

Fall 11-2019

Establishing Roaming Service to promote an integrated Reference from the National Medical Library at UAEU

Gamila Ahmed

National Medical Library, United Arab Emirates University, Al Ain, gamila@uaeu.ac.ae

Muna Sir El khatim

National Medical Library, United Arab Emirates University, Al Ain, munaah@uaeu.ac.ae

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarworks.uaeu.ac.ae/posters>



Part of the [Library and Information Science Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Gamila, A. & Sir El khatim, M. (2019, November). Establishing Roaming Service to promote and Integrated Reference from the National Medical Library at UAEU. Poster presented at the ALA's 6th library conference, Sharjah, UAE.

This Poster is brought to you for free and open access by the Conferences and Symposia at Scholarworks@UAEU. It has been accepted for inclusion in Posters by an authorized administrator of Scholarworks@UAEU. For more information, please contact fadl.musa@uaeu.ac.ae.

Establishing a Roaming Service to promote an integrated reference from the National Medical Library at UAEU

Authors: Ahmed, Gamila; Sir El Khatim, Mona

Introduction

The Roaming Reference concept is relatively new at the National Medical Library (NML) at UAE University. The purpose is to meet the patrons at the point-of-need while increasing the visibility of the library. This type of services enables the library to become an integral part of the broader institutional culture, through promoting the library resources and reference services. Librarians use iPads to engage in technology-supported roaming reference to offer face to face reference service at the patron's point-of-need.

Objectives :

- Develop and increase our communication with patrons who do not normally approach the desk.
- Promote library service and provide access to information services and research support to all patrons at all locations in the library.
- To assess the students' perception of the roaming service at the point of service and identify benefits and eventual challenges for this new form of services.
- To collect and review the patron's feedback in order to develop the roaming reference service.

Implementation :

The first phase of the roaming reference at the UAE Medical Library was conducted in term 1 of the academic year from August to December 2019, the service consists of librarians who are considered experts in using various information tools.

A typical roam is usually conducted between 9:00 AM to 3:00 PM, six hours per day in two shifts, there two roams for each shift, with a duration of 30 minutes for each roam by the Librarian.

The librarians of the NML are generally supportive of this service through the announcement of medical resources available at the NML.



Technology :

iPads were assigned to librarians to be used during the roaming service to provide quick answers and to teach students how to download medical apps such as point-of-care tools and diagnostic tools.

In addition, the roaming librarians also use iPads to demonstrate how to access medical databases such as Access Medicine database and anatomy resources.



Marketing :

The roaming reference service will be announced to the CMHS community by e-mails and launched at NML website. The roaming librarians will be available at the point-of-need where they can answer patrons' questions, promote the service and engage with patrons. To market the service and make the librarians visible, stickers has been created and placed at the back of the iPads that students easy can identify the roaming librarians.

the social media can be used for more interaction with library patrons. Libinsight tool for data collection to be used for data analysis, LibGuide for roaming reference service has been created.



Data collection :

The librarians conduct a survey about the Library Mobile Roaming Reference Services. The questions were related to their past use of reference services, in order to document the change and obtain feedback of this service. The librarians were advised to carry with them printed survey forms ready to be given to patrons after the roaming interaction. Questions included on the survey are connected to the patrons' perception of the roaming and whether or not the use of this service increased their interest in contacting librarians for research help.

