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THE DEVELOPING OF LIBRARY SERVICES

Case: Eurajoki library

Degree Programme in Business Management and Entrepreneur-
ship

2015

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Degree Programme in Business Management and Entrepreneurship

June 2015

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Number of pages: 56

Appendices: 2

Keywords: Services, service quality, service development, public library services, library service development, benchmarking

This study was done to research public library services and service improvement and development. The purpose of the research was to find out ways how Eurajoki municipality could improve and develop its library services, in order to meet the needs of the current and future users of the library. The aim was to give suggestions for improvement and development based on user interviews and benchmarking. The thesis was commissioned by Eurajoki library.

The theoretical part of the study relies on professional literature on the relevant and current topics, found by reading books, articles and websites. This part discusses the concepts of services, service quality, service development, library services and library service development.

The empirical part of the study included two researches, that were conducted using qualitative research methods; theme interviews were chosen for benchmarking and semi-structured interviews for the library user interviews. The current state of the library services was first identified as a result of the user interviews. Development suggestions were then sought by hearing the users' opinions and by benchmarking the library services to the best practices. In this case the benchmarks involved three other municipalities, that have built a new library and developed or improved their library services during the recent years. By utilising the results of benchmarking and user interviews, suggestions for service improvement and development were then made.

The results of the study, the suggestions for service improvement and development are presented at the end of the thesis. The suggestions for improvement included issues concerning for example the opening hours, technology, extending of material and so on. As a conclusion it can be stated that the library can develop its services by maintaining and building upon its strengths, stopping its weaknesses, exploiting the opportunities and defending against the threats identified.

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1 INTRODUCTION

There is a new library building being built in Eurajoki, the construction of which is planned to complete in Winter 2016. At this point there are already some benefits and changes known that the new library building will offer. The biggest change is that there will be a lot more space when compared to the old library building. The old library has approximately 330m², whereas the new building will have approximately 865m², meaning over two and a half times more space. There is for example more lounge area, a researcher room and a room for the Kotiseutu -collection, that the old building does not have. The new technology includes a self-service loaning machine, RFID-system, smart shelf, digitising equipment and a coffee machine.

The aim of this thesis is to find out the current state of the library services and based on user interviews and benchmarking, make suggestions either for improvement of the existing services or development of new services, that are currently not offered. The suggestions will naturally exclude the changes that are already known that the new building will offer.

There were two clear reasons for choosing library service development as the topic of this study. First, services and service quality are never ready. Instead, they are dynamic and constantly developing. (Lämsä & Uusitalo 2005, 22) Therefore, services such as library services in this case, need continuous improvement and development, in order to meet the changing needs of the customers. The second reason was the timing. As a new library building is built and the library is going to renew the technology in any case, this was the perfect timing to assess the current state of the library services, hear the users' needs, wishes and expectations, and to plan for the future direction.

The researcher's own experience in this field is the role of an active library user. As a resident of Eurajoki, I am naturally pleased with the opportunity to have an effect on improving the library services. The current services of the library are good, but there is always room for improvement.

2 PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

When deciding on the future direction, it is important for any company to evaluate its current position before making any decisions. By first understanding where the company is coming from and where it is at the present moment, it can decide which direction to go. (Egan 2008, 254, 295) Therefore, the objective of this study is to define the current state of library services by interviewing the library users; asking what they are satisfied and dissatisfied with concerning the current services.

The purpose of the study is to discover how the services could be developed and improved by benchmarking them to three other libraries that have built a new library building and developed their services in the recent years. This is why Luvia, Laitila and Rauma libraries were chosen as benchmarks; they have each built a new library building during the recent years and developed their services. Another reason was the size of the municipality. The results of benchmarking cannot simply be copied and imposed to the case library, instead they need to be adapted. What works in, for example a big city with 200 000 residents may not work in Eurajoki, due to the resources available and different needs of the users. Therefore, the benchmarking libraries were chosen so, that the municipality in question is approximately the same size as Eurajoki (except for Rauma), to make it more likely that the library services could be applied to the case library.

Library services are local services and as such they answer to the needs of local residents and communities. (Suomen kuntaliitto 2015) Therefore, the results of benchmarking alone are not enough to make suggestions for improvement and development, because the services of the benchmarking libraries answer to the user needs in those specific municipalities. The aim of the study is to utilize the results of benchmarking with the improvement suggestions given in the interviews by the library users. The overall objective is to give recommendations how the library could improve the existing services and develop new ones.

The main research objective is:

1. How to improve the existing and develop new library services in order to meet the needs of current and future users of the library?

In addition, there are the following objectives:

2. What kind of new services could be offered to the current and future users of the library that have not been offered before?
3. What have the current users been satisfied/dissatisfied with in the old library?
4. What kind of expectations do the users have concerning the new library?

The answers to objectives 1 and 2 will be utilised from benchmarking and user interview results. The new services could involve for example new technology, new equipment and so on.

The current state of the library services in the case company is defined by hearing the customers' opinions (objective 3). By asking the customers what they are satisfied and dissatisfied with will reveal the strengths and weaknesses of the current services and thus help define the problem areas. The answers to objective 3 will help identify the current position of the library, so that suggestions can be made concerning what to keep, replace, add and remove in the new library.

The user expectations (objective 4) concerning the new library may reveal needs for improving the existing services or new service possibilities for the library to consider. The issues may involve for example the extent of material, amount of staff, opening hours, equipment and so on. Based on the answers suggestions can be made to meet those expectations and/or needs.

3 PUBLIC LIBRARIES IN FINLAND, CASE AND BENCHMARKING LIBRARIES

3.1 Public libraries in Finland

Public libraries in Finland are maintained by the municipality, as it is stated in the library law and decree that the municipality has an obligation to offer library and information services. Libraries are an open and free space to learn for everybody and they act as an important meeting point for the residents of the municipality. A lot of different events and exhibitions are organised in the library premises. In 2013 there were 815 public libraries and 148 library buses in Finland. Most of the public libraries offer digital material, electronic services and guidance for the usage of newest media technology, in addition to the traditional printed material. Public libraries include municipal/city libraries, university libraries, university of applied sciences libraries, libraries for schools and institutions and special libraries. (Suomen kuntaliitto 2015)

3.2 Eurajoki library

Eurajoki library is situated in the centre of the municipality of Eurajoki. It operates in connection with the primary school. The library has one main library and one library bus in use. The staff consists of three permanent employees; the director of the library, a library assistant and a library bus driver-assistant. The library is open six days a week, from Monday to Friday and on Sunday. Eurajoki library is the only library in the Satakunta region that is open also on Sundays. (Satakunnan seutukirjastokeselvitys) The library bus has operated since 1978, and the current bus "Kirjakrapu" since 1997. The bus serves four days a week, from Monday to Thursday, and it has 33 stops. (Website of Eurajoen kunta 2010)

The library material includes books, magazines, newspapers and a wide collection of audiovisual material such as DVD- and video -movies, CDs, CD-ROMs and audiobooks in both cassette and CD form. The library also has five customer computers for the library customers to use. One of the computers is for checking the

availability of material and is free to use at all times. The other four computers must be reserved in advance. All computers differ according to the time for which they can be reserved and their purpose of use. One computer is for playing CD-ROM games and it can be booked for one hour at a time. Two of the computers are meant for using the Internet, one can be booked for 15 minutes and the other for one hour at a time. One computer is chargeable and can be booked for max one hour at a time, the purpose of use is word processing, printing and using the Internet. Chargeable printing, copying, scanning, faxing and art rental services are also available to the customers. (Website of Eurajoen kunta 2010)

Eurajoki library is part of Satakirjastot, which is a consortium of libraries in the Satakunta region. The libraries have common rules and a common customer and collection data base, material can be reserved and transported from and the borrowed material can be returned to any of the Satakirjastot libraries. (Website of Satakirjastot)

3.3 Benchmarking libraries

In this chapter the libraries used for benchmarking are presented. Laitila, Luvia and Rauma libraries were chosen for benchmarking in this study, because in each of these municipalities a new library building has been built and library services developed or improved during the recent years. Due to their location, size and experience on the building and service development process, they were seen as suitable libraries for the purpose of this study.

3.3.1 Laitila library

Laitila library was established in 1927 and it first operated in the town hall. In 1937 a new building was established, and it was the first building established specifically for library use. The new library operating today was built in 2006 and is located in the centre of Laitila. The city has one library and one library bus in use. The library is open from Monday to Saturday, except on summer Saturdays when it is closed. The library has departments for adults, children and youth, a music department, a hall for

reading newspapers and magazines, a multifunction space Monikko, story time space and a researcher room. The library also has computers for customer use. The library bus started to operate in 1974 when the branch libraries were closed. The bus serves five days a week, from Monday to Friday. In addition to Laitila, the bus operates in Mynämäki municipality on agreed Fridays and in Pyhäranta municipality on agreed Wednesdays and Thursdays, as these two municipalities have bought the library bus services from Laitila. (Website of the city of Laitila)

The library material includes pieces from different art forms, fiction, newspapers and magazines, music recordings, notes, DVDs and videos, language courses, audiobooks and CD-ROMs. In addition to the material, the library offers the use of digitising equipment, ten customer computers, Internet, wireless internet access, a self-service loaning machine, e-Press -newspapers (Finnish newspapers digitally on library computers), tablet computers at the youth department, chargeable printing and access to databanks and databases. The customers can also rent space from the library hall and Monikko for exhibitions and the researcher room can be reserved for quiet studying. Monikko can also be used for meetings and educational and gathering purposes. In addition to these services, storytimes are arranged for school aged children on Fridays during Spring time and guided tours are arranged for students. (Website of the city of Laitila)

The library staff includes seven employees; the director of the library, one librarian, four library assistants and one library bus -librarian. Laitila library is part of Vaski-libraries, which is a consortium of South-West Finland's libraries. Vaski-libraries include 42 libraries and 5 library buses. The libraries have a common web library, library card, rules and transportation services. (Website of the city of Laitila)

3.3.2 Luvia library

Luvia library is situated in the centre of the municipality of Luvia. It was established in 1921. The library is open five days a week, from Monday to Friday. The staff consists of three employees; the director of the library, one library assistant and one assistant in organising. In addition to traditional material, the library services include

smart shelf, four customer computers (two for adults, two for children), tablet computers, Internet, wireless internet access, chargeable copying and printing, scanning, e-Press -newspapers, rental of multifunctional facilities for meetings, storytimes etc., exhibition space, a researcher room, self-service loaning and return machines and electricity power consumption meter to borrow. Luvia library is part of Satakirjastot consortium. (Website of the municipality of Luvia, Website of Satakirjastot)

3.3.3 Rauma library

The roots of Rauma library can be traced back to 1850, when Biblioteket i Raumo was established at the back room of a pharmacy. The new main library building operating today was completed in 2004. It is located at the centre of the city of Rauma. In addition to the main library, the city has branch libraries at Kodisjoki, Lappi, Kourujärvi, Pyynpää and Uotila, an archipelago library during the summer (concentrates in sea and archipelago themes) in Kuuskajaskari and a library bus. The main library is open six days a week from Monday to Saturday and the separate newspaper reading hall is open every day. The library material includes books, magazines, newspapers, music, notes, movies, games, recordings, microfilms and databases. In addition to regular books, there are also books available with bigger letters, easy to read adult books and as audio books.

