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# Psychological Well-Being Among the Gender wise Category of Users in terms of Library Anxiety at Centrally Funded Universities of Assam, India

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## Abstract

The purpose of this paper is to assess the mental health of the male and female library users of the centrally funded university libraries of Assam in Northeast India i.e., Assam University and Tezpur University. The study has been conducted in context of library anxiety while finding for information by both the category of users to identify the shortcomings in the library system and also to suggest the remedies. Survey method has been adopted to conduct the research study. Structured questionnaire has been designed and distributed among randomly selected users. The statements developed by Sharon L Bostick (1992) which is known as Library Anxiety Scale have been applied. Library anxiety has been measured with the help of the scores proposed by Anwar, Al-Kandari and Al-Qallaf (2004). It is evident that Library anxiety exists in both Assam University and Tezpur University. Library anxiety is more in the terms of library resources and library environment. Among the gender category, library anxiety is found to be in extreme level among female users. This research study, being the first of this kind helped in finding out the library anxiety by adopting the library anxiety scale.

**Keywords** - Library anxiety, Library users, AQAK scale, Tezpur University, Assam University, Gender category of users

## 1. Introduction

In today's world of competition, thrive for excellence and the need to remain updated has taken special toll on the library users whether they are male or female. For teachers, it is crucial to arrange, organise, and update the course materials for the students to be taught. Students and scholars also have to find new facts and have to acquire the required knowledge. There are many impediments which can be faced by teachers, students, scholars and other readers alike if the libraries viz a viz the librarians fail to organise and arrange/update books or other study materials, because libraries are pertinent for research purposes as well powerhouse of knowledge for people from all sphere. Thus, mismanagement of libraries or lack of organising

skills as well failure by the librarians to update their data may result in extreme stress, shake up their minds and creating inner turmoil and might lead up to anxiety.

Psychological well-being terms to the mental health of the information seekers, which means library users. Extreme level of anxiety might grow dreadfulness such as the feeling of imminent death. With the onset of 21<sup>st</sup> century, life has been very unkind to humanity. Caught up in the rat race of modernity and cut-throat competition humanity has taken a backseat. 'Survival of the fittest' has become the key to survival. Everyone is absorbed into a whirlpool of frenzy to outrun each other even at the cost of someone else. Individuality has been wiped away and people are moving towards a homogenous identity trying to fit into a pattern, an organised system in the hope of achieving excellence.

## **2. Objectives**

The primary objective of this study is mainly to explore the experiences and feelings equated with library anxiety in the centrally funded university libraries of Assam. The other objectives are:

- To measure and compare the level of anxiety among the male and female category of library users of university libraries with the help of Library Anxiety Scale (LAS);
- To find out if there is any difference between anxiety of the gender category (male and female) users;
- To pinpoint the area which address the various dimensions of library anxiety and to conceptualize library anxiety antecedents in context of library users;
- To review the findings of the study and to provide recommendations to minimise the anxiety level of the library users.

## **3. Literature Review**

Library anxiety refers to the "feeling that one's research skills are inadequate and that those shortcomings should be hidden. In some students, it's manifested as an outright fear of libraries and the librarians who work there." The term stems from a 1986 article by Constance Mellon, a professor of library science in North Carolina, USA, titled "Library anxiety: A grounded theory and its development" in the *College & Research Libraries* journal.

Although the phenomenon of library anxiety had long been recognized in the Library and Information Science discipline, it was Mellon (1986), who formulated its grounded theory based on a study of undergraduate students. Bostick (1992) designed her study to 'determine if a quantitative tool could be developed to accurately and adequately measure the construct' of library anxiety. Starting with a master list of 294 library anxiety-related statements administered in two stages and using a variety of statistical procedures, she developed the Library Anxiety Scale (LAS) consisting of 43 statements grouped into five coherent factors. She found the LAS 'to be an adequately valid and reliable measure of library anxiety indicated by the Cronbach's alpha [CA] for the instrument of 0.80, indicating adequate internal consistency'. It may be noted that the LAS was developed using a sample of students that 'included all levels from first year to post-graduate'. Since its development in 1992, the LAS have been used in over 30 studies including two that modified it. Most of these studies have been conducted by Jiao and Onwuegbuzie (1997). They stated that they had limited information for the subclasses of the LAS. Another study, using the LAS along with two other anxiety

scales on 171 undergraduate students concluded that the LAS 'should be used as a multidimensional instrument measuring both anxiety and attitudes for women; for men, it appears to be a measure of attitude' (Jerabeck et al., 2001: 286).

