

Needs Assessment Of the Jamestown Public Library

LIS 650

Team 5

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

This report is based on the findings of a needs assessment performed at the Jamestown Public Library in Jamestown, NC. This needs assessment was conducted by Team 5 in March 2011. The purpose of the needs assessment was to evaluate how well the Jamestown Public Library is meeting their community's needs and how well the library is serving its internal and external customers.

Patrons' surveys were designed to bring out the strengths and weaknesses of the library. Patrons were asked to rate the helpfulness and friendliness of staff members, the collection, the environment, the hours, the programs, and the services of the library. A total of 151 surveys were collected throughout a one week period.

The staff surveys were created to measure the job satisfaction of library employees based on the 12 questions from *First, Break All the Rules*. In addition, staff survey questions were used in a cross-comparison to determine how well the staff feels the library is meeting patron needs. All four of the part-time staff participated in the survey. The library's director was interviewed.

While most of the results from the staff surveys were not very pleasant, the majority of the results from the patron surveys were. The staff members' comments on the surveys recommend the library make changes in management and policy as well as suggest that the library needs some general improvements. Staff members were also clearly divided on the status of the library meeting patron needs and saw areas of

improvement to be addressed. Patrons, on the other hand, were largely supportive and pleased with the Jamestown Public Library. Although there were a few areas of suggestive improvements, such as more hours, a bigger collection, and upgraded technology, patrons indicated they were satisfied with the services and staff at the Jamestown Public Library.

Overall, according to this needs assessment, The Jamestown Public Library is doing a great job meeting patrons' needs. However, the assessment also indicates there is significant room for improvement in regards to the staff's internal needs. Optimistically, the results of this needs assessment will provide the Jamestown Public Library with information that will assist in furthering to serve their patrons with greater emphasis on their needs. Equally, the findings are intended to supply the Jamestown Public Library with insight for providing a work environment that affords its staff members' the ability to provide their best efforts in order to meet patrons' needs.

INTRODUCTION

Who We Are

The Jamestown Public Library is located in the Jamestown, North Carolina. The facility was built in 1915 originally as a school. Later, in the 1980's after new schools had been built in the area, the building was closed and left abandoned. During the next few years, local residents and activists worked to regain possession of the property and restore the building. In 1988, with a volunteer librarian and 700 donated books, the

facility was opened as The Jamestown Public Library. Running mostly through volunteers, it was not until 1991 that paid staff began working for the library. In 2006, Jamestown Public Library went through the massive and much needed endeavor of converting to a computerized catalog system. The library has always had a very limited budget, resulting in heavily reliance upon volunteers and fundraising events for its continued existence. Despite its humble beginnings, the Jamestown Public Library, which has always been "a house of education," has come far in the last 23 years (Ratterman).

Who We Serve and How We Serve

At the present time, the Jamestown Public Library staff includes one full-time person, four part-time employees, and over 60 volunteers. The current collection contains approximately 23,000 books and audio-visual items (Ratterman). The library sees an average of 65,000 visitors per year (Ratterman). These visitors, according to Library Director, Eleanor Ratterman, are comprised of fifty percent Jamestown residents and fifty percent Guilford County residents, mostly from Greensboro and High Point. Local demographic records indicate that Jamestown residents are predominately white (73%), with African Americans (14%) Asians (7%), and other (6%) (CLR).

The Jamestown Public Library director, Eleanor Ratterman, pointed out in her interview that, "The Library is open to the public and has an open door policy. Patrons don't have to be a county or city residents as long as they are in the library, they can use our resources." The Jamestown Public Library is open Monday through Friday from 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. and Saturday from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

The circulation desk is located in the center of the main floor where it is visible to the patrons as soon as they walk into the library. The Jamestown Public Library has various computers for public use as well as free internet connection capability for patrons wishing to use their own computers. There are study areas throughout the library including private study rooms. The library also offers story times for children at various times each week. Additionally, book clubs, fax services, room rentals, and free computer lessons are provided. The library also offers events to the community such as tax services, book sales, art exhibits, and basket raffles fund-raisers.

The library offers free library cards to all Guilford County residents including children as long as parents present identification. The Jamestown Public Library, however, maintains a very strict policy about check out material, limiting checkout items to twenty per card. DVDs are treated differently than rest of the materials and checkouts are limited to four at a time per card. The library's website is very easy to use and it has a mixture of information for patrons of all ages. For instance, it has a link for children, which offers a list of great websites, list of games, and list of story books. It also has a separate page for teens which lists best books, amazing audio books, fabulous movies, 10 great graphic novels, cool books, and covers many other subjects of interest.

The Jamestown Public Library strives to be a caring and compassionate community center that:

- Nurtures lifelong readers and lifelong learners;

- Provides free access to literature, culture and information through books and other resources:
- Respects the cultural and historical heritage of the community;
- And helps the people of Jamestown and the surrounding communities to live more meaningful and more informed lives. (Jamestown Public Library)

METHODOLOGY

The Process

The Jamestown Public Library's director, Eleanor Ratterman, was contacted by phone on Monday, March 21, 2011, in order to seek permission to conduct a research project needs assessment. After receiving approval, surveys for staff members and patrons were formulated. These surveys were utilized to assess if the Jamestown Public Library is meeting its goals and objectives based on the library's mission statement.

As patrons entered the Jamestown Public Library, research team members approached patrons and asked them to participate in a UNCG research project by filling out a survey. Patron surveys were collected from Monday, March 28 through Saturday, April 2, 2011. During the library's 48 hours of weekly operation, research team members were present during 33 operational hours throughout the mornings, afternoons, evenings, and weekend.

Staff members were surveyed or interviewed. Surveys were distributed to the four part-time employees on Wednesday, March 30, 2011, by one research team member. These surveys were collected from the staff on Thursday, March 31, 2011, by the same research team member. The library's director was interviewed on Thursday, March 31, 2011. Two research team members conducted the interview. Data from surveys was tabulated and analyzed.

The Instruments

Patron Survey

The surveys given to patrons were paper based and divided into three sections. The first section focused on demographic information in which each patron was asked to identify gender, age, ethnicity, residency, and number of visits to the library as well as number of visits to the library's website. The second section of the patron survey was focused on identifying the services each patron used that are offered by the library. In the second section of the patron survey, patrons were asked to identify which services they use and rank those services on a scale of 1 to 5 with: 1=outstanding, 2=very good, 3=not sure, 4=below-average, and 5=negative. Services were broken into two categories: children's services and adult services. The third section on the patron survey consisted of rating statements geared to gauge the patron's satisfaction with the library, its staff, collection, hours, and such. There were fourteen statements in the third section of the patron survey. The rating scale was 1-5 with: 1=strongly agree,

2=agree, 3=not sure, 4=disagree, and 5=strongly disagree. Space was also provided on the survey where patrons had the opportunity to add any additional comments about the library or its services. (See Appendix A).

Staff Survey

The survey given to staff was paper-based and broken into three sections. The first section of the staff survey was used to evaluate employee job satisfaction. This section consisted of the twelve questions from the *First, Break All the Rules*. Staff members were asked to answer these questions with a yes or no. The second section of the staff survey consisted of eight statements about the library and staff. These statements were to be rated on a scale of 1 to 5 in which 1=strongly agree, 2=agree, 3=not sure, 4=disagree, and 5=strongly disagree. The third section consisted of three open-ended questions in which the staff members were asked to identify the library's strengths, areas for improvement, and considerations for better serving the community. Space was also provided for any additional comments. (See Appendix B).

Director Interview

Two research team members interviewed the director of the Jamestown Public Library, Eleanor Ratterman. The interview had two purposes. First, the interview provided information regarding the library, the staff, and the patrons. Secondly, the interview assisted in discovering any additional comments or concerns that might be relevant to the needs assessment. The interview lasted for about an hour. Notes were

taken by hand by one team member as well as notes were typed by the other during the interview.

Interview questions were designed to determine the library director's satisfaction that both internal and external organizational goals are being met (See Appendix C). The director was asked to explain the library's mission statement and what kind of steps she takes to meet that objective. The questions also identified areas of strengths and weaknesses in the library collections and services as well as in staff relationships. The last questions of the interview came from *First, Break All the Rules* regarding staff.