In addition to the traditional services of loaning and returning material and information services at the desk, the library services include: legal advisory arranged by lawyers, digitising of analogic recordings into a digital format, home service for Rauma citizens who cannot go to the library because of old age, disability or illness, microfilms (reading, recording and printing), art rental, e-Press on library computers, wireless internet access, printing, copying and faxing for a charge, computers, mini laptops and a scanner, scanning into a pdf-form with multifunctional, self-service loaning and return machines, a cafe and keyboards at the second floor reading room. The library also arranges visits for preschool and primary school groups, students and other adult groups, book talks for children and youth and library talks to where ever program and library information is needed. Different kind of space can also be

rented from the library; three researcher rooms, meeting room for max 12 people, meeting space for max 40 people, teaching room for 12 students and exhibition space at the lobby. Equipment such as DVD's and USB memory sticks can also be bought from the library. (Website of the city of Rauma) Rauma library is part of Satakirjastot consortium. (Website of Satakirjastot)

3.4 Comparison of case and benchmarking libraries

In the following Table 1 factual information is presented concerning the case library and the libraries that are used for benchmarking. The statistics are from year 2013. The table presents information concerning the number of residents in the municipality, the number of libraries and library buses in the municipality, the number of individual physical visits to the library (pcs), the number of individual loaners (pcs) and the percentage of loaners per inhabitants. From the statistics it can be seen, that all of the libraries in question have better percentage in loaners/inhabitants, in comparison to the Satakunta region average, which is 38,78% and the whole country average 37,80%. Thus it can be stated that all of these, both case and benchmarking libraries are actively used, which also supports the selection of Laitila, Luvia and Rauma libraries for the benchmarking part of the study. (Suomen yleisten kirjastojen tilastot)

Table 1 Case and benchmarking library statistics

City/municipality	Residents	Libraries	Library buses	Visits/pcs	Loaners/pcs	Loaners/inhabitants
Eurajoki	5922	1	1	54 000	2488	42,01%
Laitila	8460	1	1	57 339	3625	42,85%
Luvia	3360	1	0	26 990	1446	43,04%
Rauma	39 842	6 (1 main, 5 branch)	1	394 862	16 356	41,05%

4 THEORETICAL BACKGROUND AND FRAMEWORK FOR THE STUDY

4.1 What is a service?

According to Christian Grönroos a service is a process consisting of a series of more or less intangible activities, that normally, but not necessarily always, take place in interactions between the customer and service employees and/or physical resources or goods and/or systems of the service provider, which are provided as solutions to customer problems.” (Grönroos 2007, 52) In simple terms a service can be defined as deeds, processes and performances. A service is not a tangible object that can be seen, touched and felt, instead it consists of deeds and performances that are intangible. (Zeithaml & Bitner 2003, 3)

The prevailing implication is that intangibility is the key determinant of whether an offering is a service. A service can involve a tangible output, but mostly it is an intangible series of actions that bring benefit to the customer. (Kinnunen 2004, 7) The most central part of a service is indeed intangible, because due to the fact that a service is produced and consumed at the same time, it cannot be stored and sold later on and it is often impossible to return the service. (Rissanen 2006, 19) However, only few products are purely tangible or purely intangible. (Zeithaml & Bitner 2003, 3) Almost any tangible product can also be turned into a service for a customer, by customising the solution, in order to meet the needs of the customer. (Grönroos 1990, 25) In fact today every company that manufactures products, also offers their customers different services. For example for Kone Corporation that manufactures lifts, for over twenty years more than half of the company's turnover has come from services, including repair and maintenance services. (Grönroos 2009, 22)

In addition to intangibility, services have three basic characteristics. The first and most important is their process characteristic. Services are processes - consisting of functions or a group of functions - in which resources (people, knowledge, systems, infrastructure) are used in order to find a solution to the customer's problem. The customer is often in direct interaction with the service provider, but not necessarily al-

ways. For example when a customer renews the loans of library material via internet, the user is not in direct interaction with anyone. Second, services are mostly produced and consumed at the same time. For example, when a user goes to the library desk in order to borrow material, the service is produced almost entirely when the customer is present and receives the service. (Grönroos 2009, 79) This makes the production and consumption of services very different in comparison to the production and consumption of physical goods. Physical goods are produced in a factory separate from the customer, whereas services are produced in a process, that directly involves the customer with the employees, physical resources and production system of the service company. (Gustafsson & Johnson 2003, 4) Third, the customer is at least to some extent a part of the service production process as a co-producer, meaning that the customer does not only act as a receiver of the service, but also as a production resource. (Grönroos 2009, 79)

4.2 Public library services and customers

A public library that is maintained by a municipality, operates at the public sector. The objective of the service is not to maximise profits. Instead it is equality, as a public library has to serve the whole community equally. (Lovio & Tiihonen 2006, 14) It is stated in the library law and decree, that a municipality has an obligation to arrange library and information services, with the aim of enhancing equal access for the population to culture and knowledge, in order to develop knowledge and skills, internationalise, civilise and take an interest in literature and arts. (Suomen Kuntaliitto 2015)

The library's customers are the residents of the municipality, who act as users and consumers, that indirectly also take part in paying for the library's services as tax payers. As a public service, the library services can be used by practically anyone. Unlike restaurants, public libraries cannot refuse to serve certain customers. Instead, all age groups and social classes are represented and served. The only exception of this are customers who break the library rules or disturb the other customers by bad behaviour. (Lovio & Tiihonen 2006, 20-21)

When considering libraries, a service is often considered to mean the same as customer service. However, library services can also refer to service as a service product. The traditional library service products include the loaning of material, using the material in the library and information services. The service offered by the library can be defined as an intangible benefit, here referred to as the library and information services. The library customer service on the other hand involves immediate interaction with the customer, at help desk, over the phone or via internet. The library services mostly cannot be stored, however there are exceptions. An example of storing a library service product is saving the typical information service questions and answers to the internet for the customers' availability. (Lovio & Tiihonen 2006, 11-12)

The most traditional and also the most used library service is the loaning of material. This can be done either as a service given by the library staff, or by self-service. As automation increases enabling self-service possibilities, the input of the staff in loaning- and returning processes is less needed. As a result, the service chains have grown and new actors have come between the library and the customer. Books used to be lent directly at the library desk, however due to electronisation for example the transportation of material has grown, as it can be transported from one municipality to another. However, contact services, such as information services for finding material, still remain crucial in the library customer service. The most important library and information services are information services, service counseling, recommendations and book talk. Information services can include both information retrieval and guidance for information retrieval. In guidance for information retrieval, the customer is given personal guidance so, that he/she can perform the retrieval as a self-service. Information retrieval can also be performed by an library expert on behalf of the customer. In service counseling the customer requests the library staff for factual information, for example to check the availability of material. Recommendations is a service, in which the customer asks for recommendations, for example concerning historical novels or books that are appropriate for children of certain age. Book talk means that people tell of books by their own words or by reading samples at schools, institutions and libraries. (Lovio & Tiihonen 2006, 26-27)

4.3 What is service quality?

Services are complicated and therefore, also service quality is a complicated matter. Intangibility makes the evaluation of services more difficult in comparison to the evaluation of physical goods. This is because services cannot be stored and checked for quality assurance. (Gustafsson & Johnson 2003, 5) According to the literature of the field, quality is whatever the customers perceive it to be. The basis for quality are thus the customers. The quality is measured and compared to the customer's needs and expectations. Basically, the quality is good, if the customer is satisfied with the service he/she receives. Thereby well-functioning operations and error-free service do not guarantee high quality, because the requirement for high quality is the customer's view.

According to Lecklin, quality in general is fulfilling the customer's needs in a way that is as efficient and profitable as possible from the company's perspective. Although the customer is the judge of quality, customer satisfaction is not the sole purpose that should be aimed at, at all costs. Instead, the company's best interest should be kept in mind, so that profitability does not suffer. Lecklin's definition of quality also involves doing things right, meaning in an error-free manner from the beginning and every time, and most importantly doing the right things. The company may consider the quality of a service as superior, but if it includes something unnecessary that most customers do not need, the customer is likely to consider the quality as too high and not worth paying for. Quality also involves continual improvement. The incentive for improvement or development may come from own work as well as the outside world, including innovations, competitors, markets and changes in the society. Understanding the customers and markets enables the development of operations, so that needs can be answered. The above mentioned elements of good quality are illustrated in Figure 1. (Lecklin 2006, 18-19)

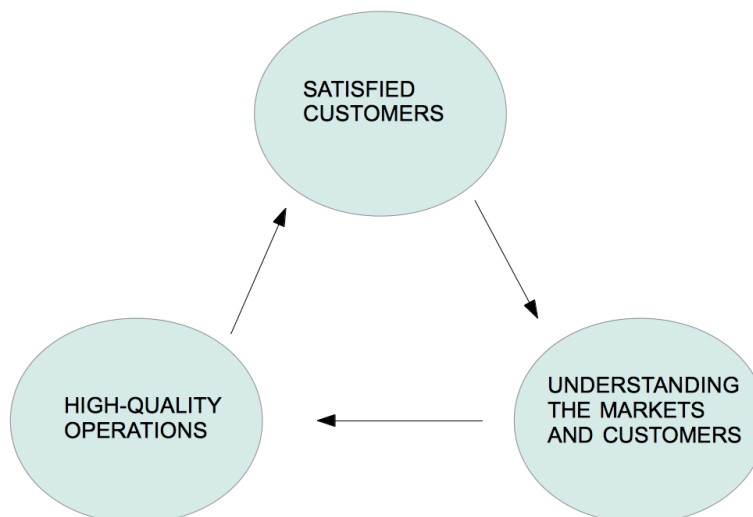


Figure 1 Elements of good quality (Adapted from Lecklin 2006, 19)

Ultimately, a good or a bad service quality is the customer's experience. The customers often base their evaluation of a service on the service experience and the feeling they have in that situation. This is connected to the customer's expectations of the service and observations made in the service encounter. (Rissanen 2005, 17) As figure 2 demonstrates, the service quality a customer experiences in the service encounter is the result of expectations, emotions, mental images and situational factors and affected by technical and functional quality of the service. (Rissanen 2006, 214) Technical quality means the outcome of the service production process; what the customer receives. Functional quality means how the customer is served, involving interaction between the customer and staff of the service provider, the service provider's physical equipment that the customer uses, physical environment and the functionality of it and the effect of other customers on the service experience. The customer compares the expectations with the actual experience, and the difference between these two tell whether the service has been good or bad. Expectations are formed on the basis of marketing communications, the experiences of the customer or other customers and the customer's needs. (Kinnunen 2004, 17)