Considering the age of Bostick's scale and its unsuitability for research students, Van Kampen (2003) decided to conduct a study to determine if library anxiety was present among doctoral students. Her study, that included Bostick's LAS statements in her instrument, resulted in the development of a new 54-item Lickert-type Multidimensional Library Anxiety Scale. Meanwhile Onwuegbuzie et al. (2004) published a treatise on library anxiety. While discussing the issues for future research, they raised a legitimate question: How will the changing library and information landscape impact library anxiety research in the future.

#### **4. Library Anxiety**

The term anxiety is defined as diffuse, vague, discomfort, very unpleasant state of mind, feeling of fear and apprehension. The anxious people may often keep themselves from enjoying real life experiences. Every individual has worries and fears, whether he is poor or rich, famous or failure. According to Freud anxiety can be adaptive if the discomfort that goes with it motivates people to learn new challenges. But whether it is adaptive or maladaptive, this discomfort can be intense. The anxious people often unable to gain gratification from their work or other activities in their life because they want to wait for worst to happen in their life. Some of the symptoms of anxiety are:

- Nervous
- Tension
- Feeling tired
- Lack of interest
- Feeling low
- Poor concentration
- Impulsive

Library anxiety was an unknown and unheard term for many library professionals but the term took storm many years back when Constance Mellon, a Professor of Library Science in North Carolina, USA mentioned about it in 1986. Later on, many theories and scales were developed and assessed library anxiety among the library users around the globe. In the year 1992, Sharon L Bostick first developed the Library Anxiety Scale known as AQAK scale or Bostick's Library Anxiety Scale, which was very successful in measuring library anxiety.

Symptoms of library anxiety are:

- Fear of the librarian
- Laziness to go to the library
- Unable to find things in the library
- Confusion in starting a research work
- AQAK scale or Bostick's Library Anxiety Scale (1992) consists of 40 statements clustered into five factors, which are: (1) Library resources, (2) Library staff, (3) User knowledge, (4) Library environment, and (5) User education (Figure 1).

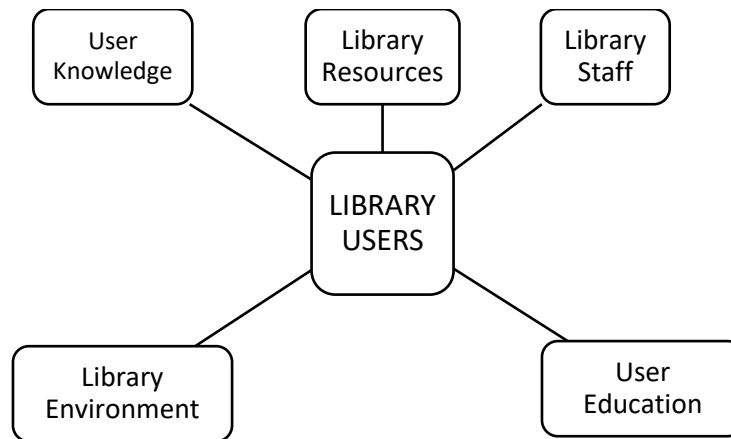


Figure 1. AQAK (A library anxiety scale)

## 5. Methodology

Survey method of research has been adopted to conduct the present study. The methods and techniques are mainly adopted from Sharon L Bostick's Library Anxiety Scale (LAS). Bostick had used 43 statements for determine Library Anxiety Scale but for this study, 31 statements out of 43 have been taken into consideration. These statements are categorised into five factors as shown below:

- Library resources
- Library staff
- User knowledge
- Library environment and
- User education

### 5.1 Data Collection Tools and Techniques

Structured questionnaire was designed and distributed among randomly selected 70 male respondents of each universities and 80 female respondents. 44 respondents from Assam university responded and responses 56 male respondents from Tezpur university were received back. The questionnaires out of 80 female respondents 70 from Assam University responded and 67 from Tezpur University were received. The questions were mainly close ended and the sample included students, teachers, and research scholars. Some data were also collected by meeting and interviewing the respondents.

### 5.2. Measurement

The questionnaire had 31 statements, which were converted into questions for better understanding of the respondents. After collection of the data, each and every question was again converted into statements and the result from each statement is measured in 1 to 5 point Lickert Scale. Range of the Lickert Scale varied from 1 to 5 where 1 was considered as the minimum level and 5 was the maximum.

### 5.3 Measurement of Library Anxiety

Library anxiety has been measured with the help of the scores proposed by Anwar, Al-Kandari and Al-Qallaf (2004). Following table represents a modified version of the anxiety score proposed by them.

