Information Needs And Resource Preferences Of Library Users Of University Of Calcutta

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Abstract

The library is essential to good education. It's crucial to organization growth. A total of 250 questionnaires were issued to University of Calcutta library customers, and 160 were returned. In that, 105 questions were suitable for analysis. Findings of the study revealed that library plays a vital role in the life of youngsters and they are visiting the library regularly. Library usage and information needs of youngsters are mainly related to employment and education. The study concludes with providing some of the important suggestions for overall development of information resources, services and infrastructure facilities of the CCL in order to provide better services to young users.

Keywords: Information need, Resources, Education, Employment, Books

INTRODUCTION

Libraries are at a crucial crossroads in this era of quickly advancing information technology and digital material. They must adapt in order to meet the requirements and preferences of users, whose needs and interests are altering in tandem with the growth of digital technology. Libraries have been essential institutions for a very long time since they are responsible for the acquisition, preservation, and provision of access to knowledge. They also provide assistance to communities in their efforts to better themselves in terms of education, professional development, and personal growth. Nevertheless, the 21st century has brought about a modification that has never been seen before in the way that people search for and consume information, which poses a challenge to the traditional library services and resources. In today's world, library patrons come from a wide range of backgrounds, including students, researchers, professionals, and casual visitors. Each of these groups has a distinct set of information requirements and resource preferences. To effectively fulfill their goal, improve their resources, and create meaningful user experiences, libraries must first come to an understanding of the requirements and preferences of their patrons.

Information is derived from the Latin word "informare," which means "information." Nominative information is the basis of the word "information." In order to generate information, raw data must be processed or given additional value. Depending on the context, a model might be a framework for thinking about a problem or it can be a declaration of the causal relationships between theoretical propositions. Detailed information-seeking models illustrate the problems that are tough to overcome. Education is absolutely necessary for the advancement of society. Because it is the engine that propels national, human, and economic progress, education is an essential component in every field of knowledge. Education, regardless of its field, not only helps citizens develop better morals but also produces a better future. Education heightens pupils' understanding of happenings on a worldwide scale. Through education, one can develop the self-assurance and tenacity necessary to adjust to shifting social norms and to compete successfully in life.

The growth of information throughout the world has made it difficult for any library to contain all subject-specific content. In the past, libraries were nothing more than information storage facilities. The proliferation of information, the increasing costs of publication, the utilization of digital print and Internet resources, increased research, shifting user requirements, and increased service expectations are all challenges that librarians must face daily. In order to fulfill the needs of library patrons and enhance the quality of library services, they are required to gather high-quality information resources. In order to satisfy the requirements of the patrons and enhance the quality of the library's services, they are required to generate

high-quality information resources from other libraries. In this day and age, libraries make advantage of the free materials available on the internet. Both library staff and patrons are confronted with challenges associated with these resources. Additionally, the behaviors of users are undergoing transformations, the most significant of which is the manner in which they search for information on the internet. They require assistance from libraries in order to search efficiently. For academics to construct a foundation of knowledge, they need to have access to current field information. New technology makes it possible to gain direct access to information; nevertheless, in order to gather and transmit this information, certain skills are required. Through the expansion of library resources, libraries provide academic users with assistance in studying, teaching, and doing research.

Information Needs and Resource Preferences

Factors like as one's educational background, occupational responsibilities, personal interests, and the precise activities one aspires to do impact one's information requirements, the fundamental motivation behind why people seek knowledge. Students and teachers that utilize academic libraries mostly look for materials to supplement their studies, research, and classroom instruction. People who use public libraries, on the other hand, may be looking for knowledge on how to manage their money, how to get a job, or how to enjoy leisure reading. Because of these variations, it is critical to assess the information needs of library patrons in order to tailor library materials and services to the specific requirements of each demographic. In addition, the conventional view of a library as a physical storehouse of books is changing as patrons want easy and instantaneous access to knowledge. Providing tangible resources as well as digital access to extensive online databases, e-books, and multimedia content, libraries nowadays are seen as hybrid locations that span the physical and digital realms.

