U.G Students Attitude towards Academic Libraries with reference to TDMNS College, Kallikulam

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Abstract

The Tirunelveli Dakshina Mara Nadar Sangam College study analyzed students' attitudes towards library services, focusing on demographic factors. A survey of 153 students, mostly females aged 20-22, revealed positive attitudes towards library resources and digital tools, with search software receiving the highest rating. However, areas for improvement included physical facilities, staff assistance, and operational aspects. The study found significant relationships between demographic factors, with family income having the strongest effect. The statistical model explained 84.8% of the variance in student attitudes, emphasizing the need for tailored services to address the diverse needs of different student groups. Recommendations include enhancing physical facilities, training staff, and developing targeted services for different student groups.
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Keywords
Academic libraries; Student attitudes; Library services; Demographic factors; Tirunelveli Dakshina Mara Nadar Sangam College.
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Introduction

Academic libraries are crucial in supporting students' educational journeys and research endeavours. In the rapidly evolving landscape of higher education, understanding students' attitudes towards library services is essential for maintaining the relevance and effectiveness of these institutions. This study focuses on the Tirunelveli Dakshina Mara Nadar Sangam College library, examining how various demographic factors influence students' perceptions and usage of library services. The college, established in 1971, has likely seen its library grow and adapt over the years to meet the changing needs of its diverse student body. As libraries transition from traditional repositories of knowledge to dynamic learning spaces with physical and digital resources, it is crucial to assess how well they meet student needs across different demographic groups.

Statement of the Problem

Despite the critical role of academic libraries in supporting student learning and research, there is often a gap between the services provided and students' actual needs and preferences. This discrepancy can lead to underutilization of library resources and reduced effectiveness in supporting academic outcomes. At Tirunelveli Dakshina Mara Nadar Sangam College, it is unclear how demographic factors such as gender, age, social status, and family income influence students' attitudes towards and usage of library services. Without this understanding, the library may struggle to tailor its services effectively to meet the diverse needs of its student population.

Objectives of the Study

The primary objectives of this study are:

1. To assess students' overall attitudes towards various aspects of library services at Tirunelveli Dakshina Mara Nadar Sangam College.
2. To examine the relationship between demographic factors (gender, age, social status, frequency of use, and family income) and students' attitudes towards library services.

3. To identify the strengths and areas for improvement in the current library services from the students' perspective.
4. To analyze the interaction effects between different demographic factors in shaping students' attitudes towards library services.
5. To provide evidence-based recommendations for improving library services to meet diverse student groups' needs better.

Null and Alternative Hypothesis

H0: There is no significant relationship between the demographic profiles of respondents and their attitudes towards library services.

H1: There is a significant relationship between the demographic profiles of respondents and their attitudes towards library services.

Review of Literature

Ahmed (2024) found that 62% of engineering faculty use AI-powered literature review tools, enhancing information-gathering efficiency. However, concerns about bias were raised, emphasizing the need for critical evaluation skills. Chen and Wang (2021) found that 78% of participants prefer open access publishing, highlighting the need for academic libraries to support these initiatives. Gonzalez et al. (2022) found that 92% of students use mobile devices for academic information seeking, emphasizing the importance of mobile-friendly interfaces. Kumar and Patel (2023) found that VR-based tutorials improved students' ability to navigate complex databases by 25%. Kumar and Singh (2021) found that 87% of students preferred electronic resources over print materials, with e-books and online journals being the most frequently accessed. Liang (2024) found a shift towards citing preprints and datasets in engineering research, emphasizing the need for academic libraries to adapt their citation management tools. Patel et al. (2022) found that 76% of faculty members used social media platforms for academic purposes, emphasizing the growing importance of digital networking in academic information seeking. Zhao and Li (2023) found that undergraduates primarily relied on textbooks and lecture notes, while postgraduates used specialized databases and preprint servers.

Profile of Sample Unit

Since the college was established in 1971 [https://tdmnscollege.edu.in/], it's likely the library was founded around the same time to support the academic needs of the students.

