

A Study of Users Opinion towards Information Resources in College Libraries of Dakshina Kannada

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Abstract

The survey investigates the users' opinions about the information resources available in the college libraries of Dakshina Kannada. A total of 266 population of post-graduate students and faculty members were selected from 18-degree colleges in Dakshina Kannada district. The results revealed that most faculty members visit the library daily for various purposes. Faculty members believe that books, journals and e-books are important information resources for their teaching and research activities, while theses/dissertations/reports are the most important resources for students. Furthermore, the respondents were moderately satisfied with the information resources available in their library. Based on these findings, some suggestions are given to increase user satisfaction with libraries. Most of the user's face problems such as a smaller number of computers to access e-resources, lack of updated resources, poor Internet connectivity and lack of skills to search e-resources. Most users believe that user education programmes definitely increase the effective use of the library. Therefore, librarians should conduct regular training programmes for users to maximise the use of library resources.

Keywords: User Opinion, Information Resources, College Libraries, Dakshina Kannada, Post-Graduate Students, Faculty Members

Introduction

Information is considered the main source for the development of mankind and the progress of a nation. A

library is an information centre for teaching, learning and research programmes and an integral part of the all-around progress of the college. The role of college libraries is immense in fulfilling the purpose of a college education. NEP 2020 focuses on building a comprehensive, application-oriented education system that prepares students with significant priority on skill enhancement for the future. "National Education Policy 2020 envisions an India-centric education system that contributes directly to transforming our nation sustainably into an equitable and vibrant knowledge society by providing high-quality education to all" (Asif & Singh, 2022). The National Education Policy has given greater importance and responsibility to libraries in terms of student skill-based learning. Libraries develop a sense of liability in the quest for knowledge and encourage users to learn, acquire knowledge, evaluate and identify new things. The research was conducted to evaluate the opinions of post-graduate (PG) commerce students and faculty members towards use of library resources in Dakshina Kannada degree colleges.

Literature Review

Several studies in the domain of academic libraries explored the utilisation of electronic resources, providing valuable insights into users' behaviours and preferences. Jan and Ganaie (2016) revealed that Social Science students exhibited a preference for print resources due to limited awareness, underscoring the necessity for orientation programmes. Kannappanavar and Madhu's (2016) research on scientists highlighted self-study methods and skill development for effective use of electronic resources. Alagu and Thanuskodi (2018)

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found low awareness and moderate satisfaction levels, indicating the need for enhanced awareness initiatives. Kumar and Sharma (2019) observed a growing reliance on electronic collections, emphasizing challenges faced by library professionals and proposing regular training sessions. Saini and Kaur's (2019) study emphasised the importance of leveraging electronic resources to enhance user satisfaction, highlighting the adaptation of libraries to digital resources.

Alokuk's (2020) research at a university revealed a high library usage rate, with students primarily visiting for personal study, internet access and library resources. Narasappa and Dharani Kumar (2020) examined pre-university college libraries, finding mixed user perceptions, with some services being rated poorly. Patrick and Oyovwe-Tinuoye (2020) studied UG students and identified areas of satisfaction like library orientation but dissatisfaction with internet facilities and e-services. Chayal and Lalita's (2021) joint survey highlighted user satisfaction with print resources but discontentment with subscription-based e-sources. Dhanraju et al. (2021) explored user opinions in Engineering College Libraries, revealing daily library visits and satisfaction with working hours and resource availability. Veer and Panda's (2021) study focused on e-resource usage during the pandemic, indicating awareness and effective use among library users. In another work, Veer et al. (2022) analysed library resources at Dronacharya College of Engineering, finding a need for updated materials and improved internet access. Pandey's (2023) comparative study of Special Libraries and Information Centres emphasized the impact of marketing and technology on user perception and services.

These studies collectively illuminate various aspects of library usage, satisfaction and challenges across different educational contexts, providing valuable insights for improving library services and resources.

Objectives of the Study

- To understand the importance of library resources by users under study;
- To find out users' satisfaction with available information resources;

- To examine the difficulties faced by respondents while accessing resources from the library; and
- To know the opinion of respondents regarding the arrangement of information resources in the library.

