

# Looking through Their Eyes: Improving Library Services for English as a Second Language Learners by Exploring Their Experiences and Perceptions of Academic Libraries Abroad and in the United States

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*The study was designed to gather information about English as a Second Language (ESL) learners' experience with academic libraries in their home country and their use of an American university library. A survey was conducted by the Outreach Services Librarian to explore ESL learners' library experiences and perceptions in order to design library instruction sessions that the ESL learners would find more relevant and understandable. Identifying and understanding the differences and similarities in library experiences while fostering library skills will help both ESL learners and librarians improve their communication and interaction with each other.*



*A survey with twenty-three questions was designed and distributed among ESL learners who were enrolled in the intensive English program at a Midwestern university. Fifty-three students in levels 4 through 7 voluntarily completed the survey. This article presents the analysis of the surveys and discusses how to assist ESL learners in using American university library services more effectively so they have a more enjoyable educational experience.*

## **Introduction**

Academic libraries across the United States are attempting to provide better services and programs to international students in order to improve their academic careers. With increases in cultural diversity occurring in universities across the country, li-

brarians are being challenged to discover new ways for these students to utilize library services even while they confront issues of language and cultural barriers. While many academic librarians have developed various programs to improve student usage of library services, such as library orientation and

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online resources, librarians continue to struggle to understand the multiple perceptions that international students have about American libraries and how they inhibit students from partaking in library activities. Patrons from various countries across the world have differing experiences in regard to academic libraries, and could potentially be unaware of the notion that student success and assistance are the highest priorities of librarians. By understanding the past experiences and perceptions that international students have about academic libraries, librarians in American universities can better design services for these students, thereby helping to improve their academic careers.

To accomplish this, librarians must first approach students and request that they share their past experiences of academic libraries in their countries of origin. Their responses will provide librarians with greater insight as to which services they could provide to influence students to utilize these services and effectively help them achieve academic success. A survey was conducted at the Rod Library at the University of Northern Iowa to gather the experiences and perceptions of various international students in the university's Culture and Intensive English Program (CIEP). The survey consisted of questions relating to their experiences with academic libraries in their countries of origin as well as their experiences with Rod Library itself. From those who responded, the results indicate a stark contrast in regard to the services provided by Rod Library in comparison to academic libraries in other countries. Rod Library is consistently considered better in relation to the services provided as well as the learning atmosphere of the library itself. However, the results also indicate that many students have not utilized Rod Library's services, primarily due to issues of language/cultural barriers, as well as a lack of knowledge of library resources. Ultimately, results from the survey conclude that Rod Library's efforts to understand the various perceptions of international students provide valuable information to improve upon the services offered to underserved populations.

## Literature Review

With the continuing influx of international students and ESL learners into American universities across the country, academic libraries are attempting to better understand how to provide the resources necessary for these students to succeed in their college career. Recent literature relating to the services provided for international students in academic libraries revolves around the issues of language/culture barriers and interpersonal communication between the librarians and the students, whether this includes librarian-student interaction, or the ways library seminars are designed and library services marketed. Scholars within the field of library science argue that these obstacles prevent international students from utilizing library services fully. In recent years, scholars have been attempting to find new ways to lessen the inhibitions international students have in what has been labeled as library anxiety, an apparent obstacle that these students have faced at a more heightened level than that of other students (Jackson 2005, 198).

An increasing number of international students are attending higher education institutions in the United States. The Open Doors 2014 data reports a total of 270,128 international students in 2013/2014. Students who were enrolled in intensive English programs were 5% of this population (Institute of International Education, 2014). Not only do these students face basic language barriers, they are often confronted by jargon or technical terminology in our academic libraries. Ligaya Ganster argued that using focus groups of international students can help librarians to better assist them with the services they provide, such as limiting library jargon and improving upon way-finding or navigation within the library itself (Ganster 2011, 379). A study by Louise Knight et al. demonstrates that international students value in-person communication over electronic methods, indicating that while students value the internet and library search engines, in-person interaction with library staff may ultimately remain the most effective way to promote library services (Knight et al. 2010, 591).

Knight's study also suggest that international students do not take advantage of the full range of library services and do not often interact with librarians, which is interesting if they also value in-person communication (Knight et al. 2010, 591). This is argued to be due to the lack of knowledge these students have about American libraries, arguably the result of both language and cultural barriers. Many students do not understand that the primary role of reference librarians in American institutions is to assist students in their studies, and therefore are afraid to approach librarians concerning issues which could be deemed as insignificant or would simply act as an annoyance to on-staff librarians (Curry and Copeman 2005, 411). International students also face societal barriers within academic libraries, in that international students are unfamiliar with the established institutions in academic libraries at American universities, and are therefore unprepared to deal with American libraries themselves, let alone library services. This could include issues such as the purpose of reference librarians; whether students must be accompanied by a librarian to acquire a book; whether students are even allowed to use library services; whether books can be check out; interlibrary loan; English library classification systems; or the American prioritization on critical thinking rather than memorization and recitation. As one article put it, "These students, highly motivated and goal oriented, strive for immediate success, often without realizing the limitations of their language abilities and the differences in their cultural perceptions, assumptions, and values. The potential for frustration is great". Basically, many of these students experience varying levels of culture shock, which can go from mild discomfort to severe depression (Greenfield et al. 1986, 229).

