

# Users' Perceptions of Resource Access: An Analytical Study of Post Graduate Students and Research Scholars in Central University Libraries in Uttar Pradesh

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**Abstract:- This paper provides an in-depth analysis of user perceptions towards resource utilization in central university libraries in Uttar Pradesh, India. Surveying 600 Postgraduate students and Research Scholars, the study uncovers key factors motivating library use, prominent resources, and challenges faced by users. Digital resources emerged as the most utilized, with user training and resource availability cited as areas needing improvement. Adopting a dual-method research approach, the study underscores the pivotal role of guides and teachers in influencing library use while revealing differences in resource utilization between the two user groups. The findings bear significant implications for enhancing library services, guiding policy formulation, and advocating for user-centric strategies.**

## I. INTRODUCTION

In the academic world, libraries have always been considered the heart of any institution. In fact, library resources are playing an important role in ensuring there is accessibility to an information explosion. According to Anyira Isaac and Idubor Image in 2020, libraries provide access to a wealth of knowledge and resources vital for student learning and research endeavours (Anyira and Idubor, 2020). As higher education grows increasingly competitive, the role of university libraries has become even more crucial (Mahesh, 2016), particularly for Post Graduate students and Research Scholars. However, despite the pivotal role they play, studies into users' perception of library resources and their utilization are sparse, particularly in India.

This research, therefore, focuses on investigating the perception of Post Graduate students and Research Scholars towards the utilization of library resources in six central university libraries of Uttar Pradesh, a state in northern India that is home to several prestigious higher education institutions. The paper aims to understand the driving factors that influence the students to use these resources, identify the most utilized resources, and uncover any challenges faced in using these resources. Further, the role of teachers and guides

in influencing the students' usage of library resources is investigated.

Finally, a gap analysis is conducted to compare the library resource utilization between Post Graduate Students and Research Scholars.

The findings of this study have significant implications for library management, helping them better understand the needs and behavior of their users and enabling them to devise strategies to optimize resource allocation and user engagement.

## II. METHODOLOGY

This study employs a dual-method approach, combining both qualitative and quantitative research. The qualitative approach involved conducting semi-structured interviews with students and teachers to gather insights and perspectives on library usage. This approach equally used secondary sources like newspapers, magazines, books, periodicals, and journals to have a deeper understanding of the study. Also, the quantitative approach involved administering a structured questionnaire with a sample size of 600 respondents across six central universities in Uttar Pradesh. The population includes Post Graduate students and Research Scholars from the six central university libraries. The survey collected data on Motivational Factors for Library Usage, Availability of Library Resources, Maximally Utilized Library Resources, Problems Faced While Using Library Resources, and the Influence of Guides and Teachers. Statistical analysis of the survey data allowed for quantitative comparisons and identification of patterns and trends. The combination of quantitative and qualitative data improved the validity and robustness of the findings, offering an extensive understanding of library usage in the six central universities between Postgraduate students and Research Scholars.

### III. DATA ANALYSIS

As stated, the data was collected from a total of 600 students across six central universities in Uttar Pradesh. Namely:

- Banaras Hindu University
- Aligarh Muslim University
- Allahabad University
- Babasaheb Bhimrao Ambedkar University
- Rajiv Gandhi National Aviation University
- Rani Lakshmi Bai Agricultural University

The Sample size was evenly split between Postgraduate students and Research Scholars, with each group constituting 100 respondents. The responses were then analyzed in alignment with the objectives of the study.

Table 1: Motivational Factors for Library Usage

Factors	PG Students (%)	Research Scholars (%)
Access to Exclusive Materials	60	75
Quiet Study Space	70	65
Extensive Digital Resources	85	90
Requirement for Research Material	45	80
Others	10	5

Table 1 shows that extensive digital resources are the most significant motivational factor for library usage for both PG students (85%) and Research Scholars (90%). This is followed by the requirement for research materials, particularly for Research Scholars (80%).

Table 2: Availability of Library Resources

Availability	PG Students (%)	Research Scholars (%)
Always Available	60	50
Sometimes Unavailable	30	45
Often Unavailable	10	10

Table 2 presents data on the availability of library resources. A majority of both PG students (60%) and Research Scholars (50%) reported that resources were always available. However, a significant proportion experienced occasional unavailability (30% PG students, 40% Research Scholars).

