

*King Fahd University of
Petroleum & Minerals*

Community Center Survey

March, 2006

Community Affairs Committee

KFUPM Community Center Survey

March, 2006

Abstract

The KFUPM Community Affairs Committee conducted a survey of campus residents on the services and facilities provided by the Community Center. In addition, the Committee wanted to get an idea of what kind of facilities and services residents would like to see offered in the Center and in the housing areas. This analysis should be invaluable in setting the priorities for maintaining and developing the Community Center as well as other recreational facilities. In completing the questionnaire, residents were asked to reflect what they believed to be their family's views as well as their own. This analysis should help the University to be more responsive to the needs of our community. In addition, residents were asked to state their opinions even if they do not use the Community Center as all opinions about it are important.

In addition, the Community Affairs Committee conducted a site visit to the Community Center to coincide with the survey. The Committee's recommendations based on this visit, and in conjunction with the survey results, are incorporated into this report.

The questionnaire was designed and the data analysed by Ian Deacon on behalf of the KFUPM Community Affairs Committee under the chairmanship of Dr. A. Al-Gahtani. Special thanks are given for the help provided by Housing & Office Services and the Community Center, and to all residents who submitted a completed questionnaire.

Ian Deacon

May 19th, 2006

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Methodology

The questionnaire was distributed both by email and a personally-addressed hardcopy to each resident's departmental pigeon-hole in March 2006. Respondents were asked to return completed questionnaires either by internal mail, fax or e-mail or to deposit them in collection boxes at both the Community Center and the General Purpose Cooperative Store. A total of 152 completed questionnaires were returned, which is nearly a 17% response rate assuming there were about 900 occupied residences on campus at that time.

Demographics

The demographic information, which has to be treated with some caution due to inconsistencies in the data received, indicates the surveyed population totalled approximately 650 persons. This figure breaks down into the following:

- total number of male adults = 186 of which 74% use the Community Center regularly
- total number of female adults = 176 of which 72% use the Community Center regularly
- total number of male children = 156 of which 79% use the Community Center regularly
- total number of female children = 133 of which 74% use the Community Center regularly

74.75% of respondent family members use the Community Center on a regular basis.

Summary

While all the survey results are presented in charts in this report, the Committee summarized the following points as the major observations:

1. 53% of the survey respondents stated that they are satisfied with the Community Center facilities, while 27% are not satisfied and 17% remained neutral (See Figure 2).
2. 67% are satisfied with regard to the opening hours of the Community Center, while 14% disagreed and 14% remained neutral (See Figure 3).
3. 60% of the users of the Center are satisfied with the services and facilities offered by the Center, and 21% have rated it as poor (See Figure 4).
4. 58% of the respondents rated the helpfulness and abilities of the Center staff as good-very good, while 18% rated it as poor-very poor and 21% remained neutral (See Figure 5).
5. 47% of the respondents mentioned that the Community Center bathrooms/restrooms are very good, while 20% rated it as poor and 23% remained neutral (See Figure 6).
6. An overwhelming number of respondents (85%) stated that the Community Center should provide services and facilities to all age groups (See Figure 7).

7. Similarly, 69% of the people stated that the Community Center should offer more recreation, educational and sports program, while 31% mentioned that the existing facilities are either sufficient or they did not provide any specific suggestion for improvement (See Figure 8).
8. When asked which programs / services the Community Center should provide, the most requested are: trips and sight-seeing visits to historic and important places (61%), language courses (55%), fitness and weight-reducing programs (52%), computer and technology classes (49%), summer programs (48%), Islamic studies (45%), arts and cultural programs (44%) (See Figure 9).
9. Around 57% of the respondents are interested in hiring rooms and services at the Community Center to hold private parties, weddings, etc., while 44% are not interested in making use of these facilities (See Figure 10).
10. Similarly, 57% expressed a desired to borrow items such as carpets, tables, chairs, lighting, etc. from the Center for holding private parties in their houses, while 43% did not express any interest (See Figure 11).
11. Those respondents who stated that they never use the Community Center were asked why this is so. 60% stated they had no interest while 55% stated it does not provide the services and facilities that they require or that they do not know enough about the Community Center. Similarly, just under 50% stated that there is neither adequate nor updated information on what is available at the Community Center (See Figure 12).
12. Those respondents who stated that they infrequently use the Community Center were asked why this is so. The responses were similar to those above (See Figure 13)
13. More than 83% of the survey respondents stated that the library services at the Center are very important (See Figure 14) and around 66% of them use the library frequently (at least more than 10 times a year). However, 23% of the surveyed people stated that they go to the library only once or twice a year (See Figure 15).
14. Concerning the Community Center Library, a large number of the respondents (69%) stated that they would like to have more new books made available, 49% want more children's books, 47% want more magazines and around 35% want more best sellers, newspapers, educational toys for loan and Internet computers (See Figure 16).
15. When respondents were asked for their three most desired improvements, they stated new adults' books, children's book and magazines (See Figure 17). The degree of satisfaction with the adult and children library services and facilities are shown in Figure 18.
16. Around 28% of the surveyed respondents mentioned that KFUPM parks and recreational facilities satisfy their needs, while 42% are dissatisfied with the facilities available and 28%

remained neutral (See Figure 19).

17. More than 90% of the respondents stated that the parks and play areas are very important for them (See Figure 20). Similarly, 52% stated that they are not satisfied with children's local area play facilities and 18% remained neutral while only 14% expressed satisfaction (See Figure 21).
18. Figure 22 shows the predicted use of a park development. 84% of the respondents would like to use the recreational park at least once a week as and when it is available on the University Campus while less than 3% stated they would use it less than once a month or never.
19. A large number of suggestions have been received from the respondents on the desired recreational features in a future park. These suggestions should be taken seriously by the University for possible implementation. Those features most requested are as follows: 77% want grass areas, 64% want swings, slides, climbing frames, etc., 63% want a café, 62% want a lake and/or water features, 59% want picnic and BBQ areas and 57% would like a restaurant (figure 23). Figure 24 indicates the top four choices of facilities and features made by residents.

Summarized Comments from Respondents

A large number of respondents would like to have better swimming pool facilities at the Community Center and they would like the swimming pool to be available all-day and later in the evening especially in the summer. In particular many respondents asked why it is closed in the early-afternoon. In addition, a fair number of comments were made regarding problems faced by some users of the ladies pool, in particular the attitude of the staff. Furthermore, many residents asked for the pool areas and changing rooms to be renovated and new poolside furniture to replace old and damaged items such as chaise lounges.

The library collection of children's books and contemporary adult fiction, especially literary works and bestsellers, should be expanded. In addition, there is a demand for more newspapers and magazines. The possibility of providing educational toys on loan should be investigated as a significant number of residents would like this service.

Many respondents commented on the poor state of many facilities and equipment including many broken or damaged exercise items, and the bowling alley.

Various respondents suggested that the cafeteria should be improved both in terms of the quality and selection of the food and the décor.

A number of residents expressed a strong need for the provision of Arabic classes and some pointed out the benefits of expatriates not just speaking Arabic but having a better understanding of the culture and Islam.

Some concerns over the rowdy behaviour of unsupervised children were expressed and how this was spoiling their enjoyment of the Community Center.

Some respondents stated that charges made for borrowing such items as balls should be discontinued as it creates the wrong impression.

Finally, many respondents congratulated the University on giving them a chance to express their opinions about and level of satisfaction with the Community Center and recreational facilities in general through this survey.

Conclusions and Recommendations

On the basis of the survey results, which are given in Appendix 1, and the site inspection, Appendix 2, the Committee after comprehensive discussions recommends that immediate action should be taken with regard to the following issues:

1. Community Center Swimming Pool.
2. Cafeteria at the Community Center
3. Community Center Library
4. Maintenance and improvement of facilities and equipment
5. Education
6. Recreation park
7. New Reception Hall

1 Swimming Pools

The members observed that the existing operating times of the swimming pool need to be extended in order to serve the Community members better. The swimming pool requires better maintenance especially with regard to better flooring (flooring needs replacement and repainted) in order to overcome avoidable injury to users and also to improve the aesthetics of the pool. The users of swimming pool should be requested not to indulge in smoking, eating and drinking near the swimming pool as this will spoil the atmosphere and create problems for other users. In addition, children under the age of 12 should not be allowed to use the pools unattended. Control of children at the Swimming Pool is the responsibility of the respective parents.

There should be reserved periods of no less than one and half hours for regular lady swimmers, both in the morning and in the evening, during which time no children will be allowed in the pools. However, children above 12 years of age can be allowed during these periods as they do not pose any problems to other users.

Finally, the ladies should respect the dress code imposed by the University. The Committee in its meeting #4 (2004-2005) held on November 2, 2004, discussed this subject at length and recommended that the female users of the Community Center Swimming Pool should dress suitably and wear Bermuda shorts, which should cover the thighs, over a one-piece swimming costume. This dress-code should be clearly communicated to the users of the swimming pool as well as the Community Center personnel responsible for enforcing the swimming pool regulations to avoid any personal judgments and possible miscommunication on the issue. Therefore, the dress code should be strictly implemented for the benefit of the community members as a whole.

This does not mean that the ladies should swim completely dressed. On the contrary, they should dress in such a way that that it does not hurt the feelings and sentiments of other users and at the same time maintain the regulations governing the dress code of the Kingdom.

Recommendations

1. The repair and upgrade of the swimming pool including, for example the pool floor tiles, diving boards, etc.
2. Exclusive times for professional lady swimmers both in the early morning and in the early evening for at least one-and-half hours each. Children below 12 years should not be allowed in the Swimming pool during these designated periods.
3. The approved dress code for women should be adopted and clearly communicated to all users.

2 Cafeteria

In general, the Committee members observed, and the survey results revealed, that the cafeteria should be improved both in terms of quality and selection of food as well as the interior decoration. After taking over the management of the cafeteria by KFUPM Food Services Department, the quality of food served has deteriorated considerably. There is no variety of items available and a limited menu is offered. In addition, the cafeteria is not open in the morning, which means that refreshments are not available to residents using the Community Center during that period. Therefore, the Committee members feel strongly that the catering services at the Community Center Cafeteria should be handed over to private operators such as Meshwar, so as to provide better quality food and to cater for different tastes and requirements of the users. This will attract a large number of people visiting the Center and also provide a more varied and extensive menu to the users.

Recommendations

1. The Cafeteria should offer a wider menu selection that is available throughout the day and be preferably operated by outside catering contractors.
2. The cafeteria should be renovated and the décor and furniture improved in order to provide a more relaxed atmosphere and appealing environment for the enjoyment of quality cuisine.

3 The Library

The Committee noted that the Community Center Library is well used by the Community. However, there is a lack of new books for both children and adults. The existing collection of books should be thoroughly revamped and a large number of new books should be added to the collection. In particular, new literary works by leading authors should be purchased as soon as possible. With regards to this point, the Librarian should be invited to a meeting of the Committee in order to get more information about the existing collections and the need for new additions. Furthermore, faculty members from the English Language Center should be contacted to get specific information on suitable books in English to be purchased for the Center Library and the Islamic & Arabic Department faculty members for adding more literary works in Arabic including religious texts as well as story books and other works. In addition, the KFUPM School Principal could be contacted to obtain his feedback on the purchase of books meant for children in both Arabic and English. The Committee believes the library should have an eclectic, international and contemporary book collection.

