

Evaluation of the Services of the Medical Library of University General Hospital of Thessaloniki AHEPA

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Abstract

Hospital libraries offer many contributions since they participate in learning. The purpose of this research was to study the medical library of University General Hospital of Thessaloniki AHEPA and the way its users respond to it. The findings of the research provide important evidences, which are useful for the management of the particular hospital. This paper shows the strong as well as the weak points of the library. The library staff should look closely at the latest and try to improve the library's performance, so it can become friendlier to its users.

In an attempt to capture, to a fairly satisfactory degree of reliability, the attitudes, the expectations and the factual state of the medical library of University General Hospital of Thessaloniki AHEPA, a research of its users was conducted. The research problem and the aim of this paper are defined by:

- Knowing and using the traditional and electronic services of the medical library of University General Hospital of Thessaloniki AHEPA, as well as, evaluating their importance, through the opinions of the users.
- Detecting the expectations of the users and the factual state regarding the collection, the staff and the areas of the AHEPA medical library.
- Determining the factors that satisfy the users.
- Finding out about the profile of AHEPA medical library users.

In view of the above the questionnaire was divided in four basic domains. Every domain included questions about each target. The primary data were collected by distributing the questionnaire to 102 users. Second step was coding the data and then processing them using the statistical package SPSS.

The findings of the research provide important clues, which are useful for the Management of University General Hospital of Thessaloniki AHEPA, in order to ameliorate the provided services of the hospital's library and by extension to provide services with better quality, in order to meet the educational and research needs of the hospital community.

It is essential that similar researches are conducted on a regular basis (less than 6 months intervals), so that weak points and problems of the medical library are located and dealt with on time. Frequent monitoring can also provide an evaluation of the ameliorating efforts carried out by the Management of the hospital and library staff.

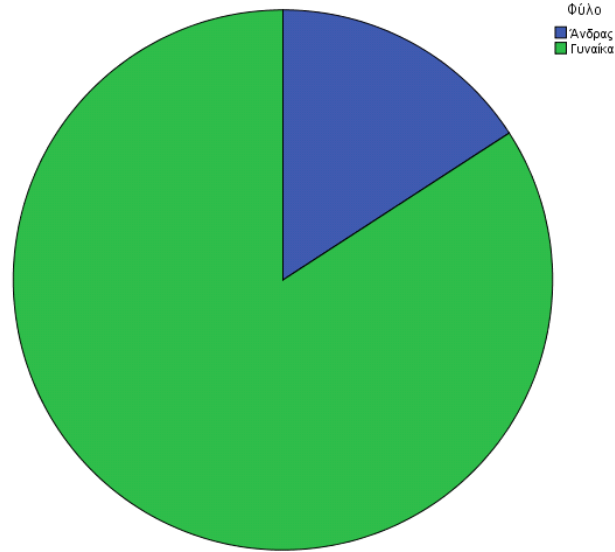
Quantitative Analysis

The sample is 102 individuals that answered the questionnaires distributed inside the hospital library of University General Hospital of Thessaloniki AHEPA. The interviewed were readers of the library and were asked about their satisfaction regarding the completeness, the staff and the diversity of the library, as well as their own aims.

Gender				
	Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent

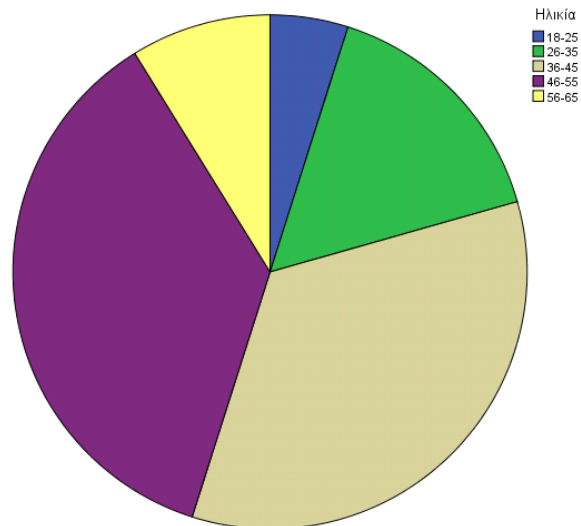
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Valid	Man	16	15,7	15,8	15,8
	Woman	85	83,3	84,2	100,0
	Total	101	99,0	100,0	
Missing	System	1	1,0		
Total		102	100,0		