With this in mind, it is important to emphasize the prospects of approachability, accessibility, and inclusivity, in that academic libraries should promote librarian interaction with students, provide easily accessible and visible materials to international students, and adopt a proactive approach in assisting international students in transitioning into an American li-

brary environment. Ann Curry and Deborah Copeman stressed the importance of librarian interaction with international students, underlining the importance of approachability and friendliness; speaking first; listening and patience; providing a detailed story of how the librarian was searching for the material; writing down key words or search terms; and follow-ups with the student in question (Curry and Copeman 2005, 417-18). Unless an academic library has an easily accessible hyperlink on their webpage that can direct international students to various materials and services, these students are going to approach the circulation desk or a reference librarian with their questions and concerns. Librarians should be professional yet welcoming in their interactions with all students, and refrain from subjects that could jeopardize such interactions and create a mistrust between the student and librarian, such as issues surrounding international politics, religion, or misconceptions about foreign cultures and countries (Sarkodie-Mensah 1992, 215-16). In regard to accessibility, Karen Bordonaro suggests that academic libraries invest in more recreational reading materials for ESL students to assist in their language studies, and putting these collections in an easily visible location to promote student usage (Bordonaro 2006, 522). Other scholars mention the importance of signage and branding, especially in multiple languages, directing students to services or book collections. The user-friendliness of online resources such as ESL websites or library search engines has also been mentioned by numerous scholars (Robinson 2006, 13).

Multiple scholars, such as Sara Brown and Alexia Strout-Dapaz, argue for unique resources and services to be offered to international students with the intent of improving their proficiency in information literacy at academic libraries, arguing in favor of library instruction seminars for international students; special handouts during orientation detailing various services the library provides; and diversity training sessions for librarians and their staff (Brown and Strout-Dapaz 2001, 320). Scholars such as Ganster focus on multimedia communication, specifically internet websites. Ganster argued that libraries should provide more

comprehensive information about services and resources through their websites, using hyperlinks to direct students on how to appropriately engage oneself in an American library setting (Ganster 2011, 376-77).

In regard to inclusivity, academic libraries across the United States are in the process of adopting further outreach initiatives and programs to further promote the usage of library services by international students, as well as ensuring that international students feel welcome and comfortable in an American library setting. However, a 2011 study conducted by Toni M. Carter and Priscilla Seaman reveal a sobering overview of outreach initiatives and program management in academic libraries. Only 43.9% (n=61) of academic libraries surveyed had a dedicated outreach position. Furthermore, many of these positions are half-time (Carter and Seaman 2011, 165). In a follow-up question given to those 61 libraries, 37 reported on the average time commitment given to outreach activities; responses indicate that most outreach librarians spend only 25-50% of their time on outreach. Only 25% of those 61 libraries had an outreach committee, and only 15.4% of the libraries without a dedicated outreach position had a committee (Carter and Seaman 2011, 166). While many academic libraries may provide services to international student ESL learners, it appears that there is a lack of a systematic approach to outreach program management. Without the effective management of outreach initiatives by academic libraries, it is unlikely that libraries will increase the participation rates of international students in regard to the usage of available resources and services.

However, even without an established outreach coordinator/librarian, academic libraries can still find ways to help create more welcoming environments that would attract international students. Scholars interested in library inclusivity are attempting to better understand the perspectives that international students have about academic libraries in the United States, as well as their personal experiences with libraries in their own countries. Maud C. Mundava and LaVerne Gray argue for an arguably radical approach in reaching out to the international community:

- Meeting the students where they spend time and extend services to them (i.e., international student centers, student housing, festivals), and invite them to the library
- Attend/sponsor/participate in various events sponsored by international students
- Host open houses for international students in residence halls to increase library awareness (Mundava and Gray 2008, 44)

While these are only a few suggestions as to how libraries can reach out to international students, they are suggestions that help send a message out to these students that they are not only welcome at their respective library, but that librarians are eager to serve them. Mundava and Gray also propose that academic libraries initiate something similar to the University of Tennessee's Culture Corner, a showcase or kiosk which promotes a different, particular foreign culture every semester with various book collections, library materials, and online resources, suggesting that broadcasting various cultures that international students identify with could attract them to use the library (Mundava and Gray 2008, 41). Again, this approach attempts to look at academic libraries through the perspective of international students, and determine what would entice students unfamiliar with the library systems of the United States to participate.

Other scholars, such as Terry Buckner and Tiana French, argue that libraries should not only be places to do research or study, but also to promote what is new on campus and as a learning center where international students can see their culture shared and celebrated (Buckner and French 2007, 9). Buckner and French suggest academic libraries host art and literature galleries, as well as provide popular reading material to promote recreational use of academic libraries (9-10). In her research, Pamela Jackson has mentioned that most international students (96%) are adept at using computers and the internet, and that academic libraries should make these resources readily available for these students, especially computer programs such as gaming, web design, programming, database design and technical software packages specific to their fields

of study (Jackson 2005, 202). Jackson, along with other scholars, also mentioned the need for longer library hours and internet access; access to daily newspapers from their home country; and the creation of a multi-lingual informational program that provides information about the community, job openings, multimedia services, and other opportunities (Jackson 2005, 204). These proactive approaches to promoting library services to international students help support library inclusivity by thinking in the perspective of the international community.

