Use of Reference Materials by Undergraduate Students Studying Library and Information Science for Better Research in University Libraries in Dharwad District

SHREEDHAR V LONAKAR

Librarian Senior Scale, Department of Library and Information Science, Govt. First Grade College, Navalgund, Dharwad

Abstract- Introduction: This study looks at how undergraduate students studying Library and Information Science at Dharwad University use reference materials in their library. The purpose is to help improve their research abilities by understanding how well they know these resources, how they use them, why they use them, and the difficulties they face when using both printed and digital sources. This study is important because it gives useful insights into how LIS students carry out their research. This can help librarians and teachers to create better collections of resources, develop more effective training, and ultimately help students do better research in the Dharwad area.

Objectives of study: The main goals of this study are to find out how much students know about the types and availability of reference resources in their university libraries. It also aims to study how often students use different reference resources, the purposes they use them for, and the ways they access them, such as online or in print.

Research methodology: The study used a survey-based descriptive research design. A total of 100 responses were collected and checked for accuracy. From the responses and analysis, it was found that there are reference and information services and resources available to students in the Uttar Kannada district.

Data analysis: The study looked at undergraduate students studying Library and Information Science in Dharwad. It found that the main areas of interest were awareness and access to resources, how students use materials, their purposes for using them, and the challenges they face along with factors that influence their choices.

Finding: Most of these students use print resources like dictionaries, encyclopedias, and textbooks for their studies and assignments. They don't use electronic resources such as bibliographic databases and online tools as much as they should.

Recommendation: The paper suggests that university libraries should organize campaigns and workshops to teach students how important and simple it is to use tools like databases, e-journals, and online library catalogs.

Conclusion: Undergraduate students in Library and Information Science in Dharwad use both traditional and electronic sources for their research. However, they generally prefer print materials over electronic ones.

Indexed Terms- Reference Materials, Undergraduate Students, Library and Information Science, University Libraries, Dharwad District

I. INTRODUCTION

This study looks at how undergraduate students studying Library and Information Science use reference materials in the libraries of Dharwad university. It aims to improve their research skills by looking at how aware they are of these resources, how they use them, why they use them, and the problems they face with both printed and digital sources. The study also includes looking at existing research and local studies from the Dharwad area. The goal is to understand how these students use important resources and to find ways to better support their academic success in the field of Library and Information Science.

The study looks at how undergraduate students in Library and Information Science in Dharwad district use reference resources to do effective research, which is an important part of doing well in school. It highlights how important these resources are in higher

education, the specific needs of LIS students who are learning to become information experts, and the possible gaps in how they use these resources due to things like lack of awareness, skills, or access. This makes the study necessary for the Dharwad region.

1. Evolution of Information Access:

From Print to Digital: Digital technology has changed how information is accessed, making electronic books, journals, databases, and web resources more important than ever, even as printed materials remain available.

Information Literacy: Libraries are no longer just places to keep books but also centers for teaching information literacy—skills needed to find, check, and use information both in physical and digital formats.

2. Importance of Reference Resources in Research:

Foundation for Research: Reference resources like bibliographies, abstracts, and indexes give important information for deep research, helping students and scholars find accurate data to back up their work.

Academic Success: Using reference resources well has a direct effect on the quality of research and helps students do better in their studies.

3. The Role of the Library and Information Science Student:

Future Information Professionals: LIS students are being taught to become librarians and information workers, so their own habits of using resources are very important.

Developing Skills: How these students use reference resources in university libraries is a real example of the skills they are learning to teach others.

4. Context in Dharwad District:

University Libraries: The study focuses on the libraries of universities in Dharwad, a place with many educational institutions where it's important to understand how well resources are being used.

Potential Gaps: Studies in other similar areas show that even when resources are available, there can be a gap in how they are used due to things like not knowing much about them, not having enough technical skills, or not enough training.

