Chapter 1

The problem

Background of the Study

In the 21st century the libraries is still considered to be one of the critical important aspect in the education provision that influences instruction and learning. The libraries of the world have experienced relevant changes that are inspired by the technological changes, user-based design ideologies, and changes in the information behavior. It has been shown that the perception of libraries by students and teachers is a crucial factor that has a strong impact on their engagement, satisfaction, and usage frequency (Mangrum and Foster, 2020; Sare et al., 2021; Adetayo, 2024). The library has grown to be more than a fixed collection of book shelves to an active learning hub that combines physical and digital spaces to motivates the various learning styles and cultural backgrounds of the users (UNESCO, 2021). Therefore, the problem of interaction and perception of library services with different stakeholders has become the focus of studies in modern times in library and information science.

The growing integration of digital technologies in education has driven libraries to accelerate digital transformation and rethink their approaches to service delivery and user engagement (Tammaro, 2020; Zhou et al., 2022). The fast transition to distance education increased the demand of users on distance access, responsiveness in service, and accessibility (Ashiq, 2022; Gross, 2022). The libraries across the world experienced difficulties to remain connected to communities and at the same time access to materials in electronic, functioning infrastructure, and literacy in information (UNESCO, 2021). Research indicates that the view of library relevance is currently not just tied to the adequacy of collections, but also to the digital functionality, technological capability, and interactional efforts with librarians (Aliyyah, 2024; Adjei, 2024; Adebayo-Atchrimi et al., 2022). Equally, the Association of College and Research Libraries (ACRL, 2021) also demonstrated how crucial librarian-faculty cooperation is to the information literacy of the digital age and the necessity to give the library services in line with the expectations of teachers as well as the students.

In addition to the accessibility of services, the inclusion aspect, collaboration, and stimulation in intellectual, library space can influence the users’ satisfaction (Gikunju, 2024; Gray, 2024; Johnson, 2023). Across the globe, it has been shown that students perceive library settings as both social and cognitive to affect motivation and well-being (Sare et al., 2021; Belotindos, 2024). According to the expert perspective, these perceptions are socially constructed and context sensitive: the meaning and experiences of usefulness, comfort, relevance will vary depending on the institution culture and the personal worldview of the user (Adetayo, 2024; Mangrum and Foster, 2020). Thus, the perceptions of study are required to measure the quality of the services as well as to comprehend the cultural and pedagogical values influencing the interpretation of the users in the library.

Furthermore, the meaning of the library in religious or sectarian institutions has an additional level of meaning since the library has spiritual and academic agenda. Religious and theological libraries had a history of serving as stores of denominations and moral teachings (Liu, 2021). Theological libraries have continued to adapt by digitizing rare resources and integrating spiritual care into their online reference services (ATLA, 2020). Nevertheless, there are problems with finding the middle between an open investigation in intellectual aspect and denominational affiliation and selective collection policies (Moore et al., 2024; Pew Research Center, 2020). The conflict between inclusion and the faithfulness to the doctrine can affect the attitude students and educators have towards the library as a means of aiding comprehensive education (Ramos and Santos, 2022). This shows the significant of empirical research into the impact of sectarian context of the influence of library user satisfaction and expectations.

In Asia and Africa, the perception use dynamics have similarities in studies carried out regionally. To illustrate, the students in Ghana and Nigeria state that poor awareness of the resources that are available and poor digital literacy decrease the utilization of libraries, even though the resources are available (Adjei, 2024; Adebayo-Atchrimi et al., 2022). In Namibia, undergraduates appreciated the services of virtual libraries and had a difficulty in infrastructural and awareness (Kiana and Mabeifam, 2021). In Kenya and other third-world settings, reconfiguration in libraries using a user-centered approach has enhanced the perception and engagement (Gikunju, 2024). All these findings do indicate a possibility that the perception-based usage patterns are universal phenomena which are dependent on the design, access, and institutional culture.