Table 1. Proposed Categories for LAS Scores

Proposed Categories for LAS Scores	
No Anxiety	0.0 – 2.2
Low Anxiety	2.3 – 2.6
Mild Anxiety	2.7 – 3.5
Moderate Anxiety	3.6 – 3.9
Severe Anxiety	4.0 – 5.0

The score from 0.0 – 2.2 shows that there is no anxiety where 4.0 – 5.0 shows the level of anxiety is severe.

### 5.4 Procedures

For each statement, a response of 1 - denotes strong disagreement, 2- denotes disagree, 3 – undecided, 4 – Agree and whereas response of 5 - denotes strong agreement. Average of all the responses provides a generalized anxiety level for the respondents. Each question is provided with 5 points in maximum (strongly disagree = 1, disagree = 2, undecided = 3, agree = 4, strongly agree = 5). Positively worded items were reversed scored so that all items were scored in the same (strongly disagree = 5, disagree = 4, undecided = 3, agree = 2, strongly agree = 1).

### 5.5 Area of the study

Two centrally funded universities of Assam were selected which are Assam University and Tezpur University. Both of the universities were established in the same year which is 1994. Following are the universities:

#### 5.5.1 Assam University

Assam University came into existence in 1994 after enactment of the Assam (Central) University Act 1989. Through its pursuit, Assam University is in the process of making itself an institute of excellence. Assam University main campus is situated at Dargakona, about 20 kms away from Silchar. The campus is set amid sprawling hillocks and typical landscape of north east. The campus is spread over 600 acres and provide an ideal environment for the researchers, students and the people interested in academic excellence. The other campus of the university is situated at Diphu in the district of Karbi Anglong, Assam. The university has the territorial jurisdiction over the five districts of Assam viz., Cachar, Karimganj, Hailakandi, Dima Hasao (erstwhile North Cachar Hills) and Karbi Anglong.

### 5.5.2 Tezpur University

Tezpur University was established by an Act of Parliament in 1994. The objectives of this Central University as envisaged in the statutes are that it shall strive to offer employment oriented and interdisciplinary courses to meet the local and regional aspirations and the development needs of the state of Assam and also offer courses and promote research in areas which are of special and direct relevance to the region and in emerging areas in Science and Technology.

## 6. Data Analysis and Interpretations

The data collected through questionnaires from the respondents of Assam University have been analysed by using the instruments and procedures explained above. The anxiety scores are found out after calculating them and later on interpreted by them with the proposed scores of anxieties. Mean for the response of every question has been calculated in 5-point Likert Scale (Table 2).

Table 2. Calculated Anxiety Score of Assam university

Q.No.	Gender	Score (number of scores received for each question)	Total	Anxiety Score
			Male (5×44)	Male (Score ÷ 220×5)
			Female(5×70)	Female (Score ÷ 350×5)
1.	Male	88	220	2.0
	Female	153	350	2.2
2.	Male	110	220	2.5
	Female	230	350	3.3
3.	Male	165	220	3.8
	Female	323	350	4.6
4.	Male	140	220	3.2
	Female	268	350	3.8
5.	Male	123	220	2.8
	Female	263	350	3.8
6.	Male	170	220	3.9
	Female	313	350	4.5
7.	Male	133	220	3.0
	Female	285	350	4.1
8.	Male	100	220	2.3

	Female	250	350	3.6
9.	Male	100	220	2.3
	Female	193	350	2.8
10.	Male	95	220	2.2
	Female	230	350	3.3
11.	Male	100	220	2.3
	Female	213	350	3.0
12.	Male	108	220	2.4
	Female	248	350	3.5
13.	Male	100	220	2.3
	Female	180	350	2.6
14.	Male	133	220	3.0
	Female	245	350	3.5
15.	Male	143	220	3.2
	Female	116	350	4.1
16.	Male	130	220	3.0
	Female	250	350	3.6
17.	Male	110	220	2.5
	Female	218	350	3.1
18.	Male	220	220	2.6
	Female	245	350	3.1
19.	Male	140	220	3.2
	Female	243	350	3.5
20.	Male	143	220	3.2
	Female	230	350	3.3
21.	Male	125	220	2.8
	Female	283	350	4.0
22.	Male	108	220	2.4
	Female	218	350	3.1
23.	Male	145	220	3.3



	Female	268	350	3.8
24.	Male	140	220	3.2
	Female	243	350	4.1
25.	Male	150	220	3.4
	Female	285	350	4.1
26.	Male	138	220	3.1
	Female	258	350	3.7
27.	Male	115	220	2.6
	Female	278	350	4.0
28.	Male	150	220	3.4
	Female	268	350	3.8
29.	Male	98	220	2.2
	Female	213	350	3.0
30.	Male	133	220	3.0
	Female	278	350	4.0
31.	Male	115	220	2.6
	Female	263	350	3.8

