

Academic Libraries in Oman in Light of Oman Vision 2040: How is that Viewed by Library Staff and Users?

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Abstract

Libraries play a vital role in the development of modern societies. They are official institutions for supporting education and spreading knowledge. In order to have sufficient information about the importance of libraries, the researchers have distributed a questionnaire among (50) library users. In fact, the results were exciting, astonishing, and promising; almost all of the sample members encouraged people to use libraries and make them their ultimate option and priority. Recommendations, discussion, and explanations will be highlighted in detail in this paper.

Keywords: development, intimacy, libraries, local society, nonofficial, relationships, users

Introduction

Libraries have no boundaries; they are places where all classes of the society meet to get knowledge for free, regardless of color, age, sex. Moreover, their role is building, cultivating, and educating society members, and keep bridging up the gap of illiteracy. Library users are diverse: university professors, students, scholars, and general public. Libraries are keen on hosting seminars and meetings with famous writers, scientists, social reformers, as a sort of serving users so as to be closer to their favorite public figures and celebrities in different fields. This paper highlights the important role libraries play in the development and progress of the

society, with a special focus on academic libraries in the Sultanate of Oman in light of Oman Vision 2040.

Study Problem

This quantitative descriptive study seeks to identify the most prominent roles played by the academic libraries in the Sultanate of Oman in line with the vision of Oman 2040 by investigating the opinions of a sample of library staff, as well as the beneficiaries, to identify the vital role played by the academic libraries in the Sultanate of Oman, and the role played by the government in supporting them -academic libraries- to achieve this role.

Study Objectives

The study aims to:

1. Identify the role played by academic libraries in the Sultanate of Oman according to the Oman Vision 2040.
2. Determine the extent to which this vision is seriously implemented in all, or most of the academic institutions that serve the people of Oman, regardless of their academic and social status, race and interests.
3. Assess the role played by the government in supporting local academic institutions, whether governmental or private, in accordance with Oman 2040 Vision, and identify if libraries receive any support from any ministry or community body.

Study Questions

1. What is the role played by the academic libraries in the Sultanate of Oman according to the Oman Vision 2040?
2. To which extent is this vision seriously implemented in all, or most of the academic institutions that serve the people of Oman, regardless of their diverse backgrounds—academic, social status, race, and interests?
3. What is the role played by the government in supporting local academic institutions, whether governmental or private, in accordance with Oman 2040 Vision, and identify if libraries receive any support from any ministry or community body?

Literature Review

Libraries are the backbone of all academic institutions, whether government or private, where faculty members, students, and researchers do their academic tasks professionally. These libraries represent the ultimate and appropriate resort for scholars who need to work for themselves, or get promoted and become good figures in the society, and set a good example in exploring and uncovering vague issues. “Libraries play a fundamental role in enhancing the learning experience, providing students with all the materials and services they need” (Marketing Team, 2019, Para. 1).

[The] UNESCO define[s] Library as, “any organized collection of printed books and periodical[s] or any other graphic or audio-visual materials with a staff to provide and facilitate the use of such materials as required to meet the informational research, educational and recreational needs of users.” (Lisbdnetwork, 2014, Para. 7).

Libraries should always keep on developing and progressing to meet the expectations of their users. In addition to receiving modern publications- local or international- they should utilize modern technology, software programs, all online media resources, and multiple venues for the users to study, research, or even promote personal relations and socialize. “University libraries not only support productivity and provide access to learning resources, but also function as spaces for gathering and socializing” (Counts, (n.d), Para.5). “Taking a holistic approach can give the library the opportunity to focus on connections and not just collections”. (Blankstein & Haas, 2022, Para.9)

Universities have had to innovate to meet student expectations and school needs, and the university libraries and learning spaces play a central role. Librarians have been at the forefront of a shift in the usage of university libraries, reimagining libraries to accommodate new technologies, expanded media sources, and multiuse spaces for students to learn, study, and socialize (Counts, (n.d), Para. 1)

Farewell to fatigue and hard work writing papers with the pen; nowadays, in the technological revolution, library users can search via the Internet and write their tasks on their laptops, or computers provided by the libraries. With the help of the Internet, plagiarism is easily checked in seconds. “Technology in libraries can be innovative, offering access to expensive tolls, training and skills that otherwise would not be available for everyone” (Lastauskaite, (n.d), Para. 9).

...many libraries give learners the possibility to use computers and engage with digital resources that cover different subjects. Through the use of computers, students can search their sources quickly, write their assignments and check the plagiarism percentage of their written work (Marketing Team, 2019, Para. 3).

Librarians work professionally. They exert time to assist and guide library users, and normally initiate good relations with all users, regardless of their positions or ranks-- students, professors, researchers, etc.

Regardless of the information visitors are looking for, they can easily access it through the help of skilled and well-trained librarians. Therefore, librarians have a significant role in public and academic libraries. Generally, their duties include collection-cataloging, development, reference services, building partnerships with educational institutions and providing instructional lecturers to visitors. However, as

many communities know, librarians do this and much more. (Lastauskaite, (n.d), Para. 5).

