

A Review of Students' Reading and Borrowing Books in PTAR UiTM Raub

Nor Hidayah Hassim^{1*}, Mohd Anwar Hassim², Noor Halimatus Sa'diah Ismail^{3*}

¹Fakulti Sains Komputer dan Matematik,
Universiti Teknologi MARA, Cawangan Johor, Kampus Segamat, 85000 Segamat, Johor.
07-9352762

²Perpustakaan Tun Abdul Razak, 09-3515549, anwar_hassim@UiTM.edu.my

³Fakulti Sains Komputer dan Matematik
Universiti Teknologi MARA, Cawangan Pahang, Kampus Raub, 27600 Raub, Pahang
09-3515377

Corresponding Author: ^{1*}hidayah@UiTM.edu.my, ^{2*}halimatusaadiah@UiTM.edu.my

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Abstract

Borrowing books is an important service provided by libraries. However, in this modern day, the technology revolution has had a major impact on society today, creating unforeseen developments, which has also affected borrowing behaviors in the library. One of the key variables to help libraries deliver more proactive services in future is to study the behavior patterns of the students. It is a great significance to analyze the frequency of borrowing books in the library, to allocate resources and improve the books borrowing services to supports the library's strategic goals. Hence, this study focused on determine the frequency of borrowers in PTAR UiTM Raub by faculty and to determine the pattern of borrowers in PTAR UiTM Raub according to month from the year 2016 until 2019. The scope of this study is limited to the number of books borrowed by students. The data was gathered from Web Based Integrated System (WILS) and graphically illustrated for the purpose of analysis and pattern studies. The findings found the students from Faculty of Administrative Science and Policy Studies (FSPPP) borrows a huge number of books which is about 62.89% compared to Faculty of Business Administration (FPP) and Faculty of Computer and Mathematical Sciences (FSKM) with 24.38% and 12.72% respectively. Apart from that, it appears from the monthly trend that most of the books are borrowed in April and October which are the first two months following semester enrolment. Meanwhile, the statistics show that the number of books borrowed decreases during semester breaks, which are February and august. In conclusion, all study objectives were met, and it is hoped that this information would be useful to the librarians at PTAR UiTM Raub so that they may provide better solutions to increase the number of books borrowed by students even during COVID-19.

Keywords: Book Borrowing, Book Borrowing Behaviour, Reading Habits, Library Services, Academic Library, UiTM, Malaysia.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

Many students nowadays prefer to find their reading materials via digital technology such as tablets, smart boards, and other similar devices. Their elder generations, on the other hand, are more familiar with the traditional way of searching the physical books in the university library for the information they require. In light of technology improvements, it can be seen that reading habits have evolved in recent years.

A university library is a symbolic representation of the educational institution. The library serves a vital function for students by providing a variety of books, newspapers, magazines, and other materials connected to academics, particularly for students who are in need but cannot afford to purchase books.

One of the most important services libraries offer is book borrowing. Library users frequently visit the library for borrowing books compared to other library services (Kumar & Raj, 2016). Therefore, it is a great significance to analyze the frequency of borrowing books in the library. Furthermore, Yan et. al (2010) also agreed that book-loan is the most important library service. This is because understanding how students borrow books can help libraries deliver more proactive services. For instance, suppose that a particular book is regularly borrowed from statistics students. Alternatively, when new books are added to the collection and they suit the pattern of commonly borrowed materials, librarians may suggest these books as well. This will undoubtedly introduce students to new reading material rather than the previous one. As a result, students have a wide range of possibilities for borrowing books. Additionally, book borrowing networks can be established between users and books based on the history of book borrowing. This is supported by Lee and Lee (2021) with research on human behaviours in borrowing books from a library and returning them. Therefore, one of the most essential aspects to be researched to enhance library service in the future is the study of book loans or borrowings in libraries.

The selection of borrowing books is diverse, and it is determined by the students' interests and the knowledge they require at the time. Among the most common reasons for borrowing books are to use as a reference to complete an assignment or work, to find additional material that is not presented in class, and, in certain cases, because they are instructed to do so by their lecturers.