However, few scholars have thought about library outreach and inclusivity in terms of understanding the needs of the international student as an individual, rather than just an entire group in general. Yushan Ye argues that academic libraries are making the mistake of stereotyping international students as all having the same cultural and linguistic backgrounds: "Lumping all these international students under the umbrella term of 'international student' contributes little, if at all, to our understanding of their real needs and problems" (Ye 2009, 8). As Ye, put it, "A student from China may have very different needs than a student from Kenya" (Ye 2009, 8). Ye desires academic libraries in the United States to look beyond the US-centric notions of treating international students as a single category, and focus on the students as individuals, "each with their unique cultural and education background, personality traits and temperament, and each facing unique challenges in their pursuit of knowledge", and treat them as real people with real issues (Ye 2009, 8). This individualistic approach to better providing the services needed for international students could provide the key to understanding the various perspectives and experiences international students have of academic libraries, and could ultimately assist American librarians in helping more of these students by focusing on each individual's unique needs. In this study, it is hopeful that by asking individual students about their own, personal experiences with their libraries in their home country, we can get a better understanding of their specific need, and apply those needs to various library ser-

vices and help lead these students to success in their academic careers.

## Methodology

A twenty-three item self-report survey was developed and distributed among ESL learners who were enrolled in the intensive English program at a midwestern university. The survey was distributed through the English instructors teaching these students. Students who were enrolled in level four and higher were given the survey. The university CIEP measures a student's proficiency in language, reading, writing, listening, and speaking and each student is assigned a level for each language skill. Level 1 students have little understanding of the English language and level 7 students are fluent in English. For the purpose of this study, students in level 4 and above were selected because they would have the language proficiency required to complete the survey. In each instructor's mailbox a set of surveys was placed with instructions for distributing and collecting the surveys. The instructors were asked to distribute the surveys and to tell the students to return the completed surveys to the intensive English program office and place them in the designated box. If instructors received a completed survey from a student, they were to place the completed survey in the designated box on the students' behalf. If students did not return a survey, another survey was given to that student after two weeks. The names of all students were removed after receiving the completed surveys and then a random number was assigned to each survey. Multiple choice questions were the main format of this survey; the survey also consisted of a few open-ended questions. For the final open-ended question, "how is your college or university library different from the Rod Library," a research assistant and the primary researcher independently read respondents' comments and rated the main topic raised by the respondents into one of four categories: library services, library size, similar libraries, and unsure of the differences. The agreement in comment categorization between the raters was 100% the same.

### Results

Surveys were distributed to eighty-six students. Sixty-five surveys were returned to the designated box. Of those, nine surveys contained a note from instructors indicating that these students are no longer attending classes. Three students only answered one of the survey questions and for this reason these surveys were eliminated for further analysis. Thus, fifty-three surveys were chosen for further evaluation. Of the completed surveys under evaluation, twenty-eight respondents were identified as male and twenty-five as female.

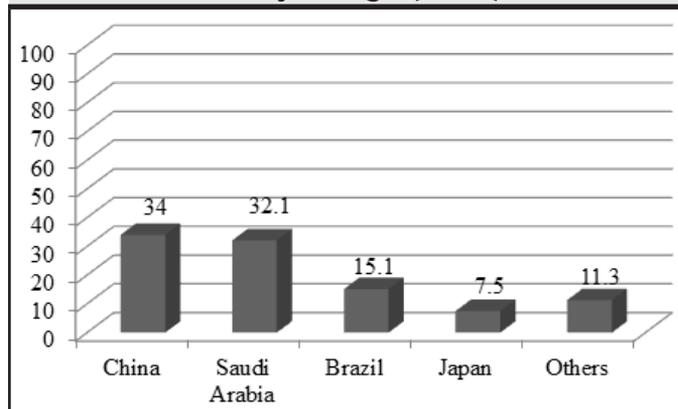
The respondents were asked their country of origin. Respondents identified themselves as being from China (34% of the respondents), Saudi Arabia (32.1%), Brazil (15.1%), Japan (7.5%), while 11.3% were from other countries (see table 1).

When students were asked whether they planned to enter an undergraduate program or graduate program after completing their intensive English program, 91.5% of the students mentioned that they were planning to enter an undergraduate program and 8.5% were planning to enter a graduate program (see table 2). (Throughout this analysis the valid percentage of those people who answered the question, excluding those who did not answer, is being reported.)

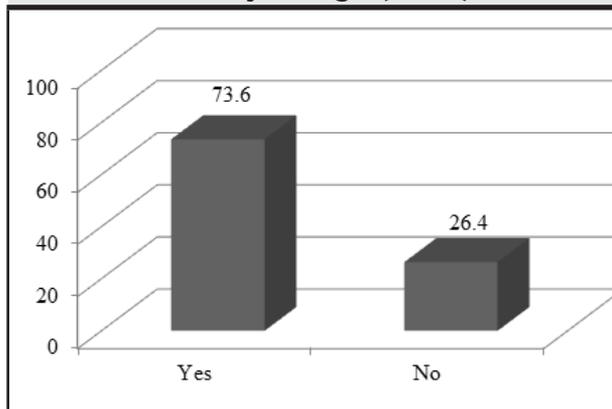
**TABLE 3**  
Current Language Skills Level (N=53)

	Level 4	Level 5	Level 6	Level 7	Finished	Did not answer
Listening & Speaking	3	20	11	12	4	3
Reading	9	13	12	15	0	4
Writing	16	11	14	9	3	0