Table 3. Calculated Anxiety Score of Tezpur university

Q.No.	Gender	Score (number of scores received for each question)	Total	Anxiety Score
			Male (5×56)	Male (Score ÷280 ×5)
			Female (5×67)	Female (Score ÷335 ×5)
1.	Male	144	280	2.6
	Female	144	335	2.1
2.	Male	180	280	3.2
	Female	174	335	2.6
3.	Male	258	280	4.6
	Female	276	335	4.1
4.	Male	192	280	3.4
	Female	162	335	2.4

5.	Male	156	280	2.8
	Female	150	335	2.2
6.	Male	168	280	3.0
	Female	312	335	4.7
7.	Male	177	280	3.2
	Female	180	335	2.7
8.	Male	156	280	2.8
	Female	138	335	2.1
9.	Male	165	280	2.9
	Female	162	335	2.4
10.	Male	147	280	2.6
	Female	126	335	1.9
11.	Male	159	280	2.8
	Female	144	335	2.1
12.	Male	159	280	2.8
	Female	144	335	2.1
13.	Male	162	280	2.9
	Female	150	335	2.2
14.	Male	219	280	3.9
	Female	210	335	3.1
15.	Male	183	280	3.3
	Female	162	335	2.4
16.	Male	171	280	3.1
	Female	228	335	3.4
17.	Male	177	280	3.2
	Female	162	335	2.4
18.	Male	183	280	3.3
	Female	162	335	2.1
19.	Male	189	280	3.4
	Female	162	335	2.4

20.	Male	207	280	3.7
	Female	162	335	2.4
21.	Male	156	280	2.8
	Female	144	335	2.1
22.	Male	156	280	2.8
	Female	168	335	2.5
23.	Male	192	280	3.4
	Female	150	335	2.2
24.	Male	207	280	3.7
	Female	210	335	3.1
25.	Male	174	280	3.1
	Female	216	335	3.2
26.	Male	159	280	2.8
	Female	168	335	2.5
27.	Male	171	280	3.1
	Female	198	335	3.0
28.	Male	180	280	3.2
	Female	186	335	2.8
29.	Male	147	280	2.6
	Female	150	335	2.2
30.	Male	180	280	3.2
	Female	162	335	2.4
31.	Male	168	280	3.0
	Female	180	335	2.7

The calculation of library anxiety is involved in the table shown above which is explained below:

Score: It is calculated by converting the responses into the number assigned (strongly disagree = 1, disagree = 2, undecided = 3, agree = 4, strongly agree = 5) and positively worded items were reversed scored so that all items were scored in the same (strongly disagree = 5, disagree = 4, undecided = 3, agree = 2, strongly agree = 1).

Total Score: The total number of scores is calculated by multiplying the number assigned to each question (5) with the number of questionnaires;

**Assam University:**

Male: 44 questionnaires are received ( $5 \times 44 = 220$ ). So, 220 denotes the total number of scores for the male users of Assam university library.

Female: 70 questionnaires are received ( $5 \times 70 = 350$ ). So, 350 denotes the total number of scores for the female users of Assam university library.

**Tezpur university:**

Male: 56 questionnaires are received ( $5 \times 56 = 280$ ). So, 280 denotes the total number of scores for the male users of Tezpur university library.

Female: 67 questionnaires are received ( $5 \times 67 = 335$ ). So, 335 denotes the total number of scores for the female users of Tezpur university library.

Anxiety Score: It has been found out by the following technique:

**Assam University**

Male:

$$\text{Anxiety Score} = \frac{\text{Score}}{220} \times 5$$

Female

$$\text{Anxiety Score} = \frac{\text{Score}}{350} \times 5$$

**Tezpur University**

Male:

$$\text{Anxiety Score} = \frac{\text{Score}}{280} \times 5$$

Female

$$\text{Anxiety Score} = \frac{\text{Score}}{335} \times 5$$

Following table represents the Library Anxiety Scores found among the users of Assam University Library.