Perpustakaan Tun Abdul Razak or also known as PTAR UiTM Raub was established in November 2015, in conjunction with the opening of the new Raub campus. It has around 9605 titles and 16960 scripts for books and 29 titles and 288 scripts for printed journals up until June 2020. It is open Monday through Friday from 8.30 a.m. to 4.50 p.m. and is run by a senior librarian with the assistance of six staff members. Their work is separated into five main divisions, including library services, acquisition and material development, digital library, archive, corporate and administration.

With the rapid advancement of technology, many people believe that libraries will become obsolete in the near future. The decline of borrowing books, which has become a challenge and deficiency around the world, is one of the primary issues that university libraries have encountered. For example, England reported that the quantity of books borrowed from libraries declined in practically every region of the country over a two-year period (BBCNews, 2016). Meanwhile, students at the University of Nottingham Malaysia demonstrated a considerable decrease in the ratio of physical book borrowing from 15% to 20% over the last two to three years (New Straits Times, 2019).

With all these facts, it seems unlikely that PTAR UiTM Raub would face the same challenges. Students currently rely more on technological know-how and are only concerned

with how to navigate through a website, rather than whether or not the information they obtain is accurate and reliable. They can perform much of their study in their room or at their desk without needing to leave. At the same time, the library's books are being increasingly stocked and stay unread. Currently, the Raub campus comprises three main faculties: the Faculty of Business Administration, the Faculty of Administrative Science and Policy Studies, and the Faculty of Computer and Mathematical Sciences. As a result, the purpose of this study was to determine the frequency of book borrowers in PTAR UiTM Raub by faculty and month.

The following structure is used to define the purpose of this study. The following section includes a review of the literature in relation to the student's reading and borrowing behavior pattern, followed by methodology, and the final portion demonstrates the paper's discussion and conclusion.

2.0 LITERATURE REVIEW

Academic libraries are an essential component of colleges and universities throughout the world and play a central role in academic life (Kuh & Gonyea, 2003). For more than a decade, research has shown that most university students still prefer to read their academic materials in print rather than on electronic devices (Mizrachi, 2016). The significant of a library is to provide the information its users require (Siguenza-Guzman et al., 2015). This proclamation is supported by Otike & Barát (2021) that stated academic libraries also responsible to offer research support, which is one of the main metrics by which universities are measured. As such, universities normally have a keen interest in improving their research output and impact. Therefore, it is undeniable to presume that a library is indeed as one of a university's most important physical attributes (Kim & Yang, 2021).

At some point in the past, Shrestha (2008) noted in a previous study that the guidance in the use of library resources and services is necessary to help students meet some of the information requirements. It is also found that library books, e-journals and Internet are the most popular source of information for the course work and research and there is no doubt that the application of Google in the student's information behaviour is prominent and positively connected with the use of traditional library resources. It is commonly known that books in the library are positively contributing to the learning experience of students. This is supported by one of the findings that revealed students are more likely to interact with literature when books are physically present (Pennington, 2012; Wayne, 2015). As a result, academic library professionals have become a more valuable and effective partner in increasing the student's experience and playing a great role in developing academic prospectus and offering information literacy sessions (Aslam, 2021).

On that premise, a university needs to have a vision to create a sustainable academic library. The first step in developing strong dynamic capabilities for the library is for the university leadership and other key stakeholders especially the librarian is to co-create a vision. This vision must be communicated to all the stakeholders, including students, library staff, faculty members, independent researchers, suppliers, collaborators, and other internal and external users.

It is beyond doubt that twenty-first century has already brought many changes in libraries such as users' expectations, collaboration with stakeholders and technological advancement that contribute to the wide range of resources that are difficult to manage (Young et al., 2020). From the librarian perspective, there are many challenges that need to be face such as to implement new technologies and provide new services which are not a choice of library

professionals or administrators. These are required however by changing the behaviour of higher education and necessary for the growth and development of the organization (Charney and Hauke, 2020; Popp, 2012; Sidorko, 2008).