II.   SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study is important because it gives useful information about how LIS students conduct their research. This can help librarians and teachers to make better collections of resources, create more effective training programs, and ultimately improve how students do their research in the Dharwad district. It also helps in understanding how students use reference materials, what problems they face, and how to make the resources more useful to them.

For Librarians:

- Help in choosing resources: The study can show which reference materials are not being used much, which could mean the collection needs updating or more variety to meet the students' needs.

- Improve user training: It will show where students struggle with finding or using resources, allowing librarians to create focused training and awareness programs about reference services.

For Educators and Institutions:

- Include resource use in teaching: Educators can use the study's findings to show the importance of different reference materials and better include them in the curriculum for LIS students.

- Justify spending on resources: The study can show how reference materials help with research, giving data to support library budget for buying and maintaining these resources.

For Students:

- Improve research skills: The study helps students know about the available resources and how to use them better, leading to better research outcomes.

- Be more independent: By knowing what the library offers, students can feel more confident about doing their research on their own.

III. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The problem is that undergraduate Library and Information Science (LIS) students in the universities of Dharwad district are not using reference resources as much as they should for their research. This is because they may not know about these resources or how to use them properly. Also, they might not have enough training in information literacy skills, which are important for finding, using, and understanding information. There could also be issues with how easy it is to access these resources or whether they are relevant enough for their studies. These problems are making it harder for students to make the most of the library's tools.

The main goal is to find out how much students in Dharwad district are using the available reference resources for their research and to understand the reasons behind their limited use. This will help identify the factors that are preventing them from making full use of these important researches too

IV. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The main goal of this study is to find out how undergraduate Library and Information Science (LIS) students in the Dharwad district use library reference resources for their research.

Specific Objectives:

- To find out how much the students know about the types and availability of reference resources in their university libraries.

- To study how often students use different reference resources, what they use them for, and the ways they access them, like online or in print.

- To identify the problems students face when using reference materials, such as not having enough information skills, trouble finding relevant resources, or issues with library technology.

- To learn how using this resource helps students with their studies and research.

- To find out how happy students are with the available reference resources and the library services provided.

- To make suggestions useful ideas to library staff and university leaders to improve the availability and use of reference resources for these students.

V. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

Research questions should focus on understanding how well LIS undergraduates in Dharwad district are aware of, can access, and actually use different types of reference resources. It should also look into what influences their use of these resources, why they use them, and the difficulties they face, all with the aim of improving their research abilities and academic results.

Awareness and Accessibility:

1. What is the level of awareness among LIS undergraduates about different reference materials, both printed and digital, in the university libraries of Dharwad?

2. How do LIS undergraduates feel about the ease of access to reference resources in their university libraries, both physically and online?

3. Which types of reference resources, such as bibliographies, indexes, abstracts, and e-resources, do LIS undergraduates mostly use and rely on?

Usage Patterns and Purposes:

1. What are the main reasons LIS undergraduates in Dharwad use reference resources for their research?

2. How often do LIS undergraduates use different types of reference resources in their university libraries?

3. Challenges and Influencing Factors:

1. What are the main problems LIS undergraduate's faces when trying to access and use reference resources for their studies?

2. Are LIS undergraduates happy with the quality and relevance of the reference resources and services available in their university libraries?

VI. REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Library is very important in the academic community. Libraries and their information resources are very important in universities and cannot be ignored.

Clabo (2002) said that students use library resources for reading for fun, to find information, doing schoolwork, and reading news from newspapers.

Adomi (2006) said that library resources are materials that help the library meet the information needs of its users.

Ojedokun (2007) said that library resources are materials that users use to make decisions and solve problems. These sources can be primary or secondary. A library is useful only if its resources are used.

Uzoagba, Ezukwuoke and Chiagbu (2012) said that library resources in different forms like print, non-print, and electronic are the main parts of any library.

Amusa & Iyoro (2013) said that most students (60%) used library resources to study, read, and do research.