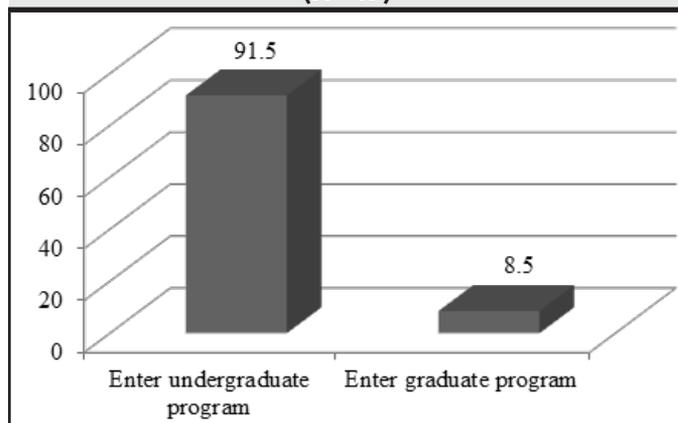
**TABLE 1**  
Country of Origin (N=53)



**TABLE 4**  
Country of Origin (N=53)



**TABLE 2**  
Educational Plans After Completing the ESL Program (N=47)



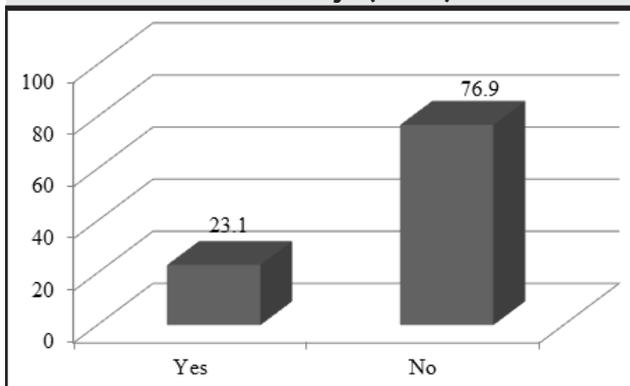
Students were asked to indicate their current level of listening and speaking, reading, and writing. Students identified themselves as shown in table 3. Students indicated if they finished particular skills.

Respondents were asked whether they had attended a college or university in their home country; 73.6% answered yes and 26.4% answered no (see table 4).

Students who indicated they had never attended a college or university in their home country were asked whether they ever used a college or university library in their country. Of those who had not at-

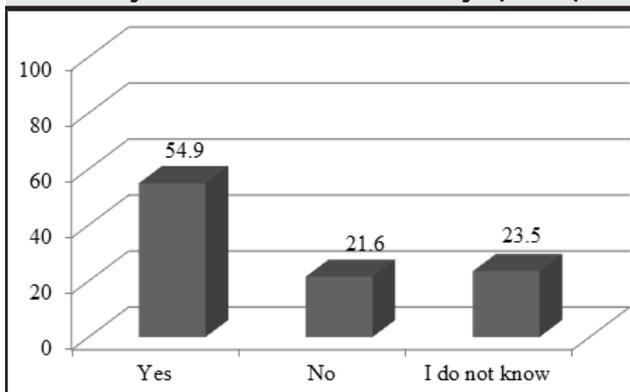
tended a college or university in their home country, the majority, 76.9%, indicated that they never used a college or university library, while 23.1% of the respondents indicated they had not attended a college or university in their home country (see table 5).

**TABLE 5**  
**If You Answered "No" to the Previous Question, Did You Ever Use a College or University Library in Your Country? (N=13)**



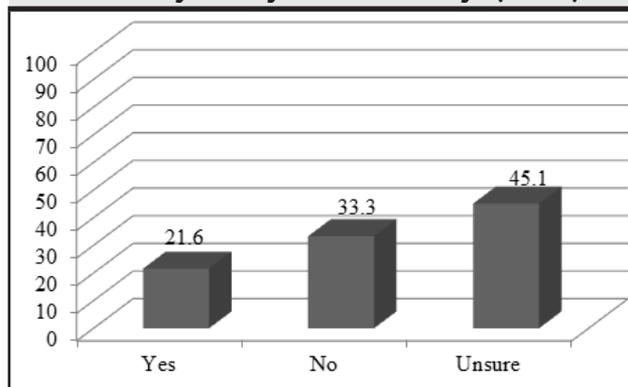
Respondents were asked whether their college or university library in their home country offered library instruction. In order to ensure that respondents shared an understanding of the meaning of the word instruction, the following definition of instruction was provided to the participants: "librarians explain to your class how to find information in the library." The majority, 54.9%, had received library instruction, 21.6% had not, and 23.5% did not know whether their library offered library instruction (see table 6).

**TABLE 6**  
**Did Your College or University Library Offer Library Instruction in Your Country? (N=51)**



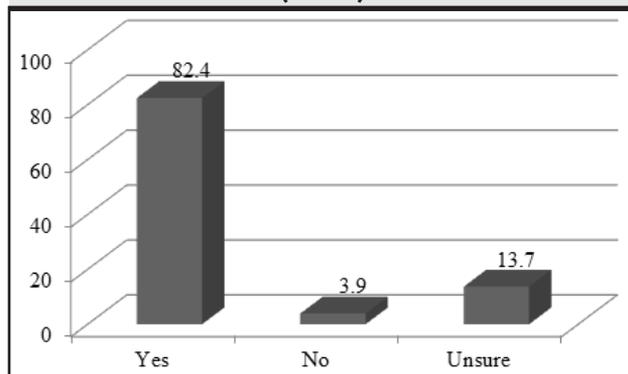
The respondents were asked whether or not they could schedule a library consultation appointment with a librarian at their college or university library in their home country. The definition of consultation was provided in this question as a "one-on-one session with a librarian." Almost 22% of the students indicated that they could schedule a consultation appointment with a librarian, 33.3% indicated that they could not, and 45.1% were unsure if they could schedule a consultation (see table 7).