Academic libraries must be significantly innovative and clever in designing the variety of services supplied to users, especially in Information Technology (IT) to remain practical, popular, and in demand all the times. Library services must change to line up with transformations in computing and networking. Unfavourably, the prevalence of mobile technologies (MT) is forcing libraries to change the way they provide services to reach as many users as possible, and users are increasingly attracted to the idea of using library services over their mobile devices (Cummings et al., 2010). Academic libraries can use MT to provide services and reach much more deeply into the work of their clients. This involves working on library e-content and developing revised policies and procedures. It also involves determining responsibilities for acquiring, licensing, storing, and maintaining the types of content that might be useful over MT (Hamad et al., 2018)

To enhance the appropriateness of books acquired under the constraints of limited budgets, librarians must choose books carefully. However, readers may not always find the chosen books suitable because librarians cannot fully gauge the requirements of readers (Ameen and Haider, 2007; Shieh and Wei, 2003; Sitanggang et al., 2010). Hence, it is advisable that library services need to be upgraded to line up with transformations in computing and networking. This is because academic libraries with their good capability in managing and storing millions of valuable information and knowledge can contribute towards achieving knowledge-rich society in Malaysia.

With that in mind, libraries are the only hub in most community where people access free information that will help improve their education, acquire new skills, make informed decisions, as well gain insights on pertinent issues. This uniqueness makes libraries and information services important for bridging the digital gap and accelerating the actualisation of sustainable development goals (SDG). Libraries also provide access to information in all formats and delivery services that meet the needs of people in a dynamic and complex society (Shafack, 2016).

In this regard, academics are the best knowledge creators while academic libraries and librarians are the key player in knowledge management. Meanwhile, universities and research organisations are themselves knowledge reservoirs (Lee, 2005). Furthermore, Anasi et al. (2018) indicated university libraries as constituents of the parent university are knowledge repositories. Similarly, Hayes (2004) has ruled that a university can be viewed as a knowledge factory creating new knowledge through research and by educating knowledge workers, both of which are essential for modern economy. However, this is only possible with the reinforcement of the librarians playing their traditional role of acquiring, organising, and disseminating knowledge among the members of the university community to promote research activities and these contribute not only towards the building of knowledge society and knowledge economy but also enhances the achievement of SDGs (Jain, 2012).

3.0 METHODOLOGY

The study employed secondary data from PTAR UiTM Raub. The data was taken from 2016 until 2019. The data consists of 13,078 books borrowed by students and due to to the constraint of COVID-19 and Online Distance Learning (ODL), where most students are not permitted to be on campus, data collection of books borrowed in PTAR UiTM Raub for the

years 2020 and 2021 is unavailable. As a result, the study will be evaluated only until 2019. The analysis was conducted by using Microsoft Excel 365 and simple descriptive analysis was applied. The detailed of the results are presented in the following section.

4.0 RESULTS AND FINDINGS

Raub campus comprises three main faculties: the Faculty of Business Administration (FPP), the Faculty of Administrative Science and Policy Studies (FSPPP), and the Faculty of Computer and Mathematical Sciences (FSKM). Below are the table and figure of the frequency books borrowed in PTAR UiTM Raub by students for these three different faculties for the year 2016 until 2019.

YEAR	FACULTY		
	FSKM	FSPPP	FPP
2016	669	1650	698
2017	646	1855	903
2018	225	2500	1077
2019	124	2220	511
TOTAL	1664	8225	3189

Table 1: Frequency of Books Borrowed by Students in Faculty for the Year 2016 to 2019

Table 1 above shows the frequency of books borrowed by students from each faculty in PTAR UiTM Raub from the year 2016 until 2019. The total books borrowed by students in FSKM is 1664, for FSPPP is 8225 and FPP is 3189. According to the table, it indicates that the students in the Faculty of Administrative Science and Policy Studies (FSPPP) shows a very extensive number of books borrowed from the library among the faculties, whereas the Faculty of Computer and Mathematical Sciences (FSKM) show the lowest number of books borrowed from the library compared to the other two faculties.