Oluwatobi, Ehiogbae, Aluko-Arowolo and Onasote (2014) found that online databases were the most used library materials, followed by dictionaries, books, and encyclopedias, which were used daily. The least used materials were CD-ROM databases.

Foloruso & Njoku (2016) said that students mainly used library resources to study and read for exams. They also used the library to find materials for assignments, do research, read newspapers, and participate in group discussions.

Barfi, Afful-Authur and Agyapong (2017) said that having library resources makes it easier for people to use them and helps with learning and teaching.

Barfi, Afful-Arthur and Agyupong (2018) found that factors like lecturers not being involved in choosing books, not enough up-to-date materials, users not being informed about new books, poor library instruction, lack of power supply, and not enough library staff were major reasons that stopped lecturers from using library materials.

VII. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

For this study, a descriptive survey method was used. The study focused on undergraduate students who are registered library users at the University of Dharwad District during the 2024-2025 academic session. According to the data collected at the time of the research, the total number of registered users was 100. These users came from all the different departments within the university. To select the sample, the availability sampling method was used. This means that the people who were present in the library at the time of the study were chosen as the sample. The total sample size was 100. A questionnaire was the only tool used to collect data.

The questionnaire had two parts. Part A asked about the basic information of the respondents, such as their age, gender, and faculty. Part B was related to the research questions. A total of 7 questionnaires were given out, and all of them were returned by the respondents.

The data collected was analyzed using frequency counts and simple percentages to understand the responses better.

VIII. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Part A: Demographic Analysis

Table No 1.

Demographic Analysis in Dharwad District

Sl. No	Details	Number (No)	Percentage (%)
1.	Gender:		
	Female	61	61%
	Male	39	39%
	Total	100	100%
2.	Program:		

	Science College	12	12%
	Medicine College	3	3%
	Arts and Commerce College	81	81%
	Education College	4	4%
	Total	100	100%

(Source: Data collection from field in Dharwad District)

Interpretation: Table No. 1 revealed the number of respondents according to gender. The analysis shows that the female respondents were more than the male respondents, having 61 (61%) while the male respondents have 39 (39%). This finding therefore shows that the female undergraduate library users are more than their male counterparts

Part B: Descriptive Analysis

1. Awareness and Accessibility:

Table No:2 Level of awareness among LIS undergraduates

Reference Materials	Frequency	Percentage
Print	67	67%
Digital	33	33%
Total	100	100%

(Source: Data collection in the university libraries of Dharwad)

Interpretation: The students studying Library and Information Science in Dharwad have a good overall knowledge of both printed and digital reference materials shown in Table No. 2. However, they do not use these resources effectively very often. This is because they face problems like not having enough access, poor internet facilities, or not having the needed skills to use digital tools like databases and e-journals. Even though they use the internet a lot, they don't make full use of the digital resources their library provides. Many of them still prefer printed materials because they find them easier to work with and cheaper, even though digital formats offer benefits like being available all the time and being shared by many students.

Table No:3 LIS undergraduates feel about the ease of access to reference resources

Options	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neutral	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
Physically	64%	27%	0%	9%	0%
Online	57%	18%	1%	16%	8%

(Source: Data collection in the university libraries of Dharwad)

Interpretation: LIS undergraduates have a mix of feelings about using reference resources. They really like the wide range of materials and the ease of accessing them online. However, they still run into problems with the physical resources, like old books and messy shelves. They also need more training to improve their digital skills so they can use both online and physical resources better. Most students are happy with e-resources because they can use them anytime and from anywhere. But some don't know about the physical services available or don't have the skills to use them well shown in Table No. 3.

Table No: 4 Types of reference resources LIS undergraduates mostly use

Types of reference resources	Frequency	Percentage
Bibliographies	53	53%
Indexes	17	17%
Abstracts	14	14%
E-Resources	16	16%
Total	100	100%

(Source: Data collection in the university libraries of Dharwad)

Interpretation: Above Table No. 4 described LIS (Library and Information Science) students, just like other researchers, use a variety of reference materials, but they mostly depend on electronic resources,

indexes, and abstracting services to find and get information on particular topics. Although bibliographies are helpful for finding existing research, the ability to quickly search, filter, and access digital resources makes indexes and abstracts, especially those available through e-resources, more important for starting research and exploring wider topics for undergraduates in Dharwad district.