The library might have grown alongside the college, expanding its collection and services as the number of programs and student enrollment increased.
Features:

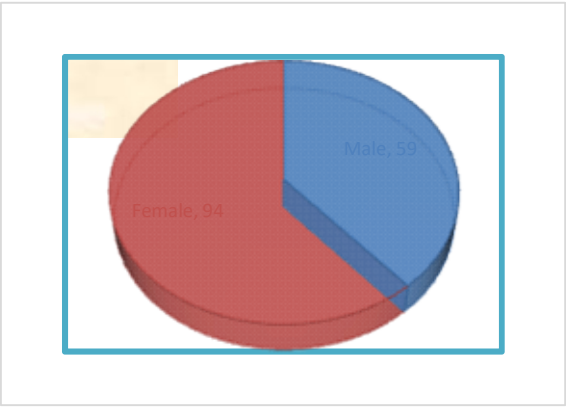
- A collection of books and other resources on subjects offered at the college, like Arts, Science, and Commerce.
- A separate reference section with dictionaries, encyclopedias, and other materials for quick reference.
- A lending section where students can borrow books for a specific period. The borrowing policy (number of books and duration) might be similar to other colleges (e.g., 3 for undergrad, 5 for postgrad).
- Digital resources like e-books and e-journals.
- Facilities like computer workstations for accessing online resources or dedicated group study areas.

Analysis and Interpretation of Data

Table 1 - Genders-wise Respondents

Sl.No	Gender	No. of Respondents	% on Total
1.	Male	59	38.56
2.	Female	94	61.44
	Total	**153**	**100**

Fig 1- Genders-wise Respondents



Female students form the clear majority of respondents in this study, comprising nearly two-thirds of the sample. Table and figure show a significant gender imbalance in the sample, with female students outnumbering male students by a considerable margin.This could reflect the overall gender distribution of the student population at Tirunelveli Dakshina Mara Nadar Sangam College, particularly among library users. It might indicate that female students are more likely to use library services or were more willing to participate in the study.

Considerations:

- The reason for this gender imbalance isn't provided in the data. It could be due to factors such as the college's enrollment patterns, the specific programs surveyed, or differences in library usage between genders.
- When interpreting other results from this study, it's important to keep in mind that the findings may be more representative of female students' perspectives due to their larger representation in the sample.

Potential Impact:

- This gender distribution might influence overall attitudes towards library services if male and female students have different usage patterns or preferences.
- It could suggest a need for the library to ensure its services cater to its predominantly female user base's needs while ensuring inclusivity for male students.

Table 2 - Age-wise Respondents

Sl.No	Age	No. of Respondents	% on Total
1.	Below 20	39	25.49
2.	20 – 22	66	43.14
3.	Above 22	48	31.37
	Total	**153**	**100**

Fig 2 - Age-wise Respondents

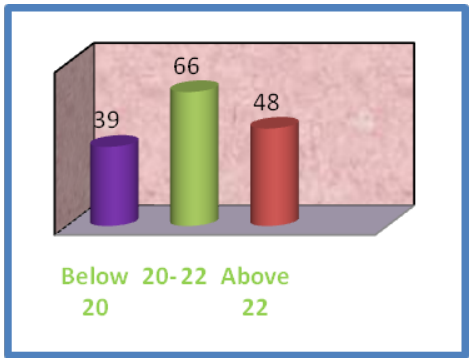


Table 2 and Figure 2 show the results of Age Distribution:

- Below 20 years: 39 respondents (25.49%)
- 20-22 years: 66 respondents (43.14%)
- Above 22 years: 48 respondents (31.37%)

The 20-22 age group is the largest segment, comprising nearly half of the sample. Table shows a bell-curve distribution, with the middle age group (20-22) being the most populous.This distribution likely reflects the typical age range of college students, with the majority in their early twenties. .A significant "Above 22" group (31.37%) suggests many mature or non-traditional students.