In addition to the above, the Library should purchase more educational toys and equipment to be part of its services to the University Community. More journals, periodicals and magazines should be purchased for use of the Community. Since the Community Center Library functions directly under the control of the KFUPM Main Library, the Dean of Library Affairs could play a very important role in providing the Center Library with a better collection of books and journals.

Recommendations

1. The children's section of the Community Center Library should be improved by the acquisition of suitable new books.
2. The provision and method of borrowing of educational toys should be investigated.
3. The adult section of the Community Center library is in urgent need of improvement and an eclectic and international selection of quality modern literature should be acquired.
4. Similar information technology as used by the main library should be introduced so users can search the collection and receive up-to-date information on new acquisitions.

4 Maintenance and improvements of facilities and equipment

The Committee notes the following important observations. The survey revealed that the Community Center facilities need to be upgraded and maintained properly and efficiently. In particular, the Committee notes the poor condition and quality of maintenance of recreational equipment such as exercise machines, billiards tables, and bowling alley. In addition, there is an

urgent need for better utilization of the available facilities and games areas. A study should be conducted into the poor design and layout of some areas of the Community Center so as to improve access and provide new facilities such as a dedicated games room for children. In addition, one of the unused rooms at the Center could be used for conducting small meetings, etc. after fully-equipping it such items as an overhead projector, bulletin board and wide screen for making power point presentations, etc.

The Committee members feel that the Community Center Entrance should be given a total face-lift in order to provide an aesthetic appearance and reflect a more relaxing environment. The Entrance and Reception Area should look impressive, attractive and pleasant.

Furthermore, in response to the demand from residents for the availability of items such as carpets, and furniture, the Community Center should provide carpets, chairs and other furniture items for conducting parties, etc. to residents for use in their houses for a nominal fee.

Recommendations

1. The Projects and maintenance Department should provide continuous maintenance of the Community Center and upgrade equipment and facilities as stated in this report.
2. A study should be conducted into the better utilization of space, improved access to certain areas and the construction of a Play Hall for children.
3. The main entrance should be redesigned to be aesthetically pleasing and majestic in keeping with the importance of this University facility.
4. The Community Center should provide carpets, chairs and other furniture items for residents for use in their houses for a nominal fee.

5 Education

The members observed that the Community Center should not only be treated as a place for relaxation, but it should be used as a place for learning. Therefore, the Center should try to provide more educational services to the Community such as conducting Arabic language classes, sports classes, martial arts, painting, swimming classes, etc. In addition, the Community Center should play an active role in offering some special programs including language classes, drawing/painting classes, etc., which will go a long way in fulfilling the long-cherished desires of some campus residents to spend their time more productively and purposefully.

Furthermore, the Center should arrange regular visits to various historic places and cultural attractions in Eastern Province such as Tarut, Al-Hassa, Qatif, Hoffuf, etc. for the benefit of the Community members.

Recommendations

1. The Community Center should play an active role in the provision of educational and recreational courses and classes as desired by the residents.
2. The Community Center, in conjunction with Public Relations, should organize regular visits to historic and cultural sites so that the expatriate community in particular will have a better understanding and appreciation of the rich culture, customs and traditions of Saudi Arabia.

6 Recreation Park

According to the survey results, a large number of suggestions have been received from the respondents on the desired recreational features in a future park, which is to be provided by the University. These suggestions should be taken seriously by the University for possible implementation. Those features most requested are as follows: a large number of people want grass areas, swings, slides, climbing frames, etc. a lake and/or water features, picnic and BBQ areas, and a café and/or restaurant.

Recommendation

1. The University should construct a Recreation Park for the benefit of campus community where they will have extra recreational facilities which will complement the services available at the Community Center.

7 New Reception Hall

Mr. Abdulrahman Abullief, Director, Community Center, informed the members that at present there is only one banquet hall available at the Community Center which is heavily used for holding banquets, parties, social gatherings, marriages, etc. Since there is no specific place earmarked for catering to the needs of, but not exclusively, important guests and distinguished visitors to the University, it is very important to have a dedicated Reception Hall beside the existing Banquet Hall. There is a space available near the Banquet Hall which can be utilized to construct the proposed Reception Hall.

Mr. Abullief stated that he sent a report emphasizing the need to construct the Reception Hall and a copy of the report is attached in **Appendix-2**.

Recommendation

1. The Committee supports the Community Center Director's request to construct an exclusive Reception Hall beside the existing Banquet Hall at the Community Center. The proposed Reception Hall will be to receive, entertain and hold meetings with visiting important guests including Ministers, Ambassadors, and other dignitaries of the University.

Appendix 1

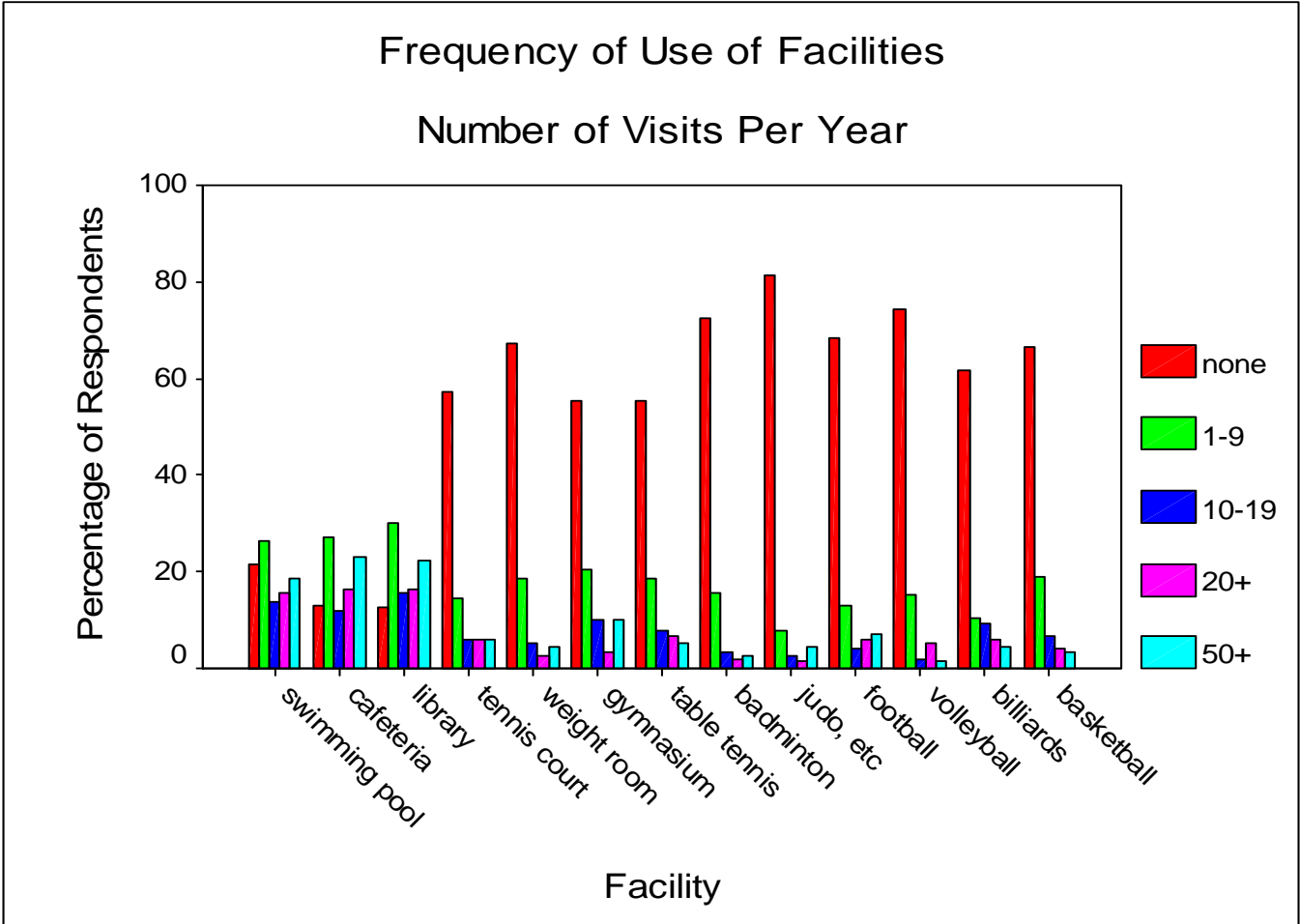


Figure 1: Frequency of use of Community Center facilities. Residents were asked to state approximately how many times they or their family used the listed Community Center facilities in the last 12 months.

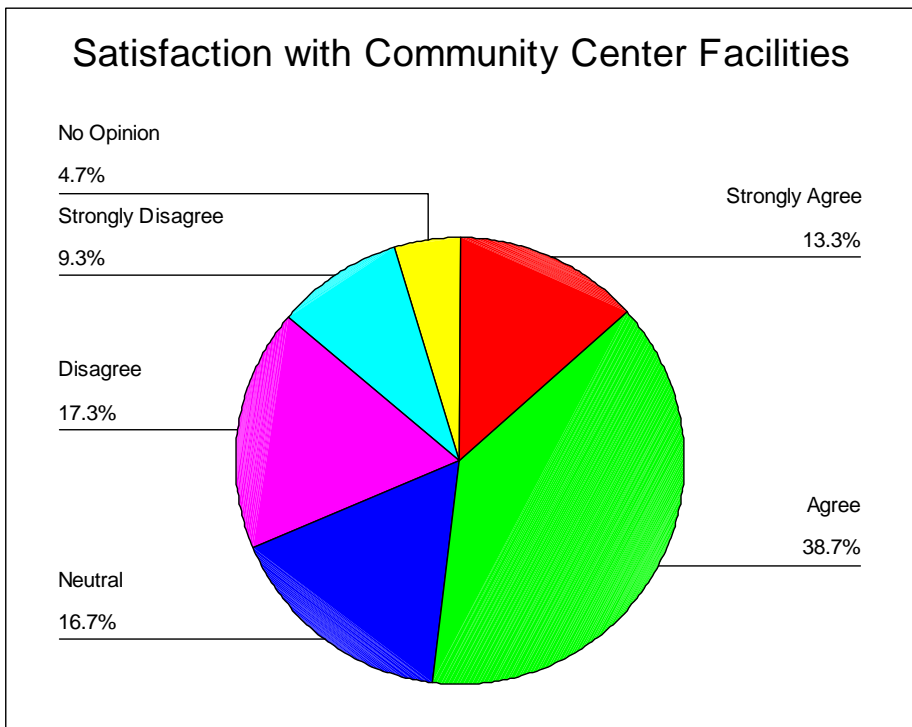


Figure 2: Satisfaction with Community Center. Residents were asked to what degree the Community Center facilities satisfied their and their family needs.