2. Usage Patterns and Purposes:

Table No:5 Reasons LIS undergraduates in Dharwad use reference resources for their research

Reasons	Frequency	Percentage
Gain Knowledge	69	69%
Conduct Research	23	23%
Facilitate Learning and Assignments	8	8%
Total	100	100%

(Source: Data collection in the university libraries of Dharwad)

Interpretation: Undergraduate students studying at LIS in Dharwad use reference materials to help with their research, find specific information about their subjects, do literature searches, and stay updated with general knowledge. They are using more electronic resources now because they are easier to access, easier to search, and help them keep up with new information faster than printed materials shown in Table No. 5. These resources are important to them because they help with their studies, making presentations, and achieving career goals. Often, their professors guide them on how to use these resources effectively.

Table No:6 LIS undergraduates use different types of reference resources

Types of reference resources	Frequency	Percentage
Books	74	74%
Electronic	26	26%
Total	100	100%

(Source: Data collection in the university libraries of Dharwad)

Interpretation: Undergraduate students studying library and information science use reference materials in different ways, but most use them moderately to a lot. How often they use these resources depends on things like how easy it is to get the materials, how much they know about using them, and how they like to learn. Table No. 6 shows that students still use traditional tools like dictionaries and encyclopedias, but they also rely heavily on digital tools to find information. To understand these habits, it's important to look at the library's specific situation, the kind of reference material being used, and what information the students are looking for.

3. Challenges and Influencing Factors:

Table No:7 Problems LIS undergraduate's faces when trying to access and use reference resources for their studies

Problems	Frequency	Percentage
Digital literacy (lack of ICT skills, poor internet access)	29	29%
Information literacy (difficulty finding, evaluating, and using resources)	43	43%
Resource access (insufficient or outdated materials, physical infrastructure limitations, and restrictions on digital content)	28	28%
Total	100	100%

(Source: Data collection in the university libraries of Dharwad)

Interpretation: Table No. 7 undergraduate students, including those studying Library and Information Science, often struggle to find and use reference materials. This is because they may not have enough knowledge about how to work with information, there

isn't enough technology support or good internet access, they don't get enough training on how to search for information, the resources available are not enough or are out of date, and some students don't like using digital resources. These problems can make students feel frustrated and stop them from using information effectively for their studies.

Table No:8 Highlight areas for improvement S with the quality and relevance of the reference resources and services available in their university libraries

Areas for improvement	Satisfaction Levels				
	Strongly Satisfaction	Satisfaction	Neutral	Dissatisfaction	Strongly Dissatisfaction
Relevance of resources	18%	35%	26%	21%	0%
Awareness of services	21%	32%	24%	23%	0%
Access to specific collections	14%	27%	19%	26%	14%

(Source: Data collection in the university libraries of Dharwad)

Interpretation: The answer to whether LIS undergraduate students are happy with their university library's resources and services is not clear, as studies show mixed feelings. Students may be okay with the basic things the library offers, but they often feel neutral or not satisfied with the quality and relevance of the materials and certain service parts, like how helpful or fast the services are shown in Table No. 8. A big challenge is making sure the library's resources and services keep up with what students need for their studies, which means the library has to keep checking and improving what it offers.

IX. FINDINGS

Many LIS undergraduate students in Dharwad mostly use print resources like dictionaries, encyclopedias, and textbooks for their studies and assignments. They don't use electronic resources like bibliographic databases and online tools as much as they should. This is because they might not realize how useful these resources are or don't have the skills to use them properly. It's important to provide training so that these students can learn how to find, check, and use both print and electronic information in a better way. Teachers and librarians can help by encouraging students and teaching them the skills needed to make the best use of library resources.