Research Methodology

Questionnaire method was used to gather information from PG commerce faculty members and students of degree college libraries in Dakshina Kannada District. Total 300 questionnaires were circulated to the users of 19 selected colleges, in which 266 responses were collected with a response rate of 88.7% (266/300). The data were analysed and presented using SPSS software.

Scope of the Study

This survey is limited to faculty members and students of the Postgraduate Commerce Department of Degree Colleges in Dakshina Kannada District. A total of 266 users from 7 government and 11 private degree colleges of Dakshina Kannada district were selected for the study. The study does not include autonomous and constituent colleges of Dakshina Kannada district and other PG and undergraduate courses. The study not covered physical education, speech and hearing colleges, education colleges and hotel management colleges.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

The accumulated data were analysed and interpreted by SPSS software. The tables are presented below:

College-Wise Distribution of Questionnaires

There are five types of affiliated colleges, namely constituent colleges, autonomous colleges, government colleges and private aided and unaided colleges. But in this study only two types of colleges have been selected that is government and private colleges. Government colleges are fully managed by the government at the central or state level and are affiliated with universities for degree structures whereas colleges which do not get any funds or aid from the government are called private colleges. Table 1 provides data on the number of colleges.

Table 1: College Wise Questionnaires Distribution

Colleges	Numbers	Questionnaire Distributed	Response Received	Percentage (%)
Government College	7	135	121	89.6
Private College	11	165	145	87.9
Total	18	300	266	88.7

As Table 1 shows 135 questionnaires were distributed to seven government colleges of which 121 returned with an 89.6% response rate. Total 165 questionnaires were distributed to 11 private colleges and 145 were collected back with a response rate of 88%. The overall response rate was 88.7% across all 18-degree colleges in the Dakshina Kannada district.

Category Wise Responses

The users were divided into two groups like PG students and faculty members. The researcher collected data on the number of users in the survey colleges and presented in Table 2.

Table 2: Category Wise Distribution of Questionnaires

Colleges	Category		Total (No=266)
	Faculty Members (No=63)	Postgraduate Students (No=203)	
Government	29 (46)	92 (45.3)	121(45.5)
Private	34(54)	111 (54.7)	145 (54.5)
Total	63 (100)	203 (100)	266(100)

Note: Numbers shown in parentheses are percentages.

Table 2 depicts that the responses from government colleges were 92 (45.3%) PG students and 29 (46%) faculty members whereas 34(54%) faculty members and 111(54.7%) PG students from private colleges.

Frequency of Library Visits by Users

Table 3: Frequency of Library Visits by Users

Description	Category				Total	Total %
	Faculty Members	%	Postgraduate Students	%		
Daily	34	54.0	54	26.6	88	33.1
Twice a week	15	23.8	67	33.0	82	30.8
Once a week	4	6.3	41	20.2	45	16.9
Fortnightly	4	6.3	36	17.7	40	15.0
Occasionally	6	9.5	5	2.5	11	4.1
Total	63	100.0	203	100.0	266	100.0

Table 3 shows that a maximum of 33% of users visit the library daily, and 31% visit the library twice a week. Only a few percent (4.1) of the users rarely visit the library.

The group-wise responses revealed that while 54% of the staff visit the library daily, a maximum of 33% of the PG students visit the library twice in a week. Thus, compared

to the staff, less percentage of students visit the library daily because maximum students visit the library for borrowing and returning purposes.

Importance of Information Resources

Users come to the library to meet their information needs, make important decisions and effectively teach, learn and research by obtaining sufficient, relevant and current information in print and non-print formats.