RESULTS

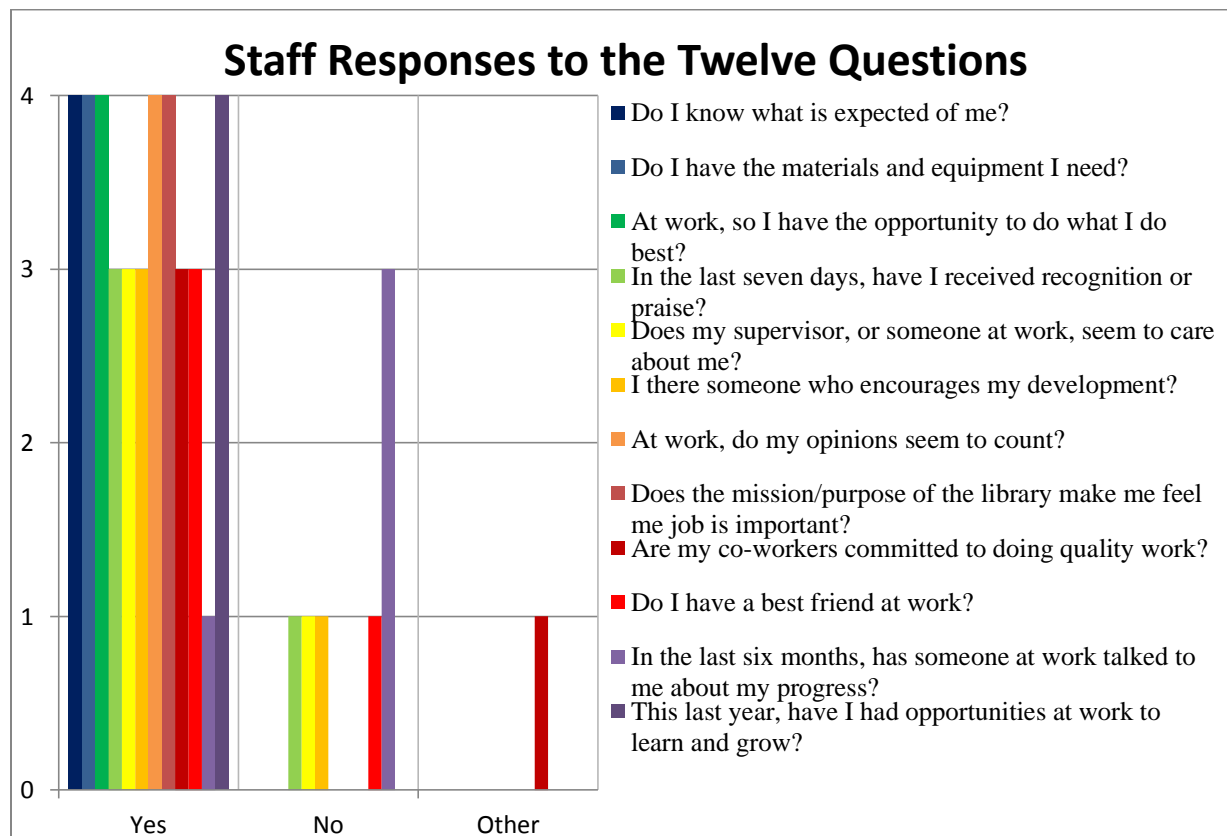
Staff Results

The purpose of the staff survey was to determine if the Jamestown Public Library is meeting the needs of the patrons as well as meeting the needs of the employees. The results of the staff survey were rather mixed.

The first portion of the staff survey asked a series of twelve questions that were based on the set of questions created by Marcus Buckingham and Curt Coffman in *First, Break all the Rules* (p. 28). Buckingham and Coffman's theory is if employees can answer positively all twelve questions, then they are well placed and the work place is strong. For all but one question, three out of the four employees could answer positively, and six of the questions were answered entirely positively. This was

encouraging. However, only one of the staff members felt that someone had discussed their progress within their role and within the organization with them. Figure 1 represents the staff's responses to the twelve questions.

Figure 1 JPL Staff Responses to the 12 Questions

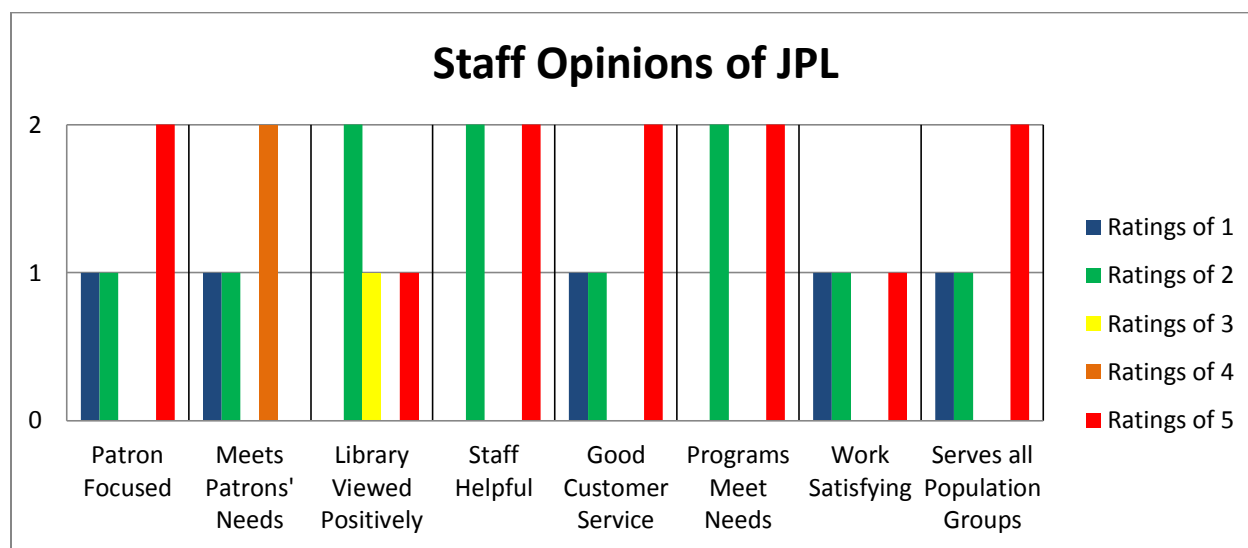


While, for the most part, the JPL staff's responses to the twelve questions were positive, their opinions of the library and of the services that the library provides were less so. For this second section of the survey, staff members were asked to rate eight different aspects of Library services. These included such items whether or not they felt that the library was patron focused, whether they met patrons' needs, to what

extent the library provided good customer service, and whether or not they served all population groups.

The two most disturbing responses on this section both dealt with the Library's staff itself, as opposed to services being offered. When asked to rate the statement, "patrons view the Jamestown Library staff as helpful and friendly," no staff member strongly agreed (rating of 1). Two staff members agreed (rating of 2), while the other two strongly disagreed (rating of 5). Even more upsetting was the staff response to the statement, "The Jamestown Public Library is committed to providing good customer service." For this question, only one member of the staff strongly agreed (rating of 1), while another agreed (rating of 2), and the remaining two both strongly disagreed (rating of 5). In other words, half of the staff felt that the library was not at all committed to providing good customer service. Furthermore, only half of the staff felt that the library was meeting patrons' needs, or that the library served all population groups. Figure 2 presents a graph of their responses.

Figure 2 JPL Staff Opinions of Services



In addition to being asked to rate different aspects of the Jamestown Public Library and library services, the staff were also asked a series of three open ended questions: "What do you feel are the Library's strengths," "What areas do you feel the Library needs to improve," and "Are there any directions or policy changes the Library should consider taking in the area of service or to better serve the community." This third and final part of the staff survey produced some of the most interesting and enlightening comments. For instance, one area that staff members were not asked specifically about was the Library's technology. Despite this, three out of the four commented on it. All felt that the Library needed to improve its technology offerings. One thought that the Library should have more computer and technology classes, and two thought there should be more available computers; one even going so far as to recommend that the Library have computers reserved exclusively for children and youth. Another felt that the library needed to extend its hours. Despite the staff low ratings of how patrons view their own levels of customer service, none of the staff

commented on it, at least not directly. One staff member commented that she felt that library was, in fact, patron focused, but she did not elaborate.

Patron Results

The average Jamestown Public Library patron is white and female. In fact, as figures 3 and 4 indicate, almost two thirds of JPL's patrons are female, while close to 75% are white. This is not surprising as it does describe what many people think of as a library's typical user. However, according to the U.S. Census Bureau, only 52% of Guilford County residents are female, while African Americans comprise nearly 33% (*Guilford County*).

