

UNDERSTANDING USER BEHAVIOR AND INFORMATION NEEDS IN MODERN LIBRARIES

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Abstract

Modern libraries are evolving into hybrid information centers that combine physical and digital resources. Understanding user behavior and information needs is essential for improving library services and ensuring effective resource utilization. This study examines the information-seeking behavior, usage patterns, and satisfaction levels of library users in academic institutions. A quantitative research method using a structured questionnaire was employed. The findings reveal that users primarily depend on digital resources and internet-based materials, with barriers including lack of awareness and limited access to resources.

Keywords

Library Users, Information Needs, User Behavior, Academic Libraries, Digital Libraries, User Satisfaction

1. Introduction

Libraries play a vital role in knowledge dissemination and academic development. With technological advancements, user expectations have shifted from traditional print-based resources to digital and online platforms. Understanding user behavior helps libraries design services that meet evolving information needs.

Information-seeking behavior is driven by the user's perceived need for information and the availability of relevant resources.

2. Objectives of the Study

- To analyze the information needs of library users
- To study user behavior in accessing library resources
- To identify preferred information sources
- To evaluate user satisfaction with library services

- To suggest improvements for modern libraries

3. Review of Literature

Library user studies have evolved significantly over time, becoming a central area in Library and Information Science research. Early studies focused on basic usage patterns, while modern research emphasizes user experience, digital behavior, and service optimization.

A critical review of academic library users highlights that **information-seeking behavior varies widely depending on user type, discipline, and access to resources**. Many studies also point out that lack of methodological rigor has been a limitation, suggesting the need for more empirical and statistically validated research.

Research on electronic resource usage shows that **e-journals and digital platforms have become dominant sources of information**, especially among students and researchers. This shift reflects the transformation of libraries into hybrid knowledge centers combining print and digital resources.

Recent comparative studies indicate that **user expectations often exceed the services provided by libraries**, particularly in terms of awareness and marketing of resources. This gap highlights the need for better user orientation and communication strategies.

Empirical research further reveals that **libraries are primarily used as learning and study spaces**, with activities such as reading, computer use, and group study being dominant. User satisfaction is closely linked to resource availability and staff support.

The evolution of user studies shows a massive growth in research output since the 1960s, establishing it as a major domain in LIS. Modern studies now integrate **user experience (UX), data analytics, and digital behavior tracking**.

Recent systematic reviews emphasize that **user experience, service innovation, and digital accessibility are emerging research trends**. Libraries are increasingly adopting surveys, feedback systems, and analytics tools to understand user needs more effectively.

Previous studies emphasize the importance of understanding user needs for effective service delivery.

- Studies highlight the diversity of user behavior in academic libraries.
- Research shows that students mainly use libraries for study and internet access.
- Library usage is strongly linked to learning and academic performance.
- Data-driven analysis helps improve library services and resource allocation.

4. Research Methodology

- **Research Design:** Descriptive survey
- **Population:** Students and faculty
- **Sample Size:** 120 respondents
- **Sampling Method:** Random sampling
- **Data Collection Tool:** Questionnaire
- **Analysis Tool:** Percentage analysis

5. Data Analysis and Interpretation

Table 1: Purpose of Library Visit

Purpose	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Study	50	41.7%
Borrow Books	25	20.8%
Internet Access	30	25.0%
Research Work	15	12.5%

Table 2: Preferred Information Sources

Source	Respondents	Percentage
Printed Books	35	29%
E-books	25	21%
Internet Resources	40	33%
Journals	20	17%

Table 3: User Satisfaction Level

Satisfaction Level	Respondents	Percentage
Highly Satisfied	30	25%
Satisfied	50	42%
Neutral	25	21%
Dissatisfied	15	12%

Table 4: Problems Faced by Users

Problem	Respondents	Percentage
Lack of resources	35	29%
Poor internet	25	21%
Lack of awareness	30	25%
Difficulty in searching	30	25%

6. Discussion

The study reveals that:

- Most users visit libraries for academic study and internet access
- Digital resources are increasingly preferred over print materials
- Lack of awareness and insufficient resources are major barriers
- User satisfaction is generally moderate to high

These findings align with previous research showing the growing importance of digital information and user-centered services.

7. Findings

- Majority of users prefer digital resources
- Library usage is primarily academic-oriented
- Awareness programs are lacking
- Infrastructure improvements are needed

8. Suggestions

- Increase access to e-resources and digital libraries
- Conduct user orientation programs
- Improve internet facilities
- Provide user-friendly search tools
- Regular feedback collection from users

9. Conclusion

The present study highlights the critical importance of understanding user behavior and information needs in the context of modern academic libraries. As libraries transition from traditional repositories of printed materials to dynamic, technology-driven knowledge centers, the expectations and preferences of users have undergone significant transformation.

The findings of this study clearly indicate that users increasingly rely on digital resources such as e-books, e-journals, and internet-based information sources. While traditional resources like printed books still hold relevance, their usage is gradually declining in comparison to digital formats. This shift underscores the need for libraries to strengthen their digital infrastructure and ensure seamless access to electronic resources.

Another key observation is that libraries continue to serve as essential academic spaces, primarily used for study, research, and access to information. However, challenges such as lack of awareness about available resources, limited access to digital tools, and inadequate search skills hinder optimal utilization. These issues highlight the gap between available services and user awareness, emphasizing the importance of regular orientation programs and user education initiatives.

User satisfaction levels, although generally positive, reveal scope for improvement in areas such as resource availability, internet connectivity, and service efficiency. Libraries must adopt a **user-centered approach**, continuously evaluating and upgrading their services based on feedback and emerging needs.

Furthermore, the study reinforces the growing significance of integrating modern technologies, including digital libraries, remote access systems, and user-friendly search interfaces. The role

of librarians is also evolving from custodians of information to facilitators and guides in the information-seeking process.

In conclusion, for libraries to remain relevant and effective in the digital era, they must focus on:

- Enhancing digital resource collections
- Improving user awareness and information literacy
- Strengthening technological infrastructure
- Adopting innovative and user-focused service models

Future research can explore advanced analytical methods, such as data analytics and user experience (UX) studies, to gain deeper insights into user behavior. By aligning services with user expectations, modern libraries can continue to play a pivotal role in academic excellence and knowledge dissemination.

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