Information Products and Services at Bharathiar University: A Study

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ABSTRACT

This study investigates the range, awareness, and utilization of information products and services offered by Bharathiar University Library. A structured questionnaire was administered through Google Forms, yielding 120 responses, of which 100 valid responses were analysed. The data were processed using Microsoft Excel and interpreted through descriptive statistical methods. The study examines user awareness, usage patterns, and satisfaction levels across postgraduate students, research scholars, and faculty members. Findings indicate high awareness and frequent use of core digital resources such as e-journals, e-books, and OPAC, while certain services require greater visibility and promotion. Overall user satisfaction is positive, though several areas for enhancement were identified. The study offers practical suggestions to strengthen the effectiveness and accessibility of library information services.

KEYWORDS: Information Products; Library Services; User Awareness; Usage Patterns; User Satisfaction; Digital Resources; Academic Libraries; Bharathiar University; Information Access.

INTRODUCTION

Academic libraries are vital centers for supporting teaching, learning, and research activities. They provide a wide range of information products and services, including print books, e-books, journals, databases, reference services, and digital repositories. The effective use of these resources enhances academic performance and research productivity. In modern times, with the growth of digital technology, libraries have expanded their services to include online access, e-resources, and current awareness services, making information more accessible to users.

Bharathiar University Library serves a diverse user community comprising postgraduate students, research scholars, and faculty members. The library offers both traditional and digital resources to support the academic and research needs of its users. However, the level of awareness, usage patterns, and user satisfaction with these services remain largely unexplored. Understanding these aspects is crucial to improving service delivery and ensuring that resources are fully utilized for academic excellence.

The present study focuses on examining the information products and services available at Bharathiar University Library. It aims to assess user awareness, usage, and satisfaction levels and to identify suggestions for enhancing library services. By analyzing data collected from students, research scholars, and faculty members, the study provides insights into the effectiveness of library services and their contribution to academic and research activities.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Gupta & Mukherjee (2024) examined psychological drivers influencing consumer adoption of generative artificial intelligence (GAI) for retail information search. Using 31 in-depth interviews and thematic analysis, the study found that trust, technology characteristics, readiness, and information attributes affect adoption. GAI reduces information overload by providing synthesized search results, but uncertainty about its functioning impacts usage. An integrated conceptual model is proposed to explain adoption in this unique context.

Rampasek et al. (2025) examine the evolving role of artificial intelligence (AI) in cybersecurity. While AI offers significant growth potential, it introduces vulnerabilities in digital products and services. The study emphasizes the importance of AI-specific standardization, conformity assessment, and certification to ensure cyber-secure implementation. Current regulatory trends risk becoming burdensome or outdated due to rapid technological advancement. Future cyber resilience depends on secure, standardized, and certified AI-enabled systems.

Farid et al. (2025) examine the applications and challenges of Digital Information Security Management (DISM) policies in academic libraries. The study, based on a systematic literature review following PRISMA guidelines across multiple databases, highlights how libraries implement DISM practices for data protection, backup, information security systems, hardware/software development, and staff training. Findings reveal that while many libraries maintain strict privacy policies, some fail to implement DISM effectively due to technical, budgetary, and readiness challenges. The study emphasizes promoting a DISM culture to ensure data security and privacy in academic libraries.

Levitan (1982) highlights the critical role of information resources in building an information- and knowledge-based society. Information resources, defined as organized stocks of information for reuse, are essential for societal welfare, enabling continuous information production and reuse. A life cycle model is presented, comprising generation, institutionalization, maintenance, enhancement, and distribution, positioning information resources at the core of these processes. Information resources function as economic "goods" with nonlinear, evolutionary characteristics, requiring further research into their economic and institutional frameworks.

OBJECTIVES

1. To study the basic profile of users at Bharathiar University Library.
2. To find out how aware users are of the library's information products and services.
3. To examine how often users make use of the available information resources.
4. To measure the satisfaction level of users with the library services.
5. To identify users' suggestions for improving library resources and services.

METHODOLOGY

The study followed a survey method to collect primary data from the users of Bharathiar University Library. A structured questionnaire was prepared using Google Forms and distributed online to students, research scholars, and faculty members. A total of 120 responses were received, out of which 100 were found valid and used for analysis. The collected data was downloaded and organized using Microsoft Excel. Percentage analysis and simple statistical methods were applied to interpret the findings. The results were presented in the form of tables to understand awareness, usage, and satisfaction levels regarding the library's information products and services.