**TABLE 7**  
**Could You Schedule a Library Consultation Appointment with a Librarian at Your College or University Library in Your Country? (N=51)**



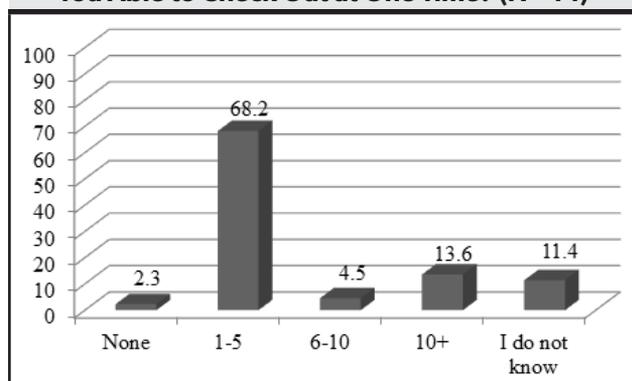
The students were asked if they were allowed to check out books at their college or university library in their country: 82.4% answered yes, 3.9% answered no, while 13.7% answered that they were unsure (see table 8).

**TABLE 8**  
**Were You Allowed to Check Out Books at Your College or University Library in Your Country? (N=51)**



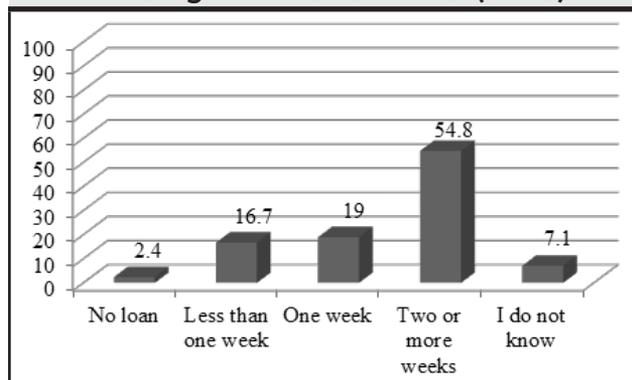
Then the respondents were asked how many books they could check out at one time if they could check out books from their home country college or university library. Only 44 students responded to this question and 68.2% indicated 1-5 books, 4.5% indicated 6-10 books, 13.6% indicated 10+ books, 11.4% indicated that they did not know how many books they could check out, and 2.3% indicated that they were unable to check out books (see table 9).

**TABLE 9**  
If You Could Check Out Books, How Many Were You Able to Check Out at One Time? (N=44)



Students were asked to indicate the length of the book loan period through the open-ended question, “how long was the loan period?” Almost 3% of the respondents (2.4%) indicated that their home country library does not check out books, 16.7% of the respondents said that the loan period is less than one week, 19% mentioned the loan period is one week, 54.8% indicated the loan period is two or more weeks, 7.1% indicated that they did not know how the length of the loan period (see table 10).

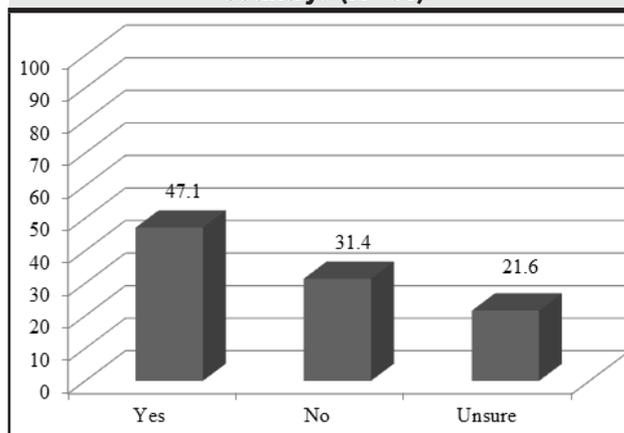
**TABLE 10**  
How Long Was the Loan Period? (N=42)



and 7.1% indicated they did not know how the length of the loan period (see table 10).

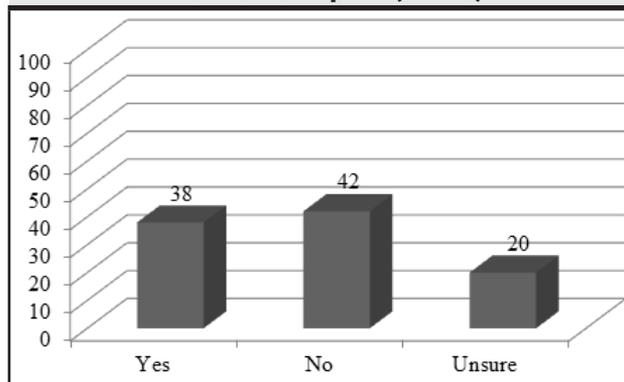
Students were asked whether they had access to electronic databases in their college or university library in their home country. An electronic database was defined as an “online system for providing information about journal articles, books, or other information sources.” About half of the respondents, 47.1% indicated they had access to electronic databases, 31.4% did not have access to electronic databases, and 21.6% were unsure (see table 11).