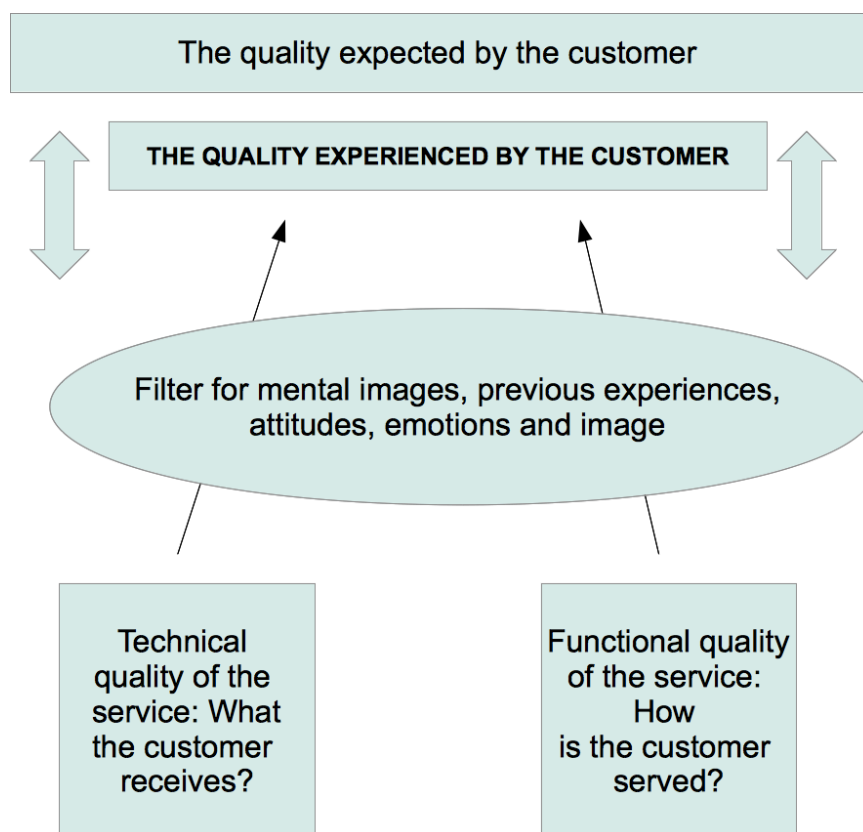


Figure 2 Service quality experienced by the customer (Rissanen 2006, 214)

Basically, the quality is good if the experienced quality meets the customer's expectations. If, however, the expectations are unrealistic, the total perceived quality is low, even if objectively speaking the experienced quality would have been good. (Grönroos 2009, 105) On the other hand, if the customer relationship in totality has worked well, the customer does not easily worry about minor quality problems. (Rissanen 2006, 215)

According to Rissanen, service quality involves the following ten dimensions or values: competences and expertise, reliability, credibility, accessibility, safety, politeness, helpfulness, communication, recognising and understanding the customer's needs and service environment. Competences and expertise refer to the service provider's competence and expertise, for example the library staff's ability to give recommendations on certain type of books to meet the customer's needs. Reliability means that the service is produced in an error-free way, which gives the customer a sense of trust in the service provider's knowhow. Credibility means that the customer

trusts that the service provider acts in the customer's best interest. Safety refers to the customer's sense of safety after the previous values have actualised well in the service. Politeness refers to how the service provider's dressing, behaviour and personality communicates respect and appreciation to the customer. Helpfulness here means that the messages sent to the customer during or after the service encounter are open, understandable and not too long. Communication means that quality communication is clear and understood by the customer. Recognising the customer's needs means that the service provider has the ability to deepen the customer's service needs. Service environment refers to the comfortability, atmosphere and visuality of the service environment. (Rissanen 2005, 215-216)

Quality is often said to be one of the keys to success, because a company's competitive advantage depends on the quality of goods and services it provides. (Grönroos 2009, 104) This is why it is important for the service provider to understand what the customers expect, and what dimensions they evaluate in service quality. When this is understood, the service provider can decide how to guide those evaluations to the right direction. When the service provider knows how the customers experience the quality of service dimensions, the company can find out how satisfied the customers are with a certain service by using customer satisfaction research. (Grönroos 2009, 99)

Service organisations aim at good quality, and thereby pursuing good quality is a target of continuous learning and development. Thus good service quality is never ready. Instead, it is dynamic and constantly developing. (Lämsä & Uusitalo 2005, 22)

4.4 Service quality and customer satisfaction

The terms customer satisfaction and service quality are often used interchangeably and these two have a lot in common. However, they are not the same as customer satisfaction is much broader subject, whereas service quality is a component of customer satisfaction, focusing specifically on the dimensions of service. (Zeithaml & Bitner, 85)

4.5 Library service quality

According to the library law the municipalities are to assess their library services, with the aim of improving the availability of library and information services, supporting the development of operations and monitoring the quality of services. The knowledge that results from the assessment is used in order to plan the library services and focus the resources in the right places. In the assessment the current state of the services should be described and compared with the previous state, and the strengths and weaknesses of the service should be identified. (Suomen Kuntaliitto 2015)

There are national quality recommendations for public libraries concerning the adequate service level. These recommendations can be used as guidelines for developing library services. However, it must be kept in mind that the national quality recommendations will not work as absolute standards in a local level. This is because library services are based on local needs and therefore national quality recommendations may not be suitable for local circumstances. Municipalities should set the kind of quality aims that can be reached with the available resources. In addition to national quality recommendations, benchmarking can be used, meaning that a municipality can compare its library services to those of other regional municipalities. (Suomen Kuntaliitto 2015) The approach of benchmarking was used in this thesis as a basis to compare Eurajoki library's services to three other libraries, in which a new library building has been built in the recent years.

4.6 Service development

In comparison to physical products, the design of services is often much more fast-paced and basically involves the renewal and improvement of the existing service. The quality of physical products is often more easily identified than that of services, because the customer always brings variations to the service being produced. Each customer receives a unique individualised service and therefore the quality of the service can vary considerably. The development process of services is more vague than the development process of physical products. This is because service development is

rarely a systematic and structured process, in which strategies and objectives are set. Instead, it is mostly a disorganised chain of events. Companies that sell physical products often have separate product development departments and experts are hired to design the product. This is not always the case with services. Services are mostly developed by those who also carry out the service, meaning that the staff executes the development in addition to other duties. Therefore, the development process of services is vague and the customers are rarely involved. (Kinnunen 2004, 29-30) Nevertheless, it is still important. Still one can and should improve and develop. On the other hand, according to Gustafsson and Johnson customers could actually contribute more to the development of services than to the development of physical products. This is because of the co-producer dimension of the customer; as a co-producer the customer can bring in new service ideas and innovations. However, value is only gained if the ideas can be translated into service improvements. (Gustafsson & Johnson 2003, 6)

Perhaps due to being a vague process, there are not many models about service development. Kinnunen uses a four-stage model to illustrate the service development process, see Figure 3. The process begins with ideation, in which the aim is to create and collect as many ideas as possible. Typical sources of new service ideas are the employees of the company who come up with ideas based on practical needs, customers, partners and competitors. The ideas are then handled and evaluated, and the most promising ideas go through to the next stage. These are basically the ideas that are most likely to bring benefits and value both to the company and its customers. (Kinnunen 2004, 40, 96)

The next stage is to develop the ideas into a more concrete form, in other words to modify them into production concepts. The production concepts explain what and how is produced and offered to the customer. In this stage it is crucial to find out, if what is being produced answers to the needs of the customers and solves their problems. The concepts are then tested with the aid of customers and experts, and the concepts that turn out as most promising proceed to the next stage. The main purpose of testing the concepts is to find out whether a service would be worth further development, or whether it should be rejected and instead focus on the development of another, more promising service. (Kinnunen 2004, 64-66)

The next stage is to formulate the concept that is chosen for further development into a service model. A service model is a detailed description of the service, demonstrating each action involved clearly and in a concrete level. The service model is then tested in use, in as authentic circumstances as possible, for example with real customers. In the testing it is possible to observe the willingness of the potential customers to use the service in practise. If the customers have been eager to test the service and reuse it after testing, it can be assumed that the service that is being developed is successful. If on the other hand the willingness is weak, possibly either the benefit for the customer is low, or the company has not succeeded in explaining the service benefits to the customer. In case there is not enough interest for the service, either the service should be further developed, changes should be made to how service benefits are explained to the customer or the service should be withdrawn altogether from bringing into the market. (Kinnunen 2004, 77-81)

If the service model is acceptable, the next and final stage of the process is preparing for launching the service and the actual launch. When planning for the launch, it is important to make sure that the benefit for the customer has remained the same, eventhough there may have been a lot of changes along the development process. The planning and the actual execution should be done carefully, because it is proved to have a great impact on the success of the service. (Kinnunen 2004, 113, 147)

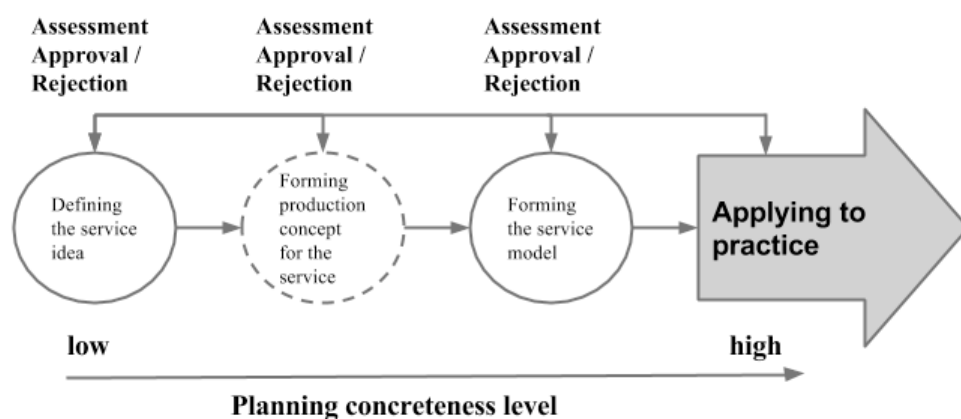


Figure 3 Service development process (Kinnunen 2004, 96)

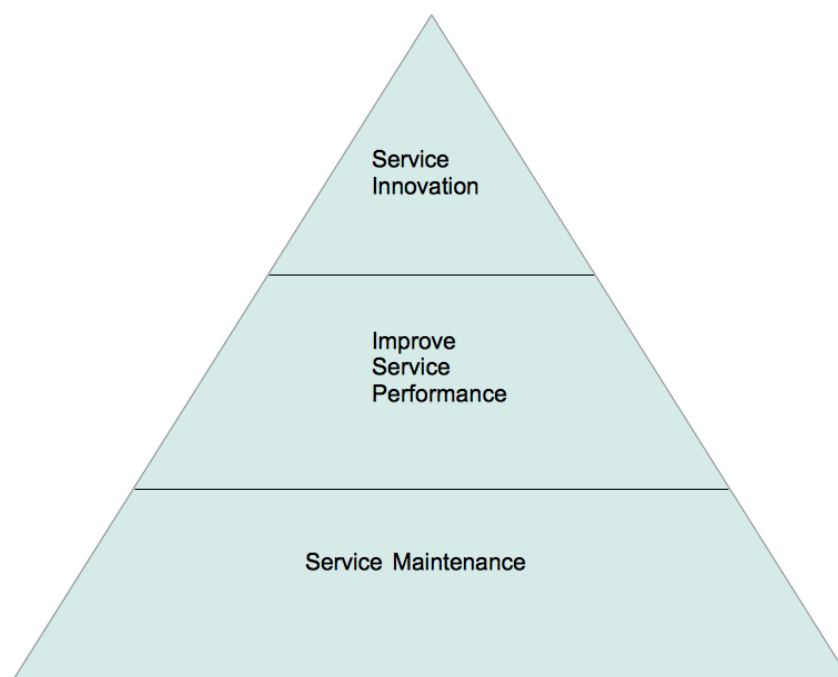


Figure 4 The Hierarchy of Service Development (Gustafsson & Johnson 2003, 23)

Another model of service development process is the Hierarchy of service development presented by Gustafsson & Johnson. The model includes three building blocks that a service company needs in order to cope and compete in the service economy: service innovation, improving service performance and service maintenance, see Figure 4. (Gustafsson & Johnson 2003, 22-25)

At the base is the foundation of the hierarchy, service maintenance. This is basically about removing “the things gone wrong”, in other words the sources of customer dissatisfaction and exit. The primary source of defects, the things gone wrong, are the customers. This kind of customer data can already exist in the company's systems in the form of frequent complaints, or it can be gathered through qualitative research (focus groups and interviews), process mapping or service audits. (Gustafsson & Johnson 2003, 49-52) After identifying the defects, the next step is to prioritize them and decide which defects to improve. These should basically be the defects that have the biggest impact on the customer, and the ones in which the company performance is the weakest. When the defects have been prioritized, the next steps are to identify,

test and implement solutions. (Gustafsson & Johnson 2003, 68-73) The hierarchy of service development can be applied to the study at hand, because the aim is to identify the things gone wrong in the old library, by asking the users in one-on-one interviews if they are dissatisfied with something and if so what, why and how the library could improve. It is important to know the defects and possible reasons for user exits, in order to take action for improvement in the new library.