Profile of Bharathiar University

Bharathiar University, established in 1982 at Coimbatore, evolved from the Postgraduate Centre of the University of Madras and was recognized by the UGC in 1985. With 39 departments and 145 affiliated colleges, it offers a wide range of postgraduate and research programs. Accredited with an A++ grade, the University holds notable NIRF and global rankings. Strong research facilities, industry-linked curriculum, international collaborations, and dedicated faculty make it a leading institution in higher education.

Statement of Problem

Bharathiar University Library offers a wide range of information products and services, but it is unclear how far users are aware of them, how often they use them, and how satisfied they are. Limited understanding of user needs may lead to underutilization of important resources. To improve service quality and support academic activities effectively, it is necessary to study the awareness, usage, satisfaction, and user expectations regarding the library's information services.

Data Analysis and Interpretation

Table 1 Category-wise Respondents

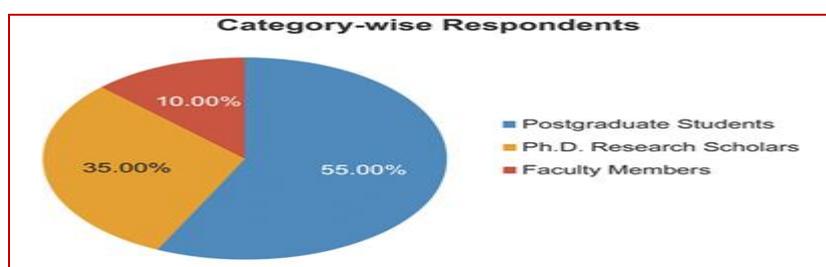| S. No	Category / Qualification	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Postgraduate Students	55	55.00
2	Ph.D. Research Scholars	35	35.00
3	Faculty Members	10	10.00
	Total	**100**	**100.00**

Figure 1 Category-wise Respondents

Table 1 shows that postgraduate students form the majority of respondents, accounting for 55% of the total sample. Ph.D. research scholars constitute 35%, indicating strong participation from the research community. Faculty members represent 10%, providing insights from an academic and teaching perspective. Overall, the distribution

reflects a balanced mix of users, ensuring reliable data for analysing information needs and service utilisation at Bharathiar University.

Table 2 Gender-wise Distribution of Respondents

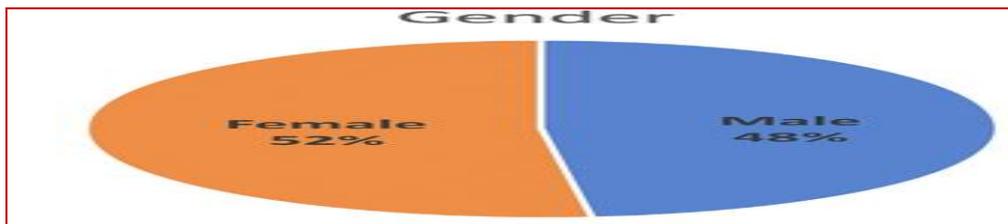| S. No	Gender	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Male	48	48.00
2	Female	52	52.00
	Total	**100**	**100.00**

Figure 2 Gender-wise Distribution of Respondents

Table 2 shows the gender distribution of the respondents. Female respondents make up 52% of the sample, while male respondents form 48%. The numbers are almost equal, which helps the study collect views from both groups fairly. This balanced participation supports a clearer understanding of how different users access and use the information products and services at Bharathiar University.

Table 3 Age-wise Distribution of Respondents

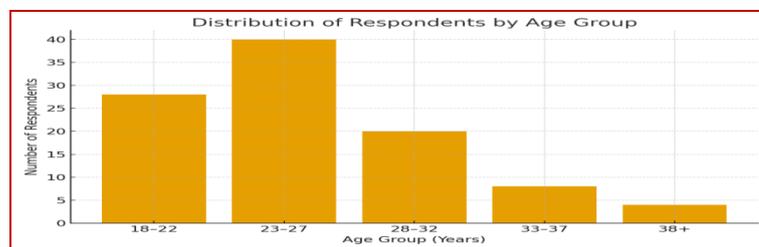| S. No	Age Group (Years)	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1	18 – 22	28	28.00
2	23 – 27	40	40.00
3	28 – 32	20	20.00
4	33 – 37	8	8.00
5	38 and Above	4	4.00
	Total	**100**	**100.00**

Figure 3 Age-wise Distribution of Respondents

Table 3 shows the age-wise distribution of respondents. The largest group is 23–27 years, making up 40% of the sample, followed by 18–22 years with 28%. Respondents aged 28–32 form 20%, while only a small number belong to the 33–37 and 38+ age groups. This indicates that most participants are young learners and researchers, which reflects active academic engagement within the university.