Figure 3 JPL Patrons by Gender

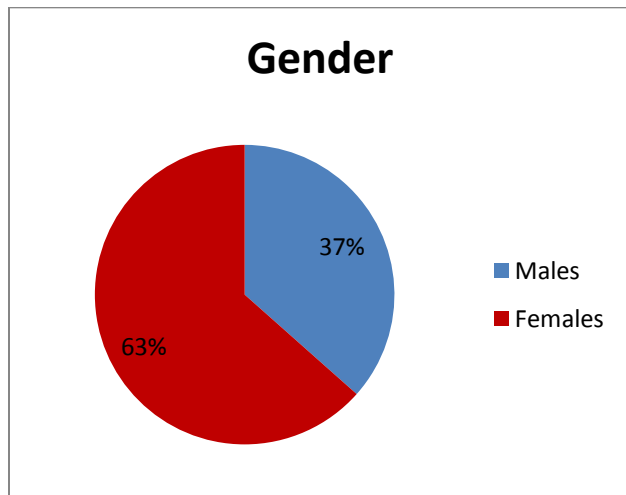
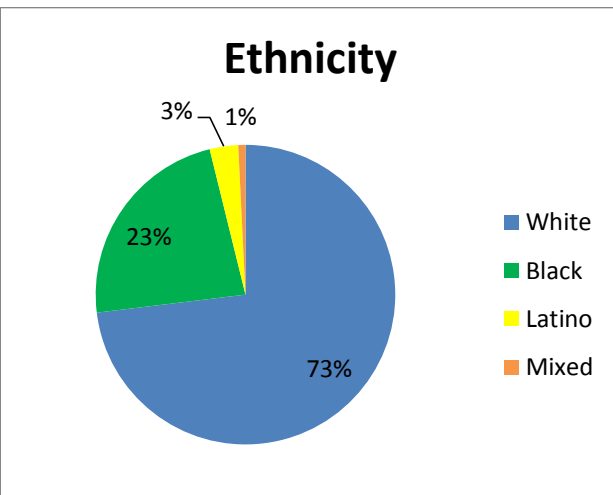
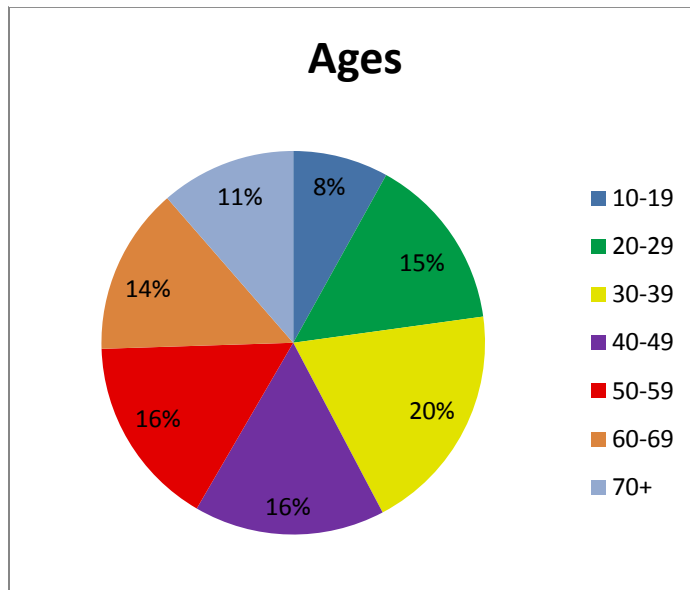


Figure 4 JPL Patrons by Ethnicity



Clearly, the library needs to reach out to both potential male users, as well as African-American residents. The third stereotype that one usually encounters with public library patrons is that they are middle aged. That however, was not the case with the

Figure 6 JPL Patrons by Age

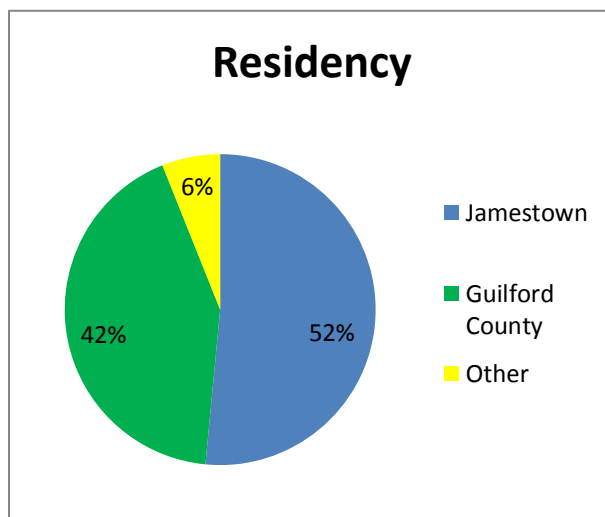


Jamestown Public Library. The distribution of various age groups that use the library was fairly evenly divided, with only 12% separating the largest group from the smallest as figure 5 shows. It would appear that Jamestown Public Library appeals to a wide ranges of ages, even if it doesn't yet manage to appeal to all segments of the

population. Not surprisingly, more than 50% of JPL's users live in Jamestown itself.

Although considering that High Point and Greensboro both have large libraries and are

Figure 5 JPL Patrons by Residency



reasonably close by, the Jamestown Public Library draws a significantly large number of people from outside of Jamestown, as shown in figure 6.

The Jamestown Public Library also seems to be doing a fairly decent job of attracting new patrons. Roughly two thirds of the

survey respondents reported that they had started using the library within the last five years, while one fifth of patrons said that they had been using the library for approximately one year. However, the library seems to have less success in retaining patrons, as only one third said that they had been using the library for more than five years. Of course, the U.S. Census Bureau reports that Guilford County grew by roughly 40,000 people from 2004-2009 (*North Carolina by County*). Figure 7 shows the breakdown of how long JPL patrons have been using their library. Also interesting to note is that nearly 50% of JPL patrons visit the library *at least* four times a month, as shown in Figure 8. Clearly, the Jamestown Public Library is a well-loved, well used library.

Figure 7 Number of Years JPL Patrons Use the Library

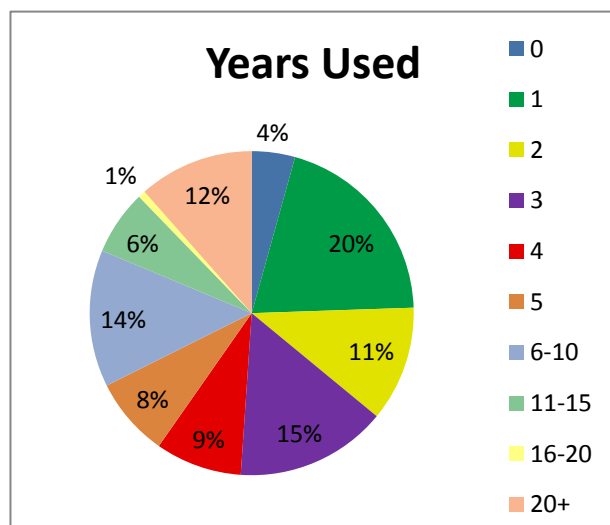
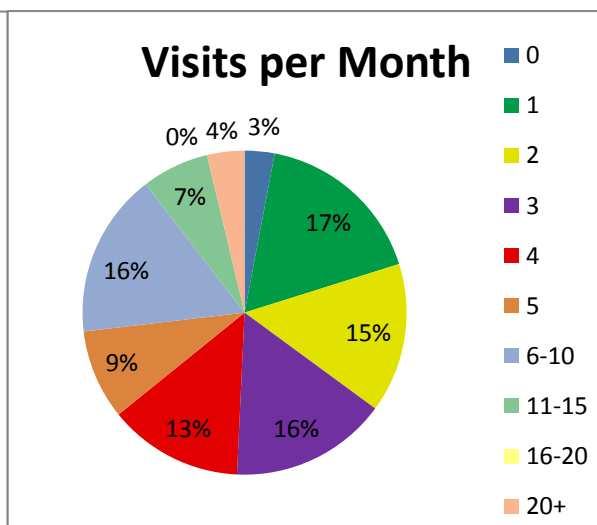


Figure 8 Number of Visits JPL Patrons Make a Month



That the people of Jamestown seem to care deeply about their library is born out in their opinions of its services and facilities. Particularly impressive, given the fact that

the staff rated their own friendliness and helpfulness so low were patron's actual views. In both cases, more than 75% of patrons surveyed felt that staff members were both friendly and helpful. Figures 9 and 10 show the percentages. Additionally, close to 70% agreed that they were very satisfied with the Library, as shown in figure 11. Other Jamestown Public Library services and facilities also received generally high ratings, with none going below 40% for very positive ratings. Figures 12-22 show the results.