Though technology is rapidly spreading all over the world, and through which quick answers are easily obtained, professional librarians can excel in helping users by giving them the right answer without wasting their time. Google, for example, although saves time and assists all users in seconds, it- sometimes- gives the user so many options to choose the best of which, sometimes there are more possible answers. The librarians, however, emerge at the right time with the right answer. “Google can bring you back 100,000 answers. A librarian can bring you back the right one.” –Neil Gaiman (Lastauskaite, (n.d), Para.7).

Libraries provide all users with chances to create, innovate, uncover, or explore new things for themselves, or the local community. The following is a very inspirational story by a simple individual who borrowed a book of his interest from the local library. Not only did he change himself, but also the whole society around.

Libraries are synonymous with education and offer countless learning opportunities that can fuel economic, social and cultural development. The inspiring story of William Kamkwamba from Malawi underlies the difference a library can make. Having borrowed a book about windmills from his local library, Mr. Kamkwamba learned how to build an energy turbine for his village. On the strength of his experience he went on to study at a leading US university. That book not only changed his life; it also transformed the lives of those in his village community. Such stories explain why many countries are eager to ensure that libraries continue to provide access to knowledge, learning and ideas (White, 2012, Para. 4)

The role of libraries should not be underestimated, no matter how technology has spread. They witness the development around us and have the vital role in the academic institutions.

As librarians, we know the value of our community services, and our patrons appreciate their importance as well. But in an increasingly digital world, we see the role of libraries as community and cultural centers at times undervalued, and occasionally under fire. (Edwards & Rae & Unger, 2013, Para. 1).

Librarians, like other faculty members who work for higher education institutions, should receive full respect and treated as educators. They are doing their best to offer assistance to all users. “Several panelists argued the importance of acknowledging that everyone who works within a higher education institution who supports students, including librarians, hold positions as educators”. (Blankstein & Haas, 2022, Para.15).

“Libraries build citizens. They educate individuals and foster thoughtful communities. They are essential components of communities-worth fighting for and funding” (Edwards & Rae & Unger, 2013, Para. 4). Moreover, Libraries are centers for knowledge and should be well taken care of financially, in particular, to keep updated with the contemporary publications.

Libraries play a major role in keeping students at academic institutions till they graduate. In this case, students feel they are highly respected and valued, as well.

“April Cunningham emphasized the value that libraries have towards student retention- students feel successful and continue their college education when they feel nurtured, engaged, connected and valued. Libraries, she noted, are an excellent place for these interactions to happen.” (Blankstein & Haas, 2022, Para. 9).

Talking about libraries, academic or private, leads to talking about some international ones. Following are short briefings about the Library of Congress, Russian State library (RSL), in addition to a number of local libraries in the Sultanate of Oman and their role in serving the local community in light of Oman Vision 2040, in particular.

The Library of Congress

It is the largest, most famous, and the oldest library in the world. It was founded in 1800 and now boasts 173 million items on diverse topics: international collections, items in 470 languages, rare African and Middle Eastern materials, Asian and European materials, children’s books, the smallest and largest book, etc. It is the place for scholars, professors, researchers, politicians worldwide. In order to get the most modern and contemporary publication, it has representative offices in (60) countries around the world. “On August 24, 1814, British troops burned the Capitol building (where the Library was housed) and destroyed the Library’s core collection of 3,000 volumes. On January 30, 1815, Congress approved the purchase of Thomas Jefferson’s personal library of 6,487 books for \$23,950”. (Library of Congress, (n.d), Para. 1).

Russian State Library (RSL)

It is considered the biggest in Russia, and the second in the world. It was founded in 1862 and ever since it receives all items published nation-wide. (RSL) holds 47 million books, manuscripts, bibliography, valuable editions, other documents, etc. It is open for all Russian citizens above 14. It has a collection in 367 languages and conducts a number of events: continuous book exhibitions, library evenings and nights, conferences, seminars, lectures, visits to famous writers-local or international- novelists, playwrights, etc. Upon the annual official report, the library is changing and developing very rapidly.

Sultan Qaboos University Library

The library of Sultan Qaboos University is the pioneering and most prestigious in the Sultanate of Oman. It started receiving users in 1986 with the ultimate aim of supporting the

academic sector at the university: faculty members, researchers, staff, students, and local community members, regardless of color or nationality. The library works according to an international standard and is keen on gaining excellence and positive effects in the academic arena in the Sultanate. It boasts high -quality services, rare and valuable manuscripts, modern and up to date publications. The library strives to offer the maximum of its services to users and staff as well: taking parts in the community service events, ensuring quality over quantity, and encourages library staff to be cooperative, and assists all users professionally without any delay.

Sohar University Library

The library of Sohar University has a distinguished role in assisting the university body. It provides students, staff members, as well as researchers, with high international standard facilities. It contains up to date database programs, e-books, journals, newspapers, periodicals, printed materials. All of that is utilized for its users. The library offers training courses, workshops, circulation, reference, electronic services, etc.

Ibri College of Technology and Applied Sciences

First of all, it is worth noting that all colleges of Applied Sciences in Oman have become colleges under the umbrella of the “University of Technology and Applied Sciences”. Ibri College lies in Al-Dhahira Region. It is a high standard library that offers lots of important services and assistance to faculty members, students, officials, and the local community, as well, especially researchers.