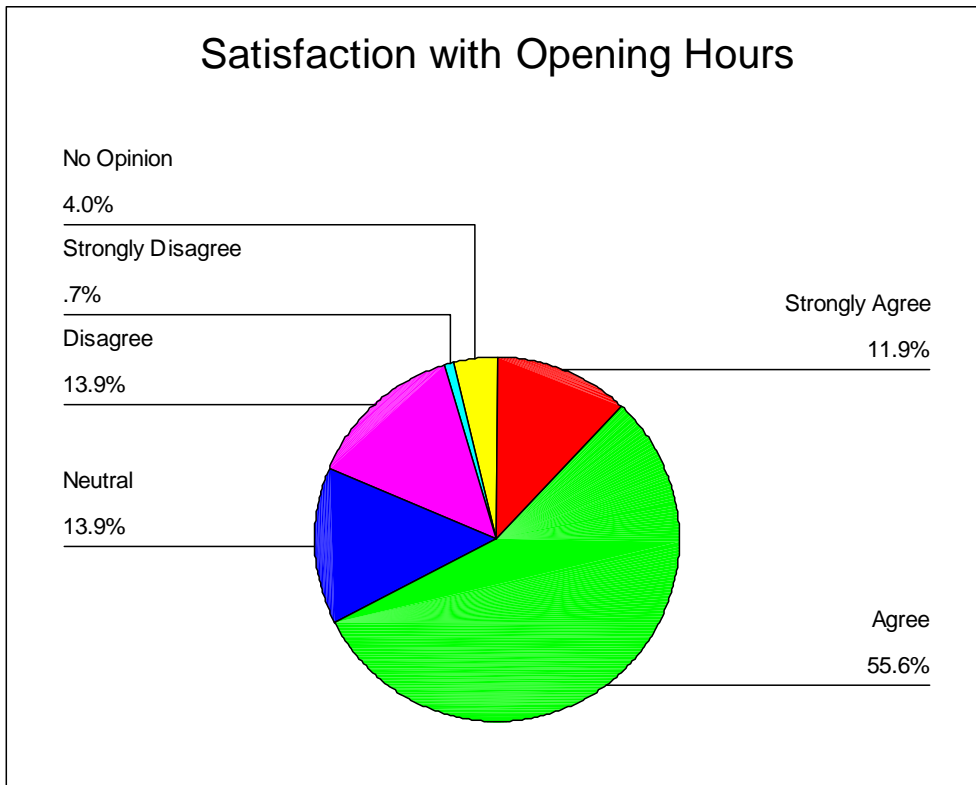


Figure 3: Satisfaction with the opening hours of the Community Center. Residents were asked whether the Community Center operating hours were satisfactory for their and their family needs.

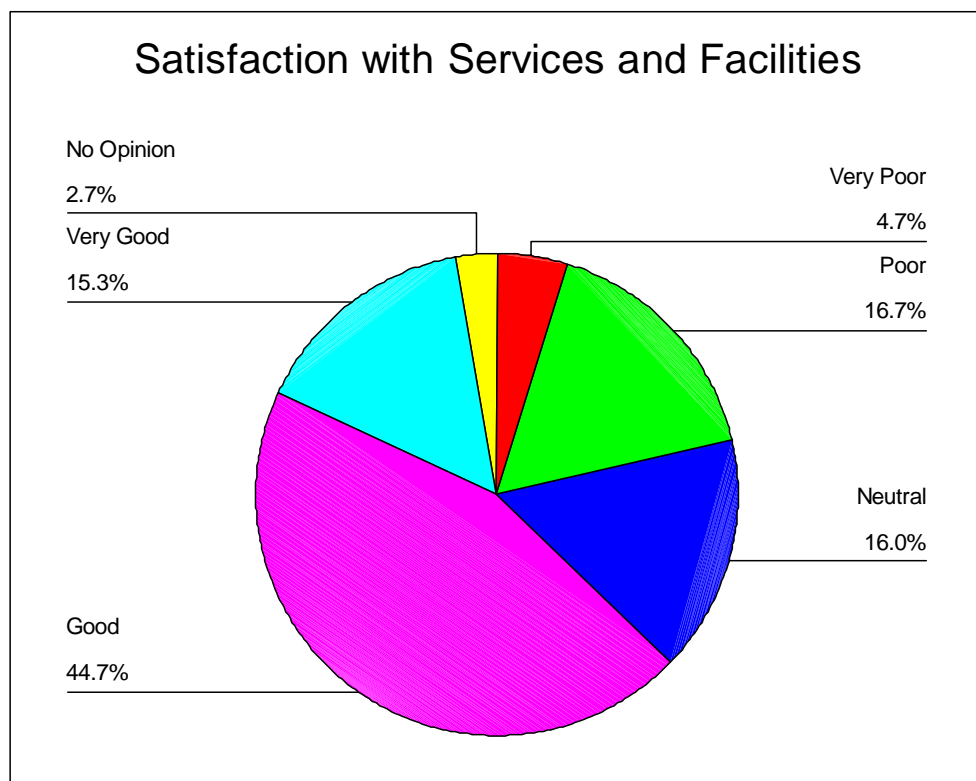


Figure 4: Ranked satisfaction with the services and facilities of the Community Center. Residents were asked to rate the services and facilities of the Community Center.

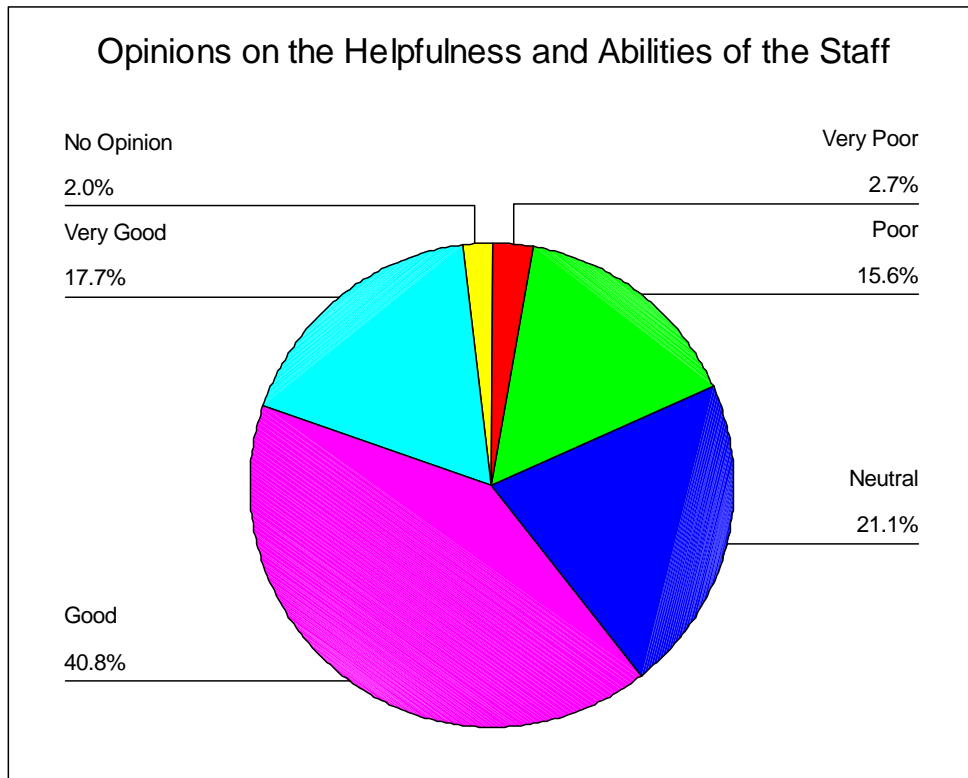


Figure 5: Ratings of the helpfulness and abilities of the Community Center staff. Residents were asked to rate the helpfulness and abilities of the Community Center staff.

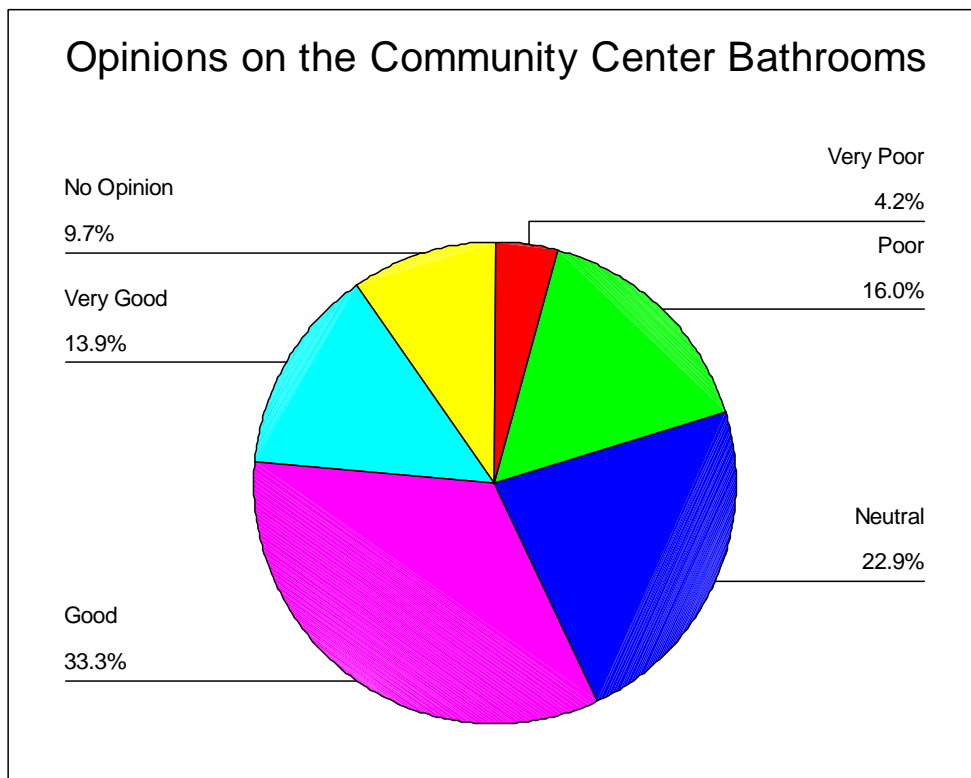


Figure 6: Respondents ratings on the Community Center bathrooms / restrooms. Residents were asked to rate their satisfaction with the bathrooms/restrooms of the Community Center.