Existing literature highlights a growing interest in library perceptions; however, most studies have focused on user satisfaction and service quality in general higher education institutions rather than in sectarian ones. Dagdag and Galiza (2020) discovered that students at Isabela Province were mostly satisfied with library services but wanted more variety on collections and better physical spaces. On the same note, the Central Mindanao University investigation (2024) showed that user satisfaction is highly related with perceived service quality and responsiveness. According to Valenzuela City Technological College (2024), students have enjoyed digital library activities but they tend to choose physical collections in order to study in depth. Belotindos (2024) associated space design with interaction by asserting that excellently designed learning commons spur utilization. These researches confirm that perception is a significant factor of engagement but seldom include teacher perception or religiously motivated background in the aspect of institutional.

Recent studies conducted in private and sectarian institutions offer limited insights into the topic. Padohinog and Ariate (2024) studied the user satisfaction level in the Dominican university Learning Resource Center and discovered that the support through librarians was highly valued by the students, and digital resources were poor compared with the expectations of the users. According to Frias, Halcon, and Frias Jr. (2025), the hybrids between scholarly law libraries and their compliance with academic standards, highlights the existence of gaps in their infrastructural and policy elements. Fiedacan (2024) found that satisfaction was predicted by the quality of services and information literacy skills in the case of a private university. Nonetheless, there is limited study that directly compares the perception of the students and teachers in the sectarian libraries.

Moreover, a constructivist and interpretivist frame theoretically shows the rationale behind the study of this phenomenon. As a socially constructed reality, perception is the reflection of lived experiences of the users of a specific cultural and institutional milieu (Adetayo, 2024; Sare et al., 2021). Faith values and academic identity are mixed with the perceptions of library adequacy, relevance and inclusiveness in the sectorial institutions. The roles and religious orientation of the teachers and students may make them view the library services differently. Exploring such subjective definitions, research can be used to understand how sectarian libraries have mediated between academic goals and religious developments. This investigation is important in making sure that libraries do not only serve pedagogy, but also to reflect the educational purpose of faith-based schools in a comprehensive way (Ramos & Santos, 2022; Liu, 2021).

In synthesizing review of the literature, it also brings out evident and continuing trends. It is factual that the perception of the user has a great influence on satisfaction and usage (Mangrum and Foster, 2020; Dagdag and Galiza, 2020). Digital transformation and spatial reconfiguration have changed what libraries are expected to be and should be globally and locally (Ashiq, 2022; Belotindos, 2024). The unique perceptions and views of students and teachers in sectarian libraries where the aims of academia and religion are intertwined are what is unexplored yet. Limited information exists in the form of empirical research on the effect of faith-based mission-alignment on perceived quality of service, relevance of collection, and digital preparedness. Such a gap will contribute new information regarding the interaction of education, religion, and information services in the context of Philippines.

This research is often motivated by an interest to learn how teachers and students perceive a sectarian library's resources, services, environment, digital accessibility, and alignment with its goals. This study specifically focuses on the Western Mindanao Adventist Academy sectarian library, aiming to improve academic and practical understanding of library perspectives within Philippine sectarian institutions in order to inform library development strategies that are sensitive to both pedagogical needs and the spiritual aspects of faith-based education. This phenomenon motivates the researcher to examine the library environment of Western Mindanao Adventist Academy sectarian library as a special setting where faith and education intersect.

Conceptual Framework

The SERVQUAL (Service Quality) model is a recognized standard for measuring the disparity between the level of service a user expects and the level of service they actually perceive they received (Ghaedi, Namdar, & Talebi, 2020; Mamta & Kumar, 2023). SERVQUAL is particularly valuable because it quantifies areas of weakness where expectations dramatically exceed perceived reality. The model can be summarized by the formula where Satisfaction is a function of the gap between Perception and Expectation.

For the WMAA sectarian library context, the classic SERVQUAL dimensions (Tangibles, Reliability, Responsiveness, Assurance, Empathy) were adapted and expanded to include dimensions crucial to the faith-based environment. This conceptual adaptation allows for a nuanced assessment that encompasses general academic needs alongside spiritual requirements.