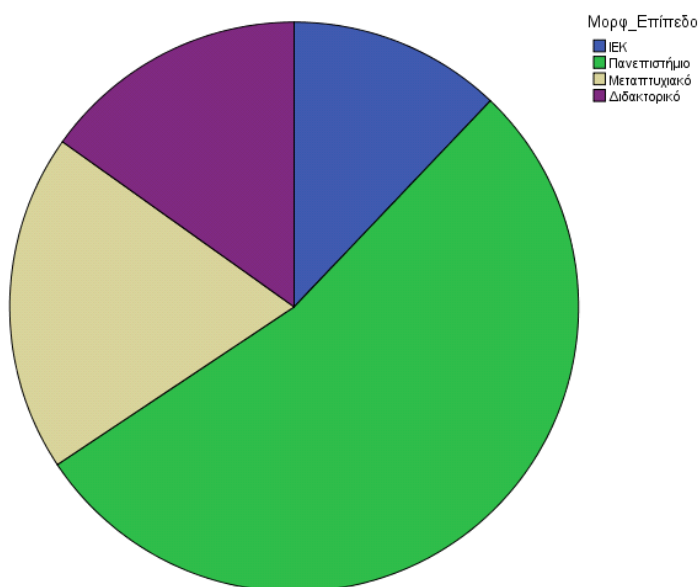
The 84, 2% of the interviewed are women whilst only 15, 8% are men. The sample shows that women have greater tendency to visit the library and to interact with the world of books and research sources.

Age					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	18-25	5	4,9	4,9	4,9
	26-35	16	15,7	15,7	20,6
	36-45	35	34,3	34,3	54,9
	46-55	37	36,3	36,3	91,2
	56-65	9	8,8	8,8	100,0
	Total	102	100,0	100,0	



70, 6% of the sample belongs to the age group 36 to 55 years old. This percentage shows that the library is used mainly by professionals that seek something specific about their line of expertise. They visit the library in order to find it. The smallest percentage of the sample are the youngest readers of 18 to 25 years old (only 8, 8% of the sample) that are perhaps more familiar with the new technologies and they do not need to go to the library to find the information they need.

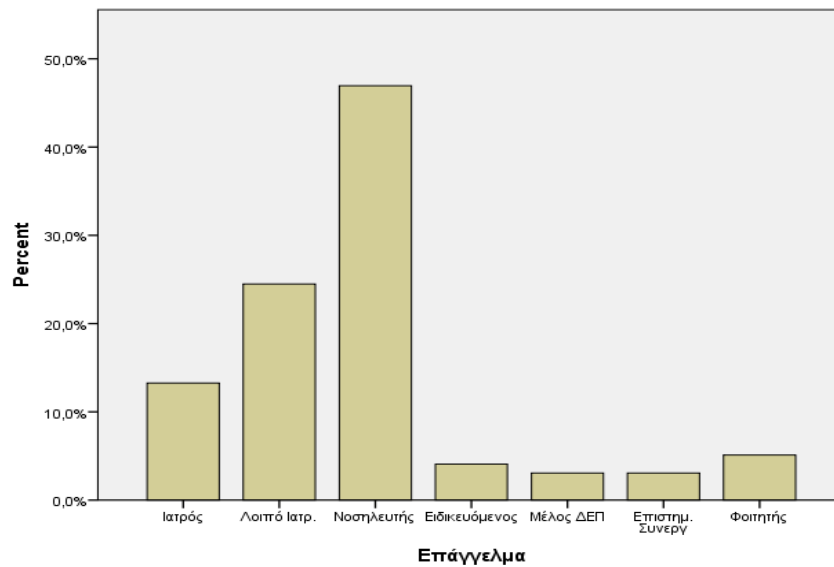
Level of Education					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Institute for Vocational Training	12	11,8	12,1	12,1
	University	53	52,0	53,5	65,7
	Master's Degree	19	18,6	19,2	84,8
	PhD	15	14,7	15,2	100,0
	Total	99	97,1	100,0	
Missing	System	3	2,9		
Total		102	100,0		



Level of Education: Graduates of Institutes for Vocational Training, University, Holders of Master’s Degree, Holders of PhD.

The majority of the hospital’s library visitors are university graduates – 53, 5%. The other categories appear with smaller percentages: 12, 1% is graduate of Institutes for Vocational Training, 19, 2% have a master’s degree and 19, 2% have a PhD.

