymakers to reaffirm the library's value to the community. Osuigwe (2023), in a similar vein, highlights how West African libraries bridge educational gaps for disadvantaged children through books and literacy programs, while Bakthiar et al. (2024) shows that digital information literacy, supported by library-school partnerships, improves learning outcomes and advances quality education. Gates (2025) further emphasize that device lending and Wi-Fi hotspots reduce the digital divide by improving internet access for low-income and minority groups, supporting equitable participation in education and digital learning. Additionally, Gray et al. (2022) found that dedicated library spaces—such as teen lounges, playrooms, and makerspaces—support safe learning and social engagement for youth within structured library programs.

In the Philippines, public libraries promote inclusive and quality education through accessible and innovative services. Precisely, the National Library's research assistance, educational programs, and diverse resources expand lifelong learning and educational access (National Library of the Philippines, 2024), while its braille and audiobooks for individuals with print disabilities support equitable access and learning participation (San Pedro-Galo, 2022). Moreover, the Calbayog City Library's Technology for Education, Employment, Entrepreneurs, and Economic Development (Tech4ED) program addresses the digital divide by delivering Information Communication Technology (ICT) services to disadvantaged communities (The Calbayog Journal, 2023). Furthermore, Piquero (2025) emphasized that the Cebu City Public Library functions as an accessible study space that facilitates board exam preparation by offering a conducive and affordable environment for intensive review.

Research has shown that these readers' services equip users with essential skills for the future. For example, Cahill & Ingram (2022) found that storytelling programs developed children's early literacy skills, symbolic



comprehension, and inference skills, whereas Zhao et al. (2023) revealed information literacy training enhances students' search, database, citation, and ethical skills, highlighting the need for educators and librarians to continuously improve instruction methods. In addition, Agyekum (2022) highlights that library spaces support the acquisition of social and communication skills through new relationships, fostering adult learners' social development and learning experiences.

### User Satisfaction

According to Padohinog & Ariate (2024), user satisfaction is essential for libraries to achieve their goals, as it directly influences usage and service effectiveness, while Mariano et al. (2024) emphasized that prioritizing satisfaction drives continuous improvements necessary for library relevance and organizational success. This supports Cuevas & Tamayo (2024) assertion that service quality influences user satisfaction. Similarly, Masion & Diaz (2024) found that perceptions of high-quality service enhance satisfaction and engagement, suggesting that improving service quality is a crucial strategy for attracting and retaining users, which in turn encourages more frequent visits and active participation. Moreover, just as the study by Tuble & Panhilason (2024) observed that frequent access to diverse resources increases satisfaction, Panhilason (2024) confirmed that user awareness is closely linked to satisfaction and utilization, implying that continuous promotional efforts are critical to maximizing the value of resources and services.

### Synthesis of Reviewed Literature and Studies

Globally and locally, the reviewed literature and studies underscore that public libraries serve a multifaceted role in advancing education by promoting literacy, lifelong learning, digital inclusion, safe learning environments, and the development of educational and social skills, which are all core components of quality education. They also emphasize that meeting user needs, which leads to user satisfaction, is essential for sustaining the quality and relevance of services.

However, despite this strong body of evidence, limited studies have examined the perspective of users regarding their specific importance and satisfaction with the readers' services within the geographic context of Quezon Province, while weighing their contribution to SDG 4. Addressing this gap, the present study investigates how reader-centered services in Quezon public libraries support literacy and lifelong learning through access to information and technology. Additionally, considering that public libraries in developing countries like the Philippines face challenges similar to those encountered internationally, the present study offers context-based insights through which relevant international practices may be adapted to address local educational challenges. In doing so, it outlines ways to strengthen public libraries' contributions to quality education and sustainable development.

### Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework of this study builds on the theory of library goodness proposed by Orr (1973), as explored by Crawford (2016). This theory provides a systematic approach to evaluating library performance by examining the interrelated concepts of quality and value. Quality is defined as how well library services meet users' needs, while value is reflected in the beneficial outcomes and positive effects derived from their utilization. This framework guided the development of the instrument by defining the essential dimensions through which readers' services can be evaluated in terms of value (importance) and quality (satisfaction).

Central to Orr's model is a feedback loop connecting key components such as resources, service capability, utilization, and beneficial effects, with service capability and utilization influenced by user demands. These variables informed the study's focus on three areas: access to collections, which represent resources, explores whether users have accessible and diverse educational and informational materials; library programs, which measure the library's capability on how effectively resources are used to provide meaningful services; and service delivery, which assesses utilization, ensures whether users can easily access and benefit from those services. Accordingly, since utilization and beneficial effects depend on user demands, perceptions of quality and value may vary across different user groups, prompting analysis of differences in their perceived importance and satisfaction when segmented by their profile. This approach supports service improvement and provides deeper insight into how distinct user groups experience and evaluate readers' services situated within a broader global context, allowing public libraries to better respond to user demands and contribute to advancing educational equity aligned to SDG 4.