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| Dimension | Focus Area | Key Perception Questions |
| Resources Adequacy (Tangible) | Quantity, currency, and physical condition of print and general Academic Digital resources. | Are general academic books up to date? Is the digital the digital accessible and sufficient? (Abam 2021) |
| Sectarian Relevance (Collection Specialization) | Adequacy, depth, and availability of materials supporting Adventist faith and theological curriculum. | Are materials related to Adventist history/theology readily available? Are religious resources relevant and adequate? (Kaba 2021 |
| Staff Roles (Assurance/Empathy) | Professionalism, subject knowledge, and perceived role of librarians as effective information literacy instructors and service facilitators. | Are librarians being helpful? Do they proactive facilitate learning? (Bangani, et.al.,2020) |
| Service Quality (responsiveness/ Reliability) | Timeless of services, reliability of digital technology, speed of access, and efficient issue resolution. | Is the library digital service reliable? Are circulation and reservation processes prompt? (Vaid,Sharma,& Verma,2024) |
| Spiritual Space/Environmrnt (Tangible) | The perceived atmosphere and physical environment conducive to both focused academic study and spiritual contemplation/reflection | Is the environment conducive to focused study? Is it perceived as a safe/spiritual space? (Mross,2021) |

Statement of the Problem

This research aims to evaluate the perceptions and usage habits of selected Grade 7–12 students and full-time teaching faculty at Western Mindanao Adventist Academy (WMAA) concerning the services and resources provided by the school library during the School Year 2024–2025, utilizing a mixed-methods approach.

The central inquiry guiding this study is:

What are the perception levels of students and teachers regarding the quality, relevance, and adequacy of services provided by the Western Mindanao Adventist Academy (WMAA) sectarian library?

Specifically, the study sought to answer the following sub-questions:

1. What is the profile of the student and teacher participants in terms of demographic characteristics (grade level, years of teaching, frequency of library use)?
2. What are the perceived levels of service quality of perception, and expected levels of service quality of expectation, across the key dimensions of the WMAA library services as rated by students and teachers?
3. What are the key perception gaps (P-E scores) among students and teachers, particularly concerning:
   * The adequacy and currency of general academic resources?
   * The relevance and depth of the sectarian/religious resource collection?
   * The role and effectiveness of librarians as instructors and service providers?
   * The quality and reliability of digital resources and access?
   * The library’s perceived role as a spiritual and supportive environment?
4. What are the underlying qualitative factors, emerging themes, and recommendations from teachers and students that explain the identified perception gaps?

Significance of the Study

The systematic assessment provided by this perception study is vital for ensuring the library’s operations align directly with both user requirements and the institution's strategic mission, moving beyond superficial compliance metrics.

*WMAA Administrators:* The findings offer crucial, user-validated data necessary for strategic long-range planning and budget allocation. Specifically, data concerning digital services and sectarian collection adequacy will justify targeted investment in these priority areas, ensuring the library fulfills both its educational and spiritual mandates.

*WMAA Librarians:* The research provides immediate, actionable feedback on service delivery. By quantifying the perception gaps, librarians can refocus efforts away from areas of strength (where perception exceeds expectation) and toward specific weaknesses (digital accessibility or collection depth). This shifts the managerial focus toward genuine user satisfaction and provides evidence to justify professional development initiatives and annual service gap measurement.

*WMAA Faculty:* Faculty members will gain detailed awareness of how students perceive the resources essential to their subjects. The data facilitates improved collaboration with librarians to enhance information literacy instruction, thus ensuring faculty can effectively fulfill their role in selecting and acquiring necessary reference materials.

*WMAA Students (Grade 7–12):* This study empowers students by offering a formal channel for their feedback. By identifying user preferences, particularly the likely desire for enhanced electronic resources, the study directs institutional investment toward formats that maximize student utility and engagement.

*Future Researchers:* For the LIS community, this research contributes baseline data and a methodologically tailored conceptual framework specifically designed for perception assessment within faith-based secondary school environments in the Western Mindanao region.

Definition of Terms

The following terms are operationally defined to ensure clarity within the context of this study:

*Sectarian Library:* Operationally, this refers to the school library of the Western Mindanao Adventist Academy, a resource center whose mandated mission is to support both the Grade 7–12 general academic curriculum and the spiritual program of the Seventh-day Adventist Church.

*Perception:* Defined as the quantitative measurement of users’ actual assessment of the library services and resources received, representing the level of current service delivery on a Likert scale (Ghaedi, Namdar, & Talebi, 2020).