Table 4. Gender wise response rate

Sl.No.	Universities	Gender					
		Male			Female		
		Questionnaire distributed	Received	Received (%)	Questionnaire distributed	Received	Received (%)
1.	Assam University	70	44	62.86%	80	70	87.50%
2.	Tezpur University	70	56	80%	80	67	84%

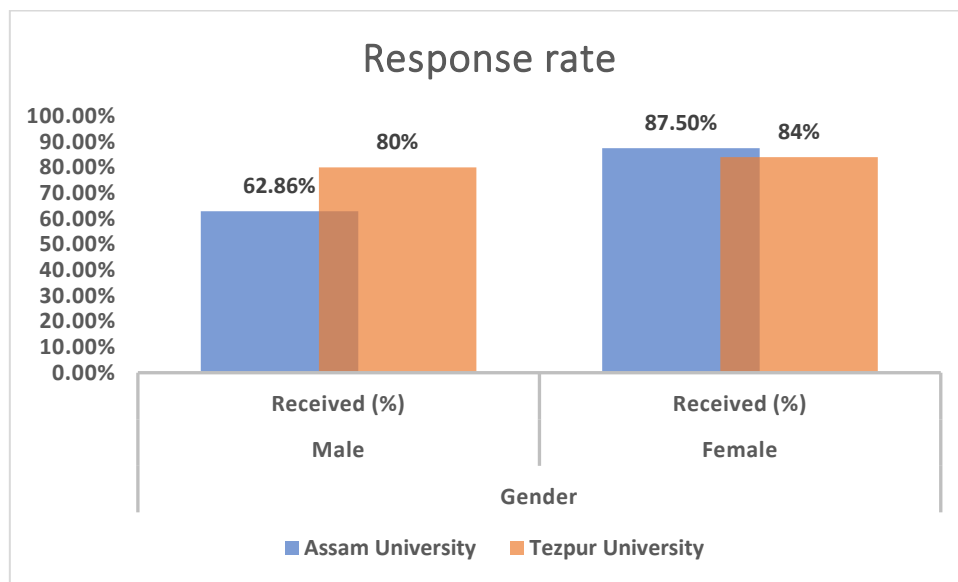


Figure 2. The gender wise response rate received from each university

**Assam University:** 62.86% responses are received from the male users and in other hand 87.50% responses are received from the female users.

**Tezpur University:** 80% responses are received from the male respondents and 84% response are received from the female respondents.

Table 5. Comparison of Anxiety scores

Sl. No	STATEMENTS	GENDER	UNIVERSITIES			
			ASSAM UNIVERSITY		TEZPUR UNIVERSITY	
			Anxiety Scores	Anxiety Levels	Anxiety Scores	Anxiety Levels

	USER KNOWLEDGE	Male	2.77	Mild Anxiety	3.47	Mild Anxiety
		Female	3.37	Mild Anxiety	2.93	Mild Anxiety
1.	I am embarrassed that I don't know how to use the library.	Male	2.0	No Anxiety	2.6	Low Anxiety
		Female	2.2	No Anxiety	2.1	No Anxiety
2.	I am unsure how to begin my research	Male	2.5	Low Anxiety	3.2	Mild Anxiety
		Female	3.3	Mild Anxiety	2.6	Low Anxiety
3.	I want to learn how to do my own research	Male	3.8	Moderate Anxiety	4.6	Severe Anxiety
		Female	4.6	Severe Anxiety	4.1	Severe Anxiety
LIBRARY RESOURCES		Male	3.23	Mild Anxiety	3.1	Mild Anxiety
		Female	4.05	Severe Anxiety	3.0	Mild Anxiety
4.	The library never has the materials I need	Male	3.2	Mild Anxiety	3.4	Mild Anxiety
		Female	3.8	Moderate Anxiety	2.4	Low Anxiety
5.	I can never find things in the library	Male	2.8	Mild Anxiety	2.8	Mild Anxiety
		Female	3.8	Moderate Anxiety	2.2	No Anxiety
6.	The copy machines are usually out of order	Male	3.9	Moderate Anxiety	3.0	Mild Anxiety
		Female	4.5	Severe Anxiety	4.7	Severe Anxiety
7.	The computer printers are often out of paper	Male	3.0	Mild Anxiety	3.2	Mild Anxiety
		Female	4.1	Severe Anxiety	2.7	Mild Anxiety
LIBRARY STAFF		Male	2.65	Low Anxiety	3.13	Mild Anxiety
		Female	3.31	Mild Anxiety	2.38	No Anxiety
8.	The library staffs are unapproachable	Male	2.3	Low Anxiety	2.8	Mild Anxiety
		Female	3.6	Moderate Anxiety	2.1	No Anxiety