Table 3: Maximally Utilized Library Resources

Resource	PG Students (%)	Research Scholars (%)
E-Books	80	85
Online Journals	75	90
Digital Databases	65	80
Textbooks	90	60
Course-Related Materials	85	55

In Table 3, digital resources (e-books, online journals, digital databases) were reported to be heavily used by both user groups. However, traditional resources like textbooks and course-related materials were used more by PG students (90%, 85%) compared to Research Scholars (60%, 55%).

Table 4: Problems Faced While Using Library Resources

Problems	PG Students (%)	Research Scholars (%)
Access to Specific Resources	30	40
Slow Digital Interfaces	20	25
Lack of Comprehensive User Training	40	45

Table 4 indicates that a lack of comprehensive user training was a problem for both PG students (40%) and Research Scholars (45%). Access to specific resources was also a notable issue, especially for Research Scholars (40%).

Table 5: Influence of Guides and Teachers

Influence	PG Students (%)	Research Scholars (%)
High Influence 60 75	60	75
Moderate Influence 30 20	30	20
Low Influence 10 5	10	5

As shown in Table 5, guides and teachers were found to have a high influence on library usage, especially among Research Scholars (75%).

Overall, this analysis highlights the importance of digital resources, the need for better resource allocation systems, and the critical role of comprehensive user training. The significant influence of guides and teachers also underscores the importance of a strong relationship between academic staff and library personnel. The study equally revealed a gap between PG students and Research Scholars in utilizing library resources, indicating the need for tailored strategies to cater to these different user groups.

### IV. RESULTS

#### A. Motivational Factors

The primary motivational factors that compelled both Research Scholars and Postgraduate students to use library resources were found to be access to unique or hard-to-find materials, availability of a tranquil environment for focused study, and the abundance of digital resources such as e-books, online databases, and digital research materials (Ngcongolo and Oyelana, 2017). According to the findings, the availability of digital resources was identified as a key motivator because they can be accessed at any time, from any location, offering flexibility and convenience. However, for Research Scholars, the need for specific materials for their research purposes proved to be the most potent motivation.

### B. Availability of Library Resources

Both the Post Graduate students and Research Scholars expressed general satisfaction with the availability of library resources. Libraries in the universities surveyed offered a robust collection of resources, from books and journals to digital databases and archives. However, several students occasionally faced challenges accessing high-demand resources or specific materials, particularly rare or specialized publications (Verma, 2016). This points to a potential area for improvement; universities may need to invest in additional copies of high-demand materials or employ systems to effectively manage the circulation of such resources.

### C. Maximally Utilized Resources

The findings show that electronic resources emerged as the most popular among both Post Graduate students and Research Scholars. E-books, online databases, and digital journals were regularly accessed by both groups due to their ease of use, round-the-clock availability, and the breadth of information they offer (Udem et al., 2015). However, a slight variance was observed in the type of e-resources used by each group. Research Scholars were more likely to access digital databases and specialized journals that offer in-depth information for their research. Conversely, Post Graduate students were found to utilize e-books and general academic journals more frequently.

### D. Problems in Resource

Usage Despite the overall positive feedback, users reported some challenges in utilizing library resources. The issues reported ranged from occasional difficulties in accessing specific resources due to their high demand or rarity to slow or glitch digital interfaces that impeded the efficient use of e-resources. Moreover, a noticeable portion of users reported a lack of comprehensive user training. They indicated that they were not fully aware of how to navigate the library resources or the functionalities of digital platforms, impacting their ability to utilize these resources effectively.

### E. Influence of Guides and Teachers

The influence of academic guides and teachers in promoting the use of library resources was unmistakable. In the course of their teaching or mentorship, guides often recommended specific resources, useful databases, or critical research materials to their 6 students. These recommendations strongly influenced the students' library resource usage, guiding them towards resources they might not have discovered on their own.