One such area where technology developments have caused noticeable changes is in the preferred forms and types of resources. Libraries used to rely on printed books and periodicals, but now digital materials are crucial, especially as internet access and digital literacy increase throughout the world. Digital formats are booming in popularity because to their accessibility, ease of search, and general usefulness, particularly among younger audiences that grew up with the internet. Despite this, not everyone prefers digital over print. Many people still like print when doing in-depth reading, claiming reasons including less eye strain from screens, improved attention, and retention when working with real materials. This emphasizes the need of libraries keeping a diverse collection that caters to both modern and traditional tastes, as different resources are useful for different things and have different audiences.

The accessibility of library materials also affects how well libraries serve their patrons' information requirements. Library patrons are no longer limited by their physical location because to the proliferation of digital resources, which allow libraries to remain open around the clock. Users who are unable to frequent a physical library often have access to digital materials such as e-journals, databases, and other online resources. Academic and research settings are prime examples of this, as researchers frequently need access to specialized resources that may not be readily available in their immediate vicinity. As a result, several libraries have made investments in digital lending models, interlibrary loan systems, and electronic resource subscriptions to guarantee that patrons may access the information they require. Subscription fees for high-quality digital resources, tight finances, and the requirement for technical assistance in utilizing digital platforms are some of the access hurdles that continue to exist. Therefore, libraries should always ask their users how satisfied they are with the accessibility of their resources and look for ways to remove these obstacles so that everyone can utilize their services.

Additionally, larger social and technical developments impact user choices; for example, the growing importance of multimedia and multidisciplinary education. Videos, audiobooks, and digital media creation tools are now part of the multimedia material that libraries offer, in addition to the traditional text-based resources. Visual and aural forms of information are becoming increasingly prevalent in education, research, and leisure, and this expansion reflects that shift in user expectations and learning patterns. Video tutorials and interactive learning platforms are becoming more popular among students as a complement to traditional textbooks.

On the other hand, working professionals may prefer webinars or podcasts for professional development. Libraries have adapted to these many forms in order to keep up with the times, frequently repurposing older buildings into community gathering places for study or media production. In light of this, libraries may better deploy their resources to foster an atmosphere that promotes exploration, learning, and engagement by collecting user feedback on the formats and materials they value most.

Library patrons' expectations of service are evolving in response to changes in resource format choices as well as the popularity of user-driven experiences. With the use of data analytics, which are now included into many library management systems, librarians may monitor patron behavior in relation to resource utilization and adjust services accordingly. Library systems like this allow us to see what people are looking for, predict what people may need in the future, and even tailor our recommendations to each individual user based on their academic interests and past borrowing

habits. The rise of user-centric service design as a distinguishing feature of popular digital platforms is in line with this individualized strategy. Through the integration of these technologies, libraries may get a deeper understanding of their patrons' complex requirements and provide tailored assistance, strengthening the bond between the library and its community.

As a result of the COVID-19 epidemic, many people have turned to online education and telecommuting, hastening the process of changing their information demands and resource preferences. In response to the growing need for information accessible from a distance, libraries have enhanced their online databases, added virtual support, and expanded their digital services. The importance of libraries as providers of digital materials and the merit of adaptable service models were both brought to light during this time. As libraries adapt to the possibilities and threats posed by an increasingly digital society, it is essential to have a firm grasp on patron tastes and expectations in the post-pandemic environment.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Bhattacharjee, Sudip et al., (2014) This study investigated the information-seeking behavior of college library users in Cachar district, Assam, including undergraduates, staff, and researchers. The present study's respondents are mostly from five college libraries in Cachar district, Assam, where computer and Internet penetration is low and professors, research scholars, and students are uncomfortable utilizing computers. For that purpose, the investigators used a survey method, which included questionnaire administration, participant observation, and participant interviews to determine respondents' information seeking behavior in terms of library visits and academic and research reading materials. Randomly selected samples received the self-designed questionnaire. The samples include UG students, teachers, researchers, and staff. Respondents completed questionnaires for data analysis and interpretation. Data was collected using questionnaires. The % method is used for data analysis.