9.	The reference librarians are unhelpful	Male	2.3	Low Anxiety	2.9	Mild Anxiety
		Female	2.8	Mild Anxiety	2.4	Low Anxiety
10.	The librarians don't have time to help me because they're always too busy on the telephone.	Male	2.2	No Anxiety	2.6	Low Anxiety
		Female	3.3	Mild Anxiety	1.9	No Anxiety
11.	Library staff don't have time to help me	Male	2.3	Low Anxiety	2.8	Mild Anxiety
		Female	3.0	Moderate Anxiety	2.1	No Anxiety
12.	Librarians don't have time to help me because they are always busy doing something else	Male	2.4	Low Anxiety	2.8	Mild Anxiety
		Female	3.5	Mild Anxiety	2.1	No Anxiety
13.	The reference librarians are unapproachable	Male	2.3	Low Anxiety	2.9	Mild Anxiety
		Female	2.6	Low Anxiety	2.2	No Anxiety
14.	If I can't find any book on the shelf, the library will help me	Male	3.0	Mild Anxiety	3.9	Moderate Anxiety
		Female	3.5	Mild Anxiety	3.1	Mild Anxiety
15.	I feel like I am bothering the reference librarian if I ask a question	Male	3.2	Mild Anxiety	3.3	Mild Anxiety
		Female	4.1	Severe Anxiety	2.4	Low Anxiety
16.	I can always ask the librarian if I don't know how to use a piece of equipment in the library	Male	3.0	Mild Anxiety	3.1	Low Anxiety
		Female	3.6	Moderate Anxiety	3.4	Mild Anxiety
17.	The people who work at the circulation desk are helpful	Male	2.5	Low Anxiety	3.2	Mild Anxiety
		Female	3.1	Mild Anxiety	2.4	No Anxiety
18.	The library staff doesn't care about students	Male	2.6	Low Anxiety	3.3	Mild Anxiety
		Female	3.1	Mild Anxiety	2.1	No Anxiety
19.	Librarian doesn't have time to help me	Male	3.2	Mild Anxiety	3.4	Mild Anxiety
		Female	3.5	Mild Anxiety	2.4	Low Anxiety

20.	The library staff does not listen to students	Male	3.2	Mild Anxiety	3.7	Moderate Anxiety
		Female	3.3	Mild Anxiety	2.4	Low Anxiety
LIBRARY ENVIRONMENT						
		Male	3.03	Mild Anxiety	3.11	Mild Anxiety
		Female	3.83	Moderate Anxiety	2.68	Low Anxiety
21.	I can't get help in the library at the times I need it	Male	2.8	Mild Anxiety	2.8	Mild Anxiety
		Female	4.0	Severe Anxiety	2.1	No Anxiety
22.	The library is comfortable place to study	Male	2.4	Low Anxiety	2.8	Mild Anxiety
		Female	3.1	Mild Anxiety	2.5	Low Anxiety
23.	I don't understand the mechanism of library overdue fines	Male	3.3	Mild Anxiety	3.4	Mild Anxiety
		Female	3.8	Moderate Anxiety	2.2	No Anxiety
24.	Good instructions for using the library computers are available	Male	3.2	Mild Anxiety	3.7	Moderate Anxiety
		Female	4.1	Severe Anxiety	3.1	Mild Anxiety
25.	The library rules are too restrictive	Male	3.4	Mild Anxiety	3.1	Mild Anxiety
		Female	4.1	Severe Anxiety	3.2	Mild Anxiety
26.	The directions for using the Library are not clear	Male	3.1	Mild Anxiety	2.8	Mild Anxiety
		Female	3.7	Moderate Anxiety	2.5	Mild Anxiety
27.	The library won't let me check out (issue) as many items as I need	Male	2.6	Mild Anxiety	3.1	Mild Anxiety
		Female	4.0	Severe Anxiety	3.0	Mild Anxiety
28.	I can't find enough space in the library to study	Male	3.4	Mild Anxiety	3.2	Mild Anxiety
		Female	3.8	Moderate Anxiety	2.8	Mild Anxiety
USER EDUCATION						
		Male	2.60	Low Anxiety	2.93	Mild Anxiety
		Female	3.60	Moderate Anxiety	2.43	Low Anxiety
29.		Male	2.2	No Anxiety	2.6	Low Anxiety



	I get confused trying to find my way around the library	Female	3.0	Mild Anxiety	2.2	No Anxiety
30.	I don't know what to do next when the book I need is not on the shelf	Male	3.0	Mild Anxiety	3.2	Mild Anxiety
		Female	4.0	Severe Anxiety	2.4	Low Anxiety
31.	I don't know what are the resources available in the library	Male	2.6	Low Anxiety	3.0	Mild Anxiety
		Female	3.8	Moderate Anxiety	2.7	Mild Anxiety

Data interpretations have been worked out by considering five important factors shown above such as - Library resources, Library staff, User knowledge, Library environment, and User education. Every statement under each factor is interpreted by measuring with proposed anxiety scores discussed above. Following are the interpretations of library anxiety scores of library users in Assam University:

### 6.1 User Knowledge

Male: Library anxiety score of the male users from Assam university is 2.77 which means mild anxiety. In other hand Tezpur university score is 3.47 which also means mild anxiety but it is higher than the score of Assam university.