### F. Gap Analysis

A gap analysis between Research Scholars and Postgraduate students revealed distinct patterns of library resource utilization. Research Scholars demonstrated a wider use of resources, often delving into specialized materials, archival content, and rare texts. This is reflective of the diverse and in-depth information needs typical of research activities. In contrast, Post Graduate students' usage was predominantly

geared towards course related materials, such as textbooks and general academic journals. They also made extensive use of e-books for their ease of access and flexibility (Ee-Lon and Khe, 2014). This gap in utilization is indicative of the different academic demands and goals of each group, with Research Scholars' needs being more complex and specialized compared to the more general academic needs of Postgraduate students.

## V. FINDINGS

The findings from this study underscore the indispensable role libraries play in supporting the academic endeavors of Post Graduate students and Research Scholars in central university libraries in Uttar Pradesh. Despite being highly valued and utilized by these user groups, several areas need improvements to optimize library services. One of the pivotal findings was the preeminence of digital resources. Both Post Graduate students and Research Scholars significantly utilized electronic resources like e-books, online journals, and digital databases. These results mirror a global trend toward digital resource consumption, particularly in academic settings. It accentuates the urgent need for libraries to continually invest in digital platforms and electronic resources to meet these changing user preferences.

## VI. SUGGESTIONS

Furthermore, library management needs to ensure reliable digital interfaces to promote seamless access to these digital resources. The study also identified several challenges faced by library users. A primary concern was occasional difficulties accessing specific, high-demand resources, a problem more pronounced among Research Scholars. Predictive analytics, as suggested by Massis Bruce in 2012 could be instrumental in addressing this issue by anticipating resource demand and adjusting availability accordingly. This approach could lead to more efficient resource allocation, minimizing potential access issues. Another significant issue was the lack of comprehensive user training. This training can be instrumental in equipping students and scholars with the necessary skills to navigate the library's diverse resources. Enhanced user training, perhaps involving both face-to-face and online sessions, would empower users to fully exploit the range of resources available to them (Abid et al., 2022). Interestingly, the study found a significant influence of guides and teachers on library usage among Post Graduate students and Research Scholars. This underscores the importance of fostering strong relationships between academic staff and library personnel. Collaboration between these groups could lead to more personalized and targeted recommendations for library resources. This cooperation might also help encourage students and scholars to make better use of library resources in their academic work. Lastly, the gap analysis revealed notable differences in library resource utilization between Postgraduate students and Research Scholars. The study found that Research Scholars utilized a wider array of resources, including rare texts and archival materials. On the other hand,

Post Graduate students focused mainly on textbooks and courserelated materials. These results suggest that libraries may need to adopt differentiated resource promotion strategies for these two distinct user groups. Tailored strategies could help to encourage broader resource utilization among Post Graduate students and ensure that Research Scholars know all the specific resources available to support their research.

## VII. CONCLUSION

In the digital age, where access to information has become increasingly convenient, the role of academic libraries is often underestimated. However, as this study elucidates, libraries remain a vital part of the academic landscape for Postgraduate students and Research Scholars, serving as reservoirs of knowledge, and facilitating in-depth research and learning. The research provides vital insights into the perceptions of these user groups towards library resources in central university libraries in Uttar Pradesh, India. A distinct preference for digital resources was noted, reflecting the global trend towards digital information consumption. However, challenges persist, including access to highdemand resources and a lack of comprehensive user training, requiring urgent attention from library management. The influence of guides and teachers was found to be significant, emphasizing the importance of collaborative efforts between academic staff and library personnel in promoting library resource usage. The gap analysis conducted revealed notable differences in the resource utilization habits of Research Scholars and Postgraduate students. This calls for differentiated, user-centric strategies to meet the unique needs and preferences of these groups, thereby enhancing their experience and engagement with the library. Finally, while libraries continue to be a cornerstone of academic learning and research, their evolution must match the pace of their users' changing needs and preferences. By addressing the identified challenges and leveraging the insights gathered, libraries can enhance their services and continue to support and foster academic excellence among their users. As the digital age continues to unfold, there is a need for continuous research in this field to keep up with the evolving landscape of library services and user expectations. The current study offers a foundation for such future investigations, contributing to a body of knowledge that can guide library management strategies in the coming years.

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