Figure 9 JPL Patron Ratings of Staff Friendliness

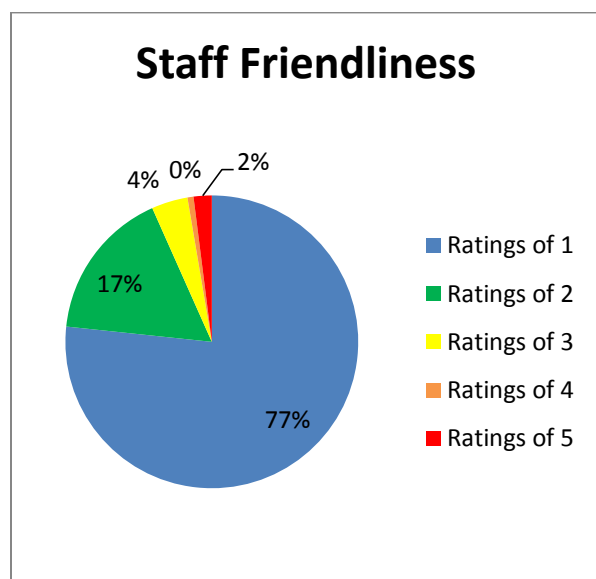


Figure 10 JPL Patron Ratings of Staff Helpfulness

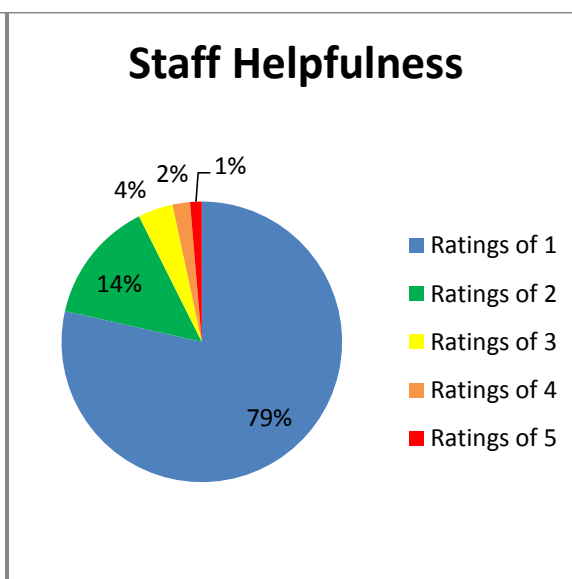


Figure 12 JPL Patron Rating of the Library Overall

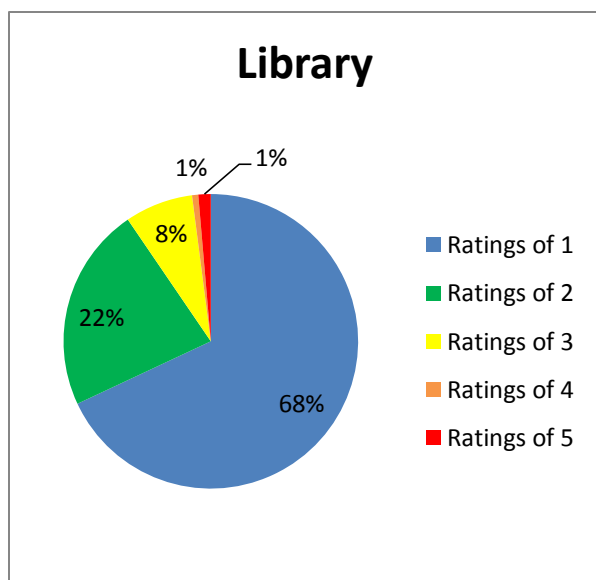


Figure 11 JPL Patron Ratings of Library Signage

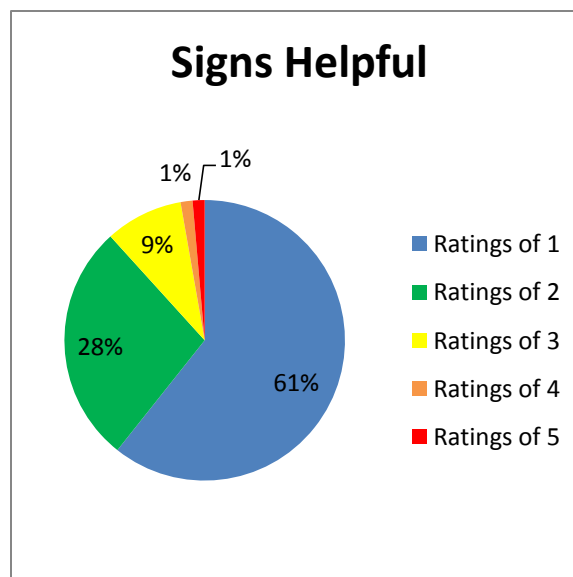


Figure 13 Patron Ratings on Parking at JPL

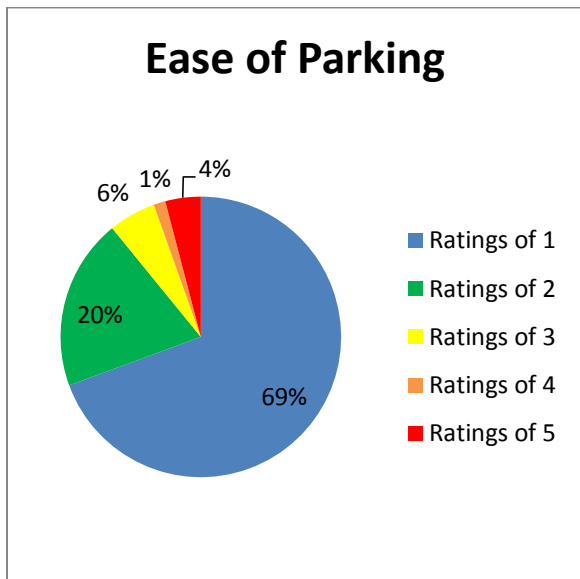


Figure 14 JPL Patron Ratings of the Adult Materials Collection

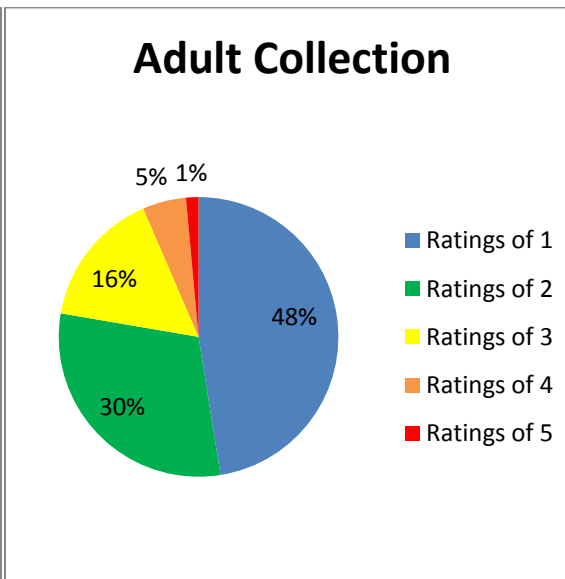


Figure 15 Patron Ratings of JPL Adult Programs

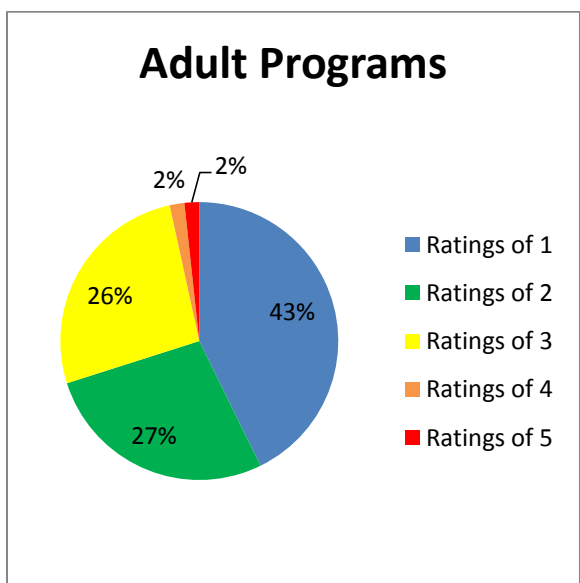


Figure 16 Patron Ratings of JPL Audio/Visual Collection

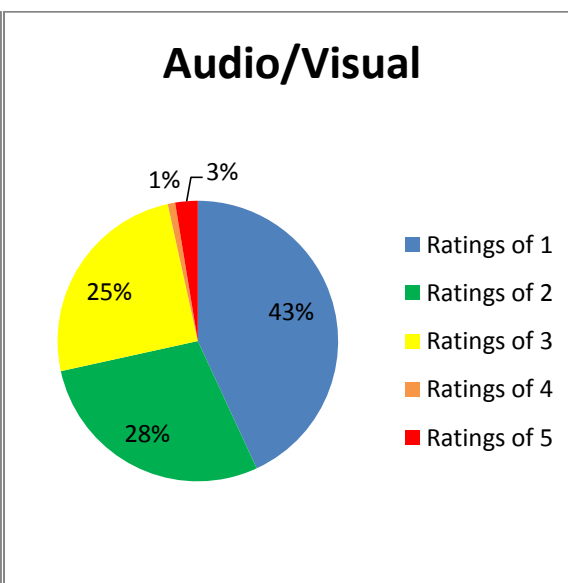


Figure 17 Patron ratings of JPL Computers

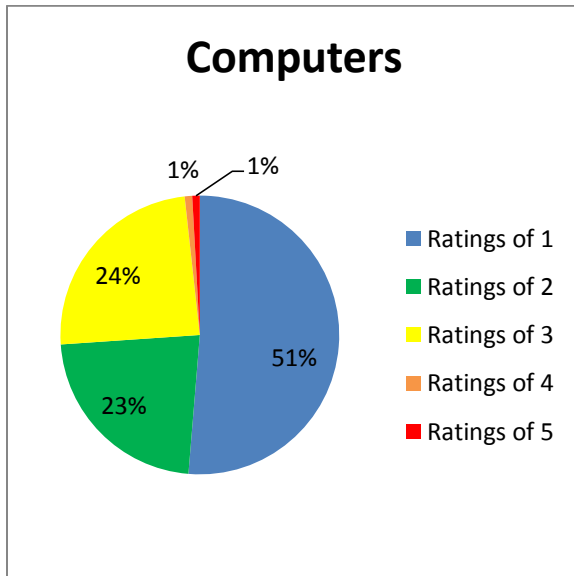


Figure 18 Patron Rating of JPL Website

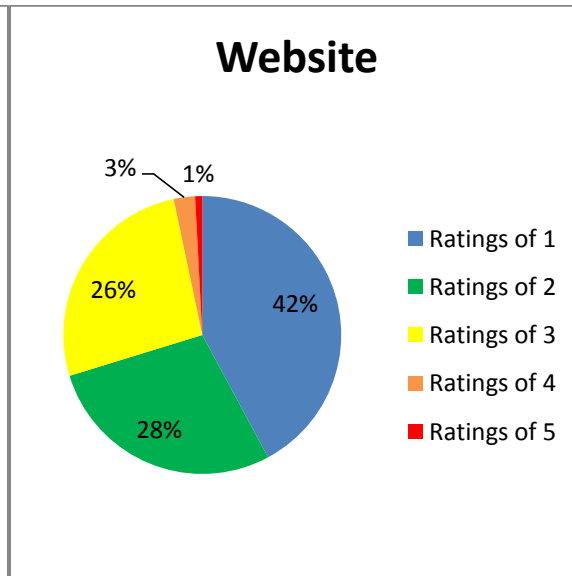


Figure 19 Patron Ratings of JPL Hours

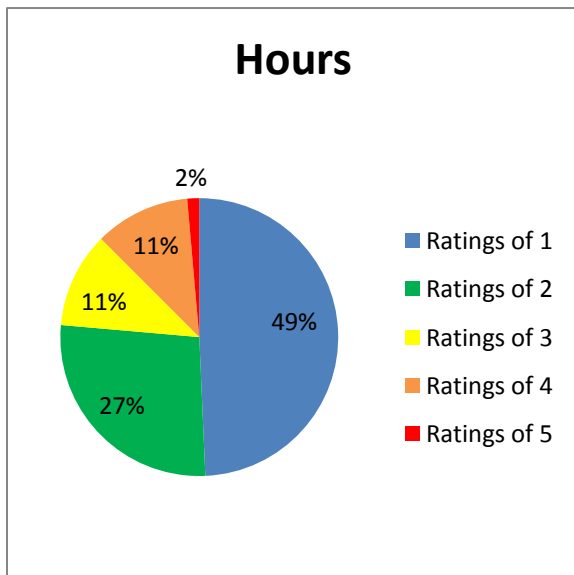


Figure 20 Patron Ratings of JPL Community Services