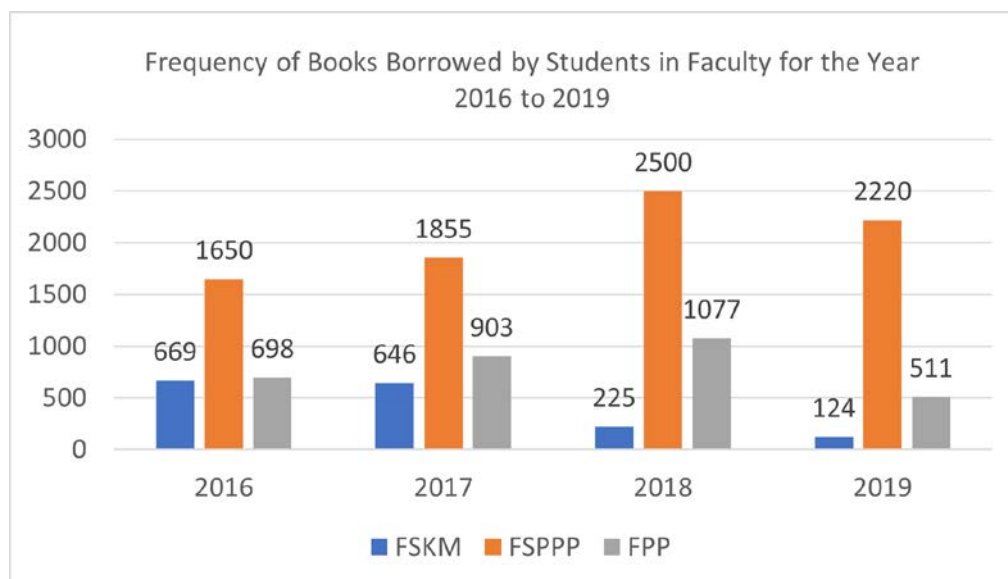


Figure 1: Frequency of Books Borrowed by Students in Faculty for the Year 2016 to 2019.

Figure 1 above shows the distribution of books borrowed by students from each faculty in library PTAR UiTM Raub. As in the figure, for the year 2016, FSKM recorded 669 numbers of book borrowed, FSPPP with 1650 numbers of book and FPP reach 698 total numbers of book borrowed. In 2017, FSKM able to achieve 646 numbers of book borrowed, FSPPP with total 1855 numbers of book and FPP states 903 total numbers of book borrowed. During the year 2018, the total numbers of book borrowed by FSKM is 225. The FSPPP reach the highest numbers of 2500 books and followed by FPP with 1077 total numbers of book borrowed. At long last, for the year 2019, FSKM able to achieve 124 numbers of book borrowed, FSPPP with total 2220 numbers of book and FPP demonstrate 511 total numbers of book borrowed. From the findings, it is discovered that the frequency of books borrowed by students in FSPPP show highest number of books borrowed from the year 2016 until 2019 compared to the other two faculties. This is also supported by the following table and figure below.

YEAR	FACULTY		
	FSKM	FSPPP	FPP
2016	N/A	N/A	N/A
2017	*13	*39	*29
2018	50	83	34
2019	28	42	45
TOTAL	91	164	108

Table 2: Frequency of Books Borrowed by Lecturers in Faculty for the Year 2016 to 2019

* Data for 2016 until July 2017 is non accessible due to system changeover. The availability of data starting from August 2017 onwards.