Furthermore, this study was also grounded in educational theories such as constructivist learning theory, lifelong learning theory, and communities of practice to provide a pedagogical lens for examining how readers' services facilitate learning outcomes and expand equitable access to education within public library contexts. These theories collectively position public libraries as dynamic learning environments where users construct knowledge,

engage in continuous learning, and participate in community-based knowledge exchange that supports literacy development, reading culture, and informal, socially situated learning.

### Conceptual Framework

The conceptual framework of this study is based on the Input–Process–Output (IPO) model, which identifies readers’ services as the independent variable and users’ perceptions of importance and satisfaction as the dependent variables.

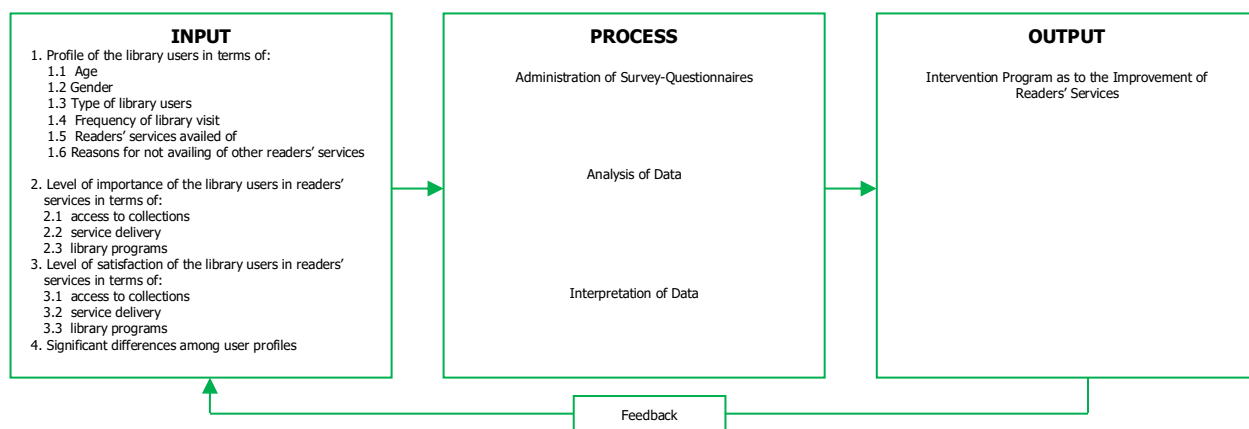


Figure 1. Paradigm of the Study

As shown in figure 1, the input data include the profile of library users and their perceived importance and satisfaction with readers’ services for access to the collection, service delivery, and library programs and the significant differences among user profiles. This categorization provides a structured way to organize and understand the different facets of the readers’ services across all library sections, from providing access to information through its collections to delivering assistance and engaging the users through programs. The process denotes the methodological steps of the study, beginning with the administration of survey-questionnaires and continuing with the analysis and interpretation of data, with the results compared with the SDG 4 targets to assess the progress made towards achieving this goal and identify areas that require further improvement or intervention. Eventually, an intervention program as to the improvement of readers’ services geared towards the achievement of the UN 2030 fourth agenda for sustainable development is the output of the study. This framework provides a structured guide for conceptualizing and organizing different ideas and concepts within the field of study.

### Statement of the Problem

Public libraries play an essential role in advancing Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4), which promotes inclusive and equitable quality education and lifelong learning opportunities for all. Despite the implementation of national and regional educational development plans aimed at addressing disparities in access to education, the specific contributions of public libraries remain insufficiently examined within the broader educational landscape. While policy frameworks recognize libraries as important educational resources, their potential to support learning and literacy development through readers’ services is often underutilized.

At the provincial level, development frameworks in Quezon Province acknowledge library initiatives; however, these initiatives are largely limited to outreach activities rather than comprehensive service development. This situation raises concerns regarding the perceived relevance, accessibility, and functional effectiveness of readers’ services in supporting learning needs within local communities. Without systematic assessment, it remains unclear whether these services adequately meet the needs of diverse library users or contribute effectively to improving educational outcomes.

Given this context, it is necessary to investigate library users’ perceptions of the importance and satisfaction of readers’ services in selected public libraries in Quezon Province. Understanding these perceptions can help identify service strengths, existing gaps, and areas requiring improvement. The findings of the study may guide the development of strategic interventions that enhance the educational impact of public libraries, strengthen their role as community learning centers, and support broader efforts to promote equitable access to quality education and lifelong learning.