**TABLE 11**  
Did You Have Access to Electronic Databases in Your College or University Library in Your Country? (N=51)



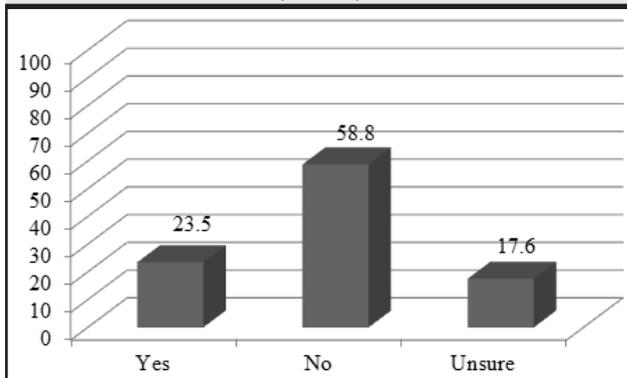
Respondents were then asked if they had had access to electronic databases from off campus: 38% indicated yes, 42% indicated no, and the remaining 20% were not sure (see table 12).

**TABLE 12**  
Did You Have Access to Electronic Databases From Off Campus? (N=50)



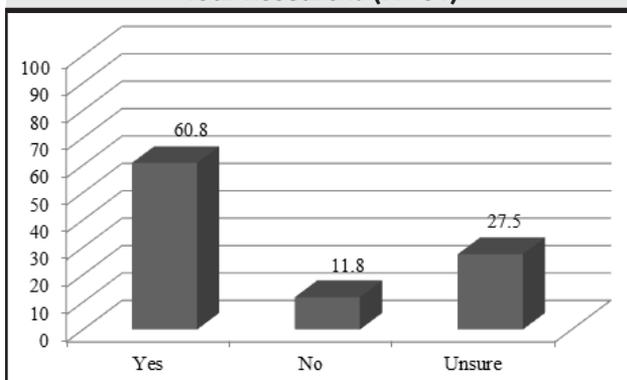
Only 23.5% of the students indicated they could check out laptop computers from their home country college or university library, 58.8% did not have access to this service, and 17.6% were unsure (see table 13).

**TABLE 13**  
**Could You Check Out Laptop Computers at Your College or University Library in Your Country? (N=51)**



Students were asked if their college or university library had a reference desk where they could get help with their research: 60.8% indicated yes, 11.8% indicated no, and 27.5% were unsure (see table 14).

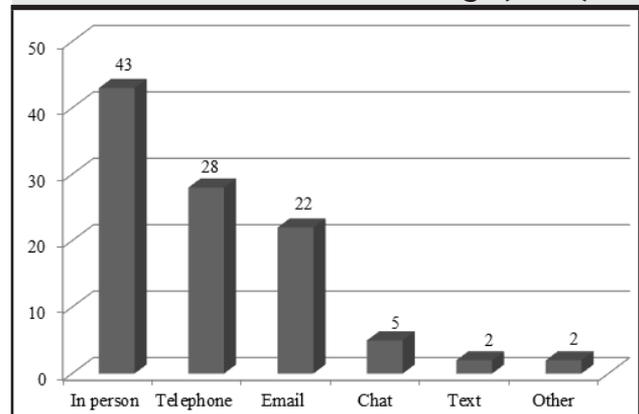
**TABLE 14**  
**Did Your College or University Library Have a Reference Desk Where You Could Get Help with Your Research? (N=51)**



Respondents were asked to indicate the methods they could use in asking questions at their home country college or university library. Several options were given to the respondents to choose from; respondents were allowed to choose more than one option if applicable. Forty-three respondents indicated they could ask questions in person, 28 students chose

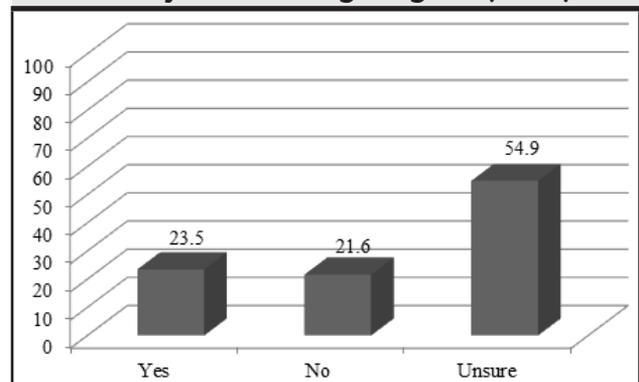
telephone, 22 students said through email, 5 answered chat, 2 students indicated text, and 2 students mentioned they have other ways of asking questions. The two students who indicated other, did not explain what they meant by other (see table 15).

**TABLE 15**  
**How Were You Able to Ask Questions at Your College or University Library in Your Country? I Was Able to Ask Questions Through (N=47)**



When respondents were asked if the college or university librarians in their country needed a college degree, 23.5% indicated yes, 21.6% replied no, 54.9% were unsure (see table 16).