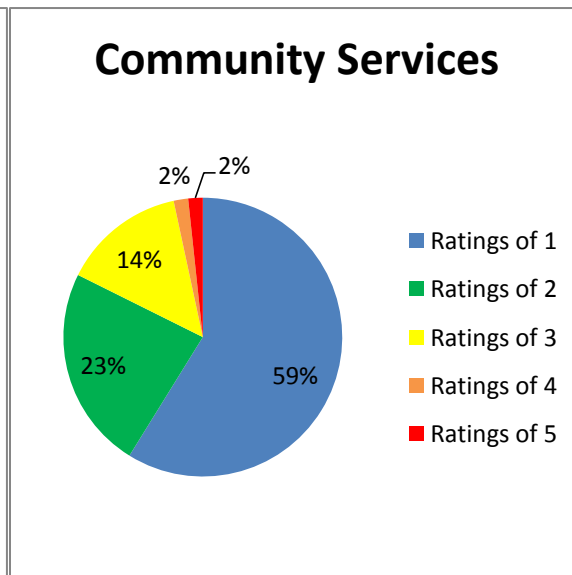
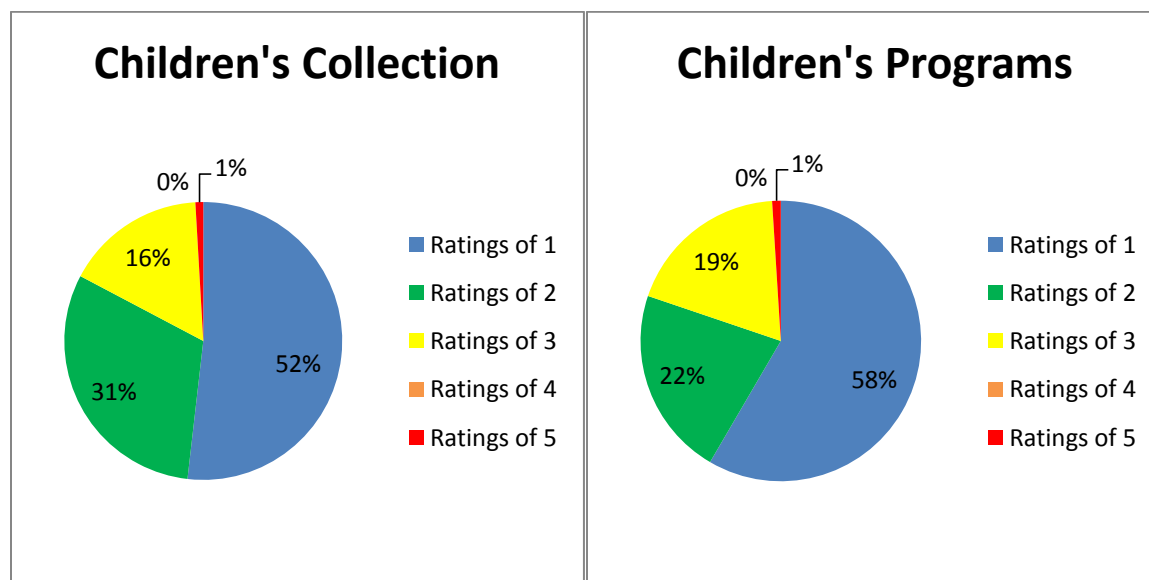


Figure 21 Patron Ratings of JPL Children's Collection Figure 22 Patron Rating of JPL Children's Programs



Patron ratings for specific services that they had used were not quite as high, but still seemed to indicate a higher level of satisfaction than the staff surveys might lead one to believe. Many services and specific collections had very positive ratings of between 30 and 50%. While, as with the general opinions about the library, the combined very positive and positive ratings, i.e. outstanding (ratings of 1) and very good (ratings of 2), frequently was between 65 and 75%. The results of the patrons' ratings of these services and/or specific collections can be seen in figures 23-40.

Figure 23 Patron ratings of JPL Adult Print Collection Figure 24 Patron Ratings of JPLs Adult Audio Collection

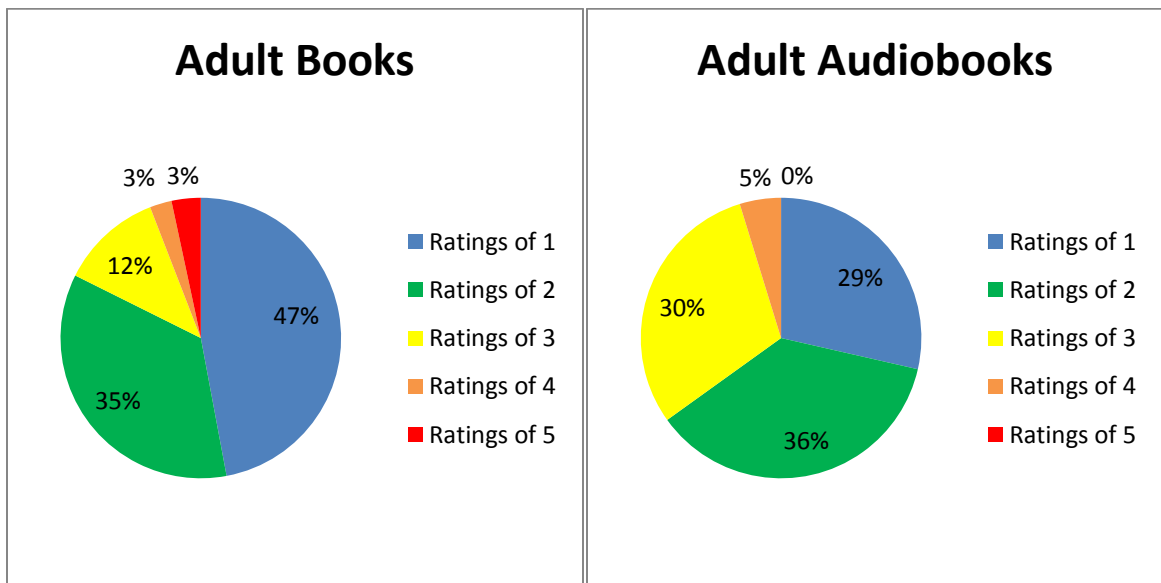


Figure 25 Patron Ratings of JPL's Newspaper Collection Figure 26 Patron Ratings of JPL's Magazine Collection