Female: Library anxiety score of the female from both the universities are in mild level but the anxiety score of females from Assam university (3.37) is higher than Tezpur university (2.93).

Comparison: Anxiety score of male users from Tezpur university (3.47) is higher than any other her gender category between Assam university and Tezpur university.

### 6.2 Library Resources

Male: Library anxiety score of the male users from Assam university is 3.23 which means mild anxiety. In other hand Tezpur university score is 3.1 which also means mild anxiety but the score of Assam university is higher than Tezpur university.

Female: Library anxiety score of the female Assam university is 4.05 which means severe anxiety and the anxiety score of female users from Tezpur university is 3.0 which means mild anxiety.

Comparison: Anxiety score of the female users from Assam university is 4.05 which is in the highest level of anxiety scale.

### 6.3 Library Staff

Male: In the context of library staff the library anxiety score of the male users from Assam university are in low level which score is 2.65 and the score from Tezpur university is 3.13 which is in mild level and higher than the score of Assam university.

Female: Library anxiety score of female users of Assam university in the context of library staff is 3.31 which means mild anxiety and female users of Tezpur university has no anxiety. (2.38)

Comparison: Library anxiety score of the female users from Assam university is 3.31 which is higher than any other gender category of users.

#### **6.4 Library Environment**

Male: In the context of library environment the library anxiety score of the male users from Assam university is in mild level which score is 3.03 and the score from Tezpur university is 3.11 which is also in mild level but higher than the score of Assam university.

Female: Library anxiety score of female users of Assam university in the context of library environment is 3.83 which means mild anxiety and female users of Tezpur university is in low anxiety (2.68).

Comparison: Library anxiety score of the female users from Assam university is 3.83 which is higher than any other gender category of users.

#### **6.5 User Education**

Male: In the context of user education the library anxiety score of the male users from Assam university is in low level which score is 2.60 and the score from Tezpur university is 2.93 which is in mild anxiety level but higher than the score of Assam university.

Female: Library anxiety score of female users of Assam university in the context of user education is 3.60 which means mild anxiety and female users of Tezpur university is in low anxiety (2.43).

Comparison: Library anxiety score of the female users from Assam university is 3.60 which is higher than any other gender category of users.

### **7. Major Findings**

Following major findings are worked out and presented by taking the five aspects of library into consideration:

- Both male and female category of users from both the universities want to learn how to do research.
- Anxiety level against the statement asked about on the curiosity on learning to do research has been found out to be whether in moderate anxiety level or severe anxiety level. That means users are not much learned on taking their research ahead.
- The female users of Assam University library contemplate that resources in the libraries are not relevant.
- The resources available in Assam University library are not relevant for the female users because they couldn't find the resources whatever they want.
- The photocopy machines and printers are always out of order.

- Anxiety score is in highest level in terms with the photocopy machines and printers. Users from both the universities think that photocopy machines or printers are either out of order or out of paper.
- The library staff are unapproachable.
- The users from both the university think that library staff are unapproachable and they are not friendly. They also mentioned that library staffs are unhelpful.
- Librarian is always busy and has no time for the users.
- It is found out on each and every statement asked on the librarian is given in negative way. Users think that librarians are always busy and he or she is not reachable.
- The library environment is unhelpful

Library sets up an environment for reading where user comes to read and also to fulfil their academic need. Instead of fulfilling the needs and setting up an environment for the users to read it creates an unwanted environment where users from both the universities don't want to be in.

#### *Users don't understand the mechanism of fine*

The library users are not familiar with the mechanism of implementation of fine on them. Specially the anxiety level on the regard to mechanism of fine is in moderate level among the female users from Assam university.

#### *Limited number of books can be issued*

The limit in number of books checking out is quite less, so that number of books doesn't serve their purpose. Library anxiety score of the female users from Assam university is in severe level regarding the book check out numbers.

#### *Computer training and instructions are not provided by the libraries*

Proper instructions on using the computers are not available in the library. Even the library does not provide any training to the users who doesn't know how to use the computer and ICT applications.

#### *Users don't know how to search the books*

The library users are not familiar with the book searching techniques in the library. Specially, the female category of users from Assam university is having highest level of library anxiety level (4.0) in regard to searching the books in the library.