Horsfall, Millie et al., (2020) Rivers State University library and information science (LIS) students' digital information demands and seeking behavior were examined. This descriptive study survey was conducted on 324 undergraduate library and information science students at Rivers State University. 245 were selected. Structured questionnaires, descriptive statistics, frequency distribution, and percentages were used to examine the results. The results showed that students needed academic, ICT, and Internet information. Exams and assignments motivated them to search for material from instructors, lecture notes, personal collections, the internet, and coworkers. They used it for academic and personal development and decision-making. Students used the internet and social media. However, weak internet search abilities, lack of computer, and information overload hindered undergraduate students' information seeking. To encourage students to use library electronic information resources, libraries should be equipped with the latest technologies and online databases and increase their orientation programs to teach students about Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC) and digital information seeking.

Kumari, Kanchan et al., (2021) This review critically evaluates selected studies. The approach and if the inferences drawn are justified are some points of divergence. Thus, this may benefit researchers studying digital user information-seeking behavior. Eleven studies were chosen to better understand their users' information demands and information-seeking behavior and to recommend ways to improve library services and their utilization. College, university, public, and government library libraries were chosen for this study. Our review is based on critical literature assessment and user information-seeking behavior. These investigations encompass many libraries and users, and some intriguing theories might be statistically validated. Inferences are weak without statistical validation of hypotheses. This is a major flaw in the literature, including this sample. However, constructive suggestions are given. These include specific libraries, methodological enhancements, hypothesis expansion, and inference validation. We think our review fills a void since analytical rigour is neglected.

Singh, Meghabat & Charak, Avinash. (2022) The study examines University of Jammu students' library use. The questionnaire was designed using Google form and evaluated using MS Excel. Complete survey responses were received from 310 students. Most responders (33.17%) used OPAC to find library documents. 31.01% of respondents used online resources to find current and precise information. The study found that the most respondents need database, institutional repository, and anti-plagiarism software training.

Zhang, Tao et al., (2016) Library services include online help and tutorials, however they are often examined in specific contexts and disciplines like subject-specific research guides. This study examined consumers' preferences and expectations of library help channels and internet help. A qualitative survey of 45 library patrons was undertaken. The survey asked users how they get library help, their online help preferences and expectations, material type, and general help channels. A content analysis was then done. Survey respondents prioritized library help channels differently. Half of respondents preferred conceptual (concept-focused) guidance, while the other half selected procedural (step-by-step) or mixed. Expert support was also cited in the poll, even though online aid was available. The authors found users' behavioral preferences, attitudes, and expectations for library help channels and online help content. Online help for libraries is

difficult since users have different help-seeking preferences and different expectations of help content depending on the situation.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Research design

This investigation adopts a quantitative research approach, utilizing structured questionnaires to gather numerical data that can be statistically analyzed.

Development of the Questionnaire

A well-structured questionnaire was meticulously designed to gather data from library users at the University of Calcutta.

Sampling Method

To ensure a representative sample, basic random sampling was employed for the distribution of the questionnaire.

Sample

Out of a total of 250 surveys distributed, 160 completed questionnaires were returned, indicating a substantial response rate. Out of the 160 responses received, 105 were deemed suitable for analysis.

Data Collection Process

The data collection process involved direct interaction with the respondents. Library users were personally approached and encouraged to complete the questionnaire as soon as possible.

Data Analysis

Data analysis was conducted using Excel worksheets, which provided an effective platform for organizing and interpreting the collected data. ANOVA was also applied to analyze the results.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Below data shows the results of this study: -