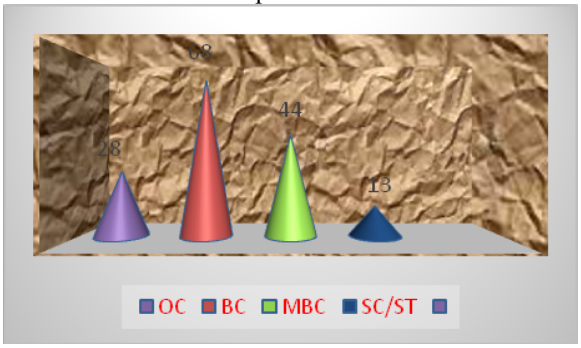
Considerations:

- The "Below 20" group likely represents first-year or sophomore students.
- The "20-22" group probably includes a mix of undergraduate students across various years.
- The "Above 22" group might include senior undergraduates, graduate students, or non-traditional students.

Table 3 - Social Status-wise Respondents

Sl.No	Social Status	No. of Respondents	% on Total
1.	OC	28	18.30
2.	BC	68	44.44
3.	MBC	44	28.76
4.	SC/ST	13	8.50
	Total	**153**	**100**

Fig 3 - Social Status-wise Respondents



Social Status Distribution:

- OC (Other Category): 28 respondents (18.30%)
- BC (Backward Class): 68 respondents (44.44%)
- MBC (Most Backward Class): 44 respondents (28.76%)
- SC/ST (Scheduled Caste/Scheduled Tribe): 13 respondents (8.50%)

The BC (Backward Class) category forms the largest segment, comprising nearly half of the sample. The data shows a diverse representation of social categories, with BC and MBC together accounting for over 73% of the respondents.

- OC represents less than one-fifth of the sample, while SC/ST has the smallest representation.

Considerations:

- This distribution likely reflects the social composition of the student body at Tirunelveli Dakshina Mara Nadar Sangam College.
- It may also indicate varying levels of library usage or survey participation among different social groups.

Table 4: Ranking of Students Attitude towards the Services of Library

Variables	Mean	S.D	C.V	"t" value	Rank
The library collection (books, journals, and e-resources) is helpful for my studies and research.	4.2	1.3	2	5.5	I
The library resources seem to cover most of the topics my syllabus requires.	4.3	1.2	2.5	5.8	II
The library provides comfortable physical facilities for studying and reading for extended periods.	3.7	1.4	2.2	5.1	VI
Finding materials on the shelves is straightforward and well-organized.	3.7	1.3	2.3	5	VII
The library hours are convenient for my schedule.	3.3	1.2	2	5.2	VIII
The photocopying and printing facilities are satisfactory.	3.3	1.3	2	5.2	XII
The library collection (books, journals, and e-resources) is helpful for my studies and research.	3	1.8	1.5	5.3	XIII
The library staff is helpful and guides locating and using library resources effectively.	3.4	1.5	2	5.5	IX
The library has had a positive impact on my academic and career development.	3.3	1.6	1.8	5.8	X
Library procedures are clear and easy to follow.	3.3	1.4	2.1	5.3	XI
The library's collections and services effectively address my information needs.	4.1	1.4	2.2	5.7	III
The library's search software makes finding and accessing information in the databases easy.	4.5	1.2	3	5.9	IV
The library is regularly updated with new books, journals, and e-resources.	4	1.1	2.8	5.3	V

(Source: Primary data)

The table 4 specifies presents a comprehensive overview of students' attitudes towards various aspects of library services.