Importance of library resources is very influencing factor for the effective use of information resources by the respondents. The researchers followed some principles to assess the importance of library resources available in the respondents' libraries. In this regard, an attempt was made by asking the users to rate the information resources based on each characteristic on a five-point Likert scale ranging from five as most important to one as not at all important. Therefore, questions were asked to determine how important users were with the information resources in their library, as shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Importance of Information Resources

Information Resources	Faculty Members			Postgraduate Students		
	Mean	S.D.	Ranking	Mean	S.D.	Ranking
Books	5	0	1	4.9	0.42	1
E-books	4.56	0.99	2	3.03	1.27	8
Journals	4.32	0.64	3	3.77	1.04	3
E-journals	4.19	1.31	4	2.96	1.43	10
Newspapers and Magazines	3.94	1.59	5	4	1.64	2
Online databases	3.52	1.28	6	3.51	1.03	6
Encyclopaedias, Dictionaries	3.3	1.30	7	2.96	1.05	11
E-Newspapers and E-Magazines	2.98	1.14	8	3.14	1.28	7
Theses, Dissertation, Reports	2.89	0.57	9	3.63	0.10	4
Question Papers	2.87	0.81	10	2.99	0.73	9
E-Question Papers	2.7	0.84	11	2.93	1.19	12
E-Theses, Dissertation, Reports	1.24	0.82	12	3.57	0.95	5

Table 4 shows that respondents consider textbooks as important library resources for their teaching and research activities, with a mean value of 5 for faculty members and 4.9 for students. E-books are the second important resource for faculty members for their research activities and newspapers and magazines in the student body. The average score of importance of e-books in the student's category is very low compared to faculty members because students don't know much about e-books, similarly, essays/dissertations are the most preferred resources by students while faculty members give less importance to projects/dissertations as they are less used. Online databases ranked 6th in both the faculty and student categories. Online essays and dissertations are the least

important resources for faculty, while e-questionnaires rank last in the student category. So, librarians' duty to give awareness programme to users about importance of the online resources available in their library.

Information Resources Locating Strategy by Users

Information locating strategy is one of the important influencing factors to users for accessing library resources. So, researcher queried users to state their chosen strategy for locating information resources, and the responses are shown in Fig. 1.

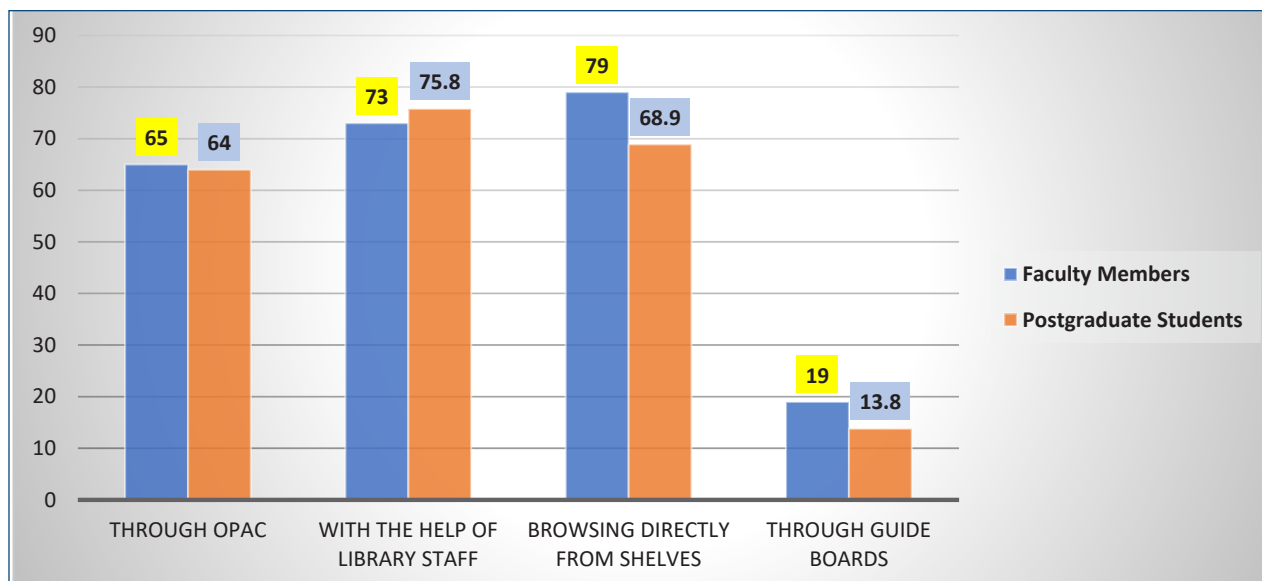


Fig. 1: Information Locating Strategy

Fig. 1 shows that total 76% students and 73% of faculty members search for library resources with help of library staff, while 79.4% faculty members and 69% students browse directly on the shelves. The least percentage of both categories' searches through guide boards in the library. More than 505 of the users follow online public access catalogue (OPAC) to find their information in the library.