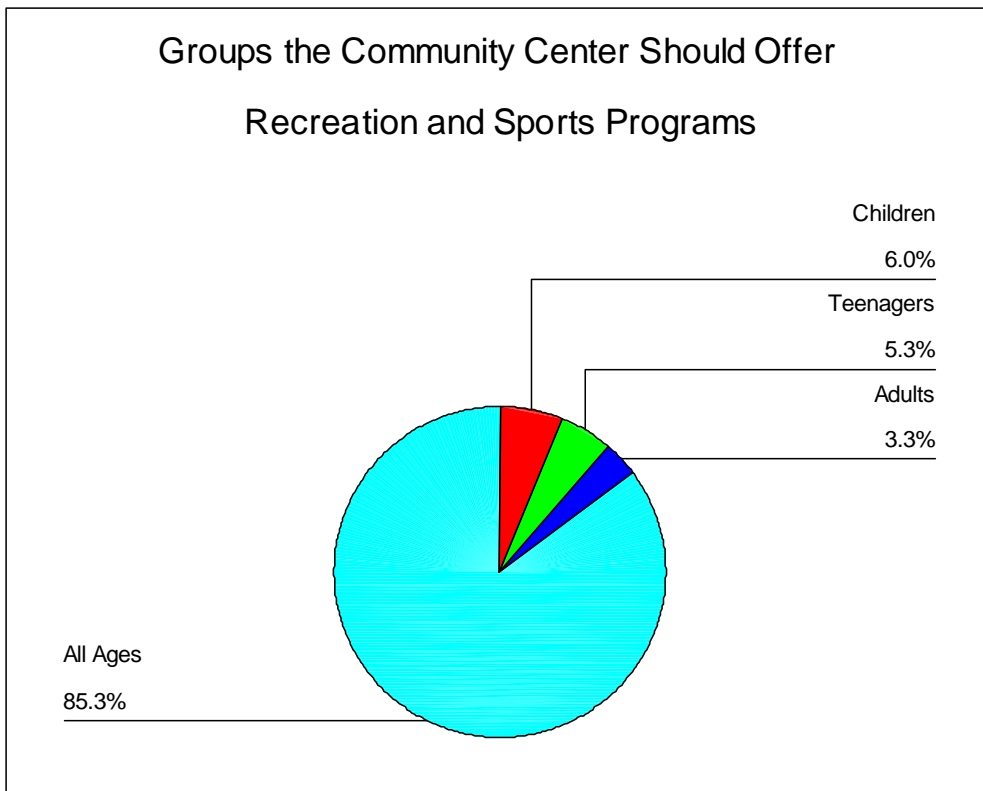


Figure 7: Age groups to which the Community Center should offer recreation and sports programs. Residents were asked which age group(s) the Community Center should cater for.

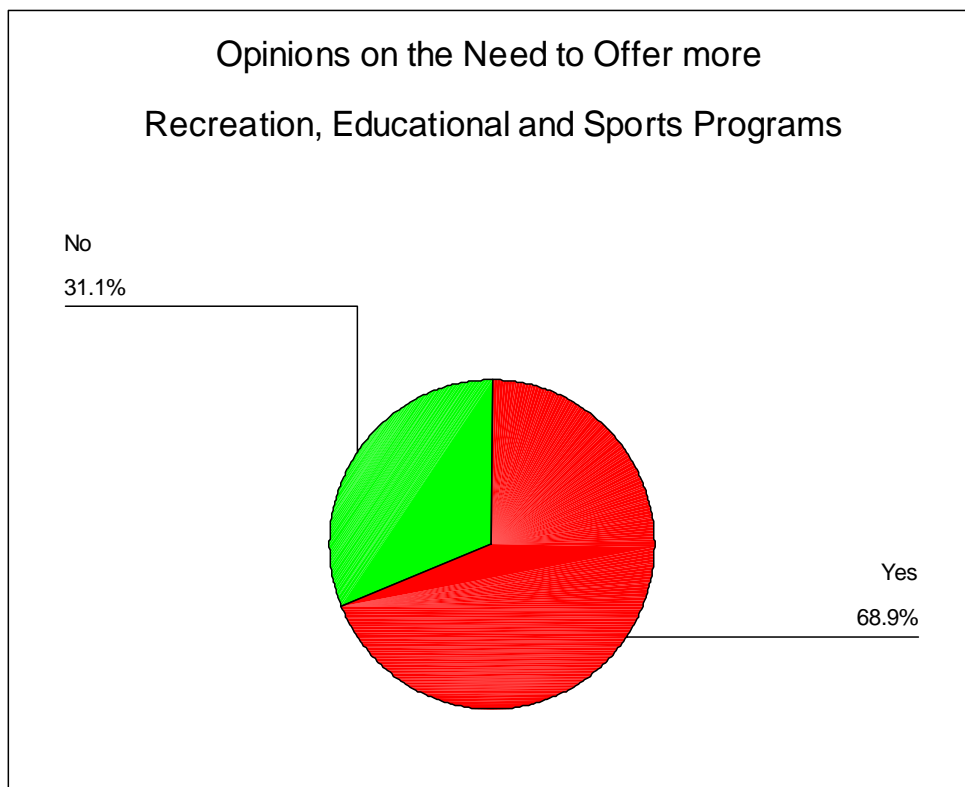


Figure 8: Residents were asked whether the Community Center needs to offer more recreation, educational and sports programs.

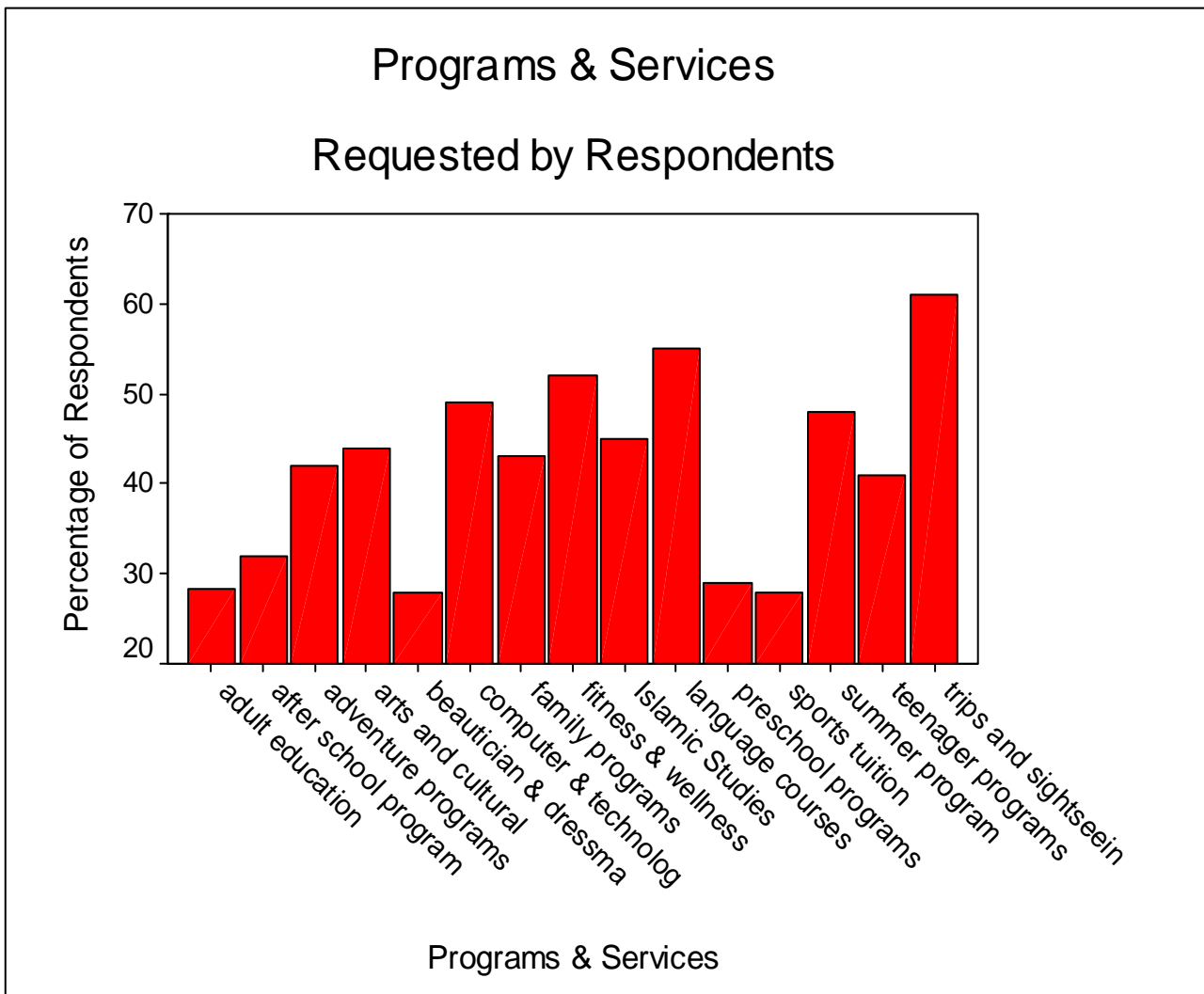


Figure 9: Programs and services requested by respondents. Residents were asked to indicate which programs/services (see below) they would like to see offered by the Community Center.

- | | | | |
|---|--------------------------------|----|------------------------|
| 1 | adult education | 9 | Islamic Studies |
| 2 | adventure programs | 10 | language courses |
| 3 | after school programs | 11 | preschool programs |
| 4 | arts and cultural programs | 12 | sports tuition |
| 5 | beautician and dressmaking | 13 | summer programs |
| 6 | computer & technology programs | 14 | teenager programs |
| 7 | family programs | 15 | trips and sight-seeing |
| 8 | fitness & wellness programs | | |

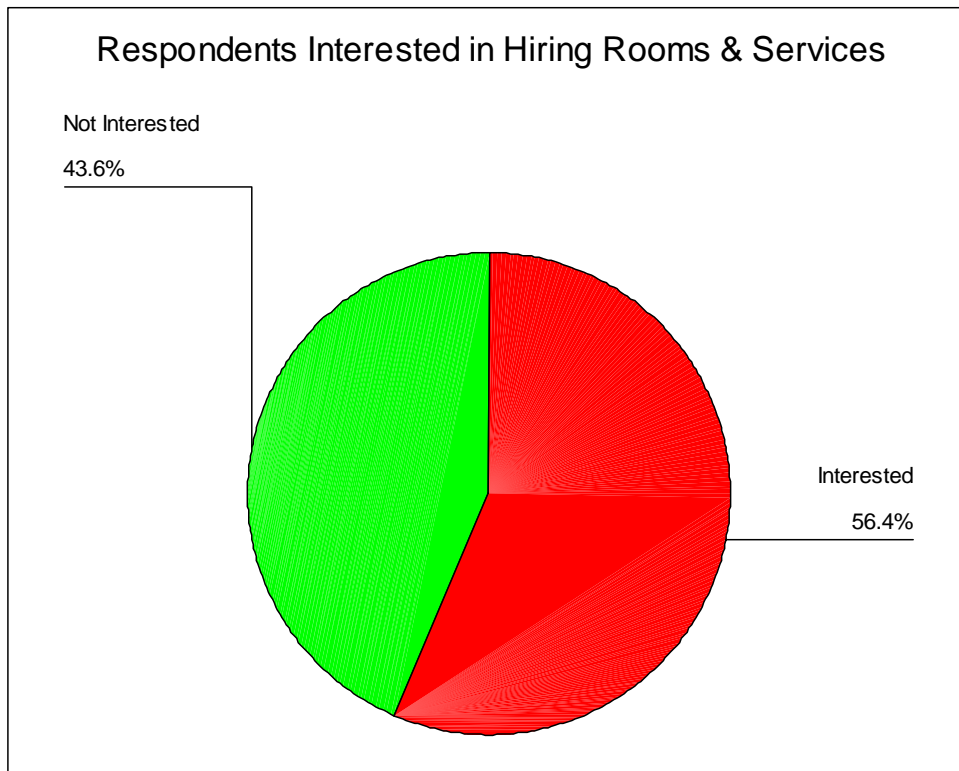


Figure 10: Respondents interested in hiring rooms and services. Residents were asked if they are interested in hiring rooms and services for private parties, weddings, etc in the Community Center.