*Expectation:* Defined as the quantitative measurement of the level of service or resource quality users believe the library *should* provide, reflecting their idealized benchmark of service on a Likert scale (Ghaedi, Namdar, & Talebi, 2020).

*Perception Gap (P-E):* The quantitative difference between a participant’s Perception score and their Expectation score. A negative gap indicates a service deficiency or weakness where actual delivery falls short of user expectation (Mamta & Kumar, 2023).

*Collection-Centered Analysis:* An evaluation strategy used for conceptual contrast in this study, which emphasizes only the collection's quality and size against regulatory mandates (Abam, 2021).

*User-Centered Analysis:* The foundational methodological philosophy of this study, assessing library services based on direct feedback regarding user satisfaction, service utility, and fulfillment of patron demands (Abam, 2021; Cooper, Jochelson, & Turner, 2020).

Chapter 2

Research Method

This chapter describes the rigorous methods and procedures employed for conducting the mixed-methods assessment, ensuring the systematic collection and analysis of data regarding student and teacher perceptions.

Research Design

This study employed an Explanatory Sequential Mixed-Methods Design (QUAN & QUAL), which is suitable for studies aiming to statistically identify problems and subsequently provide in-depth, user-driven explanations for those problems (Park, Bahrudin, & Han, 2020).

Phase 1: Quantitative

The initial phase involved administering a comprehensive survey to a large sample of students and teachers. The goal was to quantify the statistical existence and magnitude of service gaps across the SERVQUAL dimensions (P-E scores). This phase addressed the questions of *what* the perception levels and service deficits are.

Phase 2: Qualitative

Following the statistical analysis, a smaller, strategically selected group of participants was engaged in one-on-one interviews. The purpose was to gather rich narrative data, illuminating *why* the significant perception gaps (deficits in sectarian relevance or digital services) emerged in the quantitative phase (Park, Bahrudin, & Han, 2020). The qualitative findings provide the crucial user context necessary to interpret the numerical data accurately.

Research Environment

The study was conducted within the library environment of the Western Mindanao Adventist Academy (WMAA). WMAA is situated in San Pablo, Dumingag Zamoboanga del Sur and provides education for secondary students (Grade 7–12). The institutional setting is characterized by its adherence to a sectarian mission, which requires the library to maintain collections and services that integrate faith-based content with the general academic requirements of the curriculum. The physical environment itself is critical, as the library is expected to function as a space that supports both concentrated study and spiritual reflection.

Research Participants

The study participants consisted of two distinct user groups: selected Grade 7–12 students and the full-time teaching faculty of WMAA. The inclusion of both groups is necessary because their informational demands and service expectations often diverge, providing a comprehensive assessment of the library’s reach. Teachers are included as expert evaluators due to their consistent reliance on resources to deliver curriculum. Students, representing the majority of the user population, provide perspectives shaped by diverse digital literacy levels and academic needs across the junior and senior high levels.

Sampling Technique

Consistent with the two-phase design, different sampling techniques were utilized for each phase.

Quantitative Phase:

Stratified Random Sampling was employed for the student population, stratified by grade level (G7-9 vs. G10-12) and gender to ensure proportional representation across the secondary school demographics. For the smaller teacher population, Census Sampling was employed, targeting the entire population of full-time faculty for participation to ensure maximum coverage of expert perspectives.

Qualitative Phase:

Purposive Sampling was used to select interview participants (Park, Bahrudin, & Han, 2020). This method ensures that the sample is chosen based on specific criteria aligned with the study's objectives, rather than random selection . Participants were selected for their extensive experience using the library or for having demonstrated extreme scores (highly satisfied or highly dissatisfied) on the initial quantitative survey. For instance, participants exhibiting high dissatisfaction with digital services were targeted to provide specific, detailed explanations of technical failures, confirming whether the weakness was due to infrastructure, training, or resource availability. This approach ensures the qualitative phase directly illuminates the causal factors behind the statistical gaps.

Research Instrument

The assessment relied on two primary instruments: a quantitative survey questionnaire and a qualitative interview guide.