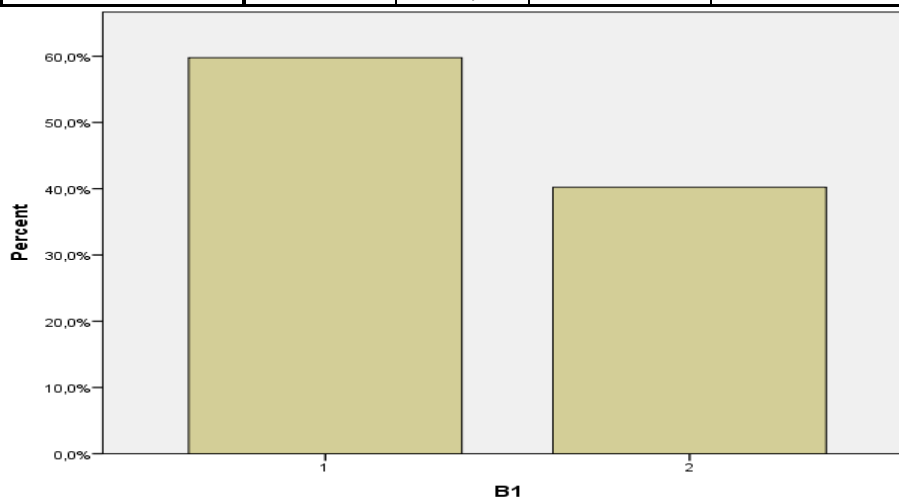
Profession					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	1	13	12,7	13,3	13,3
	2	24	23,5	24,5	37,8
	3	46	45,1	46,9	84,7
	4	4	3,9	4,1	88,8
	5	3	2,9	3,1	91,8
	6	3	2,9	3,1	94,9
	7	5	4,9	5,1	100,0
	Total	98	96,1	100,0	
Missing	System	4	3,9		
Total		102	100,0		



Profession: Doctor, Other Medical Staff, Nurse, Resident, Member of Academic Staff, Research Associate and Student.

There are several professions in the sample, but the nursing staff represents the majority – 46, 9%. That shows that almost half of visitors of the library are the lesser medical staff with a 24, 5%, to be followed by the doctors (13, 3%). The rest of the professions are represented with a percentage lesser than 5%.

Do you use the library of University General Hospital of Thessaloniki AHEPA?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	52	51,0	59,8	59,8
	No	35	34,3	40,2	100,0
	Total	87	85,3	100,0	
Missing	System	15	14,7		
Total		102	100,0		

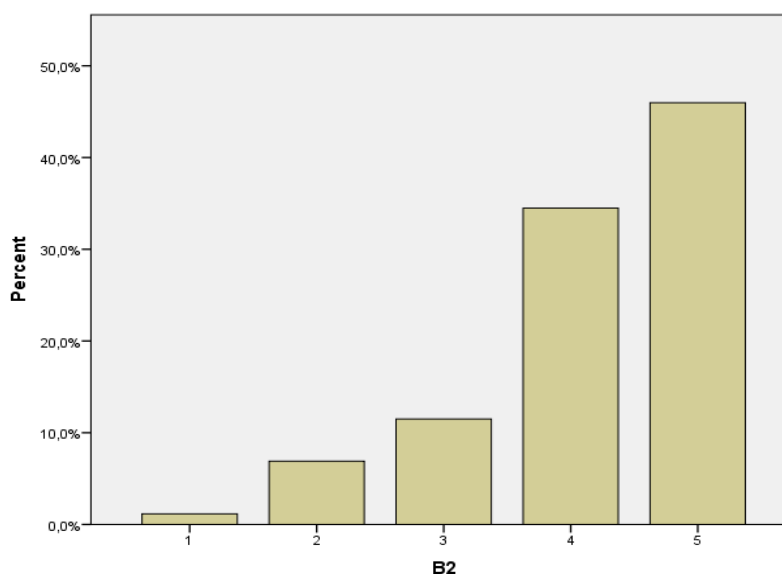


The percentage of the interviewers that responded positively for the use of the library is 59, 8%, which demonstrates that individuals that are often in the hospital do not make use of the library. Next question analyses the reasons for the small attendance in the library.