The library has current and contemporary programs and resources, and fast Internet access. The ultimate aim of the library (LRC) at Ibri College is achieving excellence in both theoretical and practical arenas: hard and soft materials. It is a link between the College as an academic domain and the local community—it conducts almost weekly dialogue sessions, workshops, seminars, conferences, lectures -both in person and online. Moreover, the (LRC) plays a very important role in welcoming students from local schools as a good step for promoting its services and facilities.

The (LRC) boasts a tremendous number of academic materials and sources—printed and e-books, periodicals, magazines, CDs, in addition to a reference hall that has the most contemporary and international references including encyclopedias, theses, desk dictionaries, rare books and references on the Arab heritage, Islamic resources, etc.

There are not less than (15) large computer labs that belong to the (LRC), where faculty members deliver lectures, and for students to accomplish their work, such as assignments and any other related academic tasks.

At the beginning of every academic year, the (LRC) staff conduct an Induction Week for new students to have a complete idea about the facilities and assistance the (LRC) offers. The researchers would like to thank the staff of the (LRC) for their ongoing effort and hard work in

helping all library users at college. They really welcome users and visitors with a big smile and positive attitude.

Briefing about Oman's ambition in the field of libraries

Every country in the world aspires to reach the highest rank in development with high and international standards, and invest in economic fields and social welfare. This is clear in Oman in light of Vision 2040 that aims to increase the percentage of the Omani workforce to at least 42% by 2040, as well as to increase local investment to 10%.

The three most important pillars on which Oman's vision depends are: people and society, economy and development, and institutional performance. And on top of the priorities is teaching, learning, scientific research, and an educational system characterized by quality, not quantity.

Oman Vision 2040 honored the establishment of the University of Technology and Applied Sciences that supports the local community with qualified graduates in diverse fields. In Salalah, for example, the government established and supported a library for children with 2000 books that suit their age and interests. Moreover, there are a number of libraries belonging to the Sultan Qaboos Higher Center for Culture and Science.

All these libraries and cultural institutions aim to make academic resources available to all according to Oman Vision 2040. As per Al-Hatmi & Nor (2022), academic libraries in the Sultanate of Oman played an important role during the Covid-19 pandemic by remotely providing users with the required and appropriate information needed.

There is also the library of Sultan Qaboos Great Mosque, which is considered a cultural landmark in serving all users in Muscat and the suburbs. It includes periodicals in both the Arabic and English languages, in addition to daily newspapers and a section for children. There is also a department for postgraduate studies that includes more than 90 studies in various fields: scientific, literary, historical, and the section related to Omani history and the publication of some local establishments.

There is also Al- Ma'refa Al –Aama (General Knowledge) library that aims to raising the cultural local hints of individuals, encouraging them to self-learning, and providing researchers with the ample opportunity to access information related to their research.

What increased the development of these educational and cultural institutions, whether at school or university stages of higher education- whether governmental or private institutions- is the non-stop support according to the Oman Vision 2040, where interest, care, moral and material support increased, with the focus of investment in education.

Oman Vision 2040

Oman Vision 2040 is the national reference for economic and social planning for the period of 2021-2040, and the source of national sector strategies and five-year development plans. It was put in place under the wise guidance of His Majesty the late Sultan Qaboos Bin Said, and carried forward by His Majesty. Oman Vision 2040 was approved by His Majesty in 2020, then it was put into action as of early January 2021 and will remain in force till 2040. (Times News Service, 2022, Para.4-5).

progress in all fields, especially in of jump the Sultanate is witnessing a very great ,Nowadays . .and tangible ll community sectors cooperate to make this Vision realA .the field of education .ning it reflects working hardhe Sultan's decree is clear and transparent and from the very beginT offices up-there are follow , ,as planned being applied is 2040 order to make sure that Vision In and evaluate all items related ,check ,in all regions and Wilayat of the Sultanate to guide, assist policy that focusses on putting specific goals (Excellence) mention Ejada to this Vision, not to . with a time limit to achieve

The Sultanate of Oman is making all efforts to meet the objectives of Oman Vision 2040 with the right approach and mechanism to ensure that none of the long-term goals are ignored. This is the reason His Majesty Sultan Haitham bin Tarik issued directives to establish 59 offices for Oman's Vision 2040, at all authorities and government organizations concerned. This is being seen as a very important step to expedite its implementation (Al Matani, 2022, Para. 1).

Oman Vision 2040 does care mostly about Education and considers it “priority”, as education is the pillar of the development of societies. Libraries- academic or public- status stems from education and should be supported to the maximum; without libraries, there is a missing link in the academic institutions.

With no libraries, the society keeps lagging behind. Libraries are great supporters to the educational movement. “considering scientific research as a sector for innovation and linking it with higher education is an important and supportive step because the quality of education is directly linked to the quality of scientific research and innovations” (Nair, 2022. Para.11).