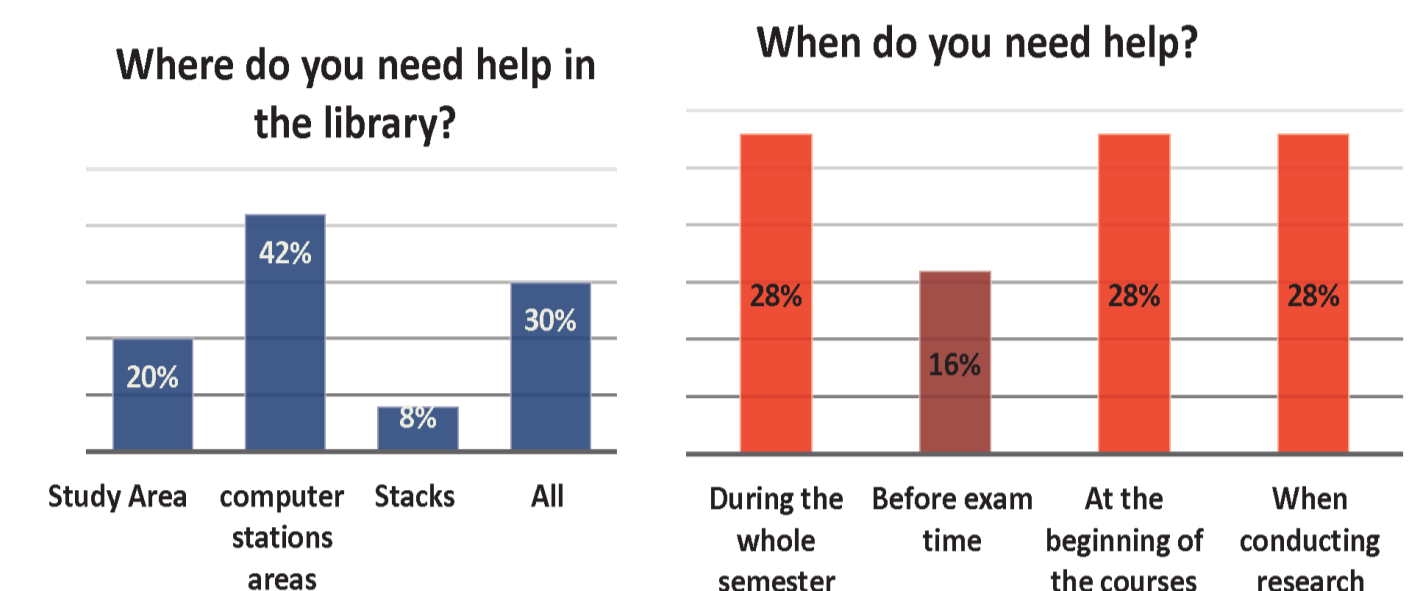
Sample interaction questions :

- Do you think that Librarians moving around with iPads will make research services more accessible for you?
- Will you approach the librarians with reference questions during the roaming service more than at the reference desk?
- Do you think that the librarians moving around will contribute and increase the awareness with the medical resources in the library?

Service evaluation :

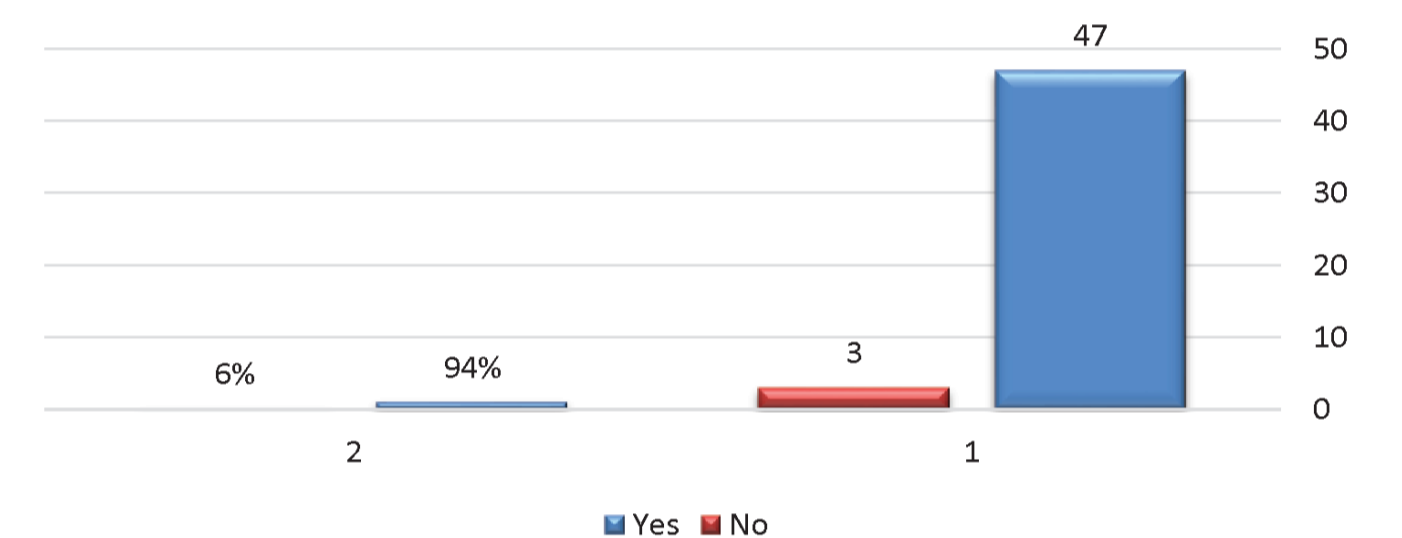
The evaluation of the roaming service was conducted between September to November 2019. Total of 50 service of roaming reference transactions were collected in 40 days.