Table 4: Awareness of Information Products & Services

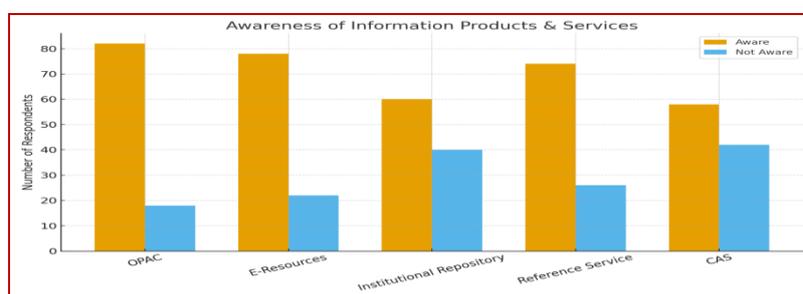| S. No	Information Product / Service	Aware	Aware Percentage (%)	Not Aware	Not Aware Percentage (%)	Total
1	OPAC (Online Catalogue)	82	82.00	18	18.00	100
2	E-Resources (E-journals, E-books)	78	78.00	22	22.00	100
3	Institutional Repository	60	60.00	40	40.00	100
4	Reference Service	74	74.00	26	26.00	100
5	Current Awareness Service (CAS)	58	58.00	42	42.00	100

Figure 4 Awareness of Information Products & Services

Table 4 shows the awareness level of respondents about various information products and services offered by the university library. Awareness is highest for OPAC (82%) and e-resources (78%), showing that most users are familiar with these essential tools. Awareness is moderate for reference services (74%) and the institutional repository (60%). Current Awareness Service has the lowest awareness (58%). Overall, most respondents know the major library services available to them.

Table 5: Usage of Information Products & Services

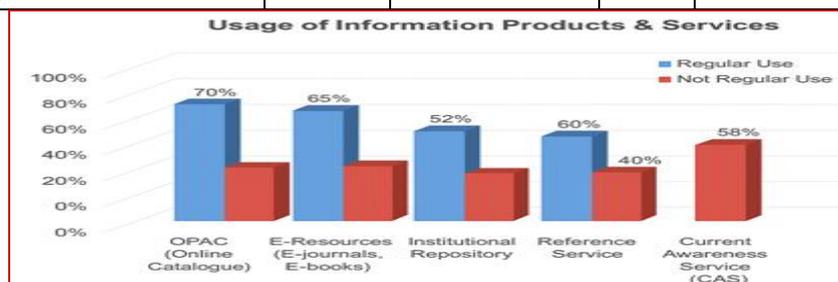| S. No	Information Product / Service	Regular Use	Regular Use Percentage (%)	Not Used	Not Used Percentage (%)	Total
1	OPAC (Online Catalogue)	70	70.00	30	30.00	100
2	E-Resources (E-journals, E-books)	65	65.00	35	35.00	100
3	Institutional Repository	48	48.00	52	52.00	100
4	Reference Service	60	60.00	40	40.00	100
5	Current Awareness Service (CAS)	42	42.00	58	58.00	100

Figure 5 Usages of Information Products & Services

Table 5 presents the usage of information products and services by the respondents. OPAC is the most regularly used service (70%), followed by e-resources (65%) and reference services (60%). Usage of the institutional repository is moderate at 48%, while Current Awareness Service shows the lowest regular use (42%). Overall, the table indicates that most users frequently rely on core digital and reference services for academic and research needs.