The Sultanate, upon the Sultan's Vision, shows a tremendous progress in all sectors that provide the whole society with respectful and fruitful life, especially when the most important sectors are combined together. Health sector and education in all phases (school till university phases) do matter and have consideration. “Citizen Well-being through healthcare and education, and ensuring fair distribution of development gains across the governorates are other key goals”. Will Oman 2040 Vision keep going on?

Oman Vision 2040 will remain as long as possible—controlling the entire establishments and institutions of the Sultanate till becomes part of the society supporting all sectors, mainly the educational. It was approved by the top of the hierarchy in the Sultanate who sets an excellent example for all people, and expatriates, as well. “Oman Vision 2040 was approved by His

Majesty in 2020, then it was put into action as of early January 2021 and will remain in force till 2040.” (Times of Oman, 2022, Para. 5). Sustainability of Omani resources, especially education, is the ultimate priority in Oman.

The Sultanate of Oman, represented by the education sector, has taken the initiative to participate in many seminars and meetings in order to exchange experiences on the best practices followed by educational systems in the world for the early recovery to ensure the sustainability of education and building stronger and more flexible educational systems that have a greater ability to serve students. (Times of Oman, 2022, Para. 4).

Nowadays, all Omani establishments, organizations, and people are unified and work hand in hand for the development of the country. The private sector has a say, as well. It exerts all efforts and investment in education, which, in turn, includes libraries, as a result.

Private higher education establishments were also provided with the opportunity to initiate some investments and commercial activities in the land offered to them at 15 per cent of the area allocated for the higher education establishment in order to establish service projects supportive to educational process (Times of Oman, 2022, Para. 4).

Methodology and Study Approach

The researchers used the Analytical Descriptive Approach in this study, as it is the most appropriate to achieve all objectives. “The approach that relies on studying the reality of the case and is concerned with describing it as an accurate description and expressing it qualitatively and quantitatively” (Obeidat, Adass and Kayed, 2001, p.23). The study is based on collecting data to identify the role of academic libraries in the local society in the light of Oman Vision 2040 according to staff and beneficiaries point of view.

Study Sampling

This study was applied to a sample of (50) users and staff of academic libraries in the Sultanate of Oman. The samples are with diverse qualifications: diploma and under, Bachelor, Masters, and PhD’s.

Data Collection

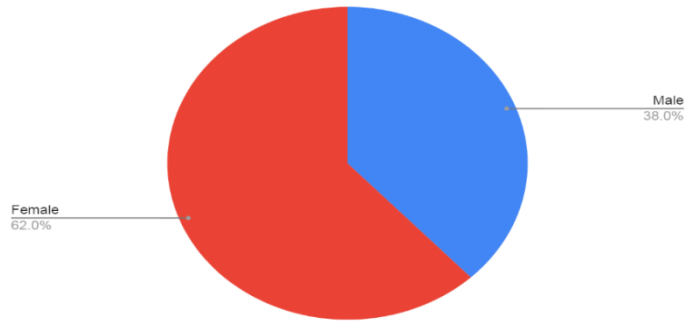
In order to get more precise information about the academic libraries and the role they play in the local society in the light of Oman Vision 2040, a survey was distributed among (50) male and female Library Science specialists and users in the Sultanate of Oman. The study is conducted by means of a questionnaire that consists of (15) questions. The first part contains (5 Yes/No) questions, the second part consists of (5 Agree/ Disagree) questions, while the last part (5) is about opinion or “self-assessment”.

Questionnaire Analysis

Table 1

Gender	Responses	%
Male	19	38.0%
Female	31	62.0%

Count of Gender النوع :

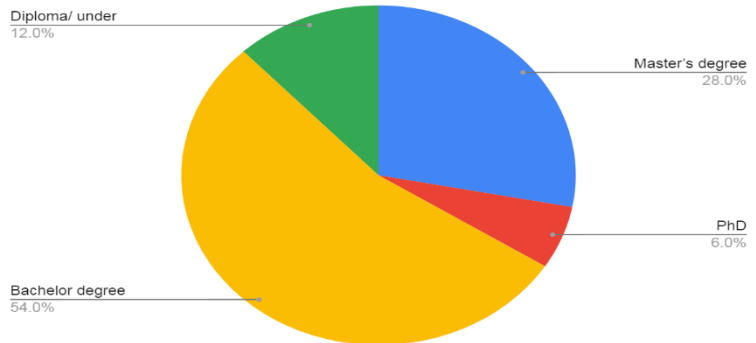


According to the study results, there were 50 respondents, with 38.0% (19 respondents) male and 62.0% (31 respondents) female.

Table2

Qualifications	Responses	%
Diploma/ under	6	12.0%
Bachelor	27	54.0%
Masters	14	28%
PhD	3	6%

Count of Your qualifications:



The respondents' educational level reveals that the majority have bachelor's degrees (54.0%), followed by master's degrees (28.0%). The remaining represents 12.0%, are diploma and undergraduate, and PhD degrees represent (6%).