Overall Satisfaction with Library Information Resources

Satisfaction with library resources is an important factor, if users are not satisfied with library resources, then the whole library system will collapse. The researcher follows a five-point Likert scale ranging from five as "very satisfied" to one as "very dissatisfied" for users to rate their satisfaction with information resources. Therefore, questions were asked to determine how satisfied the users were with the information resources in their library as shown in Table 4.

Table 5: Satisfaction with Information Resources

Description	Faculty Members		Postgraduate Students	
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.
Satisfaction	3.57	.777	3.24	1.105

Table 6 shows the faculty members were satisfied with the library resources, with a mean value of 3.57 than PG students (mean value of 3.24). So, librarians' duty to maximise the satisfaction level of both categories of users by providing value-based information to them.

Difficulties Faced by Respondents While Accessing the Library

Library information resources play a critical role in the academic success of the user community. Users' opinions about the difficulties they face in accessing library resources were measured on a five-point Likert scale from five to one. For this criterion, a number of five indicates

strongly agree and one indicates strongly disagree. In this study, users were asked questions about the challenges

they face in accessing information resources in the library. The results are shown in Table 6.

Table 6: Problems Faced While Accessing the Information Resources

Problems Faced While Using the Library	Faculty Members (Total=63)			
	Mean	S.D.	Mean	S.D.
Outdated sources of information	2.54	1.29	2.92	1.39
Less number of computers	2.35	0.93	2.99	1.31
Poor Internet connectivity	2.6	1.19	2.42	1.03
The lack of skills to search e-resources	2.15	1.08	2.9	1.30
The shorter duration of book Loan	1.98	0.96	2.78	1.34

Table 6 reveals that more than 50% of users (mean score 2.92) complained that outdated resources were hindering their use of the library and were dissatisfied with the small number of computers (mean score 2.99). Due to less number of computers, they are unable to access e-resources properly. More than 40% of both categories are unable to access library resources due to poor internet connectivity and lack of skills. This study focused on the fact that students face more challenges while accessing library resources than faculty members. So the library experts should think about this seriously and take necessary steps to solve the problems of the users. The government and institutions should provide the facilities required for students' learning to the library.

Fig. 2 deals with more than 60% of users who felt that the orientation programme definitely helps them to maximise the use of library resources, but only 2% of users said that the orientation programmes are not at all helpful in finding information in the library.

Usefulness of Orientation Programs in Using Library Resources Effectively

Library orientation adversely affects the use of library resources by users. Therefore, researchers have collected information about the usefulness of orientation programmes and shown it in Fig. 2.

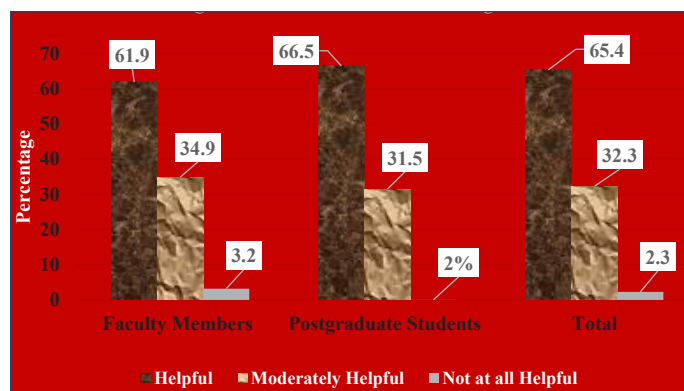


Fig. 2: Usefulness of Orientation Programs

Opinion on the Arrangement of Books on Shelves

A good arrangement of books on the shelves fulfils Dr. S. R. Ranganathan's 4th Law of Library Science. User-friendly arrangement of books allows patrons to get the information they want without wasting their time. Therefore, the researcher asked the users a question about the arrangement of books in the library, which is shown in Table 7.