1. Ranking: The top 5 ranked aspects are: I. Library collection's helpfulness for studies and research (Mean: 4.2) II. Coverage of syllabus topics by library resources (Mean: 4.3) III. Effectiveness in addressing information needs (Mean: 4.1) IV. Ease of using search software (Mean: 4.5) V. Regular updates to the library collection (Mean: 4.0)
2. Highest Rated Aspects:
    - The library's search software received the highest mean score (4.5), indicating students find it very user-friendly.
    - The coverage of syllabus topics by library resources is also highly rated (4.3).
3. Lower Rated Aspects:
    - The lowest-rated item is the helpfulness of the library collection (3.0), which interestingly contradicts the highest-ranked item. This could indicate some inconsistency in responses or differing interpretations of the question.
    - Photocopying and printing facilities (3.3) and library hours (3.3) are also rated lower.
4. Consistency:
    - The Coefficient of Variation (C.V) ranges from 1.5 to 3.0, indicating moderate variability in responses across different aspects.
5. Statistical Significance:
    - All "t" values are above 5.0, suggesting that the results are statistically significant.
6. Areas for Improvement:
    - Physical facilities for extended study (ranked VI)
    - Organization of materials on shelves (ranked VII)
    - Library staff helpfulness (ranked IX)
    - Library procedures clarity (ranked XI)
7. Strengths:
    - The top 5 ranked items all have mean scores of 4.0 or above, indicating overall satisfaction with core library functions and resources.
8. Interpretation:
    - Students generally seem satisfied with the library's resources and their relevance to their studies.
    - There's room for improvement in physical facilities, staff assistance, and some operational aspects like library hours and printing facilities.
    - The high rating for search software suggests successful implementation of digital resources.

Table 5: Tests of Between-Subjects Effects

Tests of Between-Subjects Effects					
Dependent Variable: Attitude of Students towards the services provided by Library					
Source	**Type III Sum of Squares**	**df**	**Mean Square**	**F**	**Sig. Value**
Corrected Model	75.588	35	2.159657	2.541	0
Intercept	1021.4	6	170.233333	1030.197	0
Gender	0.24	6	0.04	0.242	0.024
Age	1.16	7	0.165714	0.585	0.019
Social status	0.984	8	0.123	0.331	0.003
Frequency	5.864	9	0.651556	1.479	0.015
Family income	12.748	7	1.821143	6.429	0.002
Age * Social status	0.106	6	0.017667	0.107	0.025
Age * Frequency	0.004	6	0.000667	0.004	0.017

Age * Family income	0.06	6	0.01	0.06	0.008
Social status * Frequency	2.002	6	0.333667	2.019	0.019
Social status * Family income	0.574	7	0.082	0.289	0.01
Error	93.198	99	0.941394		
Total	2725.662	153	20.966631		
Corrected Total	168.784	152	1.308403		
a. R Squared = .848 (Adjusted R Squared = .719)					

Table 5 reveals Tests of Subjects Effects between the Dependent Variable:

This table presents the results of an Analysis of Variance (ANOVA) examining the effects of various factors on students' attitudes towards library services. Here's an interpretation of the key findings:

1. Model Fit:
   - R Squared = 0.848, indicating that the model explains 84.8% of the variance in students' attitudes.
   - Adjusted R Squared = 0.719, suggesting a good fit even when accounting for the number of predictors.
2. Overall Model Significance:
   - The Corrected Model has a significance value of 0, indicating that the overall model is statistically significant.
3. Main Effects: a. Gender (p = 0.024): Significant effect on attitudes towards library services. b. Age (p = 0.019): Significant effect on attitudes. c. Social status (p = 0.003): Highly significant effect on attitudes. d. Frequency (presumably of library use) (p = 0.015): Significant effect. e. Family income (p = 0.002): Highly significant effect, with the largest F-value (6.429) among main effects.
4. Interaction Effects: a. Age * Social status (p = 0.025): Significant interaction effect. b. Age * Frequency (p = 0.017): Significant interaction effect. c. Age * Family income (p = 0.008): Significant interaction effect. d. Social status * Frequency (p = 0.019): Significant interaction effect. e. Social status * Family income (p = 0.010): Significant interaction effect.
5. Interpretation:
   - All main effects (demographic factors) significantly influence students' attitudes towards library services.
   - Family income appears to have the strongest effect among the main factors.
   - The significant interaction effects suggest that the impact of one factor on attitudes depends on the level of another factor. For example, the effect of age on attitudes may differ across different social status groups.
6. Implications:
   - Considering these demographic factors and their interactions, library services and policies may need to be tailored.
   - Special attention might be needed for students from different family income levels, as this factor shows the strongest effect.
   - The library might consider developing targeted strategies for different age groups, social status categories, and frequency of library use.

There is a significant relationship between demographic profile of respondents and their attitude towards services of library.