If not, state the main reason for not using the library.					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Lack of time due to work conditions	24	23,5	70,6	70,6
	Unawareness of the existence of the library	8	7,8	23,5	94,1
	Lack of need for some medical information	2	2,0	5,9	100,0
	Total	34	33,3	100,0	
Missing	System	68	66,7		
Total		102	100,0		

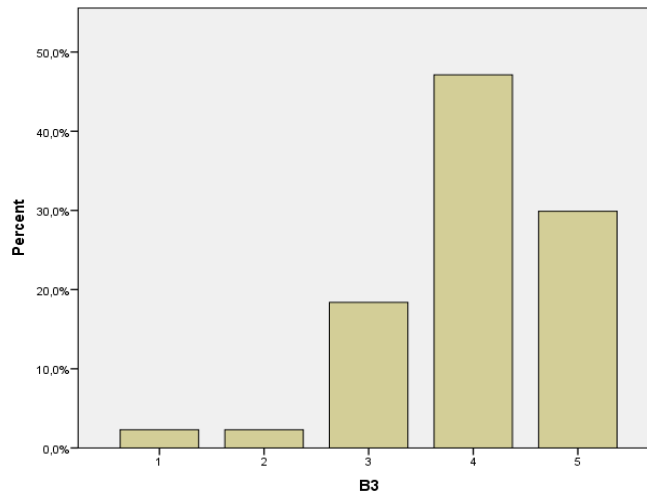
70, 6% of the interviewers stated as the main reason the lack of time due to their work that prohibits them from visiting the library and pursue their scientific interests. On the other hand 23, 5% did not know that a library existed.

In which extent do you think the library of University General Hospital of Thessaloniki AHEPA provides substantiated information to cover your scientific needs?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not at all	1	1,0	1,1	1,1
	Barely	6	5,9	6,9	8,0
	Moderate	10	9,8	11,5	19,5
	Sufficiently	30	29,4	34,5	54,0
	Very Much	40	39,2	46,0	100,0
Total		87	85,3	100,0	
Missing	System	15	14,7		
Total		102	100,0		



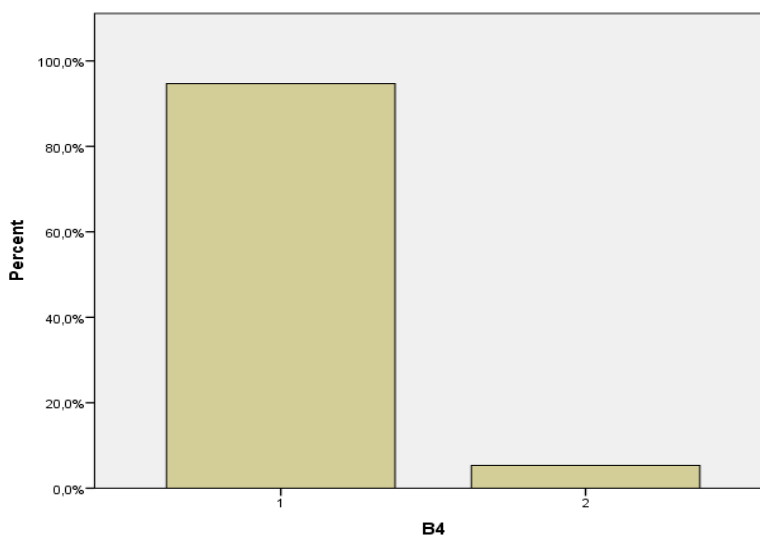
The percentage of the interviewers that responded that the library covers their scientific needs sufficiently or very much is 80, 5%. That percentage is viewed as satisfactory because the main purpose of a hospital library is to provide the necessary scientific material, so that its users can fulfill their obligations towards their scientific specialty.

In which extent do you think the hospital' library provides specific literature to support the educational needs / activities?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not at all	2	2,0	2,3	2,3
	Barely	2	2,0	2,3	4,6
	Moderate	16	15,7	18,4	23,0
	Sufficiently	41	40,2	47,1	70,1
	Very much	26	25,5	29,9	100,0
Total		87	85,3	100,0	
Missing	System	15	14,7		
Total		102	100,0		