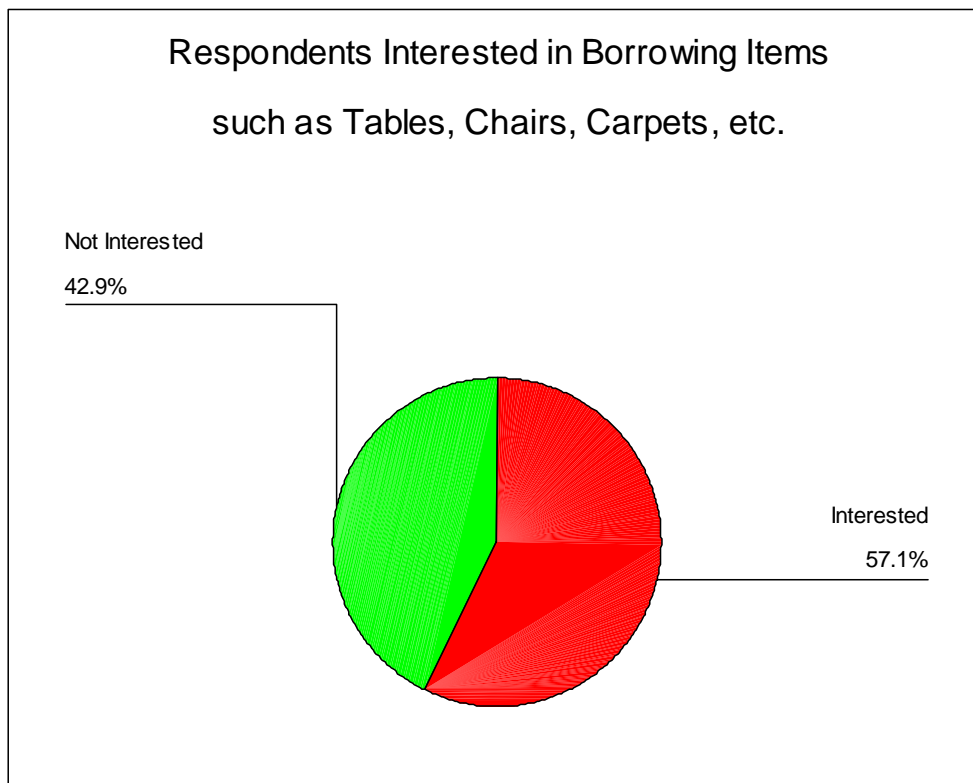


Figure 11: Respondents interested in borrowing such items as carpets, tables, chairs, lighting, etc. from the Community Center.

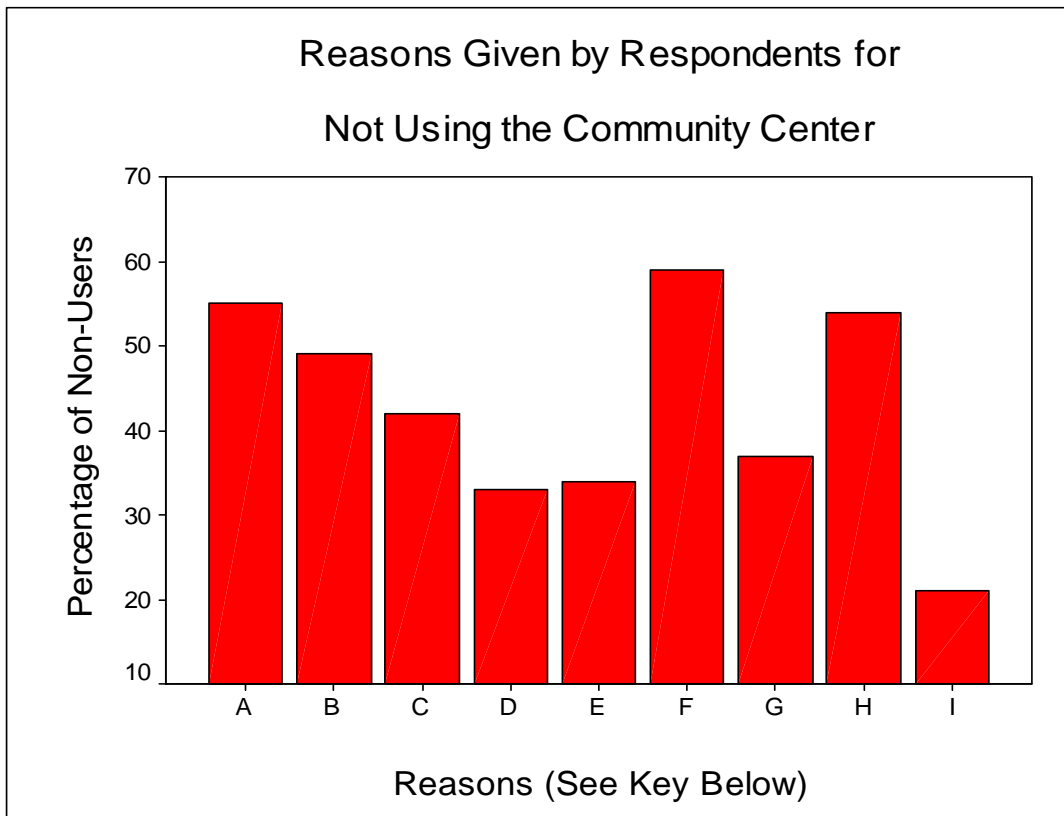


Figure 12: Reasons for respondents not using the Community Center (**see key below**). Residents who do not use the Community Center were asked to state why they or other family members do not use the Community Center.

- A It does not have the required facilities or services
- B There's not enough information on what is available
- C I/We go elsewhere for recreation and/or sport
- D There are transportation problem
- E I/We don't have anyone to accompany me
- F I'm/We're not interested
- G It is too crowded
- H I/We don't know enough about it
- I I/We don't have time

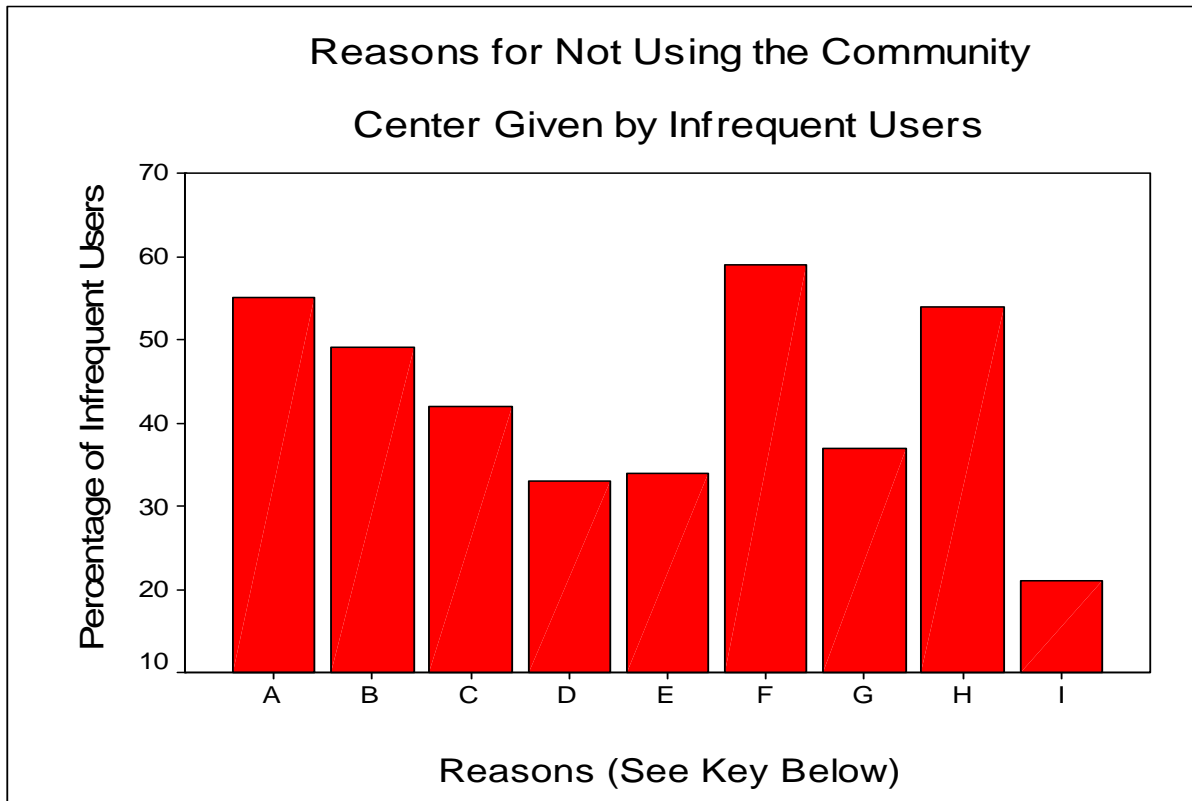


Figure 13: Reasons for respondents infrequently using the Community Center (see key below). Residents who use the Community Center infrequently were asked to state why they or other family members do not use the Community Center on a regular basis.

- A Better information on what is available
- B A warmer welcome or friendlier staff
- C Improved transportation or access
- D Help with childcare/crèche facilities
- E Less crowded in general
- F Better facilities or services
- G Longer opening hours
- H Better equipment
- I People to go with

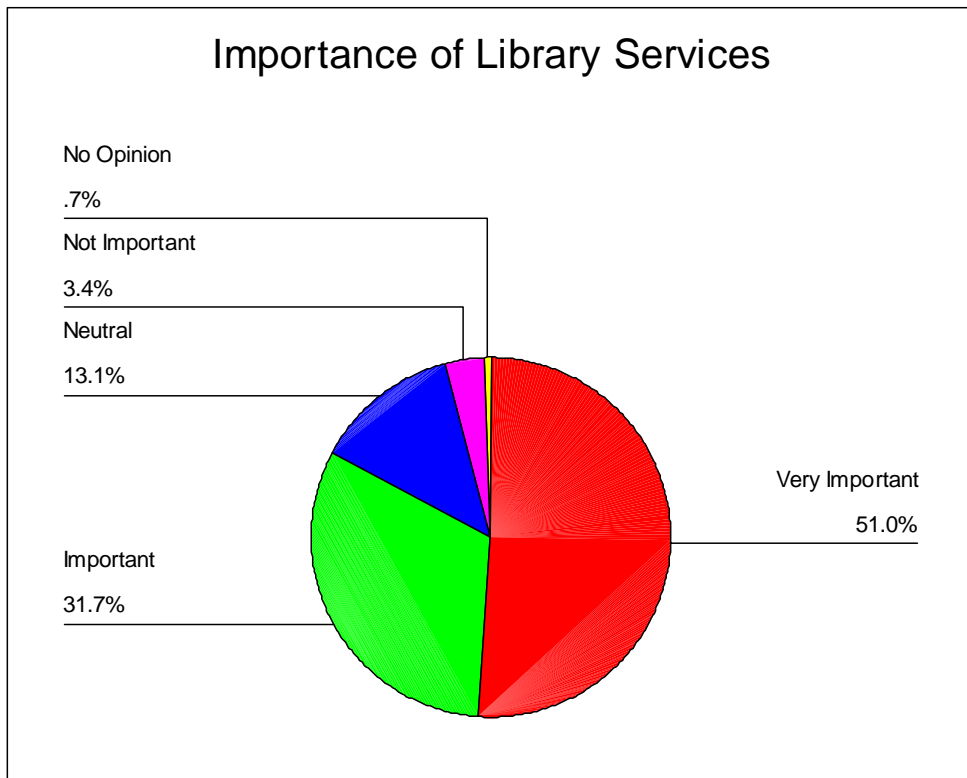


Figure 14: Importance of library services to respondents. Residents were asked to state the level of importance they attach to the availability of library services.