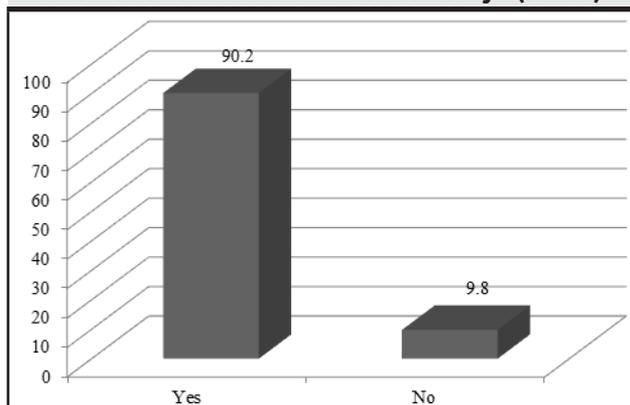
**TABLE 16**  
**Do College or University Librarians in Your Country Need a College Degree? (N=51)**



When asked if they had ever visited the Rod Library, 90.2% of the respondents indicated yes, and 9.8% replied no (see table 17).

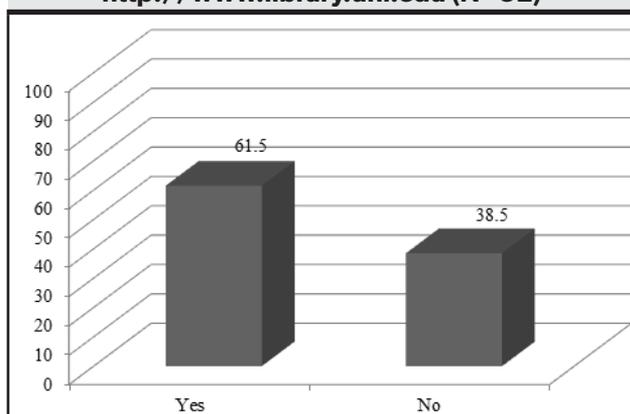
The respondents were asked if they had ever used the Rod Library's website and the link to the library

**TABLE 17**  
**Have You Ever Visited the Rod Library? (N=51)**

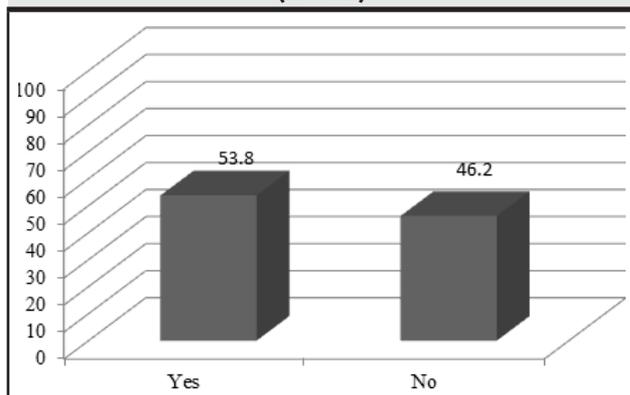


website was provided. The majority, 61.5% replied yes, while 38.5% replied they had never used our library website (see table 18).

**TABLE 18**  
**Have You Ever Used the Rod Library Website? <http://www.library.uni.edu> (N=52)**



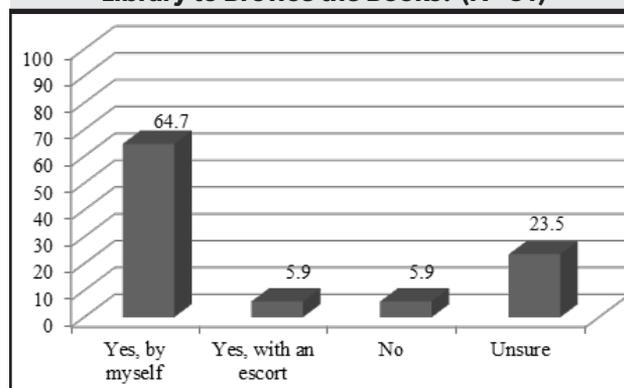
**TABLE 19**  
**Have You Ever Located Articles, Books, or Other Informational Resources in the Rod Library? (N=52)**



When respondents were asked if they had ever located articles, books, or other information resources in our library, 53.8% replied yes while 46.2% replied no (see table 19).

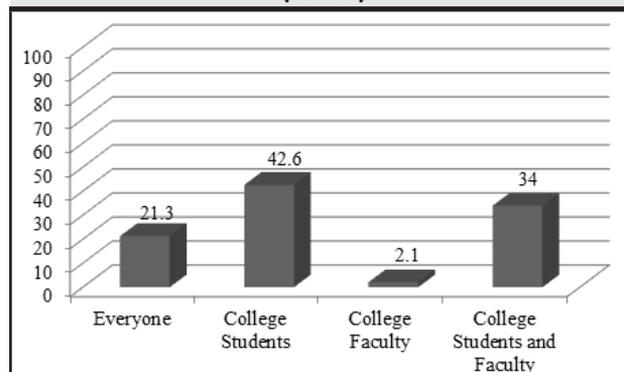
Respondents were asked if they could go inside their college or university library in their home country to browse the books: 64.7% indicated they could browse books by themselves; 5.9% indicated yes, but with an escort; 5.9% indicated no; and 23.5% were unsure (see table 20).