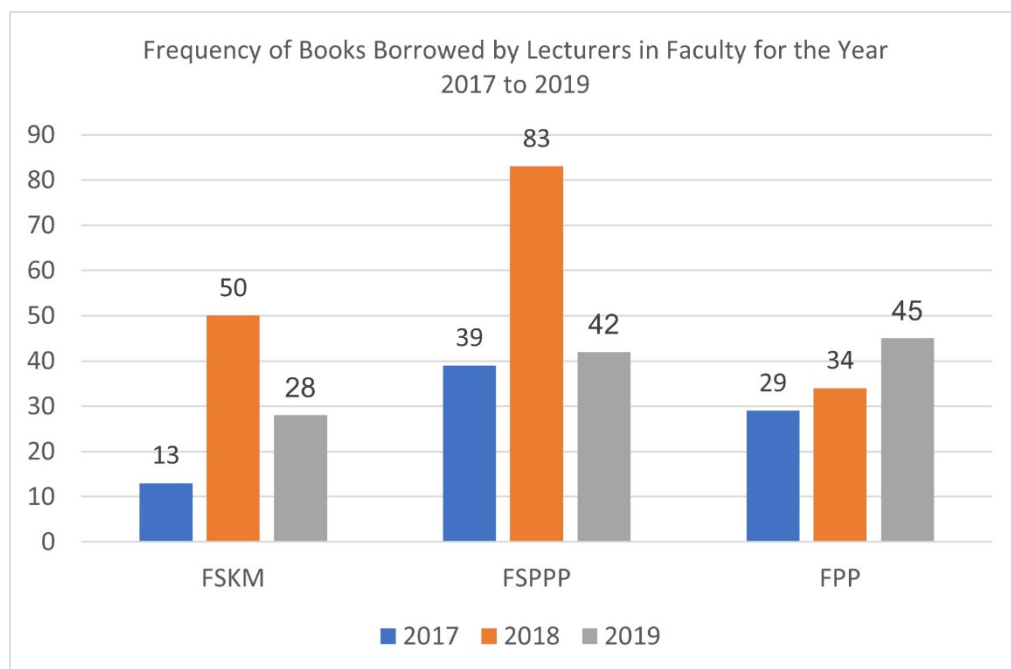


Figure 2: Frequency of Books Borrowed by Lecturers in Faculty for the Year 2017 to 2019

The distribution of books borrowed by lecturers in each faculty from 2016 to 2019 is shown in Table 2 and Figure 2. The findings from Figure 2 shows that the FSKM illustrate 91 numbers of books borrowed, FPP with 108 numbers of books and it clearly shows that FSPPP is the highest among the others with the total of 164 books borrowed. In comparison to Figure 1, there is a possibility that the relationship between the number of books borrowed by students in FSPPP and the number of books borrowed by lecturers in FSPPP can be graphically illustrated. Lecturers are perceived as leading by example in this manner. However, because this study primarily focused on student data, there is insufficient information to infer whether there is a significant association between number of books borrowed by students and number of books borrowed by lecturers in FSPPP.

It is also important to identify data by month in order to discover possible patterns. Thus, Table 3 and Figure 3 below show the frequency of books borrowed by students according to month from the year 2016 to 2019.

MONTH	YEAR				TOTAL
	2016	2017	2018	2019	
JAN	428	526	0	0	954
FEB	323	369	0	18	710
MAR	199	104	0	602	905
APR	23	0	809	635	1467
MAY	11	1	479	180	671
JUN	537	501	1	4	1043
JUL	492	319	3	0	814
AUG	377	54	2	4	437
SEP	142	384	444	305	1275
OCT	0	473	1291	650	2414
NOV	0	512	679	455	1646
DEC	485	161	94	2	742

Table 3: Frequency of Books Borrowed by Students According to Month from the Year 2016 to 2019

