



# **An examination of the information sources and services offered by medical college libraries associated with Maharashtra University of Health Sciences, Nashik.**

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## **Abstract:**

This study examines the information sources and services offered by medical college libraries associated with the Maharashtra University of Health Sciences (MUHS) in Nashik. Medical libraries are essential for supporting the educational and professional needs of students, faculty, and researchers. The libraries affiliated with MUHS are expected to provide a wide range of resources and services to cater to the diverse needs of their users. This study aims to analyze the types of information sources available in these libraries, including textbooks, journals, and digital resources, as well as the services provided, such as reference assistance, electronic resources, and interlibrary loans.

The study employs a mixed-methods approach, including surveys and data analysis, to gather insights into user satisfaction, utilization patterns, and the impact of digital resources on academic performance and research productivity. The findings reveal a significant demand for library services among users, with a majority utilizing them on a daily basis. While many users express satisfaction with library services, there are also areas for improvement, particularly in promoting access to resources and addressing user concerns.

Digital resources play a crucial role in enhancing academic performance and research productivity, with the majority of users reporting positive outcomes. However, challenges such as budget constraints and user awareness need to be addressed to maximize the effectiveness of library services. Recommendations include implementing targeted promotional campaigns, conducting feedback surveys, and providing training sessions to enhance users' digital literacy skills.

Overall, this study contributes to understanding how well medical college libraries affiliated with MUHS meet the needs of their users and provides insights for enhancing the support they provide. By identifying gaps and suggesting improvements, this study aims to contribute to the overall quality of medical education and research in the region.

## Introduction

Libraries are indispensable in medical colleges, offering essential resources and services that support students, faculty, and researchers in their educational and professional pursuits. The libraries affiliated with the Maharashtra University of Health Sciences (MUHS) in Nashik play a pivotal role in this context. This study aims to provide an in-depth examination of the information sources and services available in these medical college libraries. Understanding the scope and quality of these resources is crucial for enhancing the academic and research capabilities of medical professionals in training.

MUHS is a significant institution in Maharashtra, overseeing numerous medical colleges. These libraries are expected to cater to a wide array of needs, from providing textbooks and research papers to offering digital resources and interlibrary loan services. The primary goal of this study is to explore what types of information sources (such as books, journals, and digital media) and services (like reference services, electronic resources, and research assistance) are available in these libraries. By analyzing these aspects, the study aims to shed light on how well these libraries support the academic and research needs of their users.

One of the key aspects of this study is to understand the types of information sources available. Medical libraries typically offer a range of materials, including textbooks, reference books, scientific journals, and digital resources. Textbooks and reference books are fundamental for students, providing the core knowledge required for their studies. Scientific journals are crucial for both students and faculty as they contain the latest research findings and advancements in the medical field. Digital resources, including e-books, online journals, and databases like PubMed and Cochrane Library, are increasingly important, offering easy access to a vast amount of information.

In addition to the variety of information sources, the services provided by these libraries are equally important. Reference services are essential, helping users locate the information they need. These services often include guidance on how to use the library catalog, databases, and other resources effectively. Electronic resources and services, such as online access to journals and databases, are particularly valuable in today's digital age. They allow users to access information from anywhere, making it easier for students and researchers to find and utilize the information they need.

Interlibrary loan services are another critical aspect of library services. These services enable users to borrow books and other materials from other libraries if they are not available in their own library. This is particularly useful in specialized fields where certain materials might be scarce. Additionally, libraries often provide research

assistance, helping users with literature searches, citation management, and other aspects of their research process.

By examining the information sources and services available in MUHS-affiliated medical college libraries, this study aims to identify strengths and areas for improvement. For instance, if certain essential journals or databases are not available, this gap can be highlighted and addressed. Similarly, if users are not fully aware of or utilizing certain services, efforts can be made to promote these resources more effectively. This study is vital for understanding how well medical college libraries affiliated with MUHS are meeting the needs of their users. Access to quality information is crucial for the success of medical students and professionals. By identifying gaps and suggesting improvements, this study can contribute to enhancing the support these libraries provide, ultimately benefiting the overall quality of medical education and research in the region.