Table3

Respondent category	Responses	%
Users (Faculty members, students, Administrative body)	31	62.0%
Librarians	19	38.0%

Count of Respondent category:

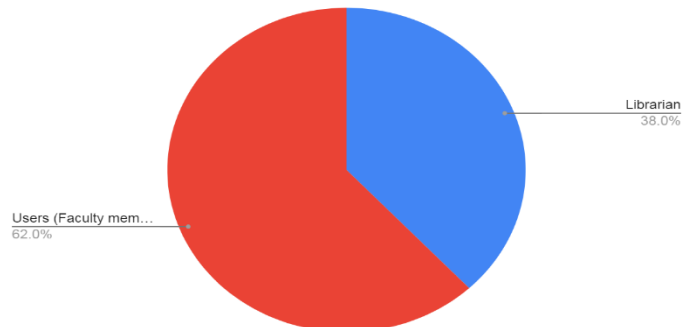


Table (3) shows that the most responses reached (31) with a percentage of (62.0%) for the users: (Faculty members, students, administrative body), followed by the librarians with (38.0%).

Table4

Age	Responses	%
23-30	14	28.0%
31-35	5	10.0%
36-40	12	24.0%
41-45	14	28.0%
More than 45	5	10.0%

Count of Age:

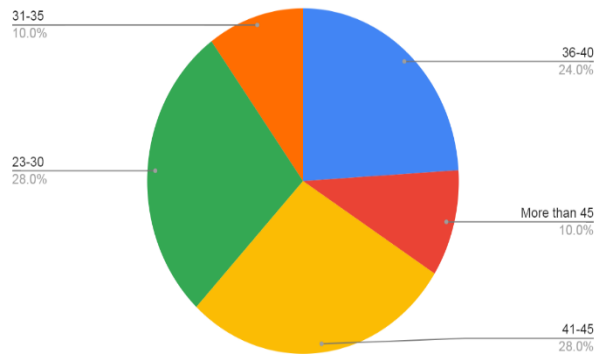


Table 4 showed that the largest group of participants was aged between 20-30 and 41-45 representing (28.0%), followed by those aged 36-40 by (24.0%); those aged 31-35 and those aged more than 50 years represented (10.0%).

Table5

1. In light of Oman Vision 2040, do you see that academic libraries, like other academic fields, are more progressing than before?	Yes	No
	42	8
	84%	16%

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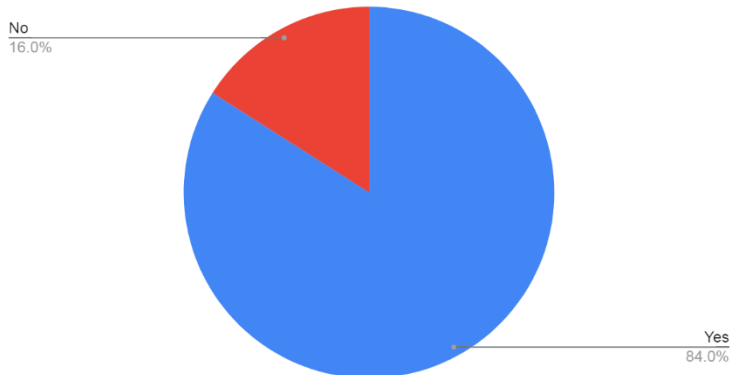
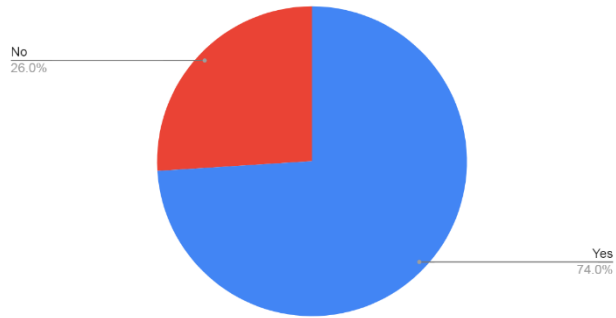


Table 5 shows that 84% of participants believe that academic libraries, like other academic fields, are more progressing than before, while 16% are not. The transforming to a digital library is important in the future because it saves effort, time and ease of access.

2. Personally, Oman Vision 2040 has made me follow up the development in all institutions and organizations in the Sultanate, libraries in particular.	Yes	No
	37	13
	74%	26%

2. Personally, Oman Vision 2040 has made me follow up the development in all institutions and organizations in the Sultanate, libraries in particular.



According to Table 6, 74% of students agree that Oman Vision 2040 has made them follow up the development in all institutions and organizations in the Sultanate, libraries in particular.

3. I am very convinced that library users—students, researchers, faculty members are highly satisfied with our facilities and assistance offered after adopting Oman Vision 2040: there is an up – to- date soft programs, new books, references, etc.	Yes	No
	41	9
	82%	18%

3. I am very convinced that library users—students, researchers, faculty members are highly satisfied with our facilities and assistance offered after adopting Oman Vision 2040: there is an up –to- date soft programs, new books, references, etc.