The middle block of the service development model is improving service performance. Whereas service maintenance was about removing the things gone wrong, improving service performance is about adding the things gone right. By improving service performance, the aim is to give customers more reasons to stay. In order to improve service performance, it is necessary to know what makes customers very satisfied with and loyal to one's services. This understanding is basically gained by studying the market, the current customers, the customers one has lost and also potential customers in the future, for example by conducting a customer satisfaction survey, interviews, focus groups or observation. The important issue to remember here is that the services and benefits the company provides should be viewed from the customer's perspective. This way, gaining an understanding of customer needs can more easily lead to new service innovations and meeting customer needs that are currently not provided for. However, when improving service performance and customer satisfaction it is also important to remember that one cannot do everything for every customer, the wishes of every single customer cannot possibly be fulfilled. This would not be profitable. (Gustafsson & Johnson 2003, 79-86) In the study at hand, the aim is to identify the things gone right, the source of very satisfied customers. This is done by asking the users in interviews, what they are satisfied with and why. The possible similarity in answers would reveal the major sources of satisfaction. It is important to know what makes users very satisfied, so that those sources of satisfaction can be kept and possibly added in the new library.

The top block of the service development model is service innovation. The other two blocks mentioned were basically aiming at satisfying and retaining the existing customers. Service innovation on the other hand aims at obtaining new customers in addition to keeping the existing ones. Customers are an important source of new service ideas as the co-producers in the service process. Other ways to seek for new

ideas are to study the environment for industry changes and new moves of the competitors. By studying the environment, possibilities for new services may be discovered as a result of new technology and customers who are seeking to serve themselves for convenience. This basically involves self-service technology that enables customers to produce the service by themselves, without any interaction with the company employees. (Gustafsson & Johnson 2003, 117-122) For example in many libraries the customers can borrow or return books by using self-service machines. In the study at hand, the intention is to find out user suggestions for new services, by asking them directly in the interview how they think the services of the library could be developed. This may include suggestions for new services that are currently not provided for, to meet the user needs. Also by benchmarking the library can find out about the new moves of the benchmarking libraries, for example concerning new technology they have taken in use.

4.7 Library services development

Library services are local services and as such they answer to the needs of local residents and communities. An increasing number of different surveys concerning service needs are made in cooperation with different demographic groups. In this user-driven approach the users of the library services, and also the non-users, are heard concerning their needs and experiences on the service, in order to be able to focus the resources correctly and develop the service. The users of the library services are often involved already in the planning phase when developing the service. As an example, the opening hours have been changed based on user feedback, so that they fit better the needs of the user. The basis for developing services should be that the needs of the customers are considered and the customers are treated equally. (Suomen Kuntaliitto 2015)

When assessing the quality of a library, the customer is in an important role. When developing the library services, the main focus is on customer-orientation. The customer is not left as an outsider, instead his/her needs and wishes are taken into consideration. The library and its staff are to hear the customers' needs, wishes and expectations directly from the customer, and base their actions on these as far as pos-

sible. Thus in order to be customer-oriented, the library needs to take the customer part of the decision-making, for example when deciding on the material acquisition. (Lovio & Tiihonen 2006, 23)

In order to be customer-oriented, the customer's best interest must always be taken into consideration. The customer does not know of all the services offered and therefore does not know to request for them. This is why the library needs to actively inform of all the library services it offers. Customer-orientation can be developed by learning from customer feedback. (Lovio & Tiihonen 2006, 24)

4.8 SWOT-analysis

SWOT-analysis is a tool (see Figure 5) with which the company can identify and evaluate its current position. SWOT stands for the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of and to a company. With the aid of SWOT-analysis, by first understanding where the company is coming from and where it is at the present moment, it can decide which direction to go. (Egan 2008, 254, 295) SWOT-analysis can be used for services, for example in order to analyse the potential for service development. (Website of RapidBi 1999-2015)

Strengths are positive and mostly internal factors, that enable the company to perform well. These capabilities are within the company's control and they need to be maintained or built upon. Strengths basically answer the question: "What do you do well?" (Website of RapidBi 1999-2015, Website of Bplans 1996-2015, Pahl & Richter, 2007)

Weaknesses are negative and also mostly internal attributes of the company, that prevent the company from performing well. These attributes must be stopped, changed or remedied in order for the company to keep up with the competition. Weaknesses are within the company's control and basically answer the question: "What should be improved?" (Website of RapidBi 1999-2015, Pahl & Richter, 2007)

Opportunities are positive and external factors that are likely to enable the company to succeed. These are for example ideas that result due to changes in technology. These ideas need to be prioritised, built on and optimised. Opportunities answer the question: "What good opportunities are there in your market that you can benefit from?" (Website of Bplans 1996-2015, Website of Mind Tools Ltd. 1996-2015)

Threats are negative and external factors that can harm the business and are beyond the company's control. Though being beyond the company's control, the threats can be addressed, minimised and managed by having contingency plans in case they occur. Threats answer the question: "What obstacles do/may you face?" (Pahl & Richter 2007, Website of RapidBi 1999-2015, Website of Bplans 1996-2015)

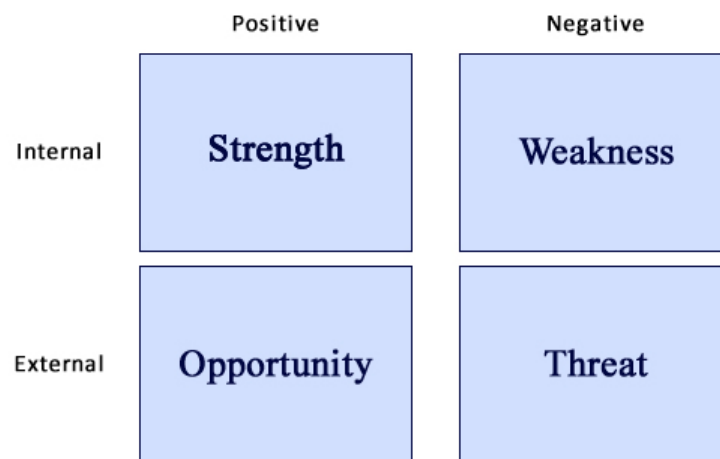


Figure 5 SWOT -matrix (InvestingAnswers Inc.)

In this study SWOT-analysis was used in order to visualise the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats of the library. Strengths, weaknesses and opportunities were identified based on the interviews with the library users and opportunities and threats were identified based on interviews with benchmarking libraries.

5 RESEARCH METHODOLOGY AND IMPLEMENTATION

5.1 Benchmarking

As mentioned one way to seek for new service ideas is to study the moves of the competitors. This can be done for example through benchmarking. There are various definitions of benchmarking, varying according to the time and criteria they focus on. According to Bhutta & Huq (1999, 255) "benchmarking is first and foremost a tool for improvement achieved through comparison with other organisations recognized as the best within the area". Basically, it is a process where the highest standards of excellence are identified and improvements are made in order to reach those standards – the "best practises". (Bhutta & Huq 1999, 254) However, as Arun Maua, VP at Arthur D. Little mentions, the best practise cannot simply be imposed as it is to one's company, instead it needs to be adapted to the company style. What fits in one company may not fit in another.

In benchmarking (see figure 6) after one has determined what is to be benchmarked, the company's current position should be analysed. The next step is to find someone who is performing better and learn from them, what they have done to achieve that performance. Finally, as a result of learning, one's processes and practises are adapted and relevant changes implemented, in order to achieve superior performance. (Codling 1998, 3)

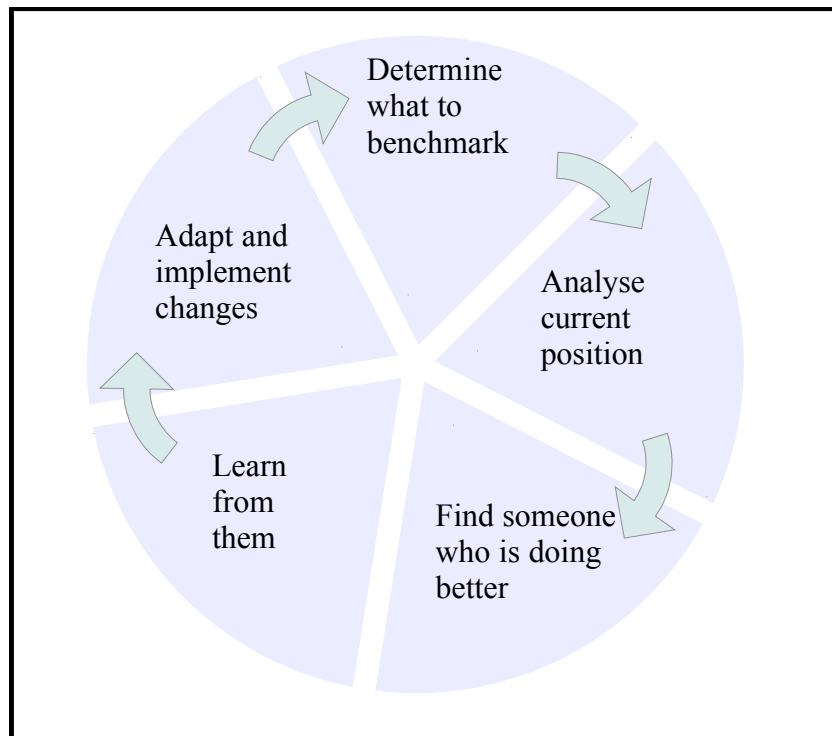


Figure 6: Benchmarking (Codling 1998, 3)

5.2 Case study

Case study is not a research approach of its own, instead it is a combination of qualitative and quantitative research approaches. Neither does it have an own methodology or research method. Instead it consists of those qualitative and quantitative data collection and analysis methods that are required, in order to examine the phenomenon under research. However, mostly case study is qualitative research. (Kananen 2013, 9) Case study is preferred when “why” or “how” questions are asked, when the researcher has only little or no control over the events and when the study focuses on a current phenomenon, instead of a historical one. (Yin 2014, 2)

Case study aims to understand and give a good description of a complex phenomenon, not to generalize. It gives explanations on a single case, however can also be conducted as a multiple case study. (Kananen 2013, 9) The target of case study is a limited case, and research material related to it can be collected using various data col-

lection methods, such as theme interviews, observation, reports and so on. (Kananen 2013, 31) The case, meaning the unit in question can be a family, company, department of a company, group of people or an individual, which is examined in a real-life context. (Kananen 2012, 34)

Case study gives a solution to a problem. It does not involve practical work to actually remove the problem. Instead the work is done when the solution to the problem is presented. In case one tried to remove the problem in practise, case study would turn into action research. (Kananen 2013, 19, 61)

This thesis involves a single case and it aims to solve the research problem: “How to develop library services in order to meet the needs of current and future users of the library?” The intention is not to do the actual practical work to remove this problem, but to give recommendations based on research. Therefore, this study can be seen as a case study. Qualitative approach was chosen because as Silverman mentions, the methods of qualitative research can provide with a deeper understanding of a phenomenon than purely quantitative data could provide. (Silverman 2001, 32)

5.3 Data collection method

In a case study, the solution to a problem is collected from various sources. One source or method is not enough, instead there must be several methods in data collection and analysis. (Kananen 2013, 56-57) This makes case study like a puzzle, that the researcher builds from various sources, in order to get an overall picture. (Kananen 2013, 77)

This thesis is conducted as a case-study and the method used is benchmarking. The data is collected from various sources by interviewing experts at the benchmarking companies and users of Eurajoki library. Mail surveys were also considered as the data collection method, however the problem with surveys is, that the data collected can be very superficial and thin, and not provide with a deeper understanding. The respondent may understand the survey question in a completely different way than the researcher had intended, and afterwards it is impossible to clarify the question.