Table 1: Gender distribution of Respondents

| Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	60	57.14
Female	45	42.86
Total	105	100
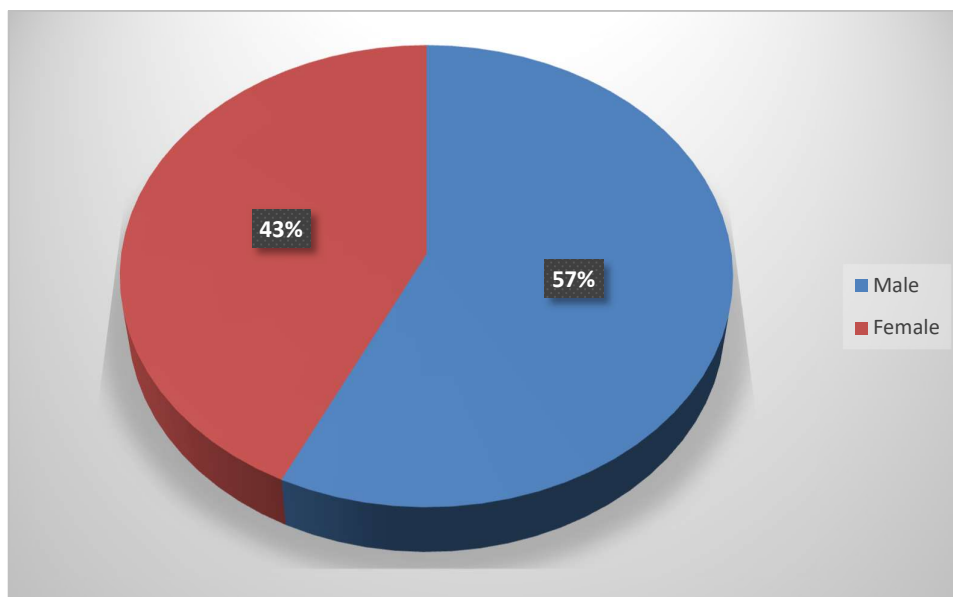
Figure 1: Gender distribution of Respondents

According to Table 1, there are 57.14% males and 42.86% females. It is more common for male responders to use than females.

Table 2: Time Spent by Respondents in One Visit

| Time Spent	Percentage
Less than 1 hour	7.95
1-2 hours	18.19
2-3 hours	15.61
More than 3 hours	58.25
Total	100
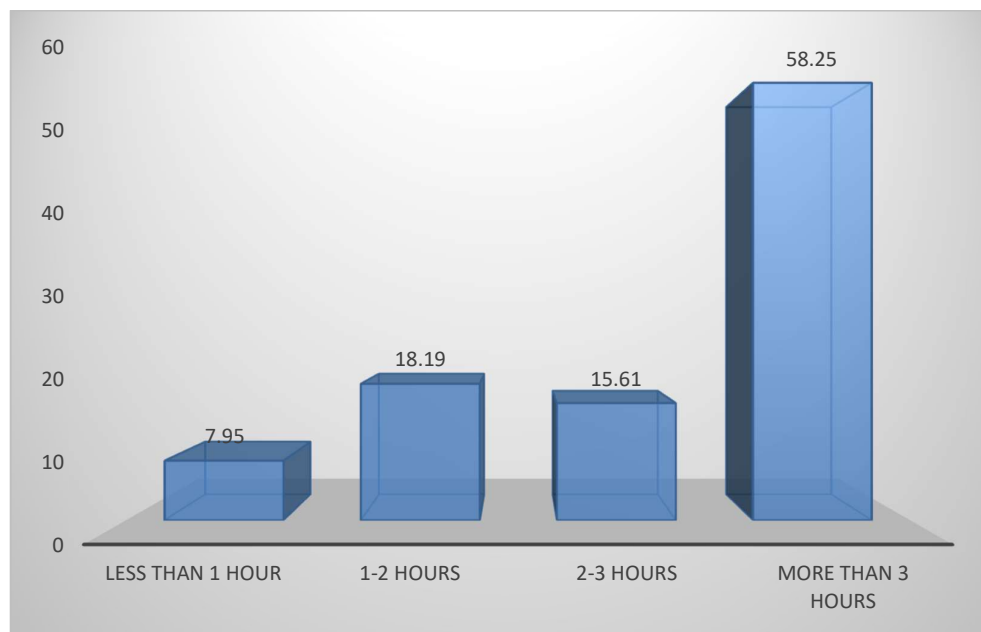
Figure 2: Time Spent by Respondents in One Visit

In accordance with the data shown in Table 2, 58.25% of respondents spend more than three hours in the library, while 18.19% spend between one and two hours and 15.61 percent spend between two and three hours. It was reported that just 7.95% of people go to the library for a period of less than an hour.