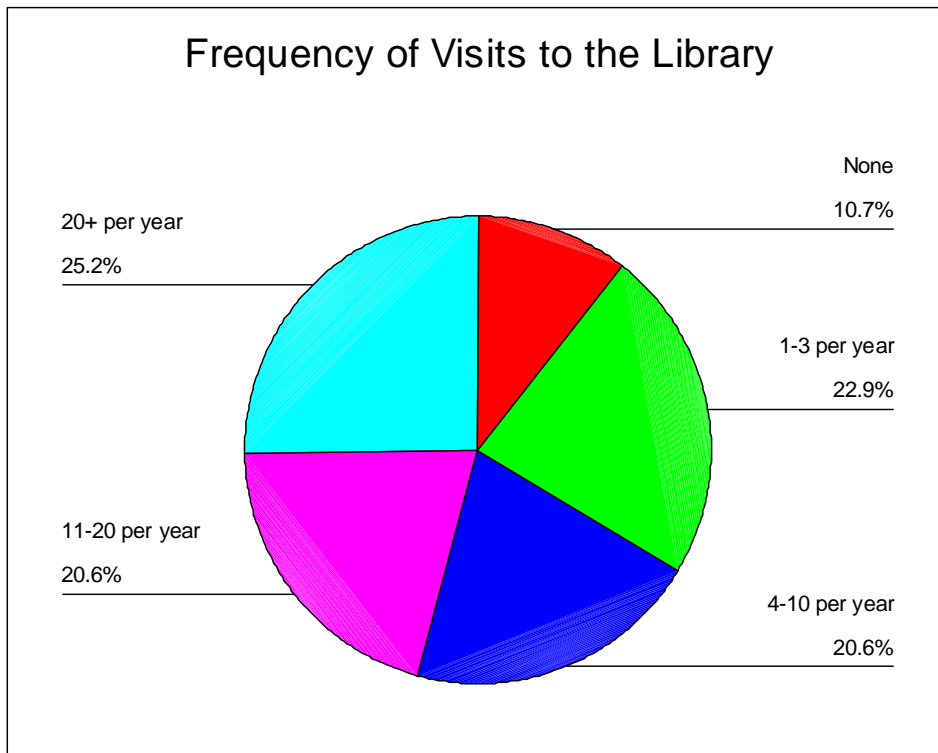


Figure 15: Frequency of visits to the library. Residents were asked to state the total number of visits that they and/or other members of their family made to the Library during the last twelve months.

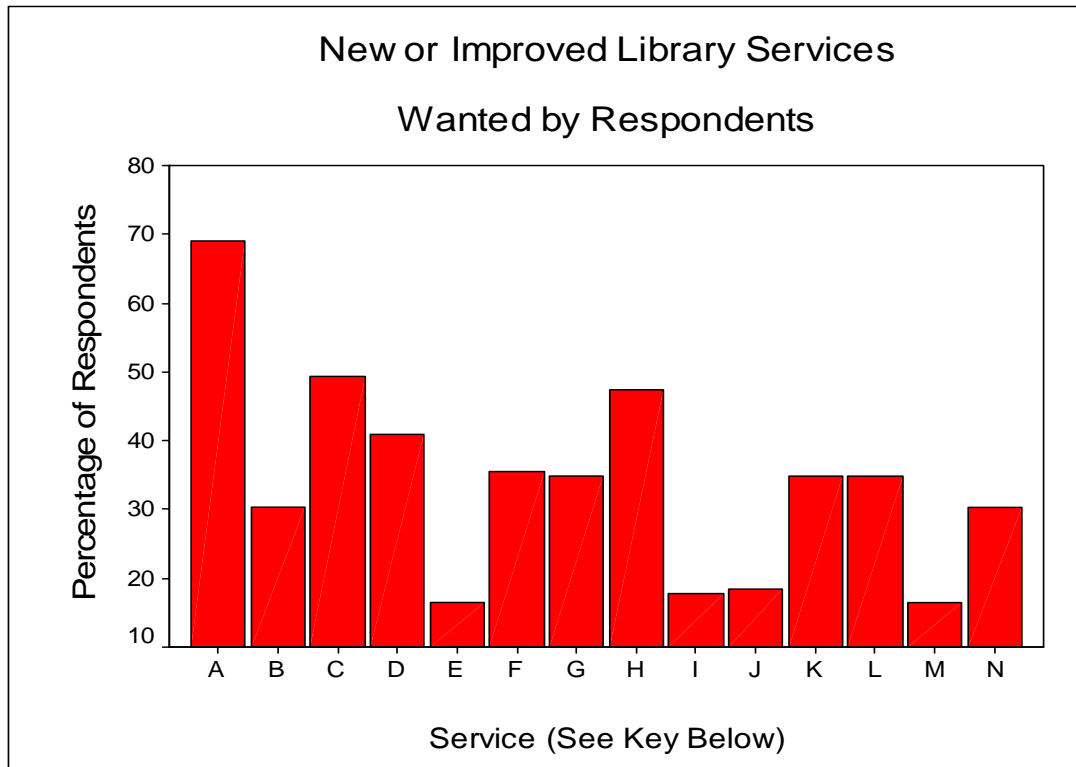


Figure 16: New and improved services requested by respondents (see key below). Residents were asked which new or improved library services they would like to see.

- A more new books
- B more books-on-CD
- C more children's books
- D CDs and videos
- E more large print books
- F more best sellers
- G more newspapers
- H more magazines
- I more non-fiction/reference
- J more fiction
- K more Internet computers
- L educational toys for loan
- M music CDs and tapes
- N additional library hours

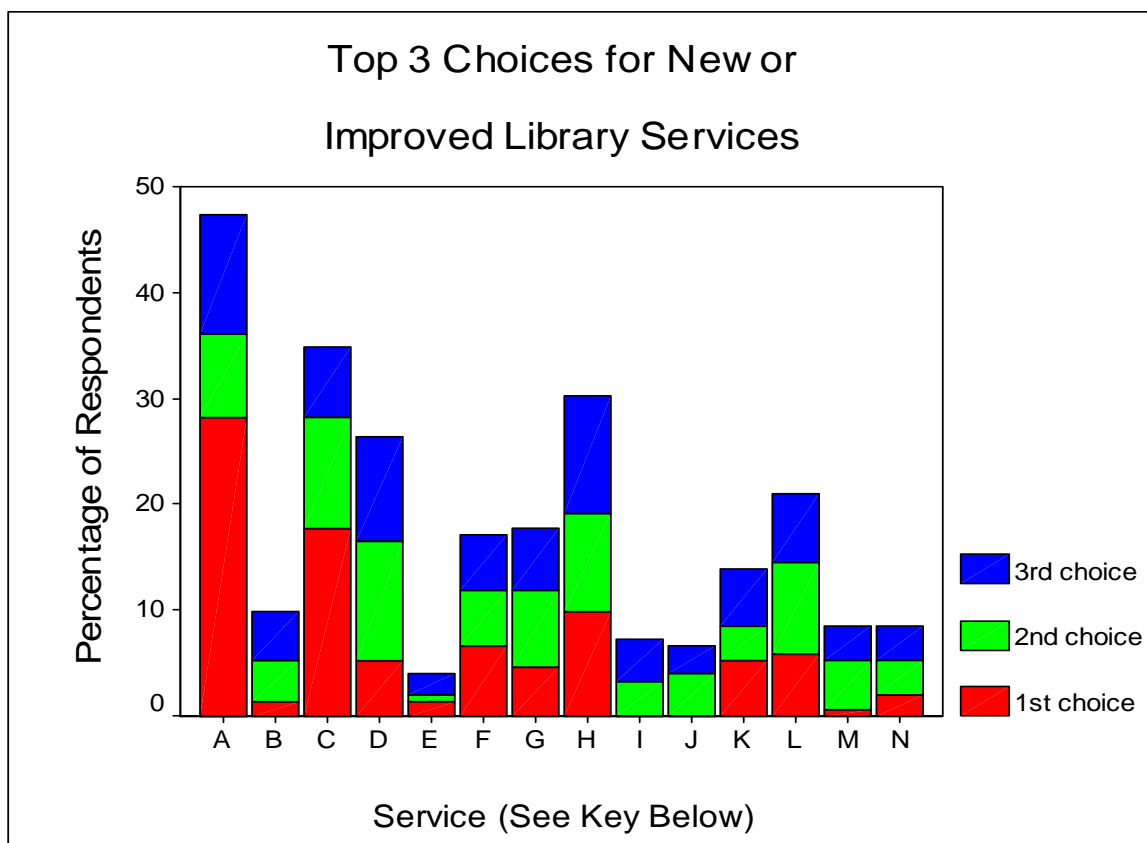


Figure 17: Top 3 choices for new and improved services requested by respondents (see key below). Of the services selected shown in Figure 16, residents were asked to list their top three choices.

