

GREAT RIVER REGIONAL LIBRARY SURVEY 2018



RESEARCH REPORT PREPARED BY ST. CLOUD STATE UNIVERSITY SURVEY CENTER

This report was prepared for the Great River Regional Library by the SCSU Survey Center.

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EXECUTIVE REPORT

The St. Cloud State University Survey Center conducted a study of Great River Regional Library (GRRL) users and non-users residing in Central Minnesota in November 2018. This is a report of the findings of that study.

HOW WAS THE STUDY CONDUCTED

We used two methods of data collection for this study, 1) a telephone survey and 2) and an Internet survey. Combined, 7,898 individuals responded to the survey measuring attitudes and behaviors related to the library system.

The survey instrument was similar for both contact methods. Telephone respondents were contacted using a random sample of cell and landline phone numbers in central Minnesota, and Internet respondents were contacted using the GRRL's own email contact list for library users (both current and former). The Internet survey instrument was drafted and the data collected using the survey software Qualtrics. An anonymous URL was generated for each individual in the sample, and then an email was sent inviting participation in the study and providing the URL to access the survey.

Recruitment for this project was very successful. Initial planning predicted approximately 400 completed surveys (100 from the telephone random-digit dialing sampling procedure). The final sample for this project included 7,898 participants: 7,472 completed the survey online, 426 completed the survey by phone. For the purpose of this project, library users were defined as individuals who used a library service at least once in the past year; non-users were defined as people who did not use any library service in the past year. Participants who did not know if they used a library service in the past year were counted as non-users (133 participants). The sample included 6,793 users (172 completed the telephone survey) and 985 non-users (254 completed the telephone survey).

We collected 7,721 fully completed surveys. Data was weighted on gender because there were a disproportionate number of women respondents, as compared with U.S. Census data for the area.

SAMPLE CHARACTERISTICS

The information in this section is the demographic characteristics of the sample, before the data was weighted. The weighted demographic data is presented below in the results graphs.

SAMPLE CHARACTERISTICS		LIBRARY USERS	NON-USERS
Gender	Women	50.8%	65.0%
	Men	49.2%	34.1%
Race	White	92.9%	90.4%
	People of color	7.1%	9.6%
Age	18 – 24	3.2%	9.8%

	25 – 44	29.7%	34.2%
	45 – 64	37.2%	34.4%
	Over 65	29.9%	21.5%
Education	High school graduate or less	6.4%	12.3%
	Technical degree, some college	25.9%	30.6%
	Bachelor's degree	31.7%	30.2%
	Education beyond bachelor's	35.5%	25.2%
Households with children		40.9%	49.2%

KEY FINDINGS

GRRL USERS

GRRL users were asked questions about the GRRL services they used in the past year, as well as questions about their satisfaction with those services. Not surprisingly, nearly 99% of GRRL users reported having a public library card, and 99% reported having a GRRL library card. These participants typically had their own library card, although some shared their cards with others. Most participants (78%) said that they were the only person using their library card; 21% reported sharing their card with at least one other person.

GRRL users tended to use services regularly. The majority of users (58%) said that they visited the library 11 or more times in the past year, whereas only 11% reported using the library 1-3 times per year or less. The most frequently used library locations reported in the survey included St. Cloud (41% of users), Elk River (11%), Waite Park (9%), Buffalo (8%), Monticello (8%), and St. Michael (7%). The questionnaire for this study included a question about the recently-added Sartell 2Go Locker service. Two percent of users reported using the Sartell 2Go Locker; of those, 16% were somewhat or very satisfied with it, but 18% were somewhat or very dissatisfied. At least one participant included an open-ended comment suggesting that GRRL add a Sartell location.

Approximately 85% of users reported using the GRRL website, griver.org. When asked how they found out about library and community activities, users reported that they found out about library activities through the radio (25%), in-library promotions (20%), or the newspaper (20%). In contrast, they found out about other community events mostly through the newspaper (24%) or social media (24%).

Participants were asked to select up to 3 reasons why they used the GRRL services. The most frequently endorsed services were use of books and magazines (88% of users), BluRay/DVD/VHS (33%), the digital library (26%), the online catalog (21%), and CDs (19%). Both users and non-users included open-ended feedback about the digital library – many prefer to access materials this way instead of traveling to a library location. Twelve percent of participants attended children's programs, 1% attended teen programs, and 10% attended programs for adults.

Overall, satisfaction with GRRL services was high. When asked how likely they were to recommend the library to a friend, with 10 representing that they were certain to recommend it, 68% of participants answered '10' and 95% provided a rating of 7 or higher. Among users, 81% can be classified as 'promoters' (rating GRRL as either 9 or 10), and 4% can be classified as 'detractors' (rating GRRL as 6 or less). The net promoter score among GRRL users is 77%.

The majority of participants rated their overall satisfaction with GRRL as excellent (49%) or very good (39%). Only 2% of participants rated GRRL as fair or poor. Overall satisfaction with GRRL was high across the counties in the service area – 42% of participants from Benton county rated GRRL as 'excellent,' as did 53% of participants from Morrison, 48% of participants from Sherburne, 48% of participants from Stearns, 59% of participants from Todd, and 46% of participants from Wright county. Approximately 2% of participants reported that they did not live in any of the above counties; among that group, 39% rated GRRL as 'excellent.' The percent of participants rating GRRL as 'excellent' was similar across gender, race/ethnicity, education, and income groups, suggesting that overall satisfaction was not influenced by demographics.

The survey also asked about satisfaction with specific services. The most common response to each of these questions was 'I do not use this service,' typically selected by 40-60% of the participants. At least 20% of users reported that they were somewhat or very satisfied with each of the services asked about in this survey. Highest satisfaction was with traditional books (70% of participants who used books were very satisfied), BluRay/DVD/VHS (27% of people who used these were very satisfied), and the digital library (24% of people who used this were very satisfied).

NON-GRRL USERS

Participants who responded that they did not use a library service in the past year were asked questions about why they did not use GRRL services and about what would encourage them to use these services. Non-users were less likely to have a public library card than users (72% of non-users had a library card), and were less likely to have a GRRL card than users (87% reported having one).

The most commonly reported reasons for not using GRRL services were that non-users felt they did not need the services (19%), bought their own materials (11%), or were not interested in the programs offered (6%). A small percentage (2% or less) of non-users reported that parking, inconvenient hours or locations, transportation, or safety concerns prevented them from using GRRL services. Approximately 10% of non-users reported an 'other' reason for not using GRRL services. Open-ended responses suggest that non-users reported using ebooks and/or audiobooks, either from GRRL, other libraries, or through private purchasing. Some non-users noted confusion responding to the 'user' question. They answered that they did not visit a library in the past year (because they did not go to a physical location) even though they used the GRRL digital library.

When asked about what would encourage them to use GRRL services, non-users did not strongly endorse any of the response options provided in the survey. Only small percentages of non-users (less than 5%) identified changes to hours, services, or locations as factors that would encourage them to use the library.

Because many non-users were sampled from the GRRL card holder list, non-users were also asked about their satisfaction with GRRL services. Non-users also rated GRRL favorably: 27% said that their overall satisfaction with the library was 'excellent' and an addition 39% rated the library as 'very good.' Among non-users in this sample, 53% can be classified as 'promoters' (rating GRRL as either 9 or 10), whereas 19% of non-users can be classified as 'detractors' (rating GRRL as 6 or less). The net promoter score among non-users is 35%.