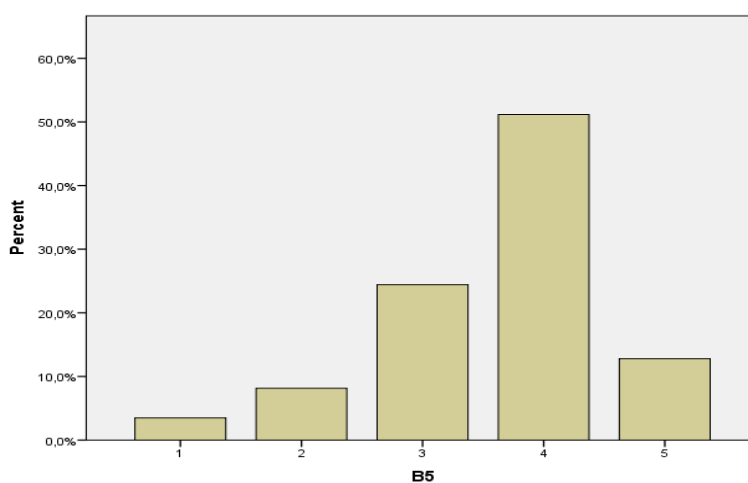
In the next question the interviewers respond in a percentage that reaches 77% that the library provides a sufficient or large degree the special literature that they need in order to cover their scientific demands. That demonstrates that the library can fulfill the purposes based on which it was created and can continue its mission.

The medical library of University General Hospital of Thessaloniki AHEPA must be connected to the Continuing Education?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Yes	89	87,3	94,7	94,7
	No	5	4,9	5,3	100,0
	Total	94	92,2	100,0	
Missing	System	8	7,8		
Total		102	100,0		



The overwhelming percentage of the library’s readers (94, 7%) believes that it should serve the continuing education. The continuing education can help a lot of people to improve their dexterities and to evolve professionally and personally, in various levels.

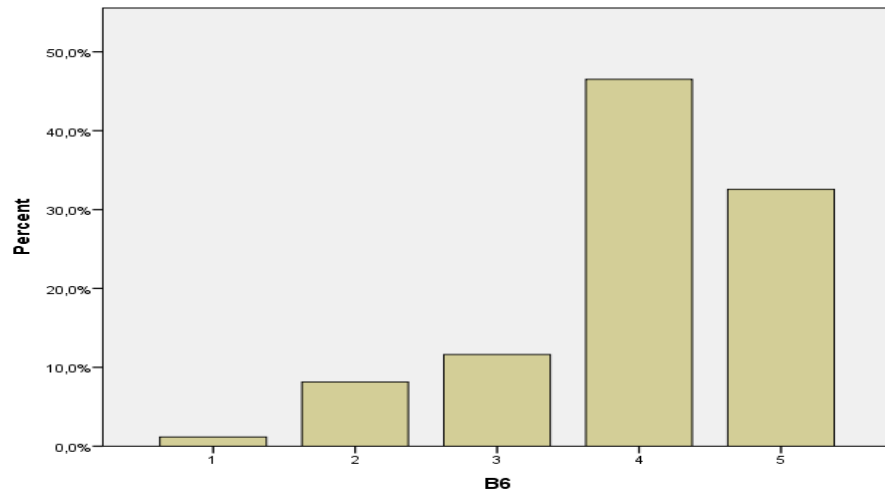
How sufficient and up to date do you consider to be the technological equipment of the medical library of University General Hospital of Thessaloniki AHEPA?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not at all	3	2,9	3,5	3,5
	Barely	7	6,9	8,1	11,6
	Moderate	21	20,6	24,4	36,0
	Enough	44	43,1	51,2	87,2
	Very much	11	10,8	12,8	100,0
Total		86	84,3	100,0	
Missing	System	16	15,7		
Total		102	100,0		



The percentage which thinks that the technological equipment of the library is enough or very much up to date and sufficient is 64%, one of the lowest in this research. It shows that some of its users are not satisfied with the level of the library’s equipment (computers, electronic means etc.) and they wish an upgrade.

The choice of printed and electronic literature of the medical library of University General Hospital of Thessaloniki AHEPA satisfied your information needs?