## Research Objectives

### General Objective

To assess the level of importance and satisfaction of library users regarding the readers' services of selected public libraries in Quezon Province in order to develop an intervention program for improving readers' services and supporting quality education and lifelong learning in alignment with Sustainable Development Goal 4 (SDG 4).

### Specific Objectives

1. To identify the profile of library users in terms of age, gender, type of user, frequency of library visit, readers' services availed of, and reasons for not availing of readers' services.
2. To assess the level of importance of readers' services as perceived by library users in terms of:
  - 2.1 access to collections
  - 2.2 service delivery
  - 2.3 library programs
3. To assess the level of satisfaction with readers' services as perceived by library users in terms of:
  - 3.1 access to collections
  - 3.2 service delivery
  - 3.3 library programs
4. To determine whether there is a significant difference in library users' ratings of the importance of readers' services when grouped according to their profile.
5. To determine whether there is a significant difference in library users' ratings of satisfaction with readers' services when grouped according to their profile.

### Research Questions

1. What is the profile of the library users in terms of:
  - 1.1 age
  - 1.2 gender
  - 1.3 type of library user
  - 1.4 frequency of library visit
  - 1.5 readers' services availed of
  - 1.6 reasons for not availing of readers' services?
2. What is the level of importance of readers' services as assessed by library users in terms of:
  - 2.1 access to collections
  - 2.2 service delivery
  - 2.3 library programs?
3. What is the level of satisfaction with readers' services as assessed by library users in terms of:
  - 3.1 access to collections
  - 3.2 service delivery
  - 3.3 library programs?
4. Is there a significant difference in library users' ratings of the importance of readers' services when grouped according to their profile?
5. Is there a significant difference in library users' ratings of satisfaction with readers' services when grouped according to their profile?

### Hypotheses

The following hypotheses were tested at the 0.05 level of significance:

H<sub>01</sub>: There is no significant difference in the library users' level of importance of readers' services in terms of access to collections, service delivery, and library programs when grouped according to their profile.

H<sub>02</sub>: There is no significant difference in the library users' level of satisfaction with readers' services in terms of access to collections, service delivery, and library programs when grouped according to their profile.

### METHODS

#### Research Design

This study utilized a quantitative-descriptive research design to systematically collect and analyze numerical data on user experiences regarding readers' services within the selected public libraries in Quezon Province. This

design was particularly appropriate for the study, as it allows the researcher to measure two critical dimensions: the perceived importance and the actual satisfaction levels of users with the readers' services. Using the quantitative approach, the study identifies significant trends and patterns, such as service rankings and performance gaps that quantify user perceptions. These metrics provide an empirical basis for illustrating meaningful conclusions and developing data-driven recommendations aimed at enhancing readers' services in support of quality education.

### Population and Sampling

This study involved 380 library users who exclusively availed of the readers' services during the calendar year 2023 offered by the three selected public libraries in Quezon Province—the Quezon Provincial Library, Tayabas City Public Library, and Atimonan Municipal Library—all recognized for their notable contributions to their communities. As such, these participants possessed firsthand knowledge and experience that is crucial for addressing the problems posed in this study. They were classified into mutually exclusive categories, meaning an individual could not be classified into more than one group, such as students, out-of-school children, out-of-school youth, employed, unemployed, persons with disabilities, senior citizens, and reviewers. A stratified random sampling technique was employed to ensure proportional representation across all user subgroups, minimize bias, and enable a comparative analysis of diverse profiles.

### Instruments

Data collection was conducted using a bilingual researcher-made questionnaire based on a 4-point Likert scale. This scale captured users' assessments, where their level of importance reflects their perception of how valuable the readers' services are to them for their learning and skill development—having a substantial impact and being essential for achieving SDG 4's educational quality-related goals. Meanwhile, levels of satisfaction expressed by users represent whether the services meet their needs or expectations to identify areas for improvement and better align with specific SDG 4 targets. A five-member panel of public library experts validated the questionnaire using a rating tool and refined it based on their suggestions. To further ensure its effectiveness, a pilot test involving 30 diverse library users was conducted, yielding Cronbach's Alpha coefficients of 0.781 for importance and 0.822 for satisfaction, both exceeding the standard threshold for research reliability.

### Data Collection

Upon approval from relevant local authorities, data were gathered using a bilingual self-developed questionnaire administered in both print and online (Google Form) formats, which spanned over a period of one month. The researcher and trained library staff personally distributed the surveys, along with consent forms at the selected sites. To maximize accessibility, library computers, tablets, Wi-Fi access, and QR codes for participants' own devices were provided in completing the online survey. On-site assistance and clear instructions were given to all participants, including vulnerable groups, to ensure accurate data collection.

### Treatment of Data

The collected data were analyzed using frequency and percentage to describe user profiles; means and rankings to assess levels of importance and satisfaction and their relative order; and the Mann-Whitney and Kruskal-Wallis tests to identify significant differences based on user profiles. These statistical measures ensured that each of the research problems were thoroughly addressed.