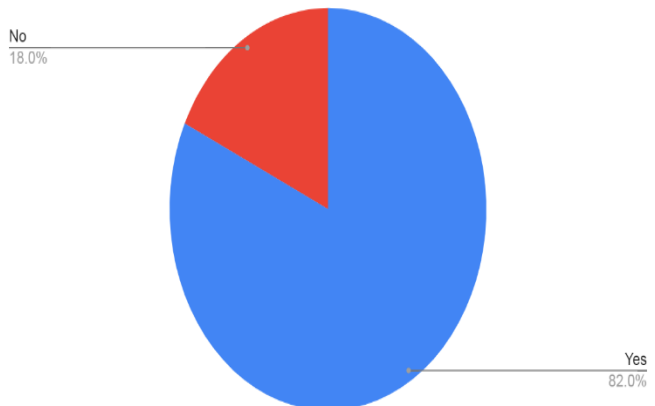
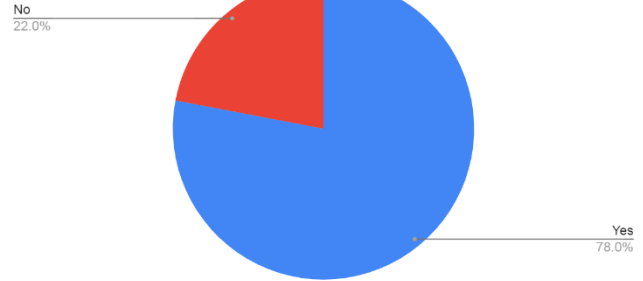


Table 7 illustrates that 82% of participants are very convinced that library users—students, researchers, faculty members are highly satisfied with our facilities and assistance offered after adopting Oman Vision 2040: there is an up –to- date soft programs, new books, references, etc.

4. In light of Oman Vision, I have noticed that more individuals refer to the library—reading, researching, and borrowing—it has become part of our culture.

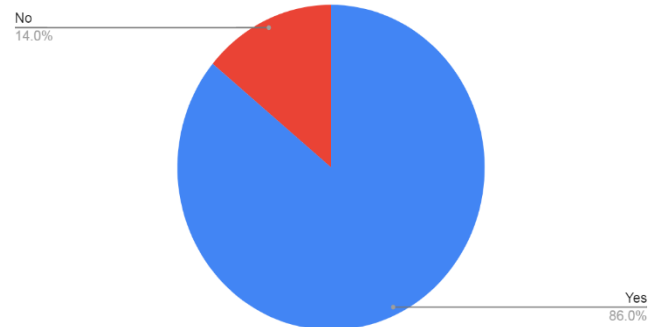


4. In light of Oman Vision, I have noticed that more individuals refer to the library—reading, researching, and borrowing—it has become part of our culture.	Yes	No
	39	11
	78%	22%

Table 8

According to the results, 78% of the respondents, in light of Oman Vision, noticed that more individuals refer to the library—reading, researching, and borrowing—it has become a part of their culture. This is a good indicator of how well the library collections and services are provided.

5. In light of Oman Vision, during their visits to the library, students from the local society are interested and extremely excited while listening to our staff briefing them about the services and facilities our library offers.



5. In light of Oman Vision, during their visits to the library, students from the local society are interested and extremely excited while listening to our staff briefing them about the services and facilities our library offers.	Yes	No
	43	7
	86%	14%

Table 9

According to Table 9, 86% of participants believe that in light of Oman Vision, during their visits to the library, students from the local society are interested and extremely excited while listening to the staff briefing them about the services and facilities of the library offers.

Table 10

6.To cope with modern development- in light of Oman Vision 2040- all academic institutions have to have libraries, as they support the educational process.	Yes	No
	48	2
	96%	4%

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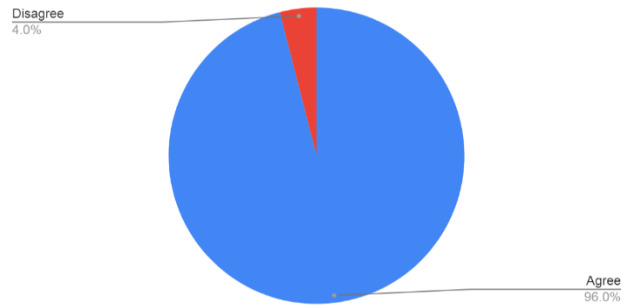


Table 10 shows that most of the participants (96%) agree that to cope with modern development- in light of Oman Vision 2040- all academic institutions have to have libraries, as they support the educational process.