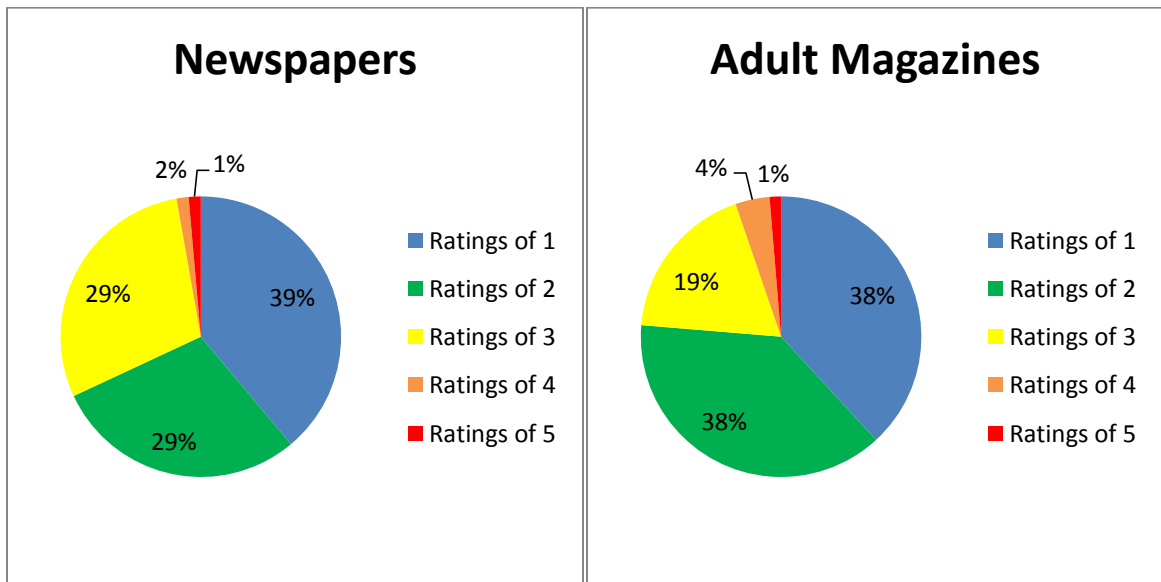


Figure 27 Patron Ratings of JPL Adult Video Collection Figure 28 Patron Ratings of JPL's Computers for Adults

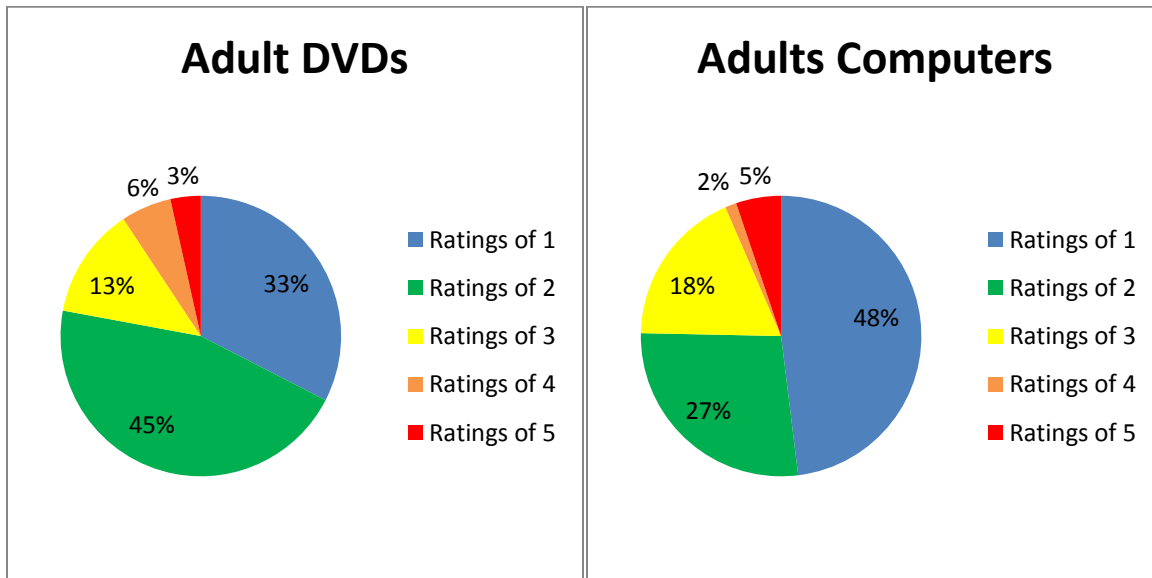


Figure 29 Patron Ratings of JPL Book Clubs

Figure 30 Patron Ratings of JPL Storytimes

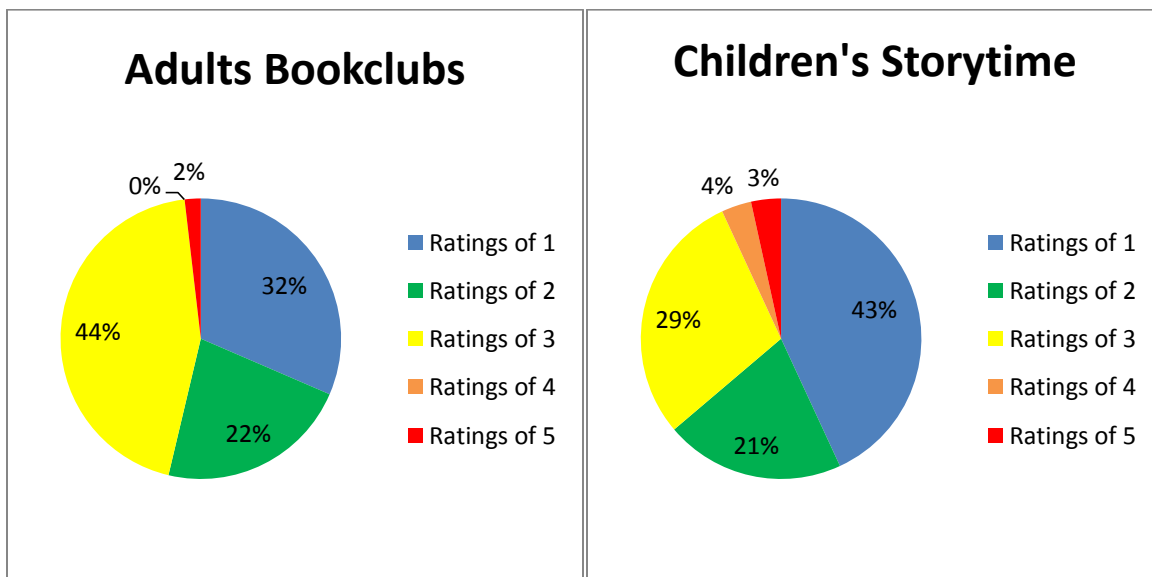


Figure 31 Patron Ratings of JPL Family Programs

Figure 32 Patron Ratings of JPL Children's Print Collection

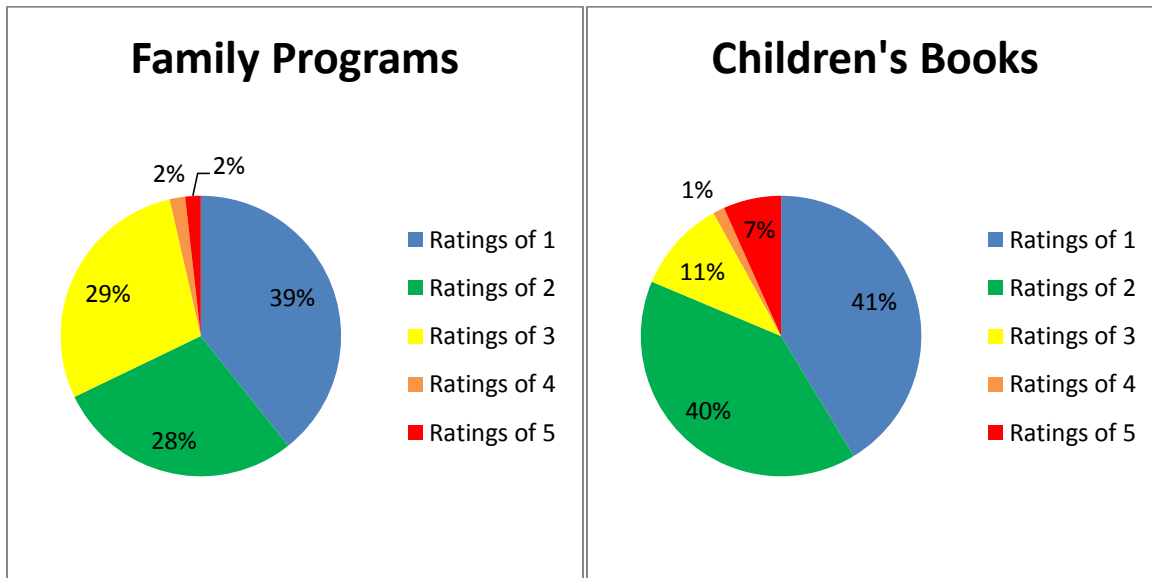


Figure 33 Patron Ratings of Children's Video Collection Figure 34 Patron ratings of JPL's Computers for Children