**TABLE 20**  
**Could You Go Inside Your College or University Library to Browse the Books? (N=51)**



When students were asked who was allowed to use books and other library resources in their college or university library, 21.3% replied everyone, 42.6% replied college students, 2.1% replied college faculty, and 34% indicated both college students and faculty. Respondents were allowed to choose more than one option if applicable (see table 21).

**TABLE 21**  
**Who is Allowed to Use Books and Other Library Resources in Your College or University Library? (N=51)**



Thirty-five individuals responded to the final, open-ended question, “how is your college or university library different from the Rod Library?” Most of the individuals who wrote comments, 51.4%, indicated that our library offers more services than did the library in their home country. Respondents offered a variety of comments, such as “My library in home country has less resources, cannot check out laptops, printing is not free, do not have those high technology equipment.” “My university library had no computers for students to use.” “There are many desks in my college library; we have to check in when we come to my library.” “The library in my university in my country doesn’t have a completely web system, so students just can go there to find books and students can’t find the article online. Rod library is better for the online service.” “I can’t eat or drink in Japanese college library.” “The treatment in the library. In the U.S. is more easier to get the info that you want. In the U.S. you can get help as many as you want at any time.” “The library of my college have a lot of things to improve.” Twenty Per cent of respondents indicated that the size of our library is bigger than their library. One respondent said that “Rod library more advanced and bigger than my university.” Only 11.4% indicated our library is similar to their library. “My university library and Rod library are very similar both have lots of resources and are very well organized” is an example of respondent comments regarding similarities among libraries in the U.S. and their home country.

Although most respondents cited differences, 17.1% of the respondents indicated they were unsure of differences because they had never visited the library in their home country or had not visited our

library. The following comments typify comments related to uncertainty of differences “I haven’t been at college or university library before at my country.” “Can’t point any difference now until I use the Rod Library” (see table 22).

## Conclusion

The survey conducted by the Rod Library at the University of Northern Iowa gathered the experiences and perceptions of various international students in the University’s CIEP program with the purpose of providing librarians with greater insight as to the services to better help these particular students achieve academic success. As many international students encounter language and cultural barriers and may not have the necessary knowledge or proper training regarding academic libraries, it should be the mission of librarians to assimilate these students into the academic library environment. From the data gathered in the survey, it appears that the areas of greatest need include the lack of awareness of library services and resources, the lack of understanding of internet resources, and the inability to locate information resources.

The central issue regarding international students in academic libraries appears to be the lack of awareness of library services and resources. Granted, 26.4% of respondents answered that they had not attended college in their native country, and 76.9% of those respondents never used an academic library in their country. It is safe to assume that the students who had not visited a college library would not be aware of the services provided, in comparison to students who did visit a college library in their native country. Yet, even the students who did visit their college library in their native country were not always aware of the services available to them, or were not provided services that are commonly available in American academic libraries.

For instance, 45.1% of all respondents thought library instruction was not provided in their country, or were unsure whether it was provided. One third of all respondents, 33.3%, thought library consultation

**TABLE 22**

**How is Your Home Country College or University Library Different from the Rod Library? (N=35)**

Category	Valid Percentage
Service	51.4
Size	20.0
Similar	11.4
Unsure	17.1

appointments were not offered in their home country libraries, and 45.1% were unsure whether they were provided. About 12% of respondents said their home country libraries did not have reference desks, and 27.5% were unsure whether they were provided. Approximately 55% of respondents were unsure whether librarians in their country needed a college degree, and 21.6% claimed that librarians did not need a college degree. Almost 60% of respondents could not checkout laptops from their library, and 17.6% were unsure whether that service was even provided. From this information, we recommend that academic librarians work to educate international students on all the available services provided by the library and where these services/resources are located. These students should not only be aware of these resources and where they are located, but how to efficiently and effectively utilize them.

The results from the survey indicate that many international students did not have electronic resources offered at the libraries in their native countries, such as electronic databases or the internet. Nearly one third of respondents (31.4%) did not have access to electronic databases while 21.6% were unsure whether they even existed at their libraries. Only 38% of respondents had off-campus access to a library's electronic database, and 20% were not sure whether it was offered off-campus. The lack of these resources has created ramifications for these students as they enroll into American universities. Although most of these respondents have visited Rod Library (90.2%), 38.5% of them have never used the Rod Library's website. It may be that language differences or lack of familiarity with library websites are barrier. Therefore, it is recommended that academic librarians create further seminars for students to understand and better navigate the library's website to find the resources and services they require.

Survey results also indicate that 46.2% of respondents have never located articles, books, or other information resources from Rod Library. Although many respondents claimed they could locate books and other resources in their native country's academic

libraries (82.4%), almost 50% of respondents did not use even the basic services provided by Rod Library. Reasons for this could include a lack of awareness of materials, but if over 90% of respondents have visited Rod Library for class or study, they should be able to notice the collection of books and other printed resources. The more likely reason is due to language and cultural barriers, in that the respondents are not comfortable with locating library materials or the library classification system. Indeed, if a significant number of respondents do not even utilize the library website for locating books and articles, it would be difficult for them to locate the book required for their studies. Even traditional students have difficulty with library classification systems; it will require greater efforts by academic librarians to effectively train international students to locate materials at an American library. Ultimately, from the perceptions and experiences of these international students, academic libraries should place a greater emphasis on breaking down the language and cultural barriers that are preventing these individuals from utilizing library resources/services, and provide a more comprehensive program for training international students on how to effectively operate, navigate, and locate library services and resources.

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