X. RECOMMENDATIONS

University libraries in Dharwad should start training programs that teach LIS students how to find, use, and evaluate information, especially digital resources.

They should also run campaigns and hold workshops to show students how important and easy it is to access tools like databases, e-journals, and online library catalogs. The library should make sure both print and electronic resources are available and well-maintained, and offer affordable photocopying services to meet students' needs. Teachers should be encouraged to use library resources in their classes and assignments so students can practice using them more.

CONCLUSION

Undergraduate students studying Library and Information Science in Dharwad use both traditional and electronic sources for their research. They often rely on dictionaries, encyclopedias, and textbooks for their main research and literature reviews. However, they tend to prefer print materials over electronic ones. Many aren't very familiar with or skilled at using advanced digital tools like bibliographic databases. This shows a need for better training and support to help these students become more independent and effective in their research using both print and digital resources.

REFERENCES

[1] Awana, O. Availability of books and other informational materials and the use of academic libraries. African Res. Rev., 2007, 1(3), 51-64.

[2] Antony, Isabella Mary., &Dhanavandan, S. (2015). Perception of web-based tools and services by college library professionals in South Tamil Nadu, India: A case study. Chinese Librarianship: an International Electronic Journal, 39. URL: http://www.iclc.us/cliej/cl38AD.pdf

[3] Bankapur (V M) and Chowdappa (N) 2012 Development, Diffusion and Utilization of E-Resources in Engineering college libraries, Trends in Development and Managing E-Resources in Libraries. VTU Belagavi

[4] Haneefa K., Mohamed. Use of ICT based resources and services in special libraries in Kerala. Annals of Lib. Inf. Stud., 2007, 54(Mar), 23-31.

[5] Hussain, Akhtar & Krishna Kumar. Utilisation of information sources and services of the Master School of Management Library: A study. Inter.J. of Lib. Sci., 2013, 9(3).

[6] Joute, Zomuana (2014). Resource Mobilization for College Library: A Job of Library Professional Excellence. Retrieved from, http://ir.inflibnet.ac.in/bitstream/1944/1832/1/28 . pdf.

[7] Kamble, L.Y. and Bankapur, V.M. Use of Internet-Based Electronic Resources by the Faculty and Students of Kles Lingaraj College Belagavi., 2022 In: UNSPECIFIED, (ed.) Kripa Drishathi., pp.69-75.

[8] Nzivo, Charles N. User perception on library services and information resources in Kenyan Public Libraries. Library Review, 2012, 61(2), 110-27

[9] Neetika Sharma, Use of E-resources by the faculty members and students: A study of Swami Shraddhanand college, University of Delhi, Delhi. Journal of Indian Library Association, 54(3), 2018.

[10] Oyeniyi, Akande Samson. (2013). Gender differences in information retrieval skills and use of electronic resources among information professionals in South–western Nigeria. International Journal of Library and Information Science, 5 (7), 208-215. URL: http://www.academicjournals.org/IJLIS

[11] O S Shekhar Singh and M T M Khan, User's Attitude towards Electronic Resources in IIT Libraries: An Evaluation Study, 10th International CALIBER, March 12-14, 2015.

[12] Ranganadham, S. & Surendra Babu, K. Awareness and use of library information resources and services in Osmania University. Inter. J. of Li. and Inf. St., 2012, 2(3) 42-54.

[13] Siddiqui & Asif Fareed. Use of library collection in the Jawaharlal Nehru University library, New Delhi. IASLIC Bulletin, 2002, 47(3), 149-61.

[14] Vinod Kumar Singh, Use of E- Resources and Services by users of Indian Institute of Management Bangalore: A Study. International Journal of Humanities and Social Science Invention, 2(9), 2013, 1631.. Umesh A. Patel, Usage of Electronic Resources by the Users of SVIT LIBRARY-Vasad, Gujarat, India: A study. 2(1), 2017, 11-15.