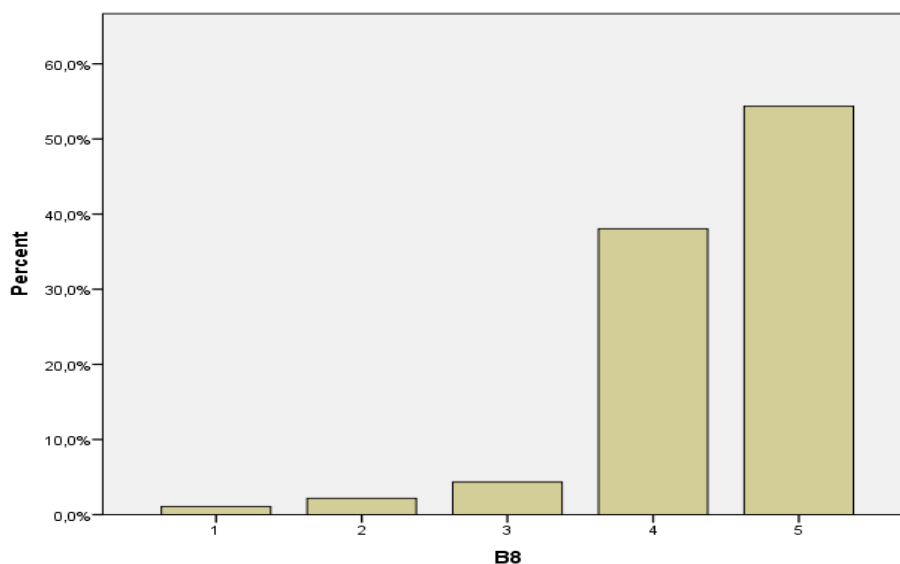
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not at all	1	1,0	1,2	1,2
	Barely	7	6,9	8,1	9,3
	Moderate	10	9,8	11,6	20,9
	Enough	40	39,2	46,5	67,4
	Very much	28	27,5	32,6	100,0
	Total	86	84,3	100,0	
Missing	System	16	15,7		
Total		102	100,0		



There is the need to give adequate library orientation in order for the user to be able to seek and find in a minimum amount of time the sources he/she needs for his/her assignment. The users of the library understand that because 83,8% of them states that library orientation is enough or very much necessary in order for them to find the sources they need.

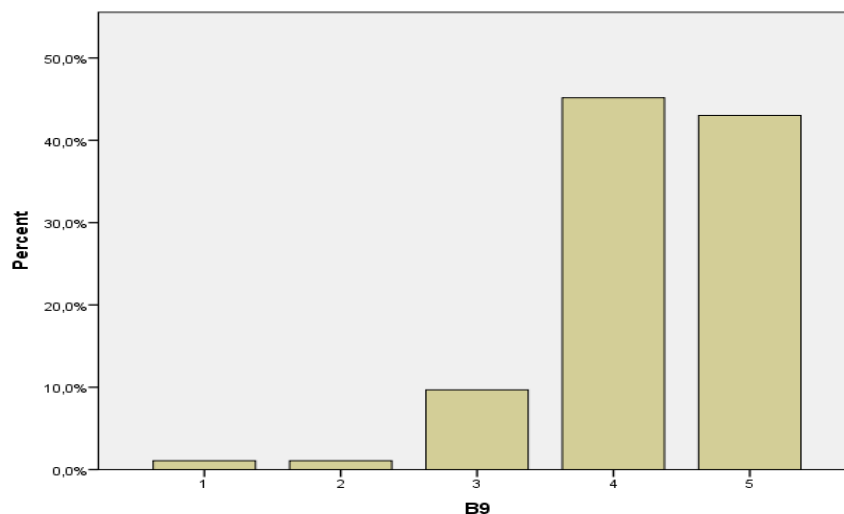
In what degree do you think that the participation of the medical library of University General Hospital of Thessaloniki AHEPA in the educational activities of the hospital it belongs to is essential?

		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not at all	1	1,0	1,1	1,1
	Barely	2	2,0	2,2	3,3
	Moderate	4	3,9	4,3	7,6
	Enough	35	34,3	38,0	45,7
	Very much	50	49,0	54,3	100,0
	Total	92	90,2	100,0	
Missing	System	10	9,8		
Total		102	100,0		