Location and service time



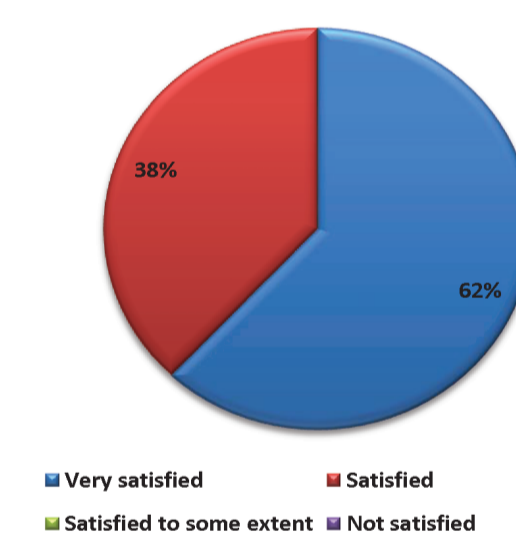
In response to the questions where they prefer the location and service time (72%) of patrons answered that they need help on the computer stations areas. (72%) of patrons responded that they need help during the whole semester, after the beginning of the courses and when conducting research

Do you think that librarians moving around with iPad's will make research services more accessible for you?

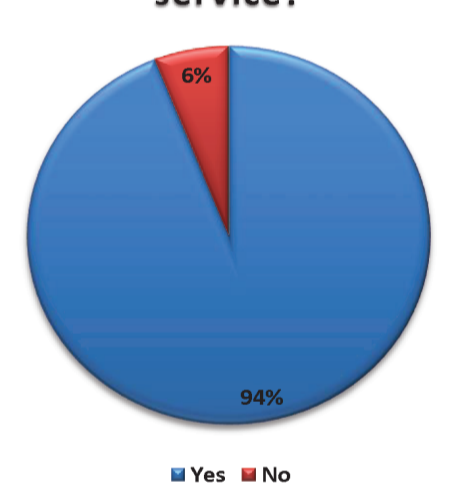


In response to the question of reference service accessibility (79%) of patrons are satisfied with the information provided by librarians, 7% of patrons are not satisfied with the information provided.

Are you satisfied with the duration of the help provided by the roaming service?



Are you satisfied with the information provided by the librarians through the roaming service?



Regarding the answers to the questions about the duration and the service satisfaction (79%) are satisfied with the information provided by librarians and (72%) of patrons are extremely very satisfied with the duration of the help provided by roaming service, and (73%) are satisfied.

Conclusion :

The Roaming Reference Service is a new library service added to the National Medical Library at UAEU. The student embedded and integrated reference support meets a different set of needs from the library patrons. It is aimed to enable students to complete the possibility to reference transactions with ongoing support and information when it is needed. Promote the services and resources of the library as well as outreach activities and the efficient usage of resources.

This study show that the response from the students that they do like the new service more than a fixed desk and indicates that the new service meets the changing behavior of library patrons, the majority of the patron responded that they need the service during the whole academic year and at the computer stations and (72%) of patrons are satisfied with the information provided by librarians, (79%) are satisfied with the information provided by librarians and (72%) of patrons are extremely very satisfied with the duration of the help provided by roaming service.

Future plans :

The librarians hope that this project will continue to help serve more patrons by using iPads with the reference service beyond the reference desk. The service raises awareness of the service offered by the library; further marketing efforts are needed to increase the visibility of the service. Today the librarians and library services are not connected to fixed point a desk. with roaming service, we have the potential to reach out beyond the library facility and meet the faculty members and outside users. This service was done within the library facility as library is not limited to a reference desk.

References:

- Gadsby, J., & Qian, S. (2012). Using an iPad to redefine roving reference service in an academic library. Library Hi Tech News, 9(1), 4-9.
- Yap, J. & M. Cajés. (2016). Where are the Librarians? The Roving Reference Experience of DLSU Libraries.
- McCabe, K. M. & J. R. W. MacDonald (2011) Roaming Reference: Reinvigorating Reference through Point of Need Service. Partnership: The Canadian Journal of Library and Information Practice and Research, 1, 7.
- Sharman, Alison and Walsh, Andrew (2012) Roving librarian at a mid-sized, UK based University. Library Technology Reports, 48(8), pp. 24-28, ISSN 2086-0024.
- Mirtz, R. M. (2013). The second half of reference: An analysis of point-of-need roving reference questions.