Table 3: Purpose of Library Visit by the Respondents

| Purpose of Visit	Percentage
Borrow books	8.67
Leisure/ Entertainment	7.09
Prepare for competitive exams	49.23
Read newspapers/Magazines	20.19
Read subject books	14.82
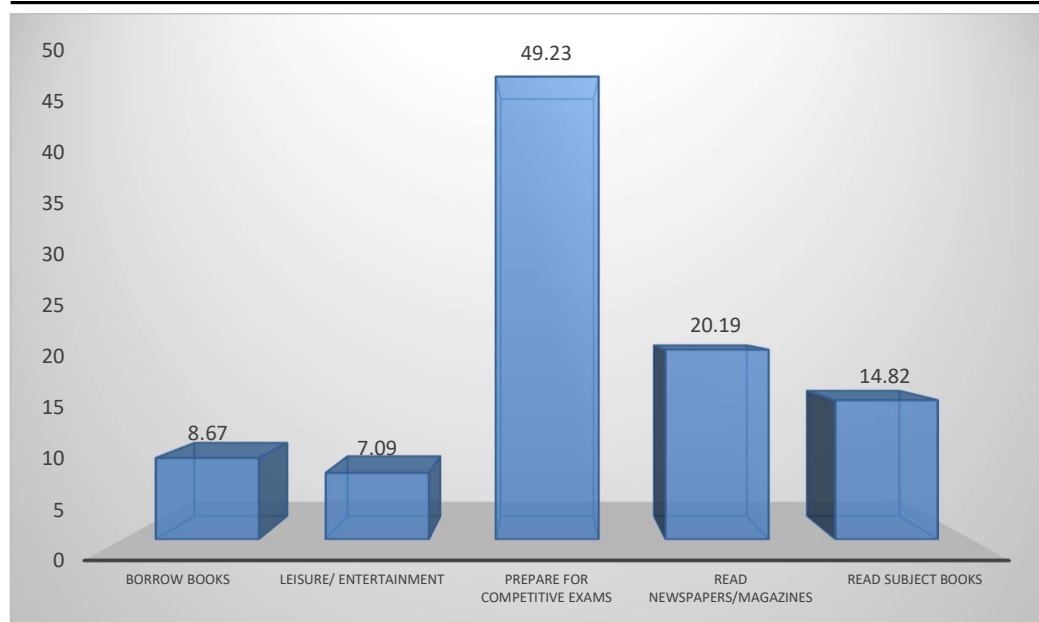
Figure 3: Purpose of Library Visit by the Respondents

As can be seen in Table 3, the majority of respondents (79.23%) go to the library in order to study for competitive examinations, while 20.19 percent read newspapers and periodicals. 14.82% of people go to the library to read books that are connected to something. In terms of book borrowing and leisure/entertainment, just 8.67% and 7.09% of people use libraries, respectively. The data reveals that the majority of respondents come to the site in order to read topic books and prepare for competitive examinations.

Table 4: Information Needs of the Respondents

| Information Needs	Percentage (%)
Educational	29.23
Employment	32.45
Political	14.33
Agricultural	2.05
Business	3.11
Government policies/Programs	12.19
Others	6.64
Total	100
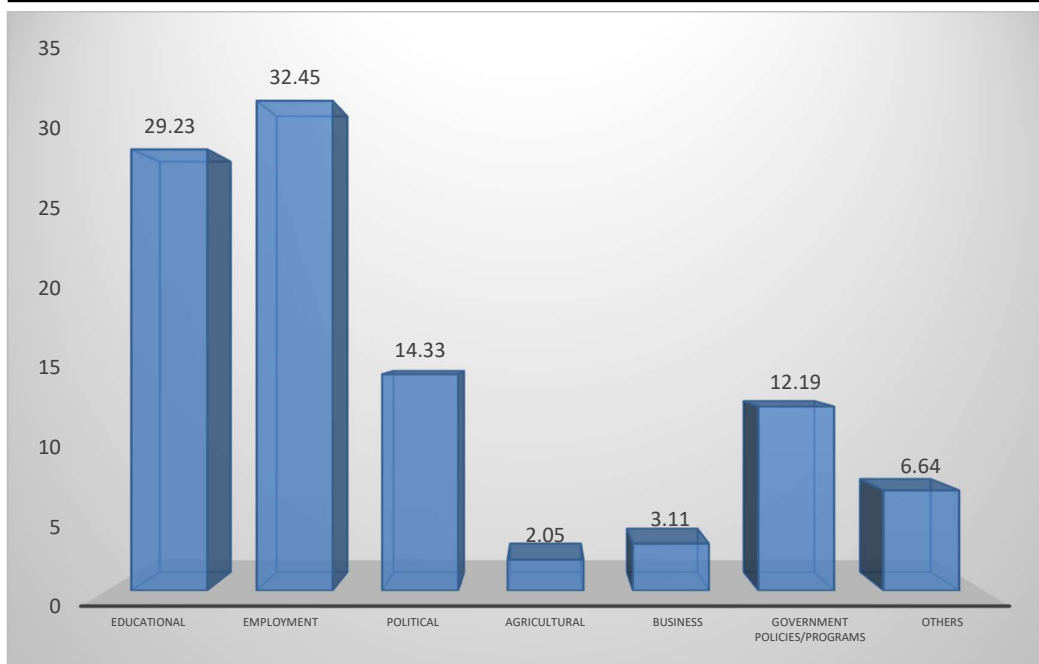
Figure 4: Information Needs of the Respondents