The response rate may also be very small, as today there are so many surveys and clarification requests, both on and offline, presented that it may not be easy to get people to participate. (Hirsjärvi et al. 2007, 93) On the other hand interview as a data collection method offers many benefits. Though being a time-consuming method, interviews allow more flexibility than mail surveys, as in the interview situation any misunderstandings can be cleared, in case for example the interviewee did not understand the question. Another feature of flexibility is, that the interviewer can present the questions in the order he/she sees appropriate. Clarifying questions can also be asked based on the interviewee's responses, and the interviewer has the possibility to repeat the question. (Tuomi & Sarajärvi, 2009) A major benefit of interview often is, that in case there is a need to supplement the material, the interviewee can be reached later, unlike for example someone who responds to a survey anonymously. (Hirsjärvi et al. 2007, 201)

Basically, the interview method can be used when a small number of people is involved and when the questions are mainly open. Semi-structured interview was chosen for this research, when interviewing the users of the library and theme interview for interviewing the library experts. Semi-structured interview is a method in between structured and unstructured interviews, and is basically used to get similar information from a larger sample of individuals. According to Gillham semi-structured interview is the most important form of interviewing in case study research, and can be the richest source of data if implemented well. (Gillham 2010, 65) The researcher develops beforehand a list of topics, themes or areas to be covered during the interview, however the interview is flexible when it comes to structure and how and in which sequence the questions are asked. The interview can also be shaped based on the interviewee's understanding and the interviewer's interests, so there is space for additional questions as well. (Website of SAGE Research Methods) The difference between semi-structured and theme interview is, that in semi-structured interview each interviewee is asked the same or almost the same questions, whereas in theme interview the discussion is built upon themes, instead of specific questions that are formulated beforehand. The themes are a bit like questions, however because one cannot answer to them in a short manner, the questions are more like broad topics of conversation. The purpose of the face-to-face interview is that during the inter-

view, new topics and questions that the interviewer did not plan beforehand can stem from the discussion. (Kananen 2013, 93)

The purpose of the interview is to gain an understanding on the phenomenon under research. (Kananen 2014, 72) The interviewees should be selected so, that they are the people who have the most experience or information on the phenomenon. (Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2009, 74)

Concerning the benchmarking part of the study, interviews were held with altogether four experts from three different libraries; Rauma, Laitila and Luvia. The interviewees were contacted via e-mail and asked if they would take part in the research. Each respondent was willing to participate. The interviewees were chosen based on their past involvement in the planning and construction phase of their municipality's new library building and the development of library services. Therefore, they possessed the most experience and information on the topic and were suitable for the purpose of the study. Interview dates and locations were then agreed. The interviews were held in March-April 2015 and took place either at the library in question or in a cafeteria. Each respondent was interviewed individually and in a quiet space, so that the respondent could concentrate in the interview without distractions. The interviewees were first explained the purpose of the study and asked if they would give their consent to recording the interview. Recording was used so that the interviewer was better able to focus on the interview and follow the course of it, because of not needing to write everything down. This also saved time. Notes were also made but only concerning important issues and in order to keep track of the interview, in case for example the interviewee explained about a theme earlier than expected. The same basic interview framework was used in each interview, however the interview did not always follow the structure of the framework. The amount of questions asked varied according to the services provided by the library and according to the interviewee's responses, as new questions stemmed from the discussion.

After the interview has been recorded, it must be transcribed, meaning that it is written down in a literary form, in order to enable the analysing of material. There are a number of different levels and techniques of transcription; exact transcription, standard language transcription and proposition level transcription. (Kananen 2013, 100).

The transcription level used in this research is proposition level. In proposition level transcription, only the main observation or message is written down. The researcher listened through the recordings twice, in order to make sure she understood the replies of the interviewees.

The library user interviews are a crucial part of the study, because as it is stated in the website of Suomen kuntaliitto, the basis for developing library services should be that the needs of the customers are considered and the customers are treated equally. The users were interviewed at the library during opening hours, because the target group of the study were the users of the library. The interviews were held in a quiet space at a corner of the library, further from the front desk, in order to make sure that honest answers were received and the respondents did not try to please the staff. The interviewees were picked quite randomly, however the researcher wanted to make sure that both genders and various ages would be represented. This in order to receive different kinds of answers, because naturally the needs of for example students are different than those of pensioners. The interview framework (appendix 2) contained both closed-ended and open-ended questions, and the answers were written down by the interviewer. The closed-ended questions dealt with the respondent's gender, how often he/she visits the library and the services he/she uses at the library. The open-ended questions covered the issues in the old library with which the interviewee is satisfied and dissatisfied with, the expectations the interviewee has concerning the new library and his/her opinions on how the current library services could be developed. Similar questions were asked from each interviewee and in the same order, however clarifying questions were asked from some interviewees based on their answer. The interviewer remained neutral in the interview and did not try to guide the answers of the respondent or present her own ideas or opinions. The interview questionnaire was pretested before the actual interviews with two people, in order to make sure that the questions are clear and understandable to the respondents.

In qualitative research it is impossible to define beforehand what kind of information and how much is needed. Therefore, as this study is a qualitative research, no sample size was defined beforehand. Instead, the criteria for the number of observation units was saturation, meaning that new interviewees were taken as long as they brought something new to the study. Once the responses began to repeat themselves and no

new information that altered the results was gained, saturation was reached. (Kananen 2013, 120) In qualitative research data collection and analysis go hand in hand, meaning that analysis of the material should be implemented as new material is collected. (Kananen 2014, 98-99) Otherwise it would be impossible to determine when saturation has been reached. In short, according to Kananen, material is collected as much as needed in order to "reveal the truth". (Kananen 2014, 98)

This study is based on the answers of the interviewees, each interviewed individually. This is not a customer satisfaction research per se, satisfaction and dissatisfaction are among the questions asked from the library users, but this study focuses more on the development issues. Another possible approach here could have been a survey and tools such as Likert scale. This could have been the easier option. However, the researcher did not want to choose the easier option due to the risks involved. If conducting a survey, there would be no certainty that the questions asked are understood by the respondents precisely the way that the researcher intended. Also if using a Likert scale, there would be uncertainty on how reliable and descriptive the answers are, because for example on the scale of 1 to 5, someone's 3 can be another person's 5. By using interview as the data collection method, any misunderstandings could be cleared to the respondent during the interview and clarifying questions could also be asked, so that the respondent understood the question in a way the researcher intended. The response rate in surveys is also often very small, whereas the response rate in this study using interviews was very good. Only one person declined due to hurry, everyone else asked agreed to participate.

5.4 Data analysis

Analysing case study data is difficult. This is because the techniques of analysis have not been well defined (Yin 2014, 132) and case study does not have own methods of analysis. (Kananen 2013, 103)

The main issues of research are data analysis, interpretation and conclusions. It is an important phase of research, where the researcher discovers what kind of answers he/she receives to the problem(s). (Hirsjärvi, Remes & Sajavaara 2007, 216)

The basic framework of analysis in qualitative research is presented in Figure 7.

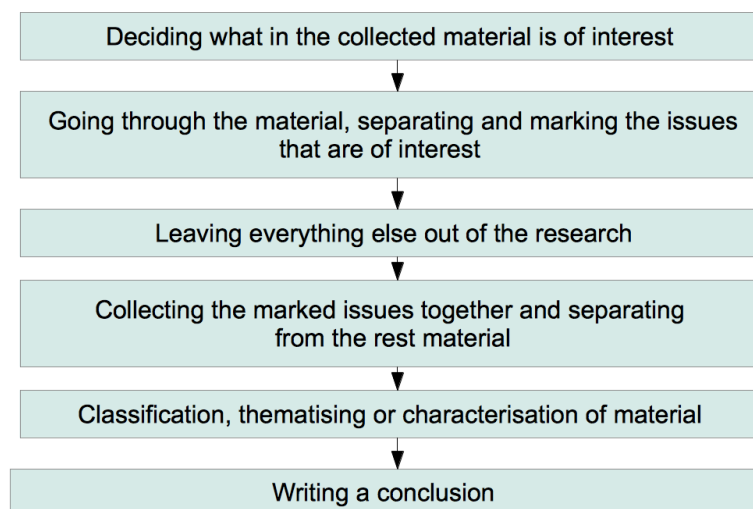


Figure 7 Framework of analysis (Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2009, 92)

The material in this study was analysed according to the basic framework. The material was first gone through and decided what information was of interest, everything else was omitted. The fifth step of the framework is often seen as the actual analysis (technique). However, this step would not be possible without the realisation of the previous steps. Neither would it be sensible without writing a conclusion. The technique chosen for this research was thematising. Thematising is basically about fractioning and classifying the material under different topics or themes, by looking for views that represent the theme; what has been said about each theme. In this study thematising was a natural choice, because theme interview was chosen as the data collection method. Thus it was obvious that the themes of the interview would form the themes of the analysis part as well. (Tuomi & Sarajärvi 2009, 93)

5.5 Summary of implementation

In the user interview part of the study, altogether 22 users were interviewed. The interviews took place in the case library during opening hours in March-April 2015. The duration of each interview was approximately 5-10 minutes.

The benchmarking interviews were held face-to-face in March-April 2015. One of the interviews took place in a cafeteria in Turku. The rest were arranged in the benchmarking libraries in question. Altogether four experts were interviewed. The interviewee of Rauma library was the former director of the library (currently retired), as she was actively involved in the construction and development phase of the new city library. The interviewees of Luvia and Laitila libraries were the current directors of the library, and in Laitila also a library assistant was interviewed, because she was actively involved in the construction and development phase of the new Laitila library. The durations of the interviews varied from approximately one hour to two and a half hours.

6 RESULTS

6.1 User interviews

In this study's user interview part, the criteria for the number of observation units was saturation, meaning that new interviewees were taken as long as they brought something new to the study. Saturation was reached after interviewing a total of 22 respondents. The number of female respondents was 14 (64%) and male respondents eight (36%). Different age groups were represented quite equally. The biggest group was the 26-35-year olds, which included 7 respondents (32%). The 25-year olds or younger included 4 respondents (18%), the 36-45-year olds included 4 respondents (18%) and the 46-60-year olds included 6 respondents (27%). The smallest age group was the over 60-year olds that only included one respondent (5%).