## Review of Literature

Libraries in medical colleges play an essential role in supporting the academic and research activities of students, faculty, and researchers. Numerous studies have been conducted to evaluate the information sources and services provided by medical libraries to ensure they meet the evolving needs of their users. This review of literature examines various aspects of medical library services and information resources, with a particular focus on libraries affiliated with the Maharashtra University of Health Sciences (MUHS) in Nashik.

### Importance of Medical Libraries

Medical libraries are crucial in providing access to a wide range of resources that support learning, teaching, and research. According to a study by Marshall (1992), well-equipped medical libraries significantly contribute to improved patient care and clinical outcomes by providing healthcare professionals with timely access to relevant information. This underscores the importance of maintaining comprehensive collections and efficient services in medical libraries.

### Information Sources in Medical Libraries

The types of information sources available in medical libraries have expanded significantly with technological advancements. Traditionally, libraries have focused on acquiring textbooks, reference books, and scientific journals. However, the rise of digital media has transformed library collections. Moghaddam and Talawar (2008) highlight the increasing importance of digital resources, such as e-books, online journals, and databases. They note that digital resources offer numerous advantages, including remote access, which is particularly beneficial for medical professionals who require information on the go.

Studies have shown that the availability of a diverse range of information sources is critical for medical education and research. Tenopir (2003) discusses the transition from print to electronic resources in academic libraries and

emphasizes the need for a balanced collection that caters to both traditional and modern information-seeking behaviors.

### Services Provided by Medical Libraries

Beyond information sources, the services provided by medical libraries are equally important in facilitating access to knowledge. Reference services, which include assistance in locating and using library resources, are fundamental. According to a study by Koufogiannakis and Wiebe (2006), effective reference services can significantly enhance the user experience and improve the efficiency of information retrieval.

Electronic resources and services have become indispensable in medical libraries. The study by Jankowska and Marshall (2001) highlights the growing reliance on electronic journals and databases, which provide users with access to the latest research and clinical guidelines. The availability of online databases such as PubMed, Medline, and Cochrane Library is crucial for medical research and education.

Interlibrary loan (ILL) services are another vital component of medical library services. ILL allows libraries to borrow materials from other institutions, ensuring that users have access to resources not available in their own library. McGrath (1999) emphasizes the importance of ILL in medical libraries, particularly for specialized and rare materials.

### Challenges and Recommendations

Despite the significant benefits, medical libraries face several challenges. Budget constraints are a common issue, affecting the ability to acquire new resources and maintain existing collections. According to a survey by the Association of Academic Health Sciences Libraries (AAHSL) in 2020, many medical libraries reported budget cuts, leading to reduced subscriptions to essential journals and databases.

User awareness and utilization of available resources and services is another challenge. Studies by Renwick (2005) indicate that many users are unaware of the full range of services offered by their libraries, leading to underutilization of valuable resources. This highlights the need for better promotion and user education.

### Objectives

1. To assess user satisfaction and usage patterns of library services among students, faculty, and researchers.
2. To evaluate the impact of digital resources on academic and research activities in affiliated medical colleges.

### Research Methodology

It is the systematic process to conduct research on given topic. In the study stratified random sampling method was used. Sample size was 50, which was collected from Amravati City. Primary and secondary data were taken. For primary data systematic questionnaire was developed and circulated to respondents of Amravati City.

1. How frequently do users (students, faculty, and researchers) utilize different library services (e.g., reference services, interlibrary loans, electronic resources)?

a) Daily	31	31%
b) Weekly	10	10%
- c) Monthly	4	4%
- d) Rarely	4	4%
- e) Never	1	1%
Total	50	100%

2. What is the overall satisfaction level of users with the library services provided, and what specific areas do they believe need improvement?

- a) Very satisfied	15	15%
- b) Satisfied	25	25%
- c) Neutral	5	5%
- d) Dissatisfied	2	2%
- e) Very dissatisfied	3	3%
Total	50	100%

3. How have digital resources (e-books, online journals, databases) influenced the academic performance and research productivity of users compared to traditional print resources?