Table 11

7. Libraries have a great effect in positively changing the mentality of societies.	Agree	Disagree
	46	4
	92%	8%

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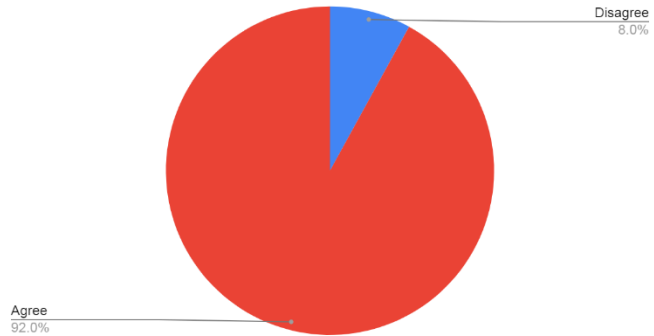
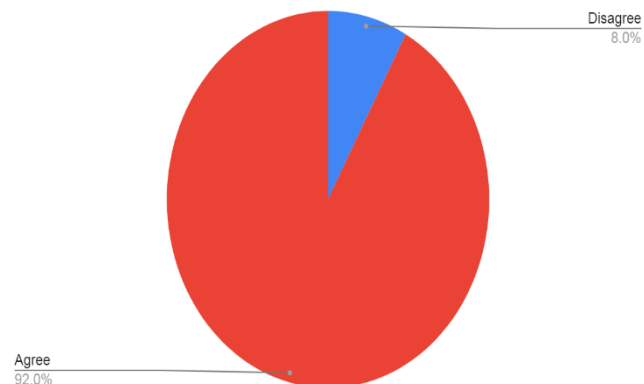


Table 11 presents that the majority of the participants- about (92%) –believe that libraries have a great effect in positively changing the mentality of societies. It is essential that the library satisfies the needs of communities as a cultural and educational center.

Table 12

8. I think libraries should have budgets from the government to be independent and get the latest publications available.	Agree	Disagree
	46	4
	92%	8%

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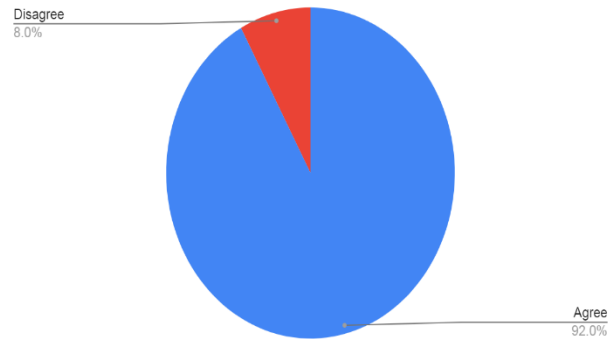


According to Table 12, 92% of participants believe that libraries should have budgets from the government to be independent and get the latest publications available. In this regard, participants say that libraries are still facing problems from traditional managements, a lack of understanding of the true role of the library, and failure to grant it absolute powers for development.

Table

	Agree	Disagree
9. In light of Oman Vision 2040, all academic institutions in the Sultanate shall seek the ultimate development and progress by being closer to the local society i.e., conduct events, workshops, lectures, invite poets, scientists, and public figures.	46	4
	92%	8%

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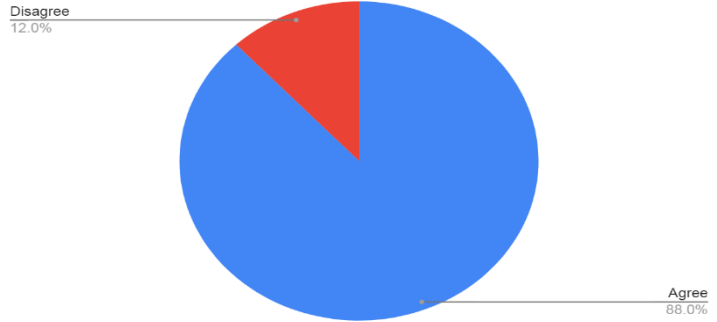
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Table 13 shows that most of the participants (92%) agree that in light of Oman Vision 2040, all academic institutions in the Sultanate shall seek the ultimate development and progress by being closer to the local society i.e., conduct events, workshops, lectures, invite poets, scientists, and public figures. The role of libraries goes beyond lending books, upscaling veracious aspects, including critical thinking, which can be done through sessions held in libraries, for instance, to discuss certain books or publications.

Table 14

10. Librarians receive library users with a positive attitude—welcoming words, smile, and extreme politeness.	Agree	Disagree
	44	6
	88%	12%

10. Librarians receive library users with a positive attitude—welcoming words, smile, and extreme politeness.



The findings indicate that most participants about (88%) believed that librarians receive library users with a positive attitude—welcoming words, smile, and extreme politeness.

Table 15

11. Personally, how important is the library for students, faculty members, researchers and local community?	Extremely important	Important	Good
	26	19	5
	52%	38%	10%

11. Personally, how important is the library for students, faculty members, researchers and local community?

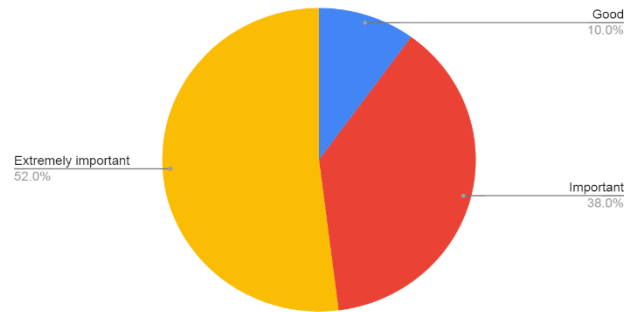


Table 15 presents that the majority of participants- about (52%)- find the library extremely important for students, faculty members, researchers and local community. Library culture is something that should be developed in students from a very young age. This will help them to be better self-learned scholars in the future.