Table 7: Opinion About the Arrangement of Books on the Shelves

Description	Category		Total
	Faculty Members (Total=63)	Postgraduate Students (Total=203)	
User Friendly	49 (77.8)	154(76)	203(76.3)
Poor Arrangement	14(22.2)	46(22.7)	60(22.6)
Can't Say	000	3(1.3)	3(1.1)
Total	63(100)	203(100%)	266(100)

Note: Numbers shown in parentheses are percentages.

Table 9 shows that 77.8% of faculty and 76% of student's opinion is that library resources arrangement system on shelves is user friendly. But 25% users opined that due to poor arrangement of books on the shelves, they cannot find resources immediately.

Opinion on the Location of the Library

The location of the library is another important factor in determining library use. In general, users can easily access resources from the library if the library is located at the central point of the college. Therefore, the researcher collected information about the location of the library from the users as shown in Fig. 3.

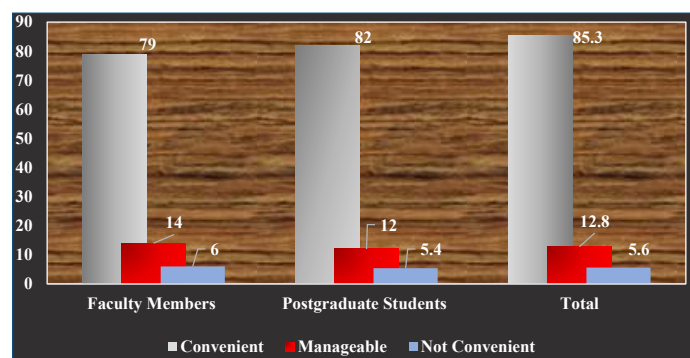


Fig. 3: Location of the Library

Fig. 3 shows that more than 80% of the users opinion that the location of the library is convenient for the library use whereas 5.6% of users felt that the location of the library was not convenient to them.

Findings and Discussions

This survey investigated the user's opinion of information resources in degree college libraries. Findings reveal that books and journals were very important resources for faculty members for their teaching and research purposes. This finding is in line with Felcy and Mallaiah (2014) in a study conducted on the use of library resources in engineering college libraries. In a related survey by Sharma (2018) that more than 75% of faculty members use books and journals for their research activities. The research examined that more than 70% of the staff members and students are browsing directly from shelves for locating information. This finding is supported by Kumar and Panday (2020) in their investigation use of

information resources by Doon University users. The average score of importance of e-books in the student's category is very low when compared to faculty members because students unaware of e-books, so they don't know the importance of e-books. Further more than 50% of the users are satisfied with the existing resources in the library and this finding supports the work of Ranganathan and Babu (2013) Ikolo (2015), and Hemavathi and Chandrashekara (2018). The study reveals that more than 50% of users complained that outdated sources of information and less number of computers hinder the use of the library properly. This study focused on the fact that students face more challenges while accessing library resources than faculty members. The same results show in the study conducted by Hari Lakshmi & Surendra Babu, in the year 2017.

Conclusion

The effective functioning of the library depends on the information resources available in the library and their use by the users. In this study, the opinions of the users about the library resources of Dakshina Kannada Degree College were collected. According to the research, the information resources in the college libraries are helpful for the study, teaching and research activities of the users. The importance of e-books in students' category is very low as compared to faculty members because students don't know much about e-books, similarly, essays/dissertations are the most preferred resources by students while faculty members give less importance to projects/dissertations. The majority of respondents are moderately satisfied with the information resources available in their library. Poor Internet connectivity, outdated library resources, very few computers, and lack of skills hinder the proper use of library resources. Librarians should organize regular information literacy programs for library users to maximize the use of library information resources.

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