- a) Significantly improved	32	32%
- b) Somewhat improved	13	13%
- c) No change	2	2%
- d) Somewhat decreased	1	1%
- e) Significantly decreased	2	2%
Total	50	100%

### Interpretation and Findings:

#### Table 1: Frequency of Utilization of Library Services

The table presents data on the frequency of library service utilization among users, including students, faculty, and researchers.

- The majority of users (31%) utilize library services daily, indicating a high level of engagement with the resources and services offered.

- 10% of users utilize library services weekly, while a smaller percentage (4%) utilize them on a monthly basis.
- A notable portion of users (4%) report utilizing library services rarely, and 1% report never using them.

**Findings:**

- The data suggests that there is a significant demand for library services among users, with a majority utilizing them on a daily basis.
- However, there is a small proportion of users who utilize library services rarely or never, indicating potential areas for improvement in promoting and facilitating access to library resources.

**Suggestions:**

- To encourage regular utilization of library services among all users, the library administration could implement targeted promotional campaigns highlighting the benefits and availability of various services.
- Providing user-friendly interfaces for accessing electronic resources and interlibrary loan services can help enhance convenience and encourage more frequent utilization.

**Table 2: Overall Satisfaction Level with Library Services**

This table presents data on the overall satisfaction level of users with the library services provided, along with specific areas for improvement.

- A significant portion of users (40%) report being either very satisfied or satisfied with the library services.
- However, there are also users who express neutral (5%), dissatisfied (2%), or very dissatisfied (3%) sentiments.

**Findings:**

- While a considerable proportion of users report satisfaction with library services, there is still room for improvement to address the concerns of users who are neutral, dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied.
- Understanding the specific areas of dissatisfaction is crucial for implementing targeted improvements and enhancing overall user satisfaction.

**Suggestions:**

- Conducting detailed feedback surveys or focus group discussions can help identify specific areas for improvement and prioritize actions to address user concerns.
- Enhancing the quality of reference services, expanding access to electronic resources, and improving the physical infrastructure of the library are potential areas for improvement based on user feedback.

**Table 3: Impact of Digital Resources on Academic Performance and Research Productivity**

This table provides insights into the impact of digital resources (e-books, online journals, databases) on the academic performance and research productivity of users compared to traditional print resources.

- The majority of users (45%) report that digital resources have significantly or somewhat improved their academic performance and research productivity.
- A small percentage of users (3%) report a decrease in academic performance or research productivity due to digital resources.

**Findings:**

- The data suggests that digital resources have a positive impact on academic performance and research productivity for the majority of users.
- However, a small portion of users report a decrease in performance, indicating potential challenges or limitations associated with digital resources.

**Suggestions:**

- Providing training sessions or workshops to familiarize users with digital resources and enhance their digital literacy skills can help maximize the benefits of these resources.
- Continuous evaluation and updating of digital resources to ensure relevance and accessibility can further enhance their effectiveness in supporting academic and research activities.

**Conclusion:**

The data analysis of user satisfaction, utilization patterns of library services, and the impact of digital resources on academic performance and research productivity provides valuable insights into the effectiveness of library services in affiliated medical colleges.

**Key Findings:**

- There is a significant demand for library services among users, with a majority utilizing them on a daily basis. However, there are still users who utilize library services rarely or never, indicating potential areas for improvement in promoting and facilitating access to resources.
- While a considerable proportion of users report satisfaction with library services, there is room for improvement to address the concerns of users who express neutral or negative sentiments. Identifying specific areas for improvement is crucial for enhancing overall user satisfaction.

- Digital resources, including e-books, online journals, and databases, have a predominantly positive impact on academic performance and research productivity for the majority of users. However, there are challenges or limitations associated with digital resources that need to be addressed to ensure optimal utilization and effectiveness.

### **Recommendations:**

- Implement targeted promotional campaigns to encourage regular utilization of library services among all users, focusing on the benefits and availability of various resources.
- Conduct detailed feedback surveys or focus group discussions to identify specific areas for improvement and prioritize actions to address user concerns.
- Provide training sessions or workshops to enhance users' digital literacy skills and maximize the benefits of digital resources.
- Continuously evaluate and update digital resources to ensure relevance and accessibility, addressing any challenges or limitations identified by users.

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