According to Table 4, the most important information demands of respondents are, respectively, employment (32.45%) and education (29.23%). 14.33% of respondents are concerned about politics, while 12.19% are concerned about measures taken by the administration. The business sector (3.11%) and agriculture (2.05%) are considered to be of lesser importance, while 6.64% want further information. The fact that respondents prefer information on job and education is demonstrated by this.

Table 5: Highly Used Library Resources by the Respondents

| Library Resources used	Percentage (%)
News Papers/ Magazines	30.23
Text books	20.16
Reference books	21.63
Competitive books	9.86
Government publications	7.88
Fictions/Novels	8.52
Others	1.72
Total	100
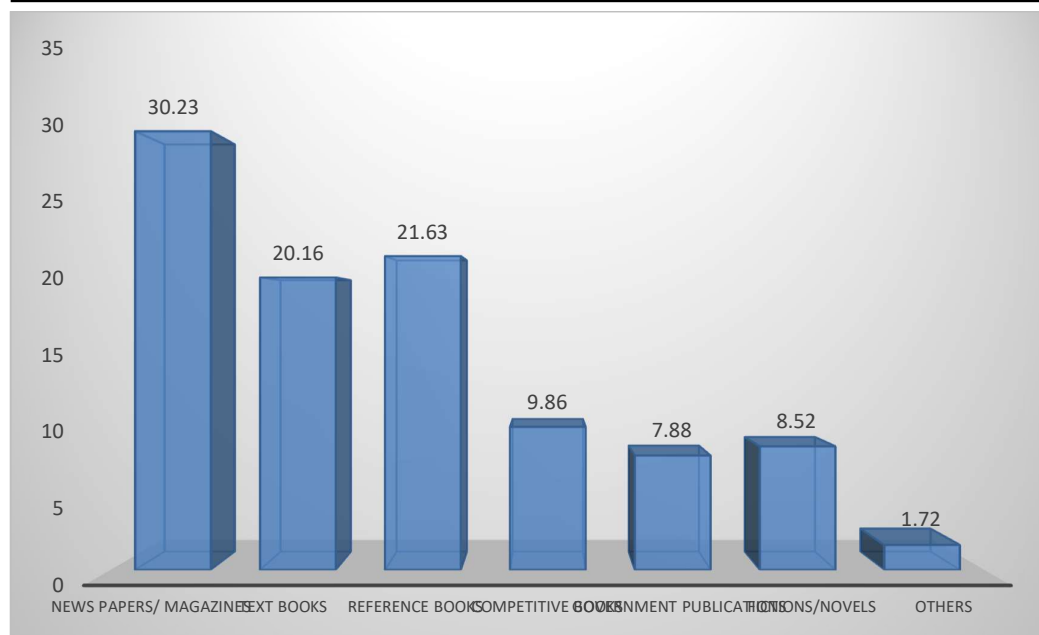
Figure 5: Highly Used Library Resources by the Respondents

Table 5 demonstrates that the most common types of reading materials utilized by respondents are textbooks (20.16%), reference books (21.63%), and newspapers and magazines (30.23%). The utilisation of competitive books (9.86%) and fictions/novels (8.52%) is moderate, but the utilisation of government publications (7.88%) and other resources (1.72%) is somewhat lower. Information is mostly obtained by respondents through the usage of publications and scholarly resources.