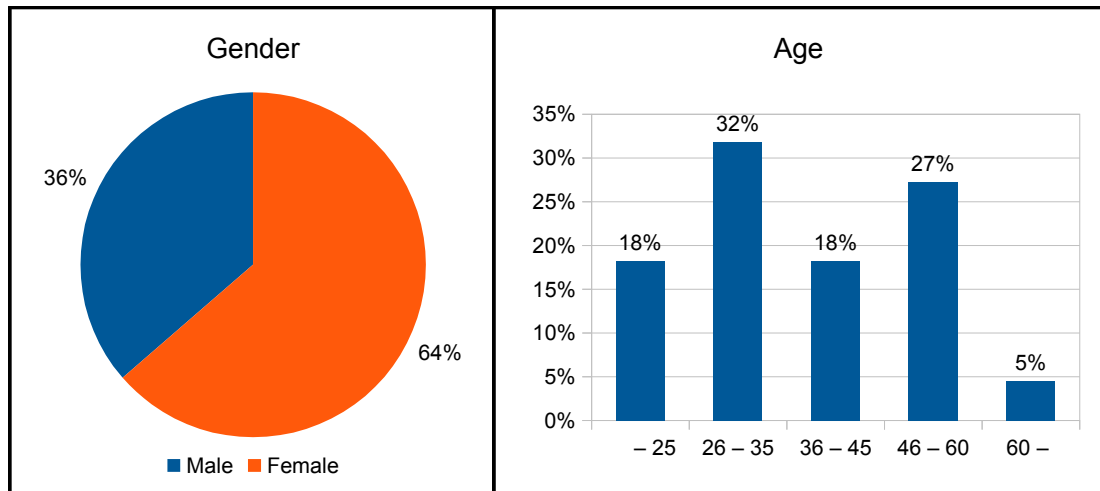


Figure 8 Gender and age summary diagrams

The majority of respondents were residents of Eurajoki, however two respondents were from Luvia and one from Rauma. The majority of seven respondents (32%) are active users of the library services, as they replied visiting the library once a week. None of the respondents use the services daily, two do so more than once a week (9%), five more than once a month (23%), three once a month (14%) and five more rarely than once a month (23%).

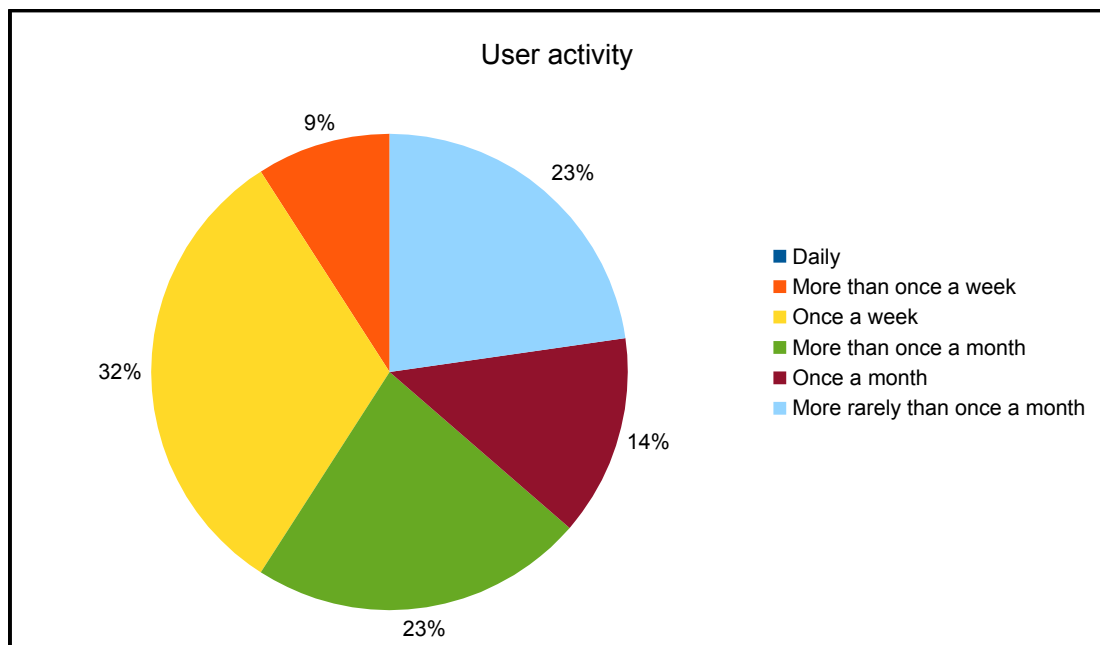


Figure 9 User activity

The majority of 20 respondents (91%) use the library services to loan, return, renew and reserve material. Twelve respondents (55%) replied reading books and/or magazines, three (14%) replied using information services and one (5%) replied using the computers and other equipment.

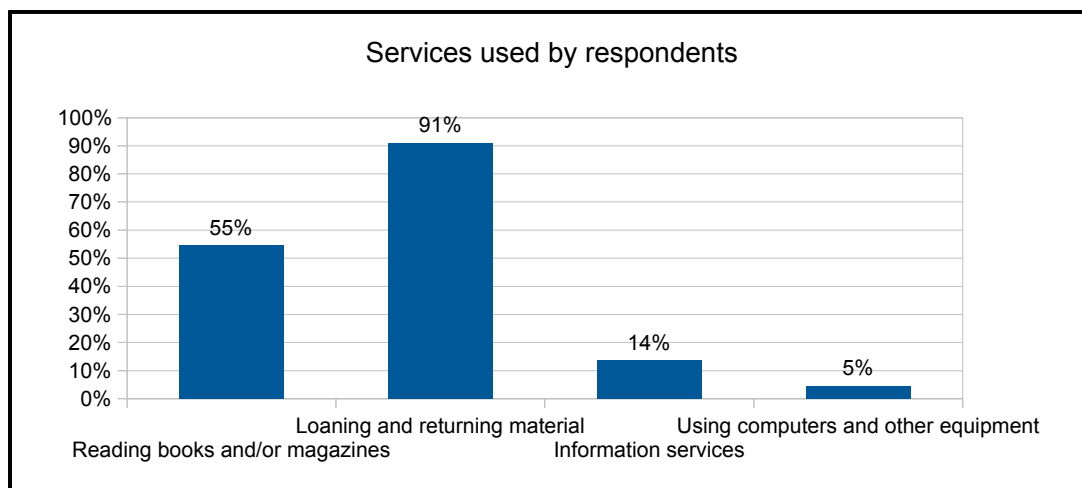


Figure 10 Services used by respondents

A number of valuable and feasible suggestions for service improvement and development were given in the user interviews. The results of the interviews are presented in the next section by applying them to Gustafsson & Johnson's Hierarchy of service development.

6.1.1 Service maintenance

In the user interviews, one of the questions concerned what in the current library the user was dissatisfied with. These sources of dissatisfaction help define the current state of the library services. In this section these sources of dissatisfaction are listed as "the things gone wrong" that should be stopped, changed or remedied.

The biggest cause of dissatisfaction was the small facilities of the library. This was considered to be a problem overall in the whole library, but particularly the newspaper/magazine reading space was mentioned. This is likely to change with the new library, as in the new building there will be two and a half times more space com-

pared to the old building and a separate space is reserved for reading newspapers and magazines.

Another cause of dissatisfaction was, that the library was considered to be very noisy. This was particularly seen as a problem when one tried to study and needed to concentrate. It was also mentioned that there are very few quiet and peaceful spaces to read in. This is also likely to change in the new library, as there will be a separate researcher room, where one can study or do research in peace and quiet. In the benchmarking part of the study it was mentioned that it is important that not all of the library space is reserved "for useful purposes", meaning that there could be several little corners with space to read in or otherwise for spending time. This may be something worth to consider for the case library, as in case the researcher room is reserved, it is important to have other quiet spaces available as well.

The library bus collection was considered to be concise and there is not a lot of variability in the material.

The collections of reference books (for example about animals), professional literature (for example social and health care related), novelty books and new Blue-ray media were considered as concise. It was also mentioned that in case there are reference books available, these are either not displayed well or they are outdated.

The music section was considered to be very unclear, because for example the CD covers are in baskets and situated at the front desk. This makes the browsing of selection difficult, particularly if there is a queue at the desk.

Fast loans were also considered a source of dissatisfaction. This is due to the short loan time, as a week goes by so quickly.

The inter-library loan system overall was considered a good service. However, when reserving material from another library (for example a book and not necessarily a new one), it takes a long time until it arrives. Also when fetching a book from the library's own storage, it takes a long time for it to arrive. In one of the benchmarking libraries the storage room is open for the library users, and in another there is the

possibility of opening the storage for the users if wanted. This was seen as a major source of both customer satisfaction and the satisfaction of the library staff, because it saves time. Therefore, an open storage room where also the users would have access may be something worth considering for the case library as well.

6.1.2 Improve service performance

In the user interviews, one of the questions concerned what in the current library the user was satisfied with. These sources of satisfaction help define the current state of the library services. In this section the sources of satisfaction are listed as "the things gone right" that should be maintained or built upon.

The biggest source of satisfaction was good customer service both in the library and the library bus. According to the users one always gets help when needed.

The library is also open on Sundays and in fact Eurajoki library is the only library in the Satakunta region that is also open on Sundays. This was considered very positive.

The library material in general was considered extensive and what was particularly mentioned were the DVDs, children's DVDs the fast acquisition of which was also considered positive, novels, newspapers and magazines, particularly interior-decoration magazines.

Other sources of satisfaction mentioned were good location of the library, inter-library loan system, good opening hours in general, email reminders of due dates and the fact that one easily finds what one is looking for.

6.1.3 Service innovation

In the user interviews, there were two open-ended questions that concerned the expectations and needs of the users, concerning the new library: "What kind of expectations do you have concerning the new library?" and "How do you think the library services could be developed?" In this section these expectations and suggestions are listed as new service ideas.

It was suggested that the loaned material could be extended to other areas of culture as well. This could involve for example puzzles and other wooden toys that do not break, sports equipment such as kettlebells, nordic walking poles, pedometers, frisbee discs etc., board games and playstation equipment and games, such as Singstar. Laitila library has already extended their loaned material to sports equipment, including the four above mentioned.

The library currently has four customer computers in use. In the interviews it was suggested that tablets could be added as new technology for the customers to use in the library. In the benchmarking part of the study it turned out that in Laitila they offer tablet computers for the customers to use. The tablet is given for loan in exchange for the library card, and the tablet can be used while in the library premises. Also in Luvia the user can loan a tablet for using the e-Press service. Perhaps this could be considered in the case library as well.

One of the sources of dissatisfaction was that the library is currently considered to be really noisy. Therefore, it was suggested that there could be quiet and peaceful spaces where for example the students and school children could study. One of the known benefits of the new library is a researcher room, which is quiet. However, in addition to the researcher room there could be more spaces, where it would be possible to study in peace and quiet.

More versatile use of the space was mentioned as one of the expectations. In the benchmarking part of the study it also came up as a suggestion that the space should be designed to be so versatile, that in case there is no demand for the original use of the space, it could be altered to something else. In the new library there is for ex-

ample a room reserved for listening to the music. In case there turned out to be no demand for this purpose, perhaps the space could be used for something else, for example for Internet use or online streaming.

One of the suggestions involved combining Internet and literature. Today particularly boys do not read that much, so they could be guided to reading with the use of Internet. Material could be put for display and guidance arranged for example through guiding school children.

The possibility to watch online streaming such as Netflix or Spotify in the library was mentioned as one suggestion. These are chargeable services, through which one can watch movies or TV-series and listen to music. Perhaps the customer computers with headphones could be used for such purpose. The ranges of music in Spotify and TV-series and movies in Netflix are extensive, thus these services would serve users of various ages.