### Ethical Considerations

The study strictly adhered to ethical protocols of the University Ethics Research Center, receiving formal committee approval, as evidenced by the granted ethical clearance prior to data collection. Informed consent was obtained from all adult participants, while signed assent and parental consent were secured for all minor respondents. This dual-authorization process ensured that both legal guardians and minors were fully informed of the research objectives. All subjects were briefed on the study's purpose and notified of their right to withdraw at any stage without penalty.

## RESULTS and DISCUSSION

This section provides an overview of the library users' evaluation of service relevance and quality, serving as foundation for assessing public libraries' contribution to the achievement of SDG 4 through the readers' services.

### 1. Profile of the library users

The figures below present the user profiles based on demographic and usage indicators. This profile provides essential context for understanding user engagement in using the library's readers' services.

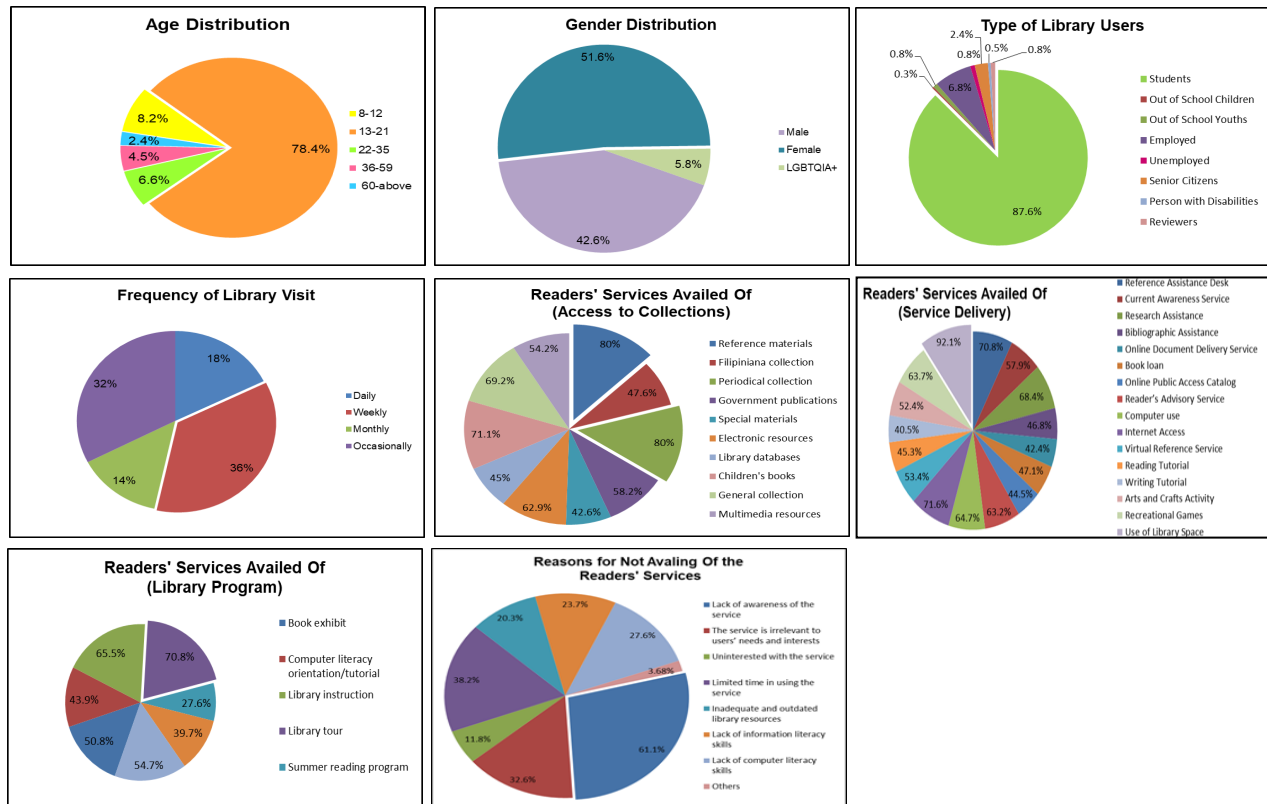


Figure 2. Profile of the library users

Figure 2 summarizes the profile of the library users by age, gender, user types, frequency of library visits, readers' services availed on the collections, service delivery, and library programs, and reasons for not using other services. As analyzed, most users are young individuals aged 13 to 21 (298 or 78.4%), while the fewest were senior citizens aged 60 and above (9 or 2.4%). More than half of the population were female (196 or 51.6%), while a small portion identified themselves as LGBTQIA+ (22 or 5.8%). These users were predominantly students (333 or 87.6%), while out-of-school children represented the smallest user group (1 or .3%). Most of them visit the library weekly (135 or 35.5%), while the least (53 or 13.9%) visits monthly. Reference materials and periodical collections (both with 304 or 80%) are the mostly accessed collections, and to a lesser extent, the special materials (162 or 42.6%). Many take advantage of the use of library space to study, learn, and review (350 or 92.1%), though fewer make use of the writing tutorial services (154 or 40.5%). The library tour, on the other hand, was the most participated library program (269 or 70.8%), while the summer reading program had the lowest participation (105 or 27.6%). Unfortunately, many of the readers' services were underutilized due to lack of awareness (232 or 61.1%), while other 14 or 3.68% have concerns about damaging library resources, time constraints, reluctance to seek assistance, perceived insufficiency of available readers' services, a preference for online resources, and ineffective library communication.

This profile provides insights into library users preferences and engagement within the public library, which discloses patterns of utilization and potential areas for service optimization. Significantly, it supports SDG 4 by emphasizing the library's commitment to serving the community regardless of their social identities. Moreover, gaps in awareness, accessibility, and user engagement must also be addressed to fully realize its potential for lifelong learning opportunities, particularly among underrepresented groups.

## 2. Library users assessment on the importance and satisfaction of the readers' services

The tables below present the combined assessment of public library users regarding both their importance and satisfaction levels with the three areas of readers' services offered. This section provides understanding of the service efficiency and its alignment with the objectives of SDG 4.