Table 6: Highly Used Library Services by the Respondents

Library Services	Percentage (%)
Books lending service	16.05
Reference service	20.96
Reading room service	36.72
Inter Library loan	26.27
Total	100
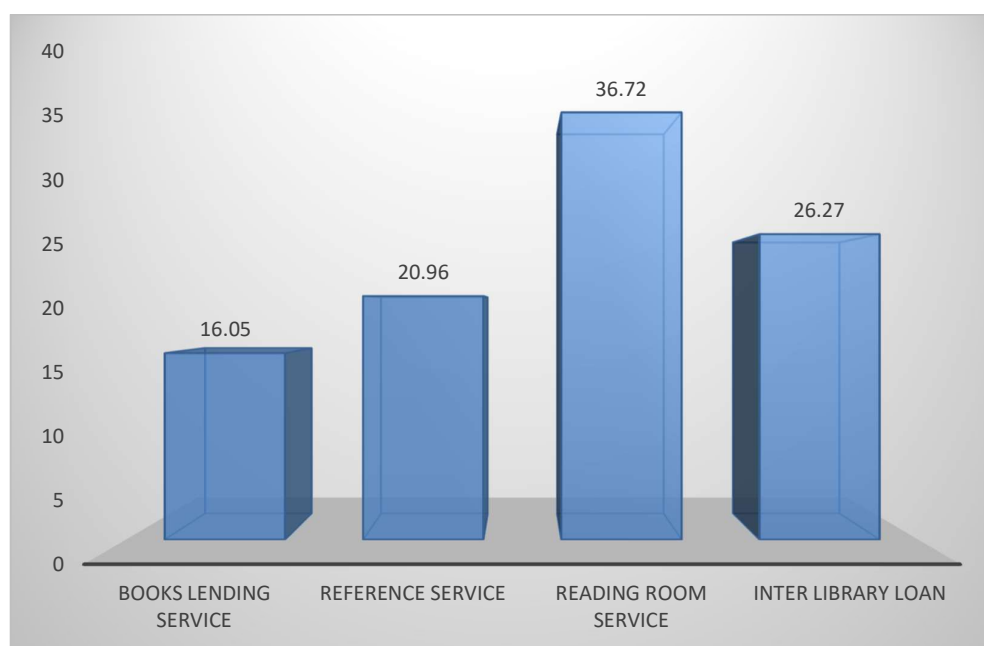
Figure 6: Highly Used Library Services by the Respondents

Table 6 displays the library services that were utilized the most often by respondents. The most popular service is the reading room service, which is utilized by 36.72 percent of members, followed by inter-library borrowing, which is utilized by 26.27 percent of members. Book lending is the service that is utilized the least, with just 16.05% of customers, while reference services are utilized by 20.96% of customers. It appears from this that the majority of respondents read on-site and make use of other libraries.

Table 7: ANOVA results on Information Needs and Resource Preferences by Gender

Source of Variation	Sum of Squares (SS)	Degrees of Freedom (df)	Mean Square (MS)	F-value	p-value	Result
Between Groups (Gender)	15.632	1	15.632	4.150	0.045*	Significant
Within Groups	388.368	103	3.771			
Total	404.000	104				

The ANOVA results presented in the table evaluate the impact of gender on the information needs and resource preferences of library users at the University of Calcutta. The between-groups sum of squares (SS) for gender is 15.632, which reflects the variance in preferences between male and female users. The within-groups sum of squares is 388.368, representing the variability within each gender group.

The F-value of 4.150 indicates the ratio of the variance between genders to the variance within each group, providing a measure of whether the differences in information needs and resource preferences between male and female users are statistically significant. The p-value of 0.045, which is less than the threshold of 0.05, confirms that the observed differences between genders are statistically significant. Therefore, the analysis suggests that gender has a significant influence on the information needs and resource preferences of library users at the University of Calcutta. This indicates that male and female users may have different preferences when it comes to the resources they seek in the library.

CONCLUSION

Collections, services, and patron satisfaction are the three most important factors that determine the success of any library. Collection selection need to be guided by the requirements of the end-user. Consequently, librarians are required to have an understanding of user information searches. Therefore, everything is selected, saved, and conserved has to be maximized and made available to their respective users. He makes use of contemporary libraries regardless of the level of technical research expertise possessed by customers. Information that is up to date is stored in a library.

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