- A more new books
- B more books-on-CD
- C more children's books
- D CDs and videos
- E more large print books
- F more best sellers
- G more newspapers
- H more magazines
- I more non-fiction/reference
- J more fiction
- K more Internet computers
- L educational toys for loan
- M music CDs and tapes
- N additional library hours

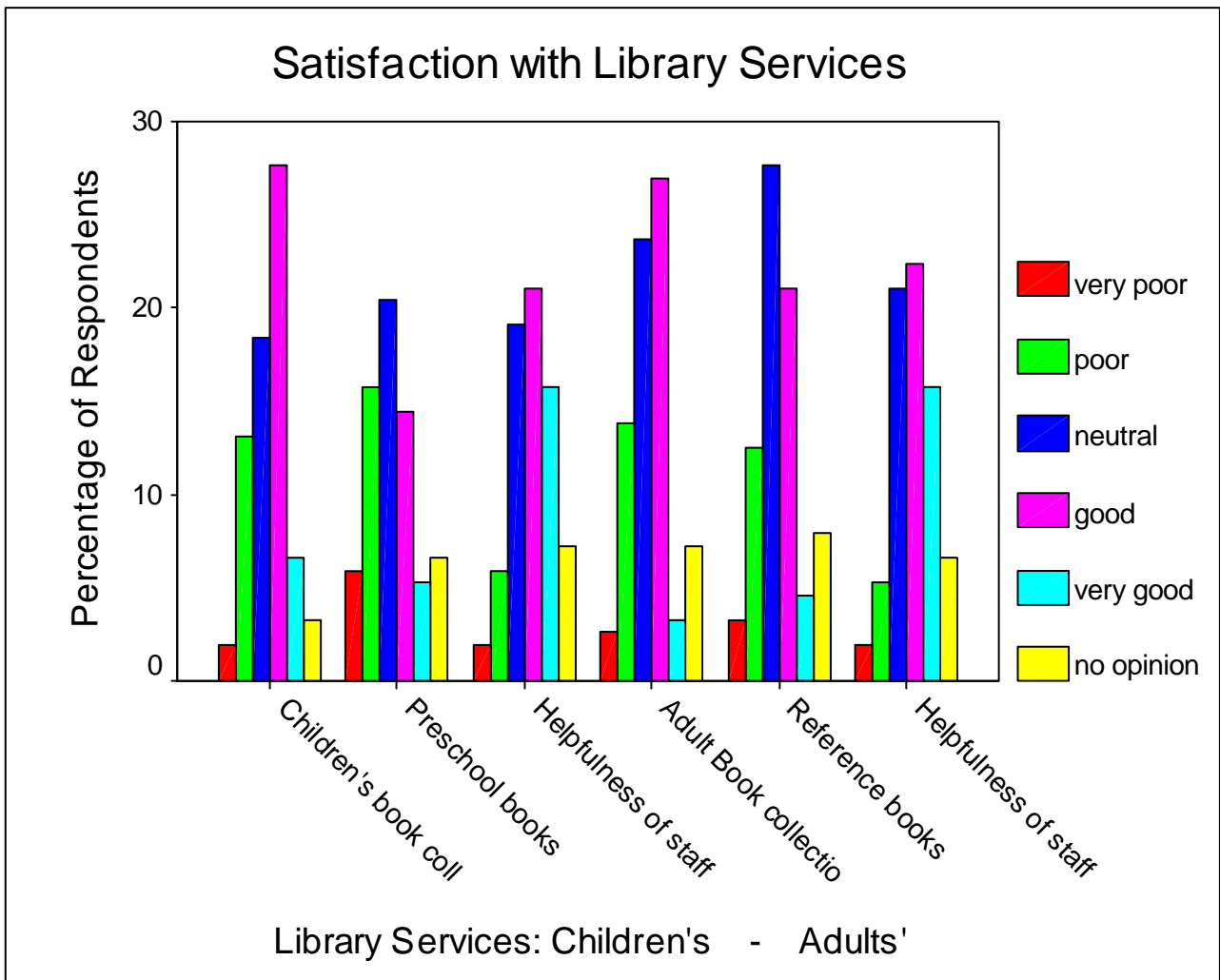


Figure 18: Ratings of library services. Residents were asked to rate the following library services:

Children's Services:

- Book collection
- Preschool books
- Helpfulness of staff

Adult Services:

- Book collection
- Reference services
- Helpfulness of staff

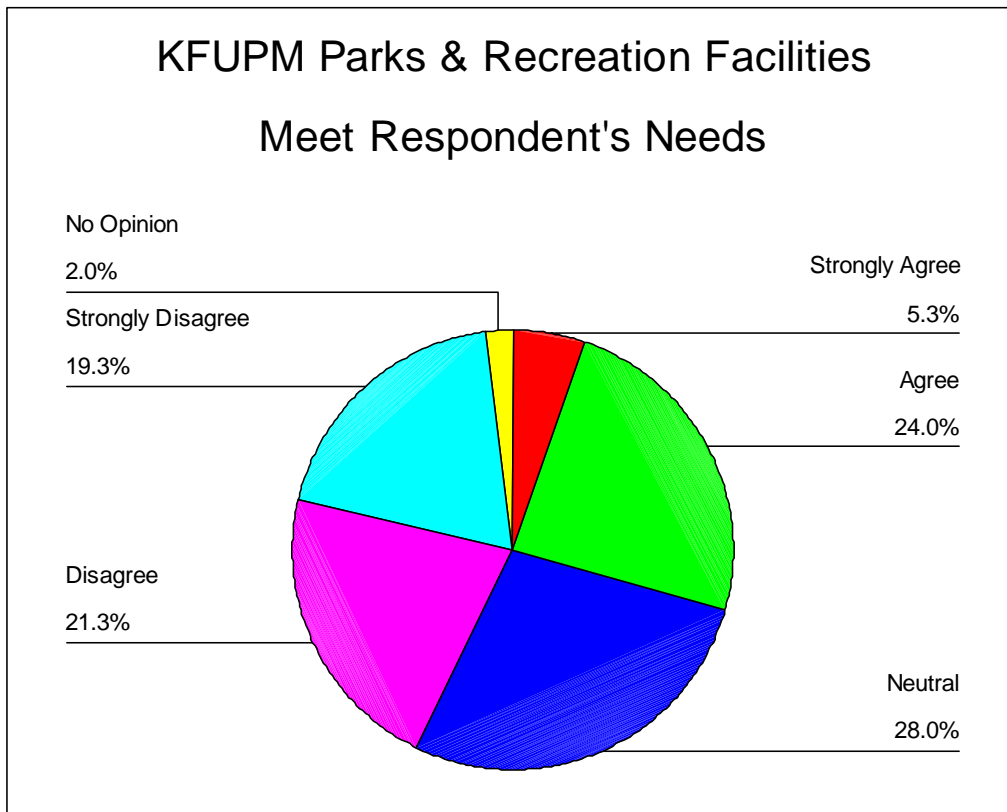


Figure 19: Satisfaction with KFUPM parks and recreation facilities. Residents were asked if, generally, KFUPM parks and recreation facilities (play areas, parks, picnic areas, etc.) satisfied their and/or the needs of their family

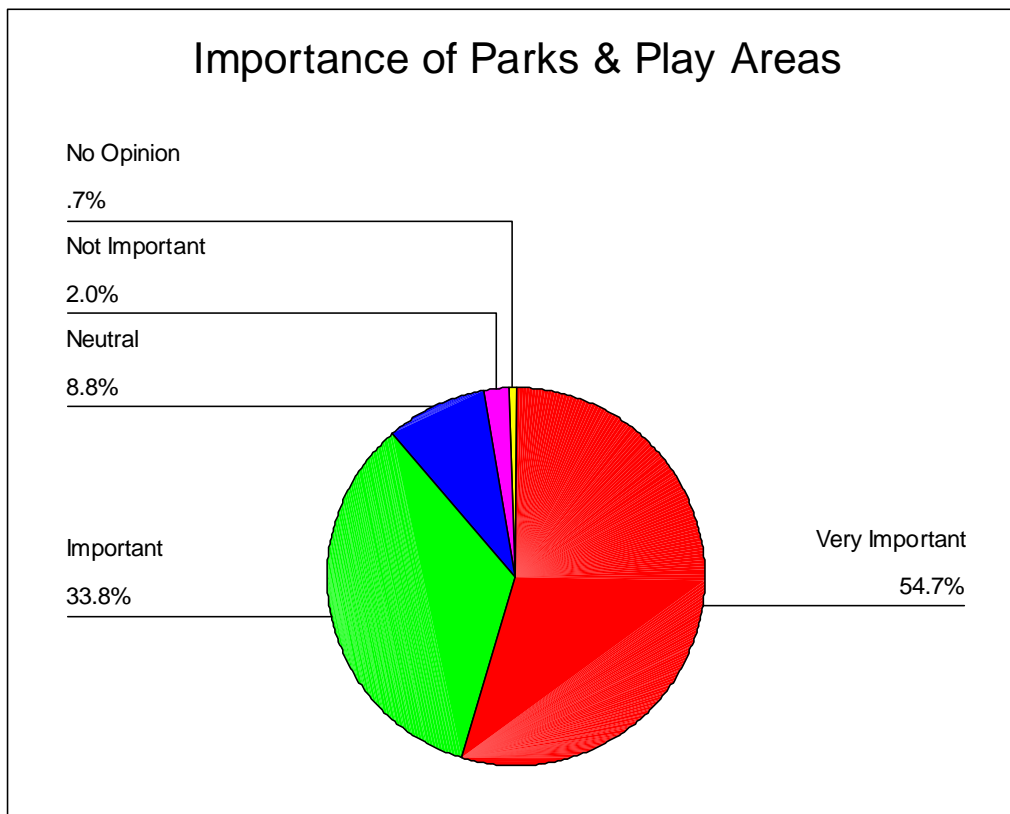


Figure 20: Importance of parks and play areas. Residents were asked how important the availability of parks and play areas are to them and their family.

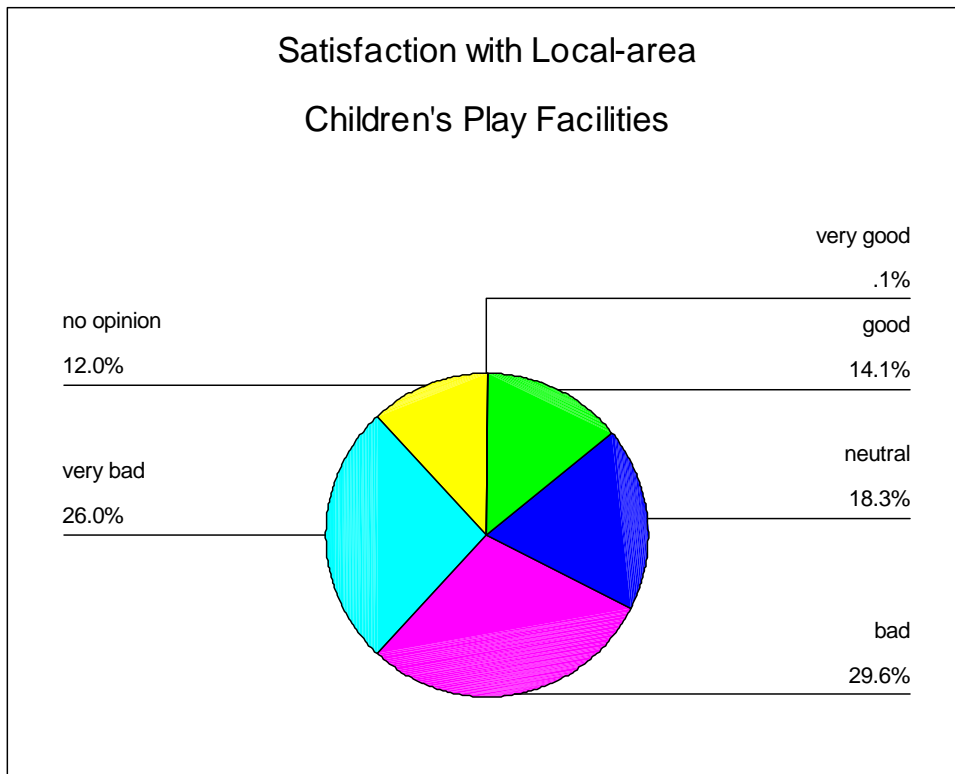


Figure 21: Satisfaction with children's local-area play facilities. Residents were asked, in general, how they rated their children's local-area play facilities.