**Table 1**

*Mean and Rank Distribution of Library Users' Assessments on the Importance and Satisfaction of the Readers' Services in terms of Access to Collections*

Access to Collections	Importance Mean	Rank	Descriptive Equivalent	Satisfaction Mean	Rank	Descriptive Equivalent
1. Children's books	3.64	1	Very Important	3.63	1	Highly Satisfied
2. Reference materials	3.58	2.5	Very Important	3.50	3	Highly Satisfied
3. Filipiniana collections	3.58	2.5	Very Important	3.46	4	Highly Satisfied
4. Multimedia resources	3.51	4	Very Important	3.41	8	Highly Satisfied
5. Periodical collections	3.50	5.5	Very Important	3.43	5.5	Highly Satisfied
6. Government publications	3.50	5.5	Very Important	3.43	5.5	Highly Satisfied
7. General collections	3.48	7	Very Important	3.42	7	Highly Satisfied
8. Library databases	3.46	8	Very Important	3.37	10	Highly Satisfied
9. Special materials	3.45	9	Very Important	3.52	2	Highly Satisfied
10. Electronic resources	3.41	10	Very Important	3.40	9	Highly Satisfied
<b>Grand Mean</b>	<b>3.51</b>		<b>Very Important</b>	<b>3.46</b>		<b>Highly Satisfied</b>

*Legend (Importance): "Very Important (3.25-4.00)", "Important (2.50-3.24)", "Unimportant (1.75-2.49)", "Very Unimportant (1.00-1.74)"*  
*Legend (Satisfaction): "Highly Satisfied (3.25-4.00)", "Satisfied (2.50-3.24)", "Dissatisfied (1.75-2.49)", "Highly Dissatisfied (1.00-1.74)"*

Table 1 revealed that library users viewed the readers' services in terms of access to collection as "very important", with a grand mean of 3.51. Children's books ranked as the most highly valued collection (M= 3.64), highlighting a preference for physical materials, particularly those supporting early literacy, over electronic resources, which, while still valued, are perceived as least important (M= 3.42).

Likewise, the findings also showed that library users were all "highly satisfied" with the collections, given the grand mean of 3.46. Children's books remained as the collection that library users are most satisfied with (M= 3.63), while multimedia resources, though still viewed favorably, received the lowest satisfaction score (M= 3.41).

The results indicate that public libraries are pivotal in achieving SDG 4, as users greatly benefit from access to different library collections. The high importance and satisfaction with children's books demonstrate the library's essential contributions to foundational literacy, supporting cognitive development, reading comprehension, language acquisition, and love for reading, laying a strong foundation for academic success and lifelong learning. These findings underscore the necessity for public libraries to ensure their collections are current, relevant, and diverse, particularly in the area of children's literature. Moreover, this evidence suggests that educators and curriculum developers integrate library resources into instruction and curriculum design to maximize the importance of children's books in enhancing literacy and enriching learning experiences.

These observations corroborate with the study of Fagan (2024) and Zhou & Lu (2024), both of which claim the immense value of children's books in promoting overall child development. Fagan emphasizes that access to this collection fosters children's language, literacy, and academic development, while Zhou and Lu found them effective in enhancing children's intellectual, emotional, linguistic, and social development.