Quantitative Instrument

The survey was adapted from established service quality models utilized in library information science, particularly the SERVQUAL framework (Ghaedi, Namdar, & Talebi, 2020; Mamta & Kumar, 2023), and structured using school-level questionnaire models (Adjei & Filson, 2024).

* Part I: Profile: Gathers demographic data (grade level, years of teaching, frequency of use).
* Part II: Expectation: Measures the ideal level of service participants believe the library *should* provide, rated on a 5-point Likert scale (1=Not Necessary, 5=Absolutely Essential).
* Part III: Perception: Measures the participants' assessment of the library’s *current* service delivery, rated on a 5-point Likert scale (1=Strongly Disagree, 5=Strongly Agree).

Crucially, the instrument incorporated items designed to assess the unique dimensions of the sectarian environment, including the perception of Sectarian Relevance (adequacy of Adventist theological texts) and the perceived quality of the Spiritual Space.

Qualitative Instrument

The interview guide utilized a semi-structured format to allow for rich, open-ended responses, following the practice of related qualitative library studies (Ghaedi, Namdar, & Talebi, 2020). The core questions focused on experiences related to library services, identifying specific collection weaknesses, and eliciting recommendations for improvement (Abam, 2021). Questions were specifically tailored based on the negative P-E gaps identified in the quantitative phase. For example, if digital services rated poorly, interview questions probed the specific operational failures, such as internet speed, hardware availability, or staff training concerning digital platforms. Furthermore, questions targeted the perceived effectiveness of librarians in their teaching roles (Bangani, et al., 2020), and the value of the library for non-academic activities, such as spiritual reflection.

Data Gathering Procedure

The data gathering procedure followed a strict, sequential protocol:

1. Administrative Clearance: Formal permission to conduct the study was secured from the WMAA Administration, endorsed by the relevant academic bodies.
2. Ethical Compliance: All participants were provided with detailed information regarding the study's purpose and procedures. Informed Consent was obtained from all participants, with specific parental consent secured for minor students (G7-10), guaranteeing voluntary participation, confidentiality, and data integrity.
3. Quantitative Collection: The surveys were administered (online or in print) to the selected samples. The data was tallied and processed immediately to identify the preliminary statistical results and perception gaps.
4. Qualitative Collection: Based on the identified gaps, the purposive sample was contacted. One-on-one, in-depth interviews were conducted, and with the participants’ permission, audio recordings were secured to ensure the accuracy of verbal responses and subsequent transcription.
5. Data Compilation and Analysis: All quantitative data (scores) and qualitative data (transcripts) were compiled and prepared for the final analysis and interpretation phase.

Data Analysis

The collected data was processed using the explanatory-sequential analysis method.

Quantitative Data Analysis:

Descriptive Statistics: Frequency counts and percentages were used to generate the profile of the participants. Means and standard deviations were calculated for the Expectation and Perception scores across all service dimensions.

Gap Analysis: The core analysis involved calculating the Mean Perception Gap (P-E) score for each dimension. Negative P-E scores mathematically quantify the perceived weaknesses of the WMAA library services.

Inferential Statistics: Independent samples t-tests were utilized to compare any significant differences in perception gaps between the student and teacher populations, providing nuance to the overall findings.

Qualitative Data Analysis:

Thematic Analysis: Interview transcripts were subjected to rigorous coding, categorization, and synthesis. This process identified recurring emerging themes (infrastructure limitations, collaboration gaps, specific collection deficits). This analysis was strictly framed to interpret and provide contextual explanations for the numerical gaps identified in the quantitative phase, adhering to the explanatory sequential structure.

Ethical Consideration in Research

Adherence to established ethical and legal procedures was maintained throughout the research process. The following principles were strictly observed (Park, Bahrudin, & Han, 2020):

*Respect for People’s Rights and Dignity*. Confidentiality of participants’ identities was maintained at all times.

*Integrity.* Honest and accurate reporting of verified participant responses was ensured. No data fabrication, falsification, or misrepresentation occurred.

*Informed Consent*. ensuring participants fully understood the purpose and procedures and participated voluntarily without

*Academic Honesty*. All data sources were properly cited and referenced. Plagiarism was strictly avoided and ethical research standards were upheld.

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