Table 6: Satisfaction Level of Users

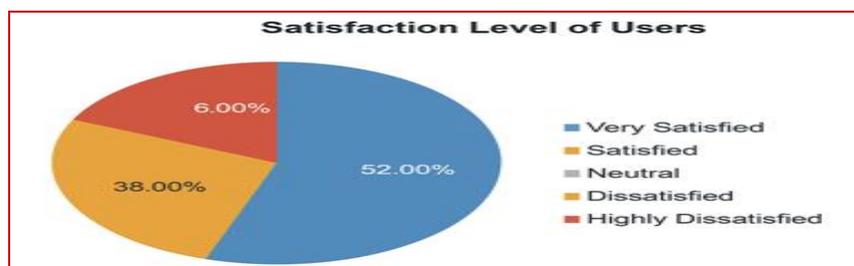| S. No	Satisfaction Level	No. of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Very Satisfied	52	52.00
2	Satisfied	38	38.00
3	Neutral	6	6.00
4	Dissatisfied	3	3.00
5	Highly Dissatisfied	1	1.00
	Total	**100**	**100.00**

Figure 6 Satisfaction Levels of Users

Table 6 shows the satisfaction level of users with the library's information services. A majority of respondents are highly positive, with 52% being very satisfied and 38% satisfied. Only a small number expressed neutral (6%) or negative opinions (3% dissatisfied and 1% highly dissatisfied). Overall, the results indicate that most users feel the library services meet their needs effectively and provide a supportive academic environment.

Table 7: Suggestions for Improving Library Services

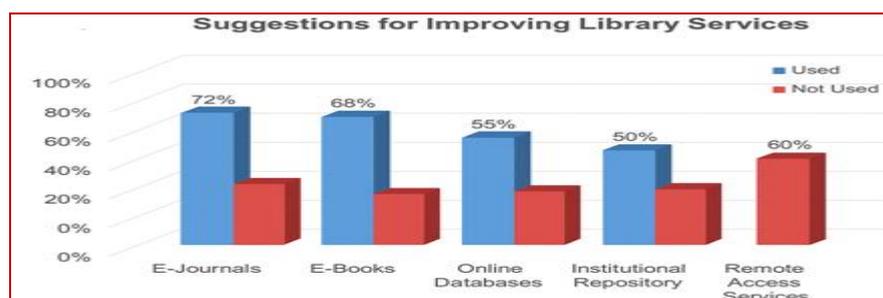| S. No	Digital Resource / Service	Used	Used Percentage (%)	Not Used	Not Used Percentage (%)	Total
1	E-Journals	72	72.00	28	28.00	100
2	E-Books	68	68.00	32	32.00	100
3	Online Databases	55	55.00	45	45.00	100
4	Institutional Repository	50	50.00	50	50.00	100
5	Remote Access Services	40	40.00	60	60.00	100

Figure 7 Suggestions for Improving Library Services

Table 7 shows the usage of digital resources and services among respondents. E-journals are the most used resource (72%), followed by e-books (68%). Online databases are used by 55%, while the institutional repository is used by half of the respondents. Remote access services show the lowest usage at 40%. Overall, the table indicates strong dependence on digital academic resources, with scope to increase awareness and access to advanced online services.

FINDINGS

The study indicates that postgraduate students form the majority of library users (55%), followed by Ph.D. research scholars (35%) and faculty members (10%), reflecting active participation from both academic and research communities. Gender distribution is nearly equal, with females comprising 52% and males 48%, while the largest age group is 23–27 years (40%), demonstrating a predominantly young user base. Awareness of library services is highest for OPAC (82%) and e-resources (78%), moderate for reference services (74%) and the institutional repository (60%), and lowest for Current Awareness Service (58%). Usage patterns show OPAC (70%) and e-resources (65%) as the most frequently used services, with moderate use of the institutional repository (48%) and Current Awareness Service (42%). User satisfaction is generally high, with 52% very satisfied and 38% satisfied. Among digital resources, e-journals (72%) and e-books (68%) are most used, indicating strong reliance on core academic resources and potential for enhancing access to advanced online services.

CONCLUSION

The study concludes that Bharathiar University Library effectively provides a range of information products and services to meet the academic and research needs of its users. Postgraduate students and research scholars are the primary users, with a balanced gender and age representation. Awareness and usage are highest for OPAC and e-resources, while services like the institutional repository and Current Awareness Service require increased promotion. User satisfaction is generally high, indicating that the library supports academic engagement effectively. The findings suggest that enhancing access to digital resources, promoting underutilized services, and continuously updating information products can further strengthen the library's role in supporting teaching, learning, and research activities.

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