**Table 2**

*Mean and Rank Distribution of Library Users' Assessments on the Importance and Satisfaction of the Readers' Services in terms of Service Delivery*

Service Delivery	Importance Mean	Rank	Descriptive Equivalent	Satisfaction Mean	Rank	Descriptive Equivalent
1. Use of library space	3.71	1	Very Important	3.63	3.5	Highly Satisfied
2. Internet access	3.64	2	Very Important	3.46	13	Highly Satisfied
3. Reference assistance desk	3.63	4	Very Important	3.57	8	Highly Satisfied
4. Book loan	3.63	4	Very Important	3.50	11	Highly Satisfied
5. Reading tutorial	3.63	4	Very Important	3.63	3.5	Highly Satisfied
6. Virtual reference service	3.62	6.5	Very Important	3.58	6.5	Highly Satisfied
7. Recreational games	3.62	6.5	Very Important	3.68	1	Highly Satisfied
8. Bibliographic assistance	3.61	8	Very Important	3.53	9	Highly Satisfied
9. Computer use	3.60	9.5	Very Important	3.39	15	Highly Satisfied
10. Writing tutorial	3.60	9.5	Very Important	3.66	2	Highly Satisfied
11. Research assistance	3.59	11	Very Important	3.58	6.5	Highly Satisfied



Continuation of Table 2

12. Arts and crafts activity	3.55	12	Very Important	3.60	5	Highly Satisfied
13. Library catalog/ Online public access catalog	3.54	13	Very Important	3.31	16	Highly Satisfied
14. Readers' advisory service	3.47	14	Very Important	3.48	12	Highly Satisfied
15. Online document delivery service	3.45	15	Very Important	3.41	14	Highly Satisfied
16. Current awareness service	3.41	16	Very Important	3.51	10	Highly Satisfied
<b>Grand Mean</b>	<b>3.58</b>		<b>Very Important</b>	<b>3.53</b>		<b>Highly Satisfied</b>

Legend (Importance): "Very Important (3.25-4.00)", "Important (2.50-3.24)", "Unimportant (1.75-2.49)", "Very Unimportant (1.00-1.74)"  
Legend (Satisfaction): "Highly Satisfied (3.25-4.00)", "Satisfied (2.50-3.24)", "Dissatisfied (1.75-2.49)", "Highly Dissatisfied (1.00-1.74)"

Table 2 revealed that the library users regarded the readers' services in terms of service delivery as "very important", as indicated by a grand mean of 3.58. The use of library space is paramount (M= 3.71), emphasizing users' appreciation for a welcoming environment that supports reading, studying, and recreation. The lower importance assigned to current awareness service (M= 3.41) may indicate a lack of awareness for this service.

Meanwhile, the findings have also shown that all users are "highly satisfied" with the services as a result of a 3.53 grand mean. Recreational games were most satisfying (M= 3.68), while computer use was the least satisfying (M= 3.39), highlighting the growing importance of recreational and social activities in library spaces, while also pointing to potential areas for improvement in digital access, technical support, or availability of computers.

The results demonstrate that public libraries support SDG 4 by offering vital services that improve users' access to educational and academic assistance within community learning environments and informal education ecosystems. The significant value given to library spaces reflects their capacity to provide a conducive environment for learning while a strong satisfaction with recreational games indicates their contribution to critical thinking, problem-solving, and social interaction beyond leisure. These findings highlight the need for public libraries to expand and upkeep library spaces while integrating creative and cognitive play resources to strengthen their educational impact. They further imply that school leaders may foster school-library partnerships to support learning outcomes and maximize the use of public library spaces alongside their school library facilities. Meanwhile, teacher education programs may prepare future educators to design and facilitate learning experiences that effectively utilize library spaces and recreational learning tools.

These analyses are parallel with those outlined by Ullah & Usman (2023), who emphasize that well-designed library spaces are essential to quality education, as they provide conducive environments for study, collaboration, and access to technology that enhance learning experiences. Similarly, Gray et al. (2022) found that public libraries have dedicated spaces well-equipped with toys and games that encourage social interaction. Such games enhances problem-solving and computational thinking skills through analyzing choices and strategies, and are recommended for integration into teaching while considering learners' cognitive styles (Sheng-Yi, & Yu-Sheng, 2025).