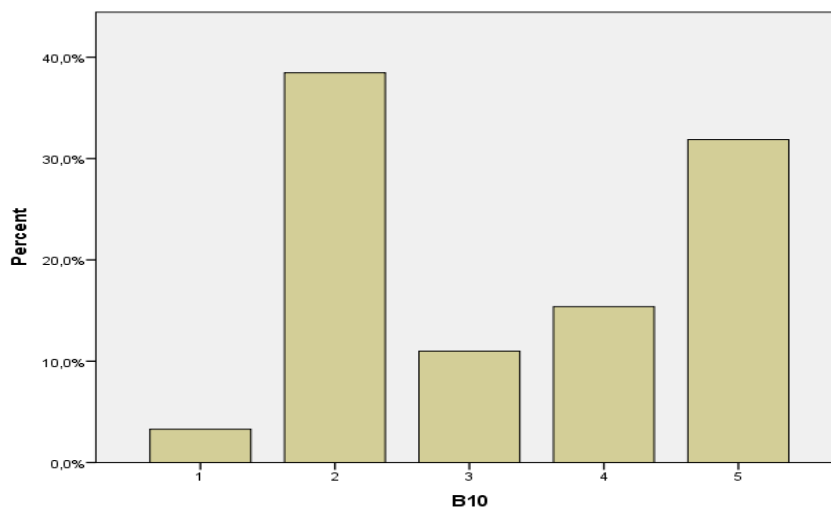
The hospital is still an educational institution where lessons and university lectures are being held. All these educational processes must be supported by the correspondent scientific material, which is usually stored in the library. The participation of the library in the educational processes is desired since the 92, 3% of the users states that they want enough or very much the participation of the library in such processes.

In what degree do you think that the output of guidelines from the staff of the medical library of University General Hospital of Thessaloniki AHEPA for the formulation strategies of writing, presenting and implementing a scientific paper is essential?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not at all	1	1,0	1,1	1,1
	Barely	1	1,0	1,1	2,2
	Moderate	9	8,8	9,7	11,8
	Enough	42	41,2	45,2	57,0
	Very much	40	39,2	43,0	100,0
Total		93	91,2	100,0	
Missing	System	9	8,8		
Total		102	100,0		



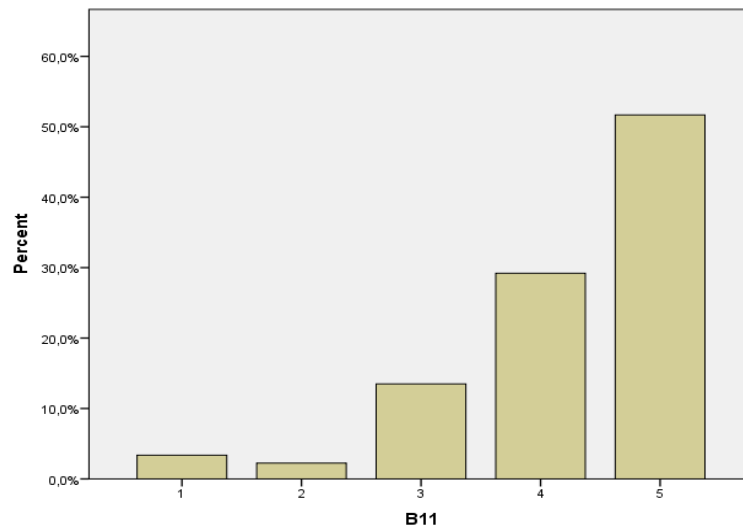
One of the functions of a university library is to teach its users the techniques for implementing a scientific paper. The users want that since the 88, 2% of them wishes enough or very much the materialization of such educational programs that will upgrade the role of the library and point out its work.

What are your priorities in the literature needs of the library?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Word, PowerPoint	3	2,9	3,3	3,3
	PubMed, Medline	35	34,3	38,5	41,8
	Internet	10	9,8	11,0	52,7
	HEAL Link	14	13,7	15,4	68,1
	Automated list	29	28,4	31,9	100,0
	Total	91	89,2	100,0	
Missing	System	11	10,8		
Total		102	100,0		



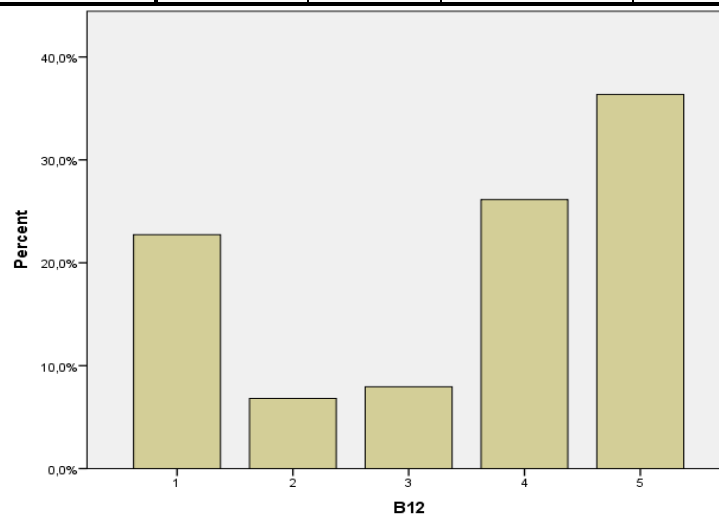
The library's users focus their main needs in services they can not outside of it on their wholeness or from their home. Because of that users prioritize the access to data bases like PubMed and Medline (38,5 %), as well as the automated list of the AHEPA's library.