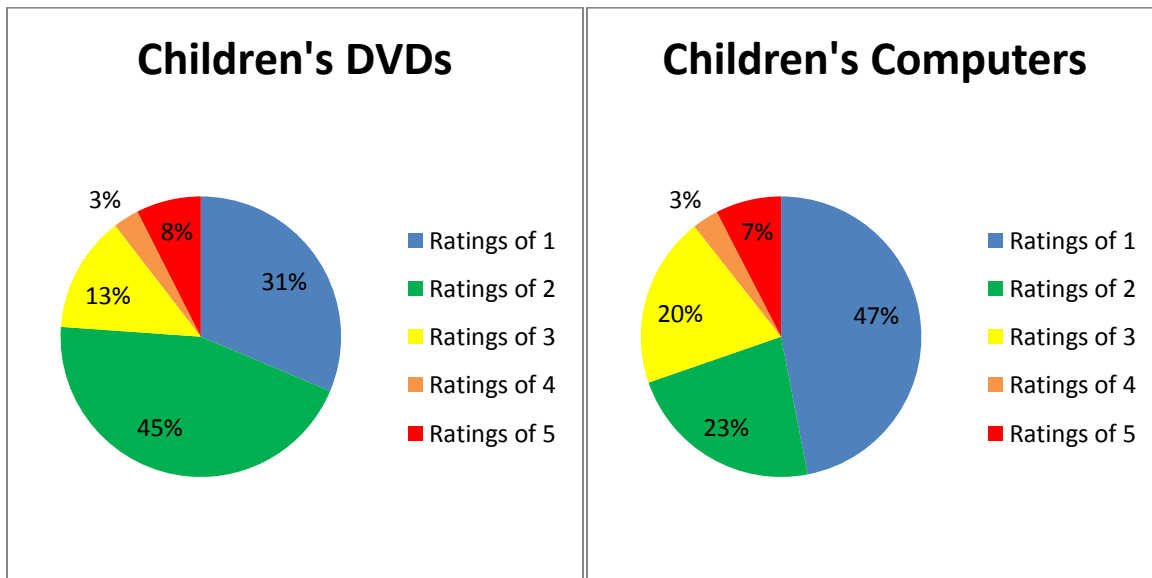


Figure 35 Patron Ratings of JPL's Children's Media

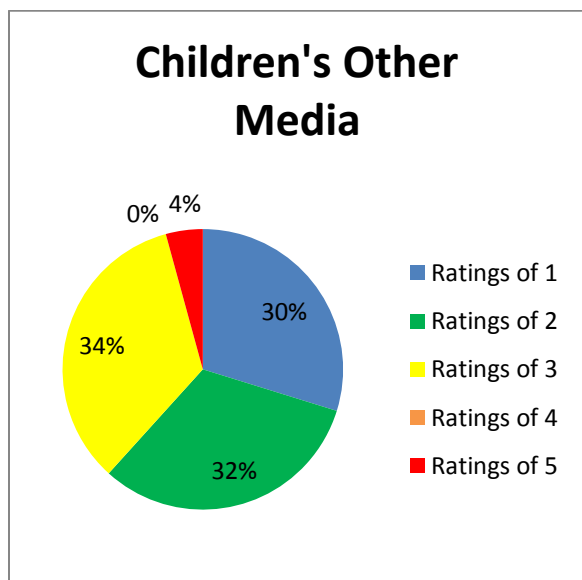


Figure 36 Patron Ratings of JPL's Summer Reading Program

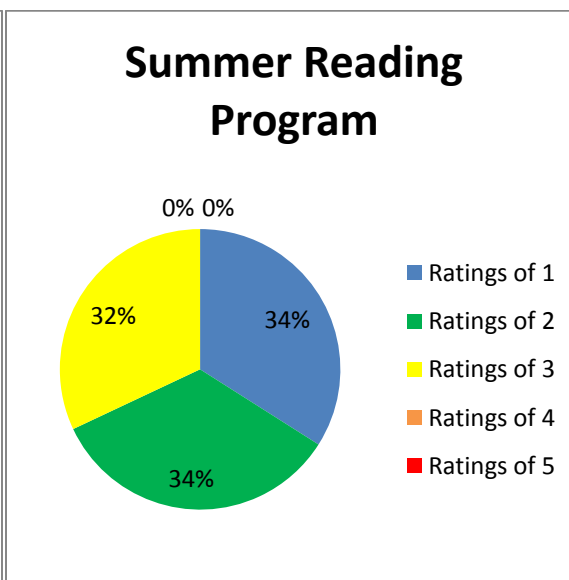


Figure 37 Patron Rating of JPL Youth Collection

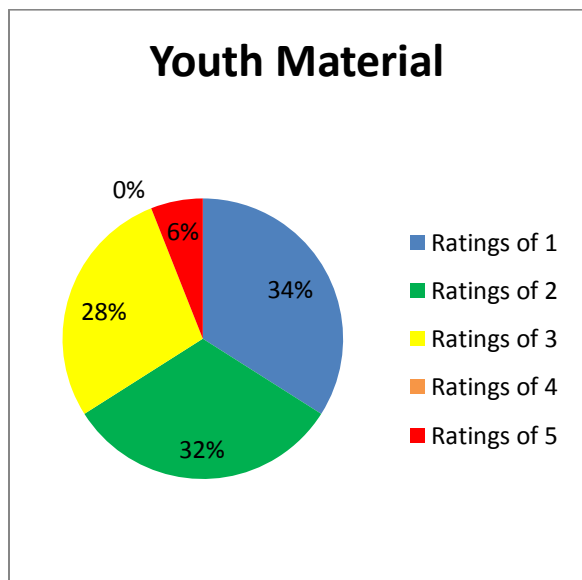


Figure 38 Patron Rating of JPL's Copiers

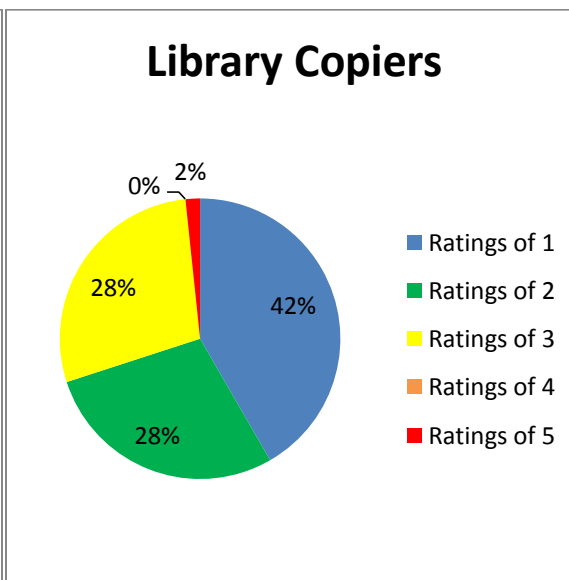
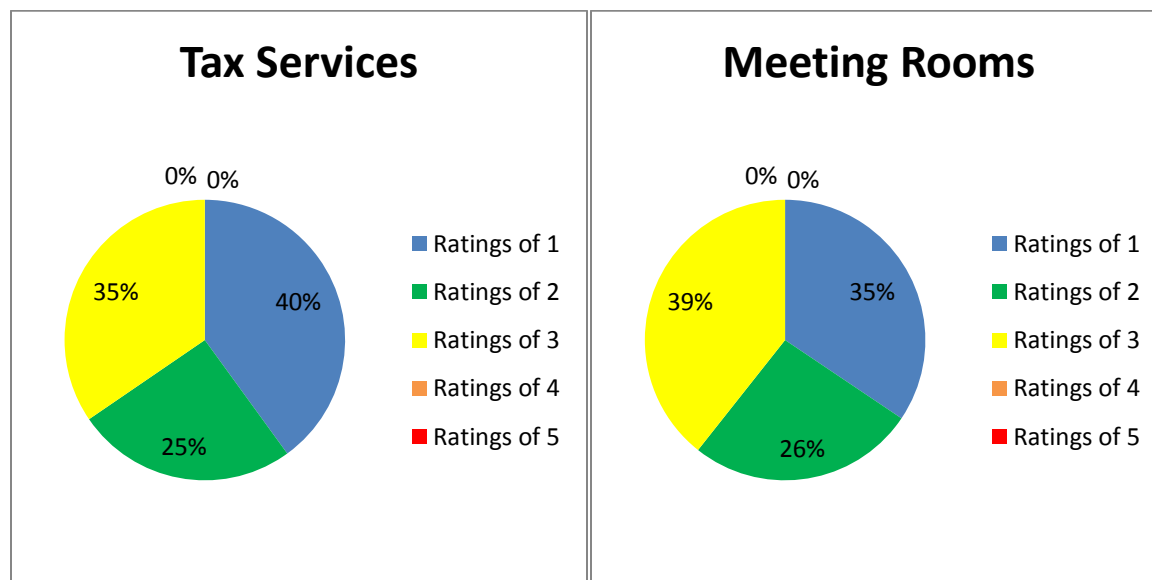


Figure 39 Patron Ratings of JPL's Tax Help Services

Figure 40 Patron Ratings of JPL's Meeting Rooms



Validity, Reliability, and Power of Findings

Patrons were surveyed in the library at varying times of the day, each day, for a week. Given the fact that data collection resulted in over 150 surveys, it is reasonably safe to assume that the data collected is a fairly representative sample of the Jamestown Public Library's normal patronage. However, there were a number of issues that might potentially call both the staff and patron data into question. Two issues in particular stand out. First, only people who came in the library were asked to participate in the survey. Even so, not everyone who entered the library participated. It is unknown how many patrons who entered the library during the data collection did not participate. Second, the week before data collection began, the *Jamestown News*,

a local paper, ran an above the fold, front page story about the fact that Guilford County was planning on decimating the Library's budget, reducing it from roughly \$55,000 down to \$13,000 (Overman). In response to the budget cuts, the library had mobilized a petition campaign. The news article referenced the petition, and some of those people who took the patron survey claimed that they weren't regular library users, but were coming in solely to take the petition. This, combined with the fact that libraries are frequently viewed as a good thing for a community to have even by those who don't actually use them, presents the possibility that the patron surveys could have been artificially inflated by people biased in favor of the Library because of the budget cuts. It also suggests that the number of patrons surveyed is slightly higher than it might otherwise have been. However, the effects of these outliers on the data overall would likely be negligible. The number of people coming in exclusively to sign the petition was very, very few. Additionally, an inherent limitation in this project is the fact that the survey was limited to only people who came into the library, the results were likely to be higher than the actual feelings of the entire community overall. Therefore, if the respondents were influenced by the budget cuts to overstate their actual opinion of the library, this was already expected.