**Table 3**

Mean and Rank Distribution of Library Users' Assessments on the Importance and Satisfaction of the Readers' Services in terms of Library Programs

Library Programs	Importance Mean	Rank	Descriptive Equivalent	Satisfaction Mean	Rank	Descriptive Equivalent
1. Library instruction/ orientation	3.65	1	Very Important	3.49	5	Highly Satisfied
2. Summer reading program	3.63	2	Very Important	3.65	1	Highly Satisfied
3. Computer literacy orientation/tutorial	3.60	3	Very Important	3.48	6	Highly Satisfied
4. Library tour	3.58	4.5	Very Important	3.58	3	Highly Satisfied
5. Storytelling	3.58	4.5	Very Important	3.64	2	Highly Satisfied
6. Book talk	3.57	6	Very Important	3.56	4	Highly Satisfied
7. Book exhibit	3.50	7	Very Important	3.44	7	Highly Satisfied
<b>Grand Mean</b>	<b>3.59</b>		<b>Very Important</b>	<b>3.55</b>		<b>Highly Satisfied</b>

Legend (Importance): "Very Important (3.25-4.00)", "Important (2.50-3.24)", "Unimportant (1.75-2.49)", "Very Unimportant (1.00-1.74)"  
Legend (Satisfaction): "Highly Satisfied (3.25-4.00)", "Satisfied (2.50-3.24)", "Dissatisfied (1.75-2.49)", "Highly Dissatisfied (1.00-1.74)"

Table 3 revealed that the library users considered the readers' services in terms of library programs as "very important", having the grand mean of 3.59. Library instruction/orientation is most valued ( $M= 3.65$ ), reflecting a desire for skill-building activities that empower users to effectively navigate library resources and use services. Book exhibits, while also valued, are considered less essential ( $M= 3.50$ ), perhaps because users prioritize more interactive or skill-based programs over passive displays.

In contrast, library users reported being "highly satisfied" with the programs, as shown by the grand mean of 3.55. The summer reading program garnered the highest satisfaction among library programs ( $M= 3.65$ ), indicating its effectiveness in engaging young readers and promoting literacy during the summer months, whereas the book exhibit, which was perceived as least important, also received the lowest satisfaction rating among programs ( $M= 3.44$ ).

The results indicate the importance of library-based literacy programs in delivering quality education (SDG 4) through public libraries. The prominence of the instruction program reflects users' need for skills in effectively navigating information for lifelong learning, whereas high satisfaction with the summer reading program might arise from blending education with social engagement, which prevents learning loss and fosters long-term literacy. This compelling evidence emphasizes the demand for sustained investment in structured instructional guidance and literacy-focused programs. Accordingly, teachers and curriculum developers may reinforce information literacy and reading enrichment within learning design; school leaders can further institutionalize library partnerships to support library-literacy initiatives; and teacher education programs may equip future educators with competencies in facilitating information literacy and reading engagement activities.

These outcomes align with the findings of Ageyiku (2022) and Ngozi (2024), who both documented the positive effects of library instruction/orientation. Specifically, Ageyiku noted improved information retrieval skills, while Ngozi linked higher information literacy to better coursework, exam, and overall academic outcomes. Similarly, the great sense of fulfillment with summer reading programs is consistent with research by Fulk (2023), who noted improvements in decoding and spelling, and Hammond et al. (2022), who found these initiatives mitigate learning loss while boosting motivation and academic performance.

### 3. Significant Difference Test in Library Users' Assessment on the Importance and Satisfaction of the Readers' Services When Grouped According their Profile

The findings revealed that there were no significant differences in the overall importance of access to collections and service delivery across age, gender, and type of users. However, significant differences were noted in the importance of library programs by age ( $p= 0.022$ ), with users aged 8–12 valuing them most ( $M= 3.76$ ) and those aged 36–59 valuing them least ( $M= 3.42$ ). Frequency of visits only influenced service delivery ( $p= 0.050$ ), with daily visitors ( $M= 3.60$ ) assigning more importance than occasional visitors ( $M= 3.44$ ). Additionally, significant differences in importance were found across all aspects of readers' services based on usage: (a) access to collections: Filipiniana collection ( $p= 0.036$ ), government publications ( $p= 0.001$ ), special materials ( $p= 0.002$ ), library databases ( $p= 0.024$ ), and children's books ( $p= 0.042$ ); (b) service delivery: reference assistance desk ( $p= 0.019$ ), current awareness service ( $p= 0.029$ ), bibliographic assistance ( $p= 0.005$ ), online public access catalog ( $p= 0.003$ ), virtual reference service ( $p= 0.032$ ), writing tutorial ( $p= 0.019$ ), recreational games ( $p= 0.001$ ), and use of library space ( $p= 0.002$ ); (c) library programs: summer reading program ( $p= 0.0003$ ) and library instruction/orientation ( $p= 0.004$ ). Furthermore, reasons for not using services, such as lack of interest ( $p= 0.006$ ) and information literacy skills ( $p= 0.026$ ), significantly influenced perceived importance in access to collections, while inadequate and outdated resources ( $p= 0.052$ ), were a significant factor affecting the importance of library programs.