#### *Users are unaware about the resources available in the library*

Assam University has **78400** books and Tezpur University has 86654 books but what will be the use of that much books if users don't have any idea what are the resources available in the library. The anxiety level of the female users from Assam University has highest level of anxiety (3.8).

## 8. Suggestions

It can be seen that library anxiety exists in both the universities i.e., Assam University and Tezpur University. The library anxiety of different levels exists among the users in various aspects and it is needed to be controlled by applying some effective measures. In regard to make the Assam University and Tezpur University library free from anxiety or to minimise it some preventive measures are suggested below:

*i. Library orientation programmes at regular intervals*

Users are needed to be trained up properly in the area of information search and research. It should be done in the respective departments or in the library. Library staff should themselves go for attending training programmes and adopt them to better serve the users community particular and society as whole in general. The training should not be only a one-time entity providing it to the new admitted students but it should also be included as a regular activity of the libraries. It should be a regular process introducing every new aspects of the library not only to the students but also to every users of the libraries.

*ii. Adequate and Important resources should be acquired*

Most of the users responded negatively in regard to the resources of the library. They think that the needful and important resources are not available. Library resources should be acquired and maintained by keeping the needs of users in mind. Adequate number of resources should be procured so that users do not have to return back empty hand from the library.

*iii. Proper maintenance of the reprography section is needed*

Users from both the university think that reprography section is not well maintained. Whether it's about the printers or the Photocopy machines. Mostly the machines are out of order or don't consists of papers. Reprography is also an important resource provided by the libraries, specially the Assam university library should specially take care of the photocopiers.

*iv. Behaviour of the library staff should be rectified*

“A smile doesn't cost anything”. Library staff should maintain a good behaviour and should be friendly and approachable as well. They should be well mannered and should take care of the user's needs. It can be always seen that users complaining about the behaviour of library staff. Same thing could be founded out in the research study that users doesn't finds library staff approachable and they seem to be rude and arrogant.

*v. Restriction on use of mobile phones; Users and Employees*

Use of the phones inside the library is strictly prohibited for the users but library staff should also follow this nature for setting up an example for the users. Sometime user thinks that restriction is enforced on them only and library staff are easily using the mobile phones and moving around the library.

*vi. Librarian should be accessible*

Librarian should be accessible and available to the users, he should try to make a good rapport with the users, and he should always try to collect feedback from the user's time to time for making the library a better place and an anxiety free one.

vii. *Books should be arranged in list complicated manner*

The books should be arranged in such an order that users can easily identify it. Arrangement of the books and racks should be done in an appropriate manner so that these are easily found by the users whatever they need. Every rack should include shelf list so that users can easily find out what a particular rack is equipped with.

viii. *Library should posture a pleasant environment*

Library should be spacious and have a pleasant environment. Proper ventilation and enough light should be maintained. Library should also focus on attracting the users into the library. The users must feel good while entering the library so that they can read, sit back and relax as well.

ix. *Silence should be maintained*

The sign "silence please" shouldn't be only used as a show piece, library staff should take care of it. It should be followed by the users and the library staff should also maintain it.

x. *Focus should be on "Least restrictive environment"*

Library should follow a "Least restrictive environment". Too many rules and regulations should be avoided. Minimum required rules should be only enforced on the users otherwise the users will avoid coming to the library.

xi. *Transparency should be there while imposing fines*

The users should know why they are liable to pay fine and they should also aware of the fact that library fines are used in the developmental work of the library. The library staff should properly explain the need of collecting library overdue fines and transparency should be maintained.

xii. *Emphasis should be given on user education*

The library should plan in making the users more literate on using the library. Emphasis should be given on user education. Library should organise training and workshops for the users for better understanding of the library and the different types of services offered by the library.

xiii. *Special attention should be given to the new users*

Proper orientation program should be designed for the new users. It should not leave out anything important about the library.

After going through the findings above suggestions are most suitable for diminishing library anxiety among the users of the universities i.e., Tezpur University and Assam University. Other than these, some of the suggestions which might also work for the betterment

of the library are: display of new books, book exhibition, new arrivals, collecting of feedback and suggestions, priority-based requisition to different category of users and web 2.0 services like ask the librarian might help.

## 9. Conclusion

The universities selected for the study i.e., Tezpur University and Assam University have revealed that both have been established in same year that is 1994 but Tezpur University library has developed immensely in comparison to Assam University library. In the comparison made between male and female from both the universities it has been found out that the level of library anxiety is more among the female users where library anxiety score among the male user is in mid-level. That means anxiety is there in both the universities but the female users are not at all satisfied with the library and its services. So, it is the time to take a call for managing the libraries in a better way and also to take care of the female users to diminish the library anxiety.

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