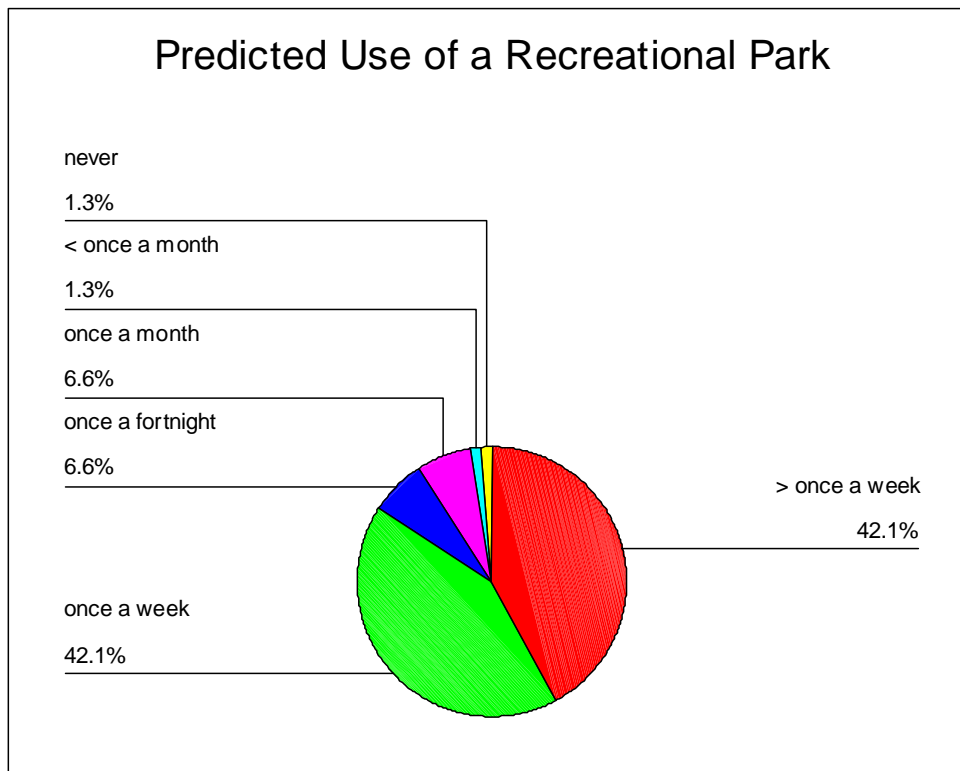


Figure 22: Predicted use of a recreational park according to respondents

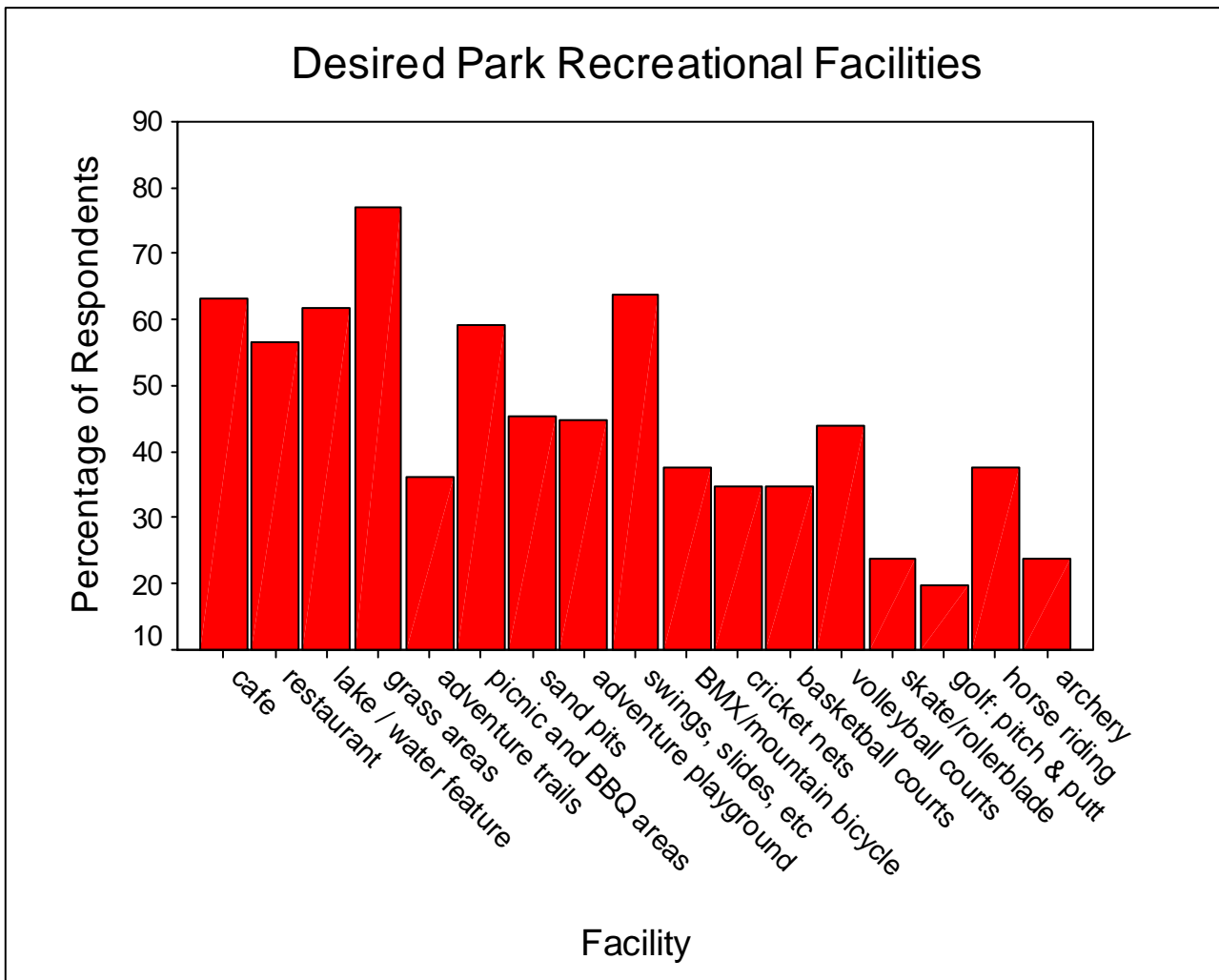


Figure 23: Desired recreational features in a future park development. Residents were asked to list what type of recreational facilities they would like to see included in a future park development. The list of possible features was as follows:

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| 1 café | 10 BMX/mountain bicycle riding area |
| 2 restaurant | 11 cricket nets |
| 3 lake and/or water features | 12 basketball courts |
| 4 grass areas | 13 volleyball courts |
| 5 adventure trails | 14 skateboard/rollerblade park |
| 6 picnic and BBQ areas | 15 golf: pitch and put |
| 7 sand pits for young children | 16 horse riding |
| 8 adventure playground | 17 archery |
| 9 swings, slides, climbing frames, etc | |

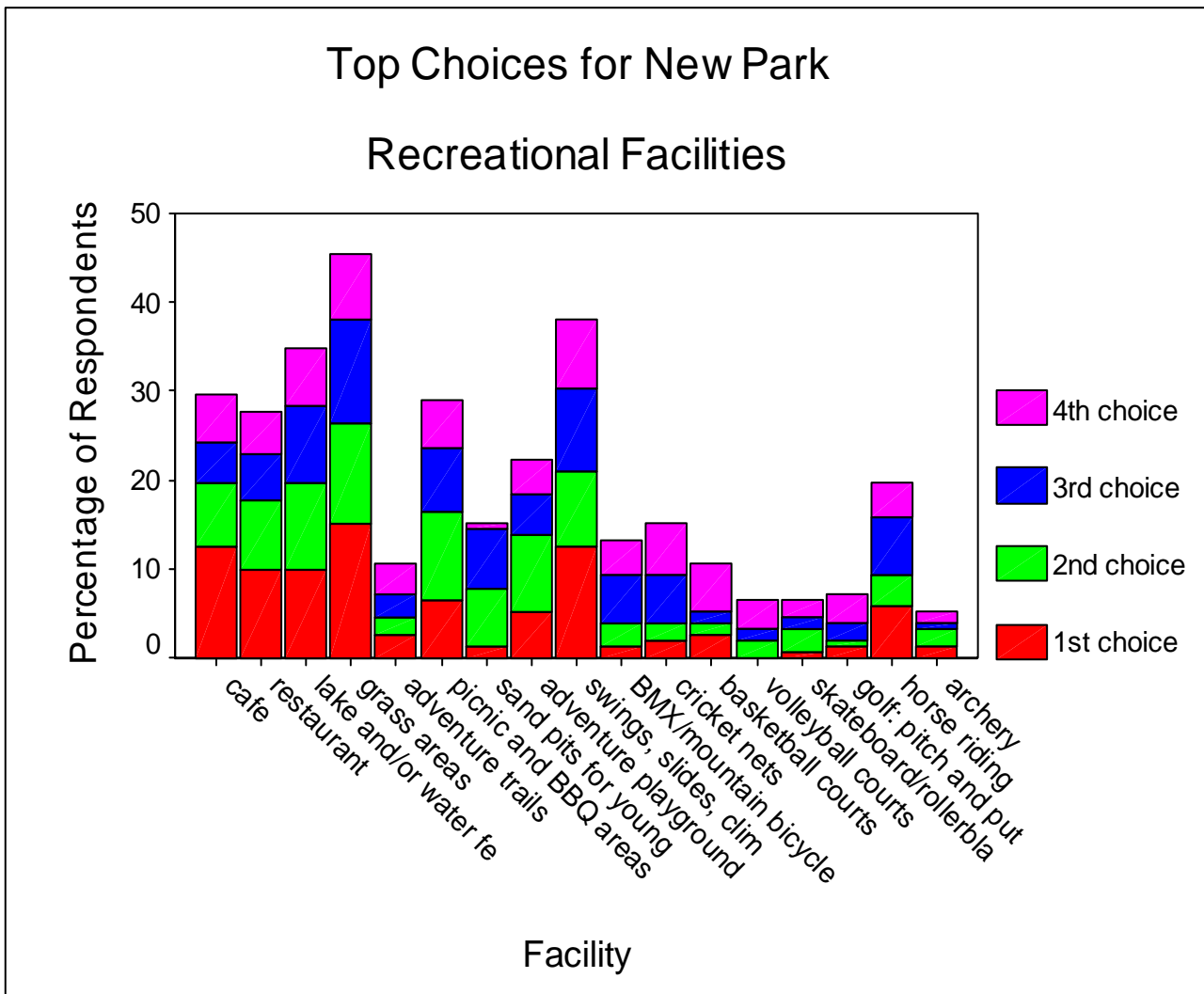


Figure 24: Choices of recreational facilities in a future park development. Of the choices selected shown in Figure 23, residents were asked to list their top four choices of facilities that they would like to see included in a new park development.

- | | |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| 1 café | 10 BMX/mountain bicycle riding area |
| 2 restaurant | 11 cricket nets |
| 3 lake and/or water features | 12 basketball courts |
| 4 grass areas | 13 volleyball courts |
| 5 adventure trails | 14 skateboard/rollerblade park |
| 6 picnic and BBQ areas | 15 golf: pitch and put |
| 7 sand pits for young children | 16 horse riding |
| 8 adventure playground | 17 archery |
| 9 swings, slides, climbing frames, etc | |