One of the suggestions concerned events; there are already some arranged, however more events were requested. The suggestions involved for example theme events for youth, children and adults, more story times for children, exhibitions for adults, cultural events that particularly elderly would enjoy, writer visits, matineas and low-threshold study circles, in which one does not have to participate every time. It was also mentioned that these events could be arranged in the evening, so that people who go to work could also participate. The new library will have a multifunctional space situated in the library lobby, so it would be ideal for organising events. In case there were two separate events at the same time, a pullable dividing wall could be used. This was mentioned in the benchmarking interviews as one of the things that would have been done differently, as the library did not acquire dividing walls, and the need for it was identified after the new library building was taken in use.

The library opening hours overall were seen as positive. However, it was mentioned that due to hobbies it would be nice if during the week the library was open longer, for example until 21:00. This is because many hobbies start so late, that after these have finished the library is already closed, and thus one is unable to use the library during the week. It was also suggested that the library could be open also on Sat-

urdays. On the other hand, it was understood that there should be one free day in a week. In one of the benchmarking libraries, there has been an experiment where the library was open also on Saturdays, but there seemed to be no demand so the opening hours were restored as they were. Perhaps Saturday opening hours and/or longer opening hours during the week could be tested in the case library as well to see if there is enough demand. As mentioned in one of the benchmarking interviews, the library should be open when people have spare time.

A playground or corner was suggested for small children. This would make the library experience more comfortable for the small children, as they would have something interesting to concentrate in. This would naturally add the comfortability of the parents as well, as they would then be able to read and search for material while their children are playing.

In general the users were satisfied with the selection of magazines. However, it was also mentioned as an expectation concerning the new library, that the selection would be even wider. This is because there is going to be a lot more space and a separate space reserved for reading magazines and newspapers. Therefore, lack of space is no longer going to be an issue.

6.2 Benchmarking interviews

What came up in the benchmarking interviews was, that the construction and developing process does not necessarily end when the building is complete and the doors are open for public. This is because often it is only after the library begins to operate, when one notices what should have been done. For example when organising events, it is really difficult to estimate how many people is going to participate. If very little, this is naturally not good but if more than estimated, this is not good either, because there may not be enough seats and racks for hanging clothes and other items. Therefore, there should be some money left in the budget for 2-3 years after the construction of the library has finished for the unexpected expenses, as it is impossible to plan everything beforehand.

As mentioned earlier in the text and what came up in the interviews was, that it is important to involve the customer in the planning and that customer feedback is very important. However, in practise the customers may not give that much feedback, and if they have not visited other libraries, they may not know what to wish for. In at least one benchmarking library there is a box for initiatives, but customers have only rarely left initiatives that concern operations. Basically, the feedback has been about daily functions, for example errors in charging and so on, not so much suggestions for improvement. In all three benchmarking libraries one of the services offered is wireless internet access and it has been a much used service. In fact many users have brought their own computers with them to the library, to enjoy the wireless internet access. The service was not a result of customer requests, instead it was considered to be a part of the modern times and therefore offered to the users. Today wireless internet access is offered in many public places, such as airports, cafeterias, hotels, trains, restaurants, buses and so on. Perhaps wireless internet access could be considered in the case library as well.

In addition to wireless internet access and tablets, the new technology that was taken in use in one of the benchmarking libraries and mentioned in the interview was a public address system and info-tv's. Through the public address system one could for example announce "The library shall be closed in five minutes" or announce about a car that has been parked in the wrong place. In info-tv's the library could announce for example about the upcoming events. Perhaps the case library is so small that there is no need for these kind of services. However, these are nevertheless mentioned here as one possibility to consider.

When arranging events, there is often the balancing involved whether there will be too little or too much audience. This is why it was suggested in the benchmarking interview, that it may be wise to involve some other community with which to arrange the event. For example when arranging events for children, one could invite a group from the day care center, so that there would be the "basic audience" present. Other people would naturally also be welcome, but at least there is the basic audience. Another possibility would be to hand out tickets beforehand, for example 50 tickets, in order to know that there is people coming to the event. However, the risk is that people may turn up without a ticket.

In one of the benchmarking libraries the separate newspaper/magazine reading space is open also on Sundays for three hours, while the rest of the library is closed. If the Saturday opening hours were tested in the case library and there turned out to be no demand, one possibility to consider would be to only open the separate newspaper/magazine reading space for a couple of hours. In another benchmarking library the newspaper/magazine reading space is opened during the week two hours earlier than the rest of the library. This may be something worth considering as well. One of the known benefits of the new library is, that there is going to be a separate space where one can listen to music. In one of the benchmarking libraries this kind of space was considered as well, but apparently the world has changed so that people use Internet for listening to music and do not come to the library anymore to do so. It may be worthwhile to plan the space so, that in case there was no demand for listening to music, the space could be used for other purposes. Such purposes may involve for example using the Internet or online streaming (Netflix and Spotify) with headphones, which was one of the suggestions brought up in the user interviews.

In the discussions one of the interviewees mentioned that during the construction phase of their new library, she had visited many new libraries in different municipalities to get ideas and suggestions. When asking in one of these libraries what would have been done differently in the development process, the answer was that a computer class was missing. In the computer class teaching could be arranged, for using the library services and Internet. This may be something worth considering for the case library as well. In case there was no demand for the purpose of teaching how to use the library and Internet, the space could be reserved for example for regular Internet use. In the benchmarking library the computer class was a huge success, and even other communities such as banks have rented the space for teaching purposes.

In one of the benchmarking libraries there were separate lounge areas for the youth and adults. The one for the youth included for example board games, tablets and a computer. The idea is that the youth can spend time there freely, without constant supervision. The lounge area for the adults was situated in a quiet corner, with comfortable seats. The space can be used for example for reading, conversations and spending time. The new library will have a separate lounge area for the youth as well.

Board games and a computer may be a good idea, for the youth to have as activities. Perhaps a separate small corner for the adults as well may be something worth considering for the case library.

All three benchmarking libraries have a separate meeting room(s) or a multifunctional space, where the library staff and different unions can have meetings. There will be a multifunctional space in the new library as well, however this is an open space that is situated in the lobby, so it cannot really be used for meetings. Perhaps the space that is reserved for exhibitions could be designed to be so multifunctional, that it could be used for meetings and such as well. In fact, a meeting room was also mentioned as an expectation concerning the new library in the user interviews as well.

One of the changes that two of the benchmarking libraries had and what the staff was very satisfied with and the users benefitted from involved the location of the library bus garage. Earlier the garage was situated separate from the library building, even many kilometres away, which made collecting material from the bus to the library difficult. After the new library was taken in use, the garage was situated in connection with the library building, which made collecting the material easier. At the moment the case library's bus garage is situated in connection with the library building and it would be beneficial to have it so also in the new building.

It was mentioned in the benchmarking interviews that although the staff is there for the library users, it is also important that the staff feels comfortable at work as well, in order to be able to do their work, smiling. The benchmarking libraries have invested in the well-being of the staff, by acquiring for example electronic tables that the staff was very satisfied with, ergonomic chairs adjusted to user needs by a physiotherapist and personal computers for each employee. It was also mentioned that one of the factors affecting job satisfaction is, that the employees have an own space, adequate space for each and good tools and equipment. Good ventilation was also mentioned as one important factor affecting the coping of staff and comfortability of the users. These are something worth considering for the case library as well.

A couple of issues that came up in the interviews involved the displaying of material. In the benchmarking library corner shelves or display racks were acquired to the ends

of shelves, where books can be placed to tempt the users to loan. What was also acquired were panels that can be pulled or leaning stands that are placed in shelves with heavy books, so that the user does not have to carry the heavy book, but can read it from the panel or leaning stand. These may be useful for the case library to acquire as well.

When asking for opinions and advice for the development, a couple of issues came up. First of all, time changes purposes and functions. Therefore, it is important to plan a protean building, so that spaces can later be moved to something else if and when needed. Second, the space should not be reserved entirely for useful purposes. This is because people often come to the library, not to use library services, but to spend time. The library is like a living room to them, which is why there should be free space for spending time. Third, and what was already mentioned, there should be money left after the construction, because not everything can be planned ahead and surprising needs may arise and grievances occur. It was also advised that it would be beneficial to visit other libraries that have recently built a new library building. One can get good advice and experiences in practise from people who have been in the same situation. Particularly when taking in use the new library, in case difficulties occur for example concerning the new technology, it may be beneficial to contact other libraries that have taken in use similar technology, to receive peer support in how they have solved problems.

It was also advised that because there are many libraries in Finland, the library should have some element for which it is remembered; what is its speciality.

7 CREDIBILITY

Each research must have a credibility assessment, because errors are possible in each step of the research process. (Tuomi & Sarajärvi, 134) All research naturally aims at avoiding errors, and therefore the researcher must explain what he/she has done in order to ensure credibility, reliability and quality. (Kananen 2013, 124)

As discussed earlier in this study, case study does not have its own methodology, data collection or analysis methods. Neither does it have its own credibility assessment, involving the concepts of reliability and validity. In fact, it has been questioned whether the concepts of reliability and validity can be used in case studies, because all descriptions that involve human beings are so unique that there are no two similar cases. Nevertheless, the reliability and validity of each research should be assessed in some way. (Hirsjärvi et al. 2007, 227)

The prerequisite for a reliable case study is accurate documentation, meaning that each decision made along the research process has been written down and justified. The aim of this is, that when an outside reader reads the report, he/she can see the validity and solidity of the decisions made. This would be practically impossible without accurate documentation. (Kananen 2013, 116) The reliability of the research is shown in the researcher's detailed description of how the research is conducted. When considering interviews, the description should basically involve the circumstances in which the material was collected, including venue, time used for the interviews, possible distractions and misinterpretations. (Hirsjärvi et al. 2007, 227)

The reliability of this study can be shown based on the fact that the documentation is accurate; the steps of the research process are explained in detail and the decisions made are justified. Alternative approaches are presented and reasons explained why a certain approach was chosen over the alternatives. The interview circumstances are also explained in detail, including the timing, venue, time used for the interviews and argumentation for the choice of benchmarking companies and interviewees. The fact that the interviews were recorded also adds to the reliability of the study, as writing down the events from memory does not correspond the authentic situation, which would make the study less reliable. (Kananen 2013, 117)

Validity as a concept seems very unclear, as there is no general consensus on the definition. Hirsjärvi et al define validity in terms of whether the research methodology is able to measure what it was supposed to measure. (Hirsjärvi et al. 2007, 226) For example if the respondent of a survey has understood the question incorrectly, meaning in a different way than the researcher intended, the results of the research are not valid. The validity of this study was ensured by conducting a test interview, in

order to make sure the interviewee understands the question the way the researcher intended. The interview framework was also sent to the case library for comments. The library was satisfied with the framework so no alterations were needed. In both user and benchmarking library interviews clarifying questions were made when necessary, to make sure the interviewee understood the question.

When using interview as the data collection method, there are a number of different biases and errors that may occur. Examples of these are, that the interviewee may misunderstand the question or give such answers that would please the interviewer, memory failure, wrong sample selection, and so on. (Adams et al. 2007, 148-149) In this study there is the possibility that the users misunderstood the question or gave pleasing responses. However, the questions asked were unbiased and simple, in order to avoid misunderstandings. The interview was also pretested to make sure that the questions are understandable and understood the way the researcher intended. The space for the interview was chosen so, that it located further from the front desk and the library staff. This was in order to ensure that the interviewee's would not give answers to please the staff. Concerning the benchmarking interviews, error may have occurred as a memory failure from the interviewee's part or as wrong sample selection. However, the theme of the interview was explained to the participants well before the actual interview, so they could reminisce and write down notes. Each participant was involved in the construction of their municipality's new library building and development of services, and thus gained the most information and experience on the topic. Therefore the selection is seen as appropriate.