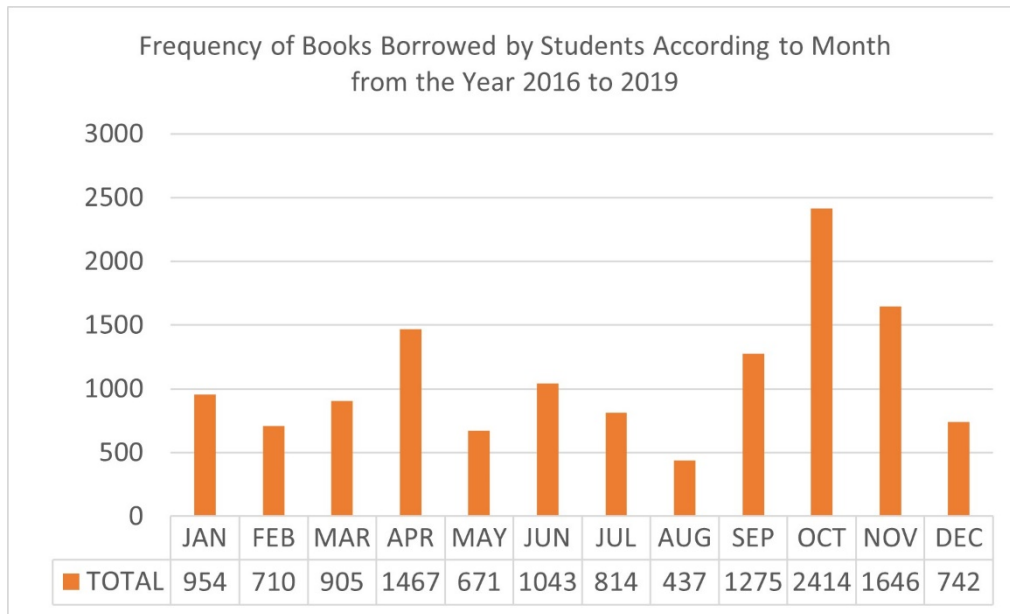


Figure 3: Frequency of Books Borrowed by Students According to Month from the Year 2016 to 2019

According to the UiTM academic calendar, which has been accepted by the University Senate, standard enrolment semesters will be held twice a year, despite the COVID-19 circumstances and restrictions. Enrolment will typically take place in early March and early September each year. Meanwhile, the semester breaks for students are normally in February and August. The data in Table 3 and Figure 3 showed the highest books borrowed in April is about 1467 books and in October with 2414 numbers of books. This finding is corresponded to the semester enrolment status because both months are one consecutive month after the student’s enrolment take place. In contrast, in August show the lowest numbers of books borrowed with 437 books and show a declining in numbers of books borrowed in February with 710 books altogether.

5.0 DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

The objective of the research is to determine the frequency of borrowers in PTAR UiTM Raub by faculty from the year 2016 until 2019 and to determine the pattern of borrowers in PTAR UiTM Raub by each month from the year 2016 until 2019. From the findings achieved in the previous section, it can be concluded that both objectives are successfully fulfilled. Students from the FSPPP shows a tremendous frequency of books borrowed in library PTAR UiTM Raub, compared to the other two faculties. Taking into consideration the nature of the FSPPP courses, a large amount of reading materials and book references are required. *This is due to the fact that a Diploma in Public Administration requires students to engage in the areas of politics, sociology, economics, history, and geology in order to improve their critical thinking and understanding.* It is the field oriented toward practical applications within political science and is often organized as a separate department that prepares students for careers in the [civil service](#). Political science examines institutions and behavior, favoring descriptive over normative approaches, and developing hypotheses or drawing conclusions based on empirical data, which is expressed quantitatively whenever possible, (Roskin, 2020). *Thus, one of the*

recommendations from this study is further research should be conducted based on data from FSPPP to understand more about student's behavior.

Aside from that, the lecturers are viewed as examples to follow. This is supported by the number of books borrowed by lecturers in the FSPPP is the highest among the other faculties. This also implies that as the number of lecturers in the FSPPP borrowing books increases, the number of students in the FSPPP borrowing books expands as well. As a result of this initial investigation, the second recommendation is that further research be conducted to see whether these two variables have indeed positive relationship.

Meanwhile, the trend of borrowers in PTAR UiTM Raub by month reveals an increase in the number of books borrowed, particularly in April and October. This may be related to student enrolling in March and September, when lecturers expect students to find reference books for specific courses in the first few weeks of classes. Students frequently borrow a range of books to supplement the material covered in class. In addition, the findings also indicate a downward pattern in the number of books borrowed between the months of February and December, as those two months of the year are the semester breaks for students. Throughout all the results, findings and discussion, the study clearly met the objectives. In conclusion, this information is hoped to be valuable to the librarians at PTAR UiTM Raub for them to continue to deliver tangible and human interaction-oriented benefits. Even though the internet is a necessary and one of the essential components in life, it is still not a library which is full of fact-based and will not be able to take the position of librarians.

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