The inexperience of the research team and the variability of multiple people entering data also represent a small question of the reliability of the data. Likewise, the format of the survey itself may have been less advantageous than originally thought. The surveys were limited to one page for participation ease. Lengthy surveys would have discouraged participation. However, some of the questions may have

limited results. For example, several patrons asked team members to define ethnicity. Another limitation, which would most likely result again, is lack of attention to directions on the survey by patrons. Some patrons simply checked services used rather than rating them. The staff survey was completed by all part-time staff members suggesting the validity and reliability of these is high. All of these factors certainly affected validity and reliability. However, taking all these factors into consideration, the reasonable level of validity and reliability seem to suggest that the power of the findings is adequate.

CONCLUSION

These findings might have been artificially reduced, and so extrapolating beyond the actual data must be done cautiously, and any conclusions drawn from these surveys must be taken as tentative.

Internal Customer (Staff) Conclusions

Overall, the staff answered the 12 questions from *First, Break All the Rules* mostly positively. This indicates that the staff is mostly satisfied with their jobs. However, there was one question in which three of the four answered negatively. This related to having someone discuss performance progress. Within the library itself, there is no real opportunity for advancement currently. That being said, however, even if there are no opportunities, the employees should still be told whether or not they are performing well in their current roles.

Additionally, comments made by staff on the survey indicate management under the current library director is a serious source of contention. Of the low ratings that the staff gave themselves, these came from a lack of good management practices. Staff members revealed their view that the library director is unqualified and that a more suitable individual needs to be put in that position. The current director does not have an M.L.I.S. degree, and admittedly doesn't even have a college degree.

In regards to staff opinion on how the library is doing in meeting the needs of patrons, there was more discrepancy. Of the seven questions regarding staff opinion of the library, responses were divided almost equally. This indicates a strong division among staff in regards to the library's mission and purpose. Based on these findings, it would appear that much of the staff of the Jamestown Public Library do not feel that the Library is being run with their patrons' best interests at heart.

Internal Customer (Staff) Recommendations

The survey results clearly substantiate the need for internal development. According to Eleanor Ratterman, library director, there is no system for performance appraisals. Although all four staff indicated that they know what is expected of them, three of the four part time employees indicated that they do not receive praise or performance initiatives. Without formal job descriptions or performance evaluations there is little to support employee job satisfaction. It is recommended that internal policies regarding personnel and performance be established.

Due to the division of the staff over the library's state of meeting patron's needs, it is recommended that strategic planning be implemented. Strategic planning would address the strengths and weaknesses of the programs and provide a forum for discussion on the library's ability to meet patron's needs in order for uniformity in employee's expectations of patron's needs. Strategic planning events would also provide opportunities in which to strengthen personal relationships among staff members.

While it would be very naïve and unwise to blame the staff's poor self-evaluation solely on an inexperienced and under-qualified director, this does appear to be at least part of the problem. That being said, from comments made during an interview, it would also appear that the director is not unaware of at least some of these problems. Ratterman noted that she is aware of the need for formal evaluations and is working to have these eventually instituted. In the meantime, though, the Jamestown Public Library staff feels that they are not providing the best services that they can. Depending on how the director handles this, it can either be an impetus for change, or can create a downward spiral of increasing negativity.

External Customer (Patron) Conclusions

Overall, patrons responded very favorably to the Jamestown Public Library, its staff, and the services in which the library provides. Ninety percent responded that they strongly agreed (rating of 1) or agreed (rating of 2) with being very satisfied with

the Jamestown Public Library. Reviewing the percentages of patrons who rated services, ratings of 1 (outstanding) or 2 (very good) were significantly high compared to the percentages of patrons who rated those same services with a rating of 4 (below average) or 5 (negative). Likewise, additional comments made by patrons resulted in minimal negative responses. One respondent was disappointed in the last weeding process and the other felt some staff had attitude issues. The remaining were all very positive.

Patrons were asked on the survey what other services they would like to see the Jamestown Public Library offer. The patrons who made suggestions revealed wanting to see the library offer longer hours, longer checkout time for DVDs, more books, and more programs like other libraries offer. Even with these suggestions being made, the survey results still indicate that patrons rated these areas are highly favorably. While we can draw a few limited conclusions from this study, it's true benefit will only be felt if the data is saved and compared with that of future studies as it can help to guide the Library to the path of creating loyal, lifelong patrons.

External Customer (Patron) Recommendations

The survey results clearly indicate that little needs to be changed at the Jamestown Public Library. With a satisfaction rate of 90%, the library appears to be meeting patron's needs. However, there is still room for improvement. Patrons' suggestions may be considered. It is recommended that policies be reviewed to assure

that the patron's needs and access to information is at the forefront of the library's mission objective. One such consideration would be to afford a longer checkout time for DVDs.

Another recommendation based on patron feedback is in the area of collection. Several patrons noted a need for increased materials in the overall collection. Such areas included more ethnic and multicultural materials, more Christian literature, and more adult non-fiction. A review of the collection development policy is recommended to assure such areas are adequately represented.

Given the budget situation and that the library is run on few staff and so many volunteers, items requiring additional funds may be difficult to address. It is clear that patrons requested longer Saturday and evening hours. Additionally, staff and patrons saw a need for more computers and upgraded technology. Unfortunately, providing additional hours of operation as well as increased and updated technology may not be feasible at this time. However, it is recommended that further study and/or evaluation of the budget be done to determine how and if such could be added to the current library's operation.

TEAM EXPERIENCE

Weaknesses

Major Setback with Greensboro Public Library

Team 5 was doing well with this project initially. The first major obstacle that had to be overcome was the setback three weeks into the project. Originally, the team had contacted Greensboro Public Library's Benjamin Branch and was on schedule with the course timeline to begin data collection. Due to an unknown internal conflict, the Greensboro Public Library withdrew its approval for conducting the needs assessment only days prior to the data collection process. Having to quickly find another research location, the team felt pressure to reach the project completion date. This limited time for adequate research of the Jamestown Public Library as well as limited the time availability for further data collection.

Proximity to the Research Locality

Another obstacle that limited data collection was the proximity of the team members to the research site. No one lived in the community of the Jamestown Public Library. No prior knowledge of the community, the facility, and the patrons made the research process more difficult. The proximity issue also created difficulty in the amount of time team members were able to spend on site. Again, this may have had adverse effects on the project outcome.

Jamestown Public Library's Hours of Operation

Along with the proximity and starting late issue, the hours in which the Jamestown Public Library was open also presented an obstacle. The Jamestown Public Library is open mostly during regular business hours. This made it difficult for team members to adjust their own work schedules in order to participate more in the patron survey collection process. Because the team was unable to be on site during all the operating hours of the Jamestown Public Library the week data was collected, certain patron populations may have been unrepresented.

Jamestown Public Library's Petition

Unbeknownst to the team, the Jamestown Public Library was involved in a petition against local government budget cuts that would adversely affect the library. The staff and volunteers of the library were heavily pursuing patrons to sign their petition during the time in which the needs assessment was taking place. Team members did not feel staff members or volunteers were supportive of the needs assessment due to their personal agenda of the library's petition. While asking patrons to participate in the survey, some of the team members were asked by staff to promote patrons signing the petition at the same time. This was somewhat of a conflict of interest and should have been avoided. Needless to say, patrons were often inundated with forms being thrust in their direction and may have caused some hindrance to the data collection process.

Strengths

Team Work

Despite all the obstacles Team 5 encountered, Team 5 worked diligently to complete this project. After the major setback with the Greensboro Public Library, each team member worked to find another location and proceed forward in order to meet the project deadline. While it may have been to our disadvantage by not having a team leader, each member of the team watched over the project details to assure that the project continued to move forward accurately and without failure. Everyone had different strengths in which made each member valuable in different ways.

Learning Process

Overall, this was not an easy process or project. However, Team 5 feels we each learned a great deal. Not only did we learn the process and purpose of a needs assessment, but we also learned much more through the process. The biggest lesson was perhaps how to overcome obstacles to complete a group project in a timely manner. The setback could have crippled the group. Instead, as a team, we quickly began finding solutions and working to meet the project goal. As part of the process, members were often stretched by advancing their knowledge of technology in order to maintain a high level of group interaction. For example, several team members had

never utilized Skype before, yet embarked on a learning experience in order to communicate. By relying on the strengths of each member rather than focusing on the weaknesses, Team 5 learned much more than the process of a needs assessment, but also significant dynamics of team work for success.

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