How sufficient do you think the staff of the medical library of University General Hospital of Thessaloniki AHEPA is as far as its ability to seek out literature is concerned?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not at all	3	2,9	3,4	3,4
	Barely	2	2,0	2,2	5,6
	Moderate	12	11,8	13,5	19,1
	Enough	26	25,5	29,2	48,3
	Very much	46	45,1	51,7	100,0
	Total	89	87,3	100,0	
Missing	System	13	12,7		
Total		102	100,0		



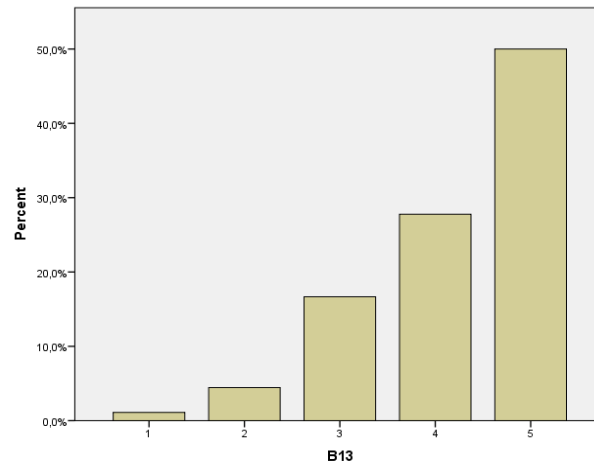
The library staff plays a crucial role in the final experience the user shapes from it. The staff must be able to help those who need assistance in finding literature. This need is recognized by the users since 79,9% of them consider the ability of the staff to find the literature enough or very much important to them.

Do you believe that the staff of the medical library of University General Hospital of Thessaloniki AHEPA reduced the time you devote in finding the necessary information?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not at all	20	19,6	22,7	22,7
	Barely	6	5,9	6,8	29,5
	Moderate	7	6,9	8,0	37,5
	Enough	23	22,5	26,1	63,6
	Very much	32	31,4	36,4	100,0
Missing	System	14	13,7		
Total		102	100,0		



The users were asked about the usefulness of the library's staff. Although the 62,5% of them responded that the staff helped enough or very much, the 22,7% stated that there did not make much difference if there was no staff to provide assistance, something that should alert the library and its staff.

How effective do you find the use of the medical library of University General Hospital of Thessaloniki AHEPA,?					
		Frequency	Percent	Valid Percent	Cumulative Percent
Valid	Not at all	1	1,0	1,1	1,1
	Barely	4	3,9	4,4	5,6
	Moderate	15	14,7	16,7	22,2
	Enough	25	24,5	27,8	50,0
	Very much	45	44,1	50,0	100,0
	Total	90	88,2	100,0	
Missing	System	12	11,8		
Total		102	100,0		



In the final question about the overall picture of the library from the point of view of its users 78, 4% responded that has a fairly well or very well opinion about its use and the overall work it offers to the hospital. That demonstrates the positive contribution of the library to the work of the hospital and how it can affect in a positive way the overview of the hospital. In the last question it is asked for the users to formulate suggestions about the improvement of its use and of its services. Some suggestions are the following:

- Organizing seminars an how to find the wanted literature, how to write scientific papers, how to publish it and how to use the electronic media.
- Setting up a reading room.
- To expand the room for the archives.
- To organize seminars for teaching statistical analysis.
- To provide access to programs like the SPSS.
- To provide bigger access to research journals.

Conclusions

The medical library of University General Hospital of Thessaloniki AHEPA is an integral functioning part of the hospital, which represents an expansion of the university. In that context the library functions as a university entity that can offer support to the students and the staff of the hospital. The goal of the library is to provide that support to its users. The questionnaire that was used tried to point out the satisfaction of its users. It seems that the library succeeds in that a lot, as the majority of the answers are very positive for the library. There are gaps that can be filled with the right actions from the Management of the hospital and the staff of the library.