In the researcher's opinion the research was successful, as a number of valuable ideas and feasible suggestions for improvement and development were brought up as a result. What was particularly successful was the choice of user interviews as a research method. A number of feasible ideas were brought up in the interviews that perhaps would not have been brought up if using a survey. Also the choice of benchmarking libraries, the experts to be interviewed and using interviews as the research method in the benchmarking part of the study were successful. By using face-to-face interviews, the researcher was able to receive enough information to complete the study. This would perhaps not have been possible if using for example a survey, as the response rates tend to be really low.

In the researcher's point of view, what was not so successful in the study was, that although almost all age groups were represented quite equally, the group of over 60-year olds only included one respondent. Therefore, if the study was implemented again, the researcher would try to reach more over 60-year old respondents in order to receive possibly more versatile ideas.

The researcher is satisfied with the results of the study, because the research objectives were met and as mentioned a number of feasible suggestions for service improvement and development resulted from the study.

The benchmarking and user interviews differed to some extent. The results of benchmarking interviews were basically more related to improving the existing services than developing new ones. The results also gave insight and suggestions for contingency plans against the threats identified. On the other hand, in addition to improving the existing services, the results of the user interviews also brought up ideas for the development of completely new services.

Both benchmarking and user interviews gave valuable ideas and suggestions for improvement and development of library services. When considering which was more useful from the development point of view, the researcher would consider the user interviews to have been more beneficial. This is because the results of the user interviews were more helpful in answering the research objectives. Also the respondents of the user interviews are the people who are actually going to use the services of the new Eurajoki library. Therefore, they are the experts to say what is wanted and needed and what is not. In addition, the user interviews gave more suggestions for new service development, which was one of the objectives of this study.

8 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

The purpose of this thesis was to find out ways how Eurajoki library could develop its services, in order to meet the needs of the current and future users. The methods used in this study, benchmarking and interviews, proved very productive. The users of the library gave valuable information on the current state of the library services and on the issues which could be changed, improved or developed in order to meet the user needs. The benchmarking library experts gave precious insight into their own library's development process and the changes involved, that could be applied to the case library as well. As a result of benchmarking and interviews, a number of feasible ideas and suggestions arose. All of these ideas are presented as a summary in the SWOT -analysis table at the end of this chapter. It is for the case library to decide which suggestions it sees as feasible and wants to implement. However, a few of the suggestions stood out in particular, that the researcher would like to recommend.

Opening hours

Though the users in general were satisfied with the library opening hours, longer opening hours during the week due to hobbies were suggested as well as Saturday opening hours. In one of the benchmarking interviews it was mentioned that the library should be open when people have spare time. Therefore, the researcher would recommend testing the longer opening hours during the week and Saturday opening hours as well, to see if there is demand. In case there was no demand, the opening hours could be restored as they were, or it could also be tested that only the newspaper/magazine reading hall was opened for a couple of hours. This would not require as much resources, because the rest of the library was closed and loaning and other services not in use, meaning that less staff is needed.

Extending the loaned material

Another development suggestion that the researcher would like to make, is extending the loaned material to include other areas of culture as well. This could include the ones suggested; puzzles and other wooden toys that do not break, sports equipment such as kettlebells, nordic walking poles, pedometers, frisbee discs etc., board games

and playstation equipment and games, such as Singstar. Extending the loaned material would not require heavy investments, but of course more space would naturally be required for the material. As in the new library building there shall be two and a half times more space than in the old library, space would perhaps not be an issue.

Quiet places to study and read in

In the user interviews one of the biggest sources of dissatisfaction was noise, as the library was considered to be very noisy. This makes it difficult for the users to concentrate if one wanted to study or read in peace. Therefore, the researcher would recommend that in addition to the researcher room, which is only reserved for two people, there could be more quiet places or corners where one could study or read in peace.

Tablets and wireless internet access

One of the user suggestions concerned extending the library technology to include tablets. In most of the benchmarking libraries tablets are offered for the users to loan and use while in the library premises. This has been a much used service. The researcher would recommend the case library to extend its technology to include tablets. Thus when loaning the tablet, the user could use it where ever inside the library building, and not be bound to a specific place, which makes it more comfortable for the user. Also wireless internet access could be considered. This is a service offered by each benchmarking library. Wireless internet access was not suggested in the user interviews, however as already mentioned if the users have not visited other libraries, they may not know what to wish for. Therefore, they may not know of this service possibility to wish for. Wireless internet access is today's technology and offered in numerous public spaces. Therefore, it would be a natural addition to the library services. The tablets could then use the wireless internet access and users could also bring their own devices (laptops, tablets, smartphones, etc.) to use in the library and enjoy the wireless internet access.

Comfortability and well-being of staff

As mentioned in the benchmarking interview, the staff is there for the users, but it is important for the well-being of the staff to feel comfortable at work as well. Therefore, the researcher would recommend the case library to invest in the well-being of the staff by acquiring for example ergonomic chairs, electric tables, air conditioning and shelves with wheels.

Open storage

Many of the benchmarking libraries have an open storage, where the users have access. This makes it possible for the users to fetch the material they are looking for from the storage, and thus they do not need to wait for it to be fetched for them. One of the sources of dissatisfaction in the current library was the long delivery time of material from the storage to the user. An open storage would remove this source of dissatisfaction, and therefore the researcher recommends an open storage for the case library as well.

The conclusion of this study can be presented in the form of a SWOT -analysis:

Strengths		Weaknesses	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Extensive DVD-collection (especially for children) • Fast acquisition of children's DVD's • Extensive collection of books • Good selection of magazines/newspapers • Good opening hours, and also open on Sundays • One easily finds what one is looking for • Good customer service, one always gets help • Good service especially in the library bus • Good location • Inter-library loan system • Good selection of interior-decoration magazines • Good selection of novels • Email reminders of due dates 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Small facilities • Noisy • Not a lot of space in newspaper/magazine reading space • Rare acquisition of new Blu-ray material • Concise collection of novelty books, reference books and professional literature • Music section very unclear • Fast loans • Not a lot of quiet places to read in • Concise collection and variability in library bus material • Slow delivery time when reserving material from another library • Slow delivery time when fetching a book from a storage 	
Opportunities		Threats	
From customers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More exhibitions (adults) and cultural events • Online streaming • Saturday opening hours • Playground/corner for children • Puzzles or other wooden toys that do not break for loan • Quiet spaces to study in for students and school children • More versatile use • Low-threshold study circles in the evening • Writer visits • Matineas • Theme events for children, youth and adults • Later opening hours during the week • Combining Internet and literature -> guiding boys to reading • Extending the loaned material to other areas of culture • Tablets • More storytimes for children • Broader selection of magazines • Meeting room 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • No money left after construction is finished for unplanned expenses • No audience in events 	
From benchmarking other libraries	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wireless internet access • Public address system • Info-tv • Electronic tables, ergonomic chairs and personal computers for staff • Lounge area for adults/conversation spaces • Lounge area for the youth • Versatile planning of spaces • Display racks • Panel that is pulled or leaning stands for heavy books • Shelves on wheels • Computer class • Open storage • Different opening hours for the separate newspaper/magazine reading space 		

As mentioned according to the library law the municipalities are to assess their library services and in this assessment the current state of the services should be described, and the strengths and weaknesses of the service should be identified. (Suomen Kuntaliitto 2015) Therefore, the conclusion of the study is presented in the form of a SWOT -analysis, as a summary.

The strengths and weaknesses indicate the current position and state of the library services. The strengths show what the library does particularly well. On the other hand, the weaknesses indicate what or where the library should improve. The library should maintain or build upon its strengths, while the weaknesses should be stopped, changed or remedied. The opportunities listed are gathered from user and benchmarking interviews, and include all the ideas that came up as new or improved service ideas. It is not the intention that the library should consider all of these possibilities, because as mentioned, the needs and wished of every single user cannot be fulfilled. It was also mentioned that library services are local services based on local needs. Therefore, it is possible that not all of the benchmarking results mentioned are suitable to local circumstances for Eurajoki library. Instead, the library should set the kind of quality aims that it can reach with the available resources.

However, as mentioned the users of the library are to be heard equally, concerning their needs and experiences on the service, in order to be able to focus the resources correctly and develop the service. Therefore, all the ideas that came up in the interviews and benchmarking alike are presented for the library to consider.

Overall it can be stated that the library can develop its services by maintaining and building upon its strengths, stopping its weaknesses, exploiting the opportunities and defending against the threats identified. (Website of RapidBi, 1999-2015) The contingency plans against the threats were suggested earlier in the results part of the study.

8.1 Further research

After the new library has been taken in use and functioned for a while, further research could be made concerning how satisfied the users have been with the new library and how their expectations have been met.

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APPENDIX 1

Benchmarking kysymykset:

Millaisia muutoksia/etuja uusi kirjastorakennuksenne tarjoaa vanhaan verrattuna kirjaston käyttäjän ja henkilöstön näkökulmasta (lisää tilaa, erilaiset aukioloajat tms.)?

Millaisia mahdollisesti uusia palveluita, tekniikkaa ym. otettiin käyttöön uudessa kirjastorakennuksessa (älyhylly, lainausautomaatti, RFID-tunnistusjärjestelmä, digitointimahdollisuus tms.)?

Mistä ideat uusiin palveluihin lähtivät? (asiakkailta, henkilöstöltä, johdolta, muilta kirjastoilta ym.)

Mihin muutoksiin asiakkaat ovat olleet erityisen tyytyväisiä (esim. jokin tietty asia, josta on tullut asiakkailta erityisen hyvää palautetta)?

Mihin muutoksiin henkilöstö on ollut erityisen tyytyväinen (esim. jokin tietty asia, joka on mahdollistanut sen, että henkilöstö on pystynyt palvelemaan asiakkaitaan entistä paremmin)?

Tuliko palautetta että jotain uusien palveluiden lisäksi olisi vielä kaivattu?

Olisiko sinulla neuvoja kirjastopalvelujen kehittämiseen (esim. jotain minkä itse havaitsi kehitysprosessin aikana olevan hyvä toimintatapa tai mitä olisi voinut tehdä toisin)?

Kysely

Sukupuoli:

mies _____

nainen _____

Ikä: _____

Kotipaikka: _____

Kuinka usein käytät kirjaston palveluja:

päivittäin ____

useammin kuin kerran viikossa ____

kerran viikossa ____

useammin kuin kerran kuussa ____

kerran kuussa ____

harvemmin ____

Minkälaisia kirjaston palveluja käytät (voit valita useamman vaihtoehdon):

Lehtien ja/tai kirjojen lukeminen ____

Aineiston lainaus, palautus, uusiminen tai varaus ____

Informaatiopalvelun käyttö ____

Tietokoneiden ym. välineiden käyttö ____

Etsin tietoa ____

Muu, mikä: _____

Mihin asiaan/asioihin olet nykyisessä kirjastossa tyytyväinen/tyytymätön?

Millaisia odotuksia sinulla on uuden kirjaston suhteen? (Aineiston laajuus, henkilökunnan määrä/ammattitaito, tilat, laitteet yms.)

Miten kirjaston palveluja voitaisiin mielestäsi kehittää?