Table 16

12. The Internet in the library is:	Excellent	Good	Poor
	23	22	2
	46%	44%	4%

12. The Internet in the library is:

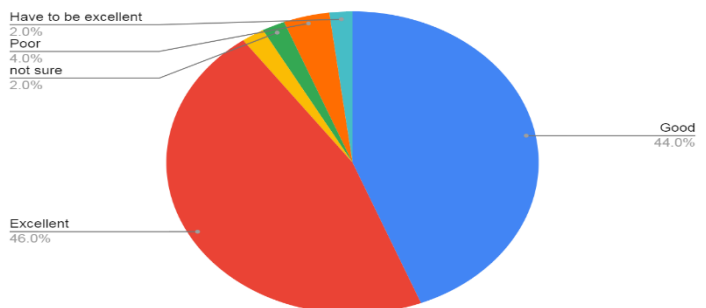


Table 16 shows that 46% of participants stated that the Internet in the library is excellent, while 44% said it is just Good.

Table 17

13. The library indirectly teaches users to:	Socialize	Not plagiarize while researching.	Follow certain rules, be quiet, and respect others and not disturbing them
	7	6	36
	14%	12%	72%

13. The library indirectly teaches users to:

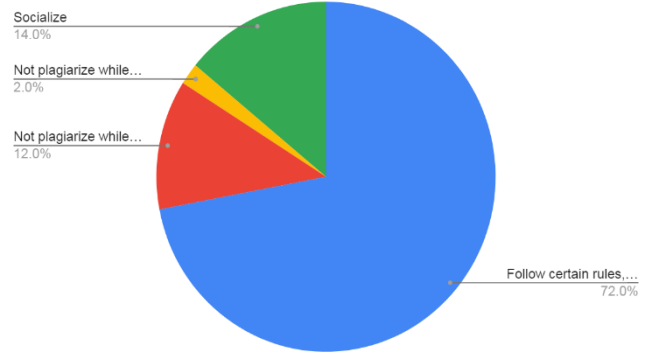


Table 17 shows that most of the participants (72%) agree that the library indirectly teaches users to Follow certain rules, be quiet, and respect others and not disturbing them.

Table 18

14. Since they are well experienced in their field, librarians can be good consultants for faculty members in choosing some reference books that suit certain courses.	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree
	24	25	1
	48%	50%	2%

14. Since they are well experienced in their field, librarians can be good consultants for faculty members in choosing some reference books that suit certain courses.

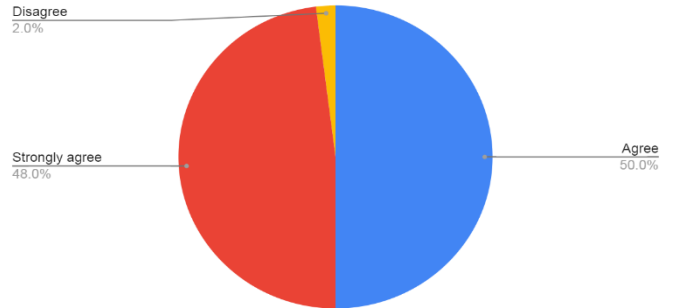


Table 18 illustrates that 50% of participants agree that librarians can be useful consultants for faculty members in selecting reference books that are appropriate for specific courses because they are experienced in their field. Furthermore, 48% of participants strongly agree.

Table 19

15. Librarians:	Are still needed for guidance and assistance no matter how technology is spread.	Are useless in the age of technology.	Work hand in hand with modern technology in their work place
	15	9	26
	30%	18%	52%

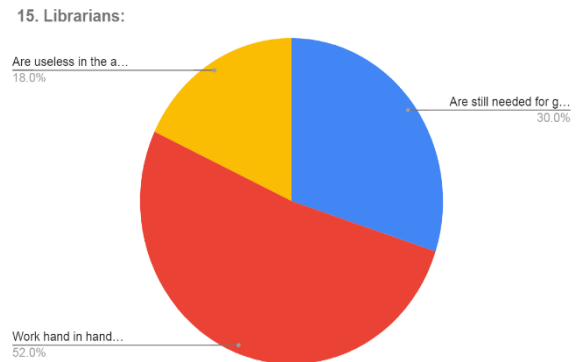


Table 19 shows that the largest group of participants -52% - agree that librarians work hand in hand with modern technology in their workplace, while 30% of participants think that librarians are still needed for guidance and assistance no matter how technology is spread. This finding reveals that academic libraries need specialists who have expertise in research related to the university's multiple fields and comprehensive knowledge of the contents of the various digital resources to answer all research inquiries asked by all users.

Conclusion

Public libraries play different roles in the development of societies—educational, societal, political, scientific, etc. In light of the technological flux, they-libraries- should cope with the diverse development so as to introduce quality services to users with different backgrounds. In this paper, via a precise and objective questionnaire, the researchers have become more aware of the importance of academic libraries. The results were fruitful; libraries do work hand in hand with the other government and private academic institutions such as schools, colleges, and universities. No doubt, academic libraries are needed badly in any society and that is supported by Oman Vision 2040 that plays an important, effective, and encouraging factor in pushing all establishments forward, no matter whether they are government or private.

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