Conversely, the results also showed that age, type of users, and frequency of visits did not significantly affect overall satisfaction with access to collections, service delivery, and library programs. However, there were notable gender-based differences in library program satisfaction ( $p= 0.043$ ), with women reporting greater levels of satisfaction ( $M= 3.57$ ) than men ( $M= 3.38$ ). Moreover, noticeable differences in satisfaction were discovered across all aspects of readers' services: (a) access to collections: Reference materials ( $p= 0.028$ ), Filipiniana collections ( $p= 0.003$ ), government publications ( $p= 0.0003$ ), special materials ( $p= 0.0001$ ), library databases ( $p= 0.008$ ), children's books and general collections (both with  $p= 0.044$ ); (b) service delivery: current awareness service ( $p= 0.023$ ), bibliographic assistance ( $p= 0.005$ ), online public access catalog ( $p= 0.026$ ), virtual reference service ( $p= 0.006$ ), reading tutorial ( $p= 0.012$ ), writing tutorial ( $p= 0.021$ ), recreational games ( $p= 0.001$ ), use of library space ( $p= 0.008$ ); (c) library programs: library tour ( $p= 0.001$ ), summer reading program ( $p= 0.006$ ), book talk ( $p= 0.011$ ), and storytelling ( $p= 0.054$ ). Service relevance ( $p= 0.011$ ) and user disinterest ( $p= 0.008$ ) are factors affecting satisfaction with service delivery; limited time ( $p= 0.004$ ) affects program satisfaction; inadequate and outdated resources ( $p= 0.0003$ ) affect



overall satisfaction with access to collections; and a lack of information literacy skills significantly influences satisfaction with access to collections ( $p= 0.001$ ), service delivery ( $p= 0.001$ ), and library programs ( $p= 0.044$ ).

These data highlight the intricate relationships between user profiles, service utilization, and perceived importance and satisfaction. The findings imply the need for public libraries to move beyond basic service provision and focus on designing user-centered services that proactively address the diverse needs and expectations of their communities, ensuring meaningful and inclusive educational experiences for all.

### Conclusions

In conclusion, the selected public libraries in Quezon Province play a vital role in achieving SDG 4 by addressing the educational needs of diverse user groups through the different facets of the readers' services. High levels of user-perceived importance regarding children's books, the use of library space, and instruction programs align with the SDG 4 targets of promoting early literacy, inclusive learning environments, and information literacy. Similarly, high satisfaction with children's books, recreational games, and summer reading programs demonstrates the effectiveness of these libraries in meeting user needs and expectations, particularly in cultivating a love for reading, providing enriching leisure activities, and promoting a culture of learning among youngsters. From a pedagogical perspective, these libraries function not only as learning spaces but also as active agents in improving teaching and learning through accessible collections and informal instruction. Their services extend curriculum enrichment by reinforcing literacy, digital, and independent learning skills beyond the classroom. They also show educational leadership by designing and delivering programs that meet the changing needs of the community. Together, these outcomes clearly substantiate the potential of readers' services to alleviate learning gaps by responding directly to the developmental and educational needs of library users. However, notable variations highlight the necessity for improved services targeting less frequent users, development of age-appropriate and inclusive programs for younger users and LGBTQIA+ individuals, implementation of regular user needs assessments, and formulation of strategic plans to address barriers in accessibility and sustain the continued relevance and satisfaction of these services to all user groups. Moving forward, public libraries may leverage these insights to advocate for increased resources and policy support that enable them to expand their reach, develop a targeted intervention program addressing the identified gaps, and strengthen their role as essential community centers for inclusive and equitable quality education, thereby maximizing their contribution to the achievement of SDG 4 in Quezon Province and beyond.

### Recommendations

Based on the findings and conclusions of the study, public libraries may strengthen readers' services by increasing user awareness, optimizing underutilized services, and addressing variations across diverse user groups. This may be achieved through diversifying and updating special materials, multimedia resources, and electronic resources to better support learning needs.

Public libraries may also enhance writing tutorials, summer reading initiatives, and information literacy programs through structured, inclusive, and flexible delivery modes that encourage broader participation among users. Current awareness services, online public access catalogs (OPAC), and book exhibits may likewise be revitalized through innovative and community-centered approaches to improve accessibility and engagement.

Collaboration with educational institutions, local organizations, and community networks may further expand resource sharing, increase program visibility, and encourage greater participation among learners. Active community involvement in program development may also strengthen the relevance and responsiveness of public library services to local educational needs.

Moreover, regular user needs assessments aligned with institutional and local development agendas may guide strategic planning and service improvement. Inclusive programming for marginalized groups, together with streamlined service workflows and proactive marketing strategies to raise awareness, may help enhance service utilization, improve access to educational resources, and sustain alignment with global educational goals.

Finally, policymakers and public administrators may consider integrating public library development into broader educational initiatives and supporting collaborative partnerships that strengthen the role of public libraries as community learning centers contributing to quality education and lifelong learning.

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