Findings of the Study

Gender Distribution:

- Female students constitute the majority (61.44%) of library users or survey respondents.
- This gender imbalance suggests potentially different library usage patterns between male and female students.

Age Distribution:

- Most respondents (43.14%) fall in the 20-22 age group.
- A significant presence (31.37%) of students above 22 years old indicates a diverse age range of library users.

Social Status:

- BC (Backward Class) students form the largest group (44.44%), followed by MBC (Most Backward Class) at 28.76%.
- SC/ST students have the lowest representation (8.50%) among library users or survey respondents.

Student Attitudes towards Library Services:

- The library's search software is rated highest (mean 4.5), indicating high satisfaction with digital resources.
- Students find the library collection and resources highly relevant to their studies and syllabus (ranked 1st and 2nd).
- Lower satisfaction is reported for physical facilities, staff assistance, and operational aspects like library hours and printing facilities.

Demographic Factors Influencing Attitudes:

- All main demographic factors (gender, age, social status, frequency of use, and family income) have significant effects on students' attitudes towards library services.
- Family income shows the strongest effect among these factors.
- Significant interaction effects exist between various demographic factors, suggesting complex relationships in how these factors influence attitudes.

Overall Satisfaction:

- Students generally seem satisfied with core library functions and resources, with the top 5 ranked items all having mean scores of 4.0 or above.

Areas for Improvement:

- Physical facilities for extended study
- Organization of materials on shelves
- Library staff helpfulness
- Clarity of library procedures
- Photocopying and printing facilities
- Library hours

Statistical Significance:

- The overall model explaining students' attitudes is statistically significant, with 84.8% of the variance in attitudes explained by the demographic factors and their interactions.

Suggestions

1. Tailored Services:
   - ❖ Develop targeted services and resources for different demographic groups, especially considering the significant effects of age, social status, and family income on attitudes.
   - ❖ Create specialized programs or resources for students above 22 years old, who comprise many library users.
2. Improve Physical Facilities:
   - ❖ Enhance the comfort and functionality of study areas, especially for extended periods of use.
   - ❖ Upgrade photocopying and printing facilities to better meet student needs.
3. Staff Training:
   - ❖ Implement additional training for library staff to improve their ability to assist students effectively and provide guidance on resource location and usage.
4. Digital Resources:
   - ❖ As students highly rate these, continue investing in and improving digital resources and search software.
   - ❖ Offer training sessions for students to maximize the use of these digital tools.
5. Collection Development:
   - ❖ Maintain the strong alignment between the library collection and

curriculum needs, as students highly value this.
- ❖ Ensure regular updates to the collection, focusing on areas relevant to all social status groups.

6. Accessibility:
   - ❖ Review and potentially adjust library hours to accommodate student schedules better.
   - ❖ Implement measures to increase library usage among underrepresented groups, particularly SC/ST students.
7. Operational Improvements:
   - ❖ Simplify and clarify library procedures to make them more user-friendly.
   - ❖ Improve the organization and labelling of materials on shelves for easier access.
8. Feedback Mechanism:
   - ❖ Implement a regular feedback system to assess and improve library services based on student needs and preferences.

Conclusion

The study reveals that students at Tirunelveli Dakshina Mara Nadar Sangam College generally have a positive attitude towards library services, particularly regarding the relevance of resources to their studies and the quality of digital tools. However, there is significant variation in attitudes based on demographic factors such as gender, age, social status, and family income.The library's strengths lie in its collection's relevance to the curriculum, the effectiveness of its search software, and its regular updates. Areas for improvement include physical facilities, staff assistance, and some operational aspects.The complex interplay of demographic factors in shaping student attitudes highlights the need for a nuanced, tailored approach to library services. The library can enhance its role in supporting academic success and research by addressing the identified areas for improvement and considering the diverse needs of different student groups.The high explanatory power of the statistical model (R-squared = 0.848) underscores the importance of demographic factors in understanding and predicting student attitudes towards library services. This insight provides a solid foundation for strategic planning and resource allocation to improve library services

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