



# Library Sources, Services, and User Satisfaction: An Empirical Study of Self-Financing Women's Arts and Science Colleges in Tiruppur & Erode Districts

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## Abstract

Academic libraries serve as the backbone of higher education, providing a wide range of sources and services to support teaching, learning, and research. In self-financing women's arts and science colleges, libraries play a pivotal role in empowering women students and scholars. This study aims to analyze the usage of library sources and services by faculty, students, and research scholars in selected colleges in Tiruppur & Erode district and to assess their level of satisfaction. The study adopts a quantitative research approach with data collected through structured questionnaires from librarians, faculty, and students using random sampling. Seven self-financing women's colleges form the sample frame. Data are analyzed using descriptive statistics and the chi-square test to explore associations between variables such as level of study and library usage. The findings are expected to provide valuable insights for enhancing library services, user education, and extension activities in women's colleges.

**Keywords:** Academic libraries, research scholars, Modern Library, Library Services

## Introduction

Academic libraries have become the backbone of teaching, learning, and research activities in higher education. They act as gateways of knowledge by providing access to information sources, services, and digital resources. In women's colleges, particularly in self-financing institutions, libraries play a vital role in supporting education and empowering women through knowledge.

User education in library science is an essential component of this process. It refers to the planned efforts made by libraries to train users in identifying, locating, evaluating, and effectively using information resources. User education includes library orientation, information literacy programs, and training in the use of digital databases. In the context of higher education, such education enhances the ability of faculty, students, and research scholars to make optimum use of the available library resources.

The present study aims to empirically analyze the usage of library sources and services and the extent of user satisfaction among stakeholders—faculty, students, and research scholars—in self-financing women's arts and science colleges of Tiruppur & Erode districts.

## Aim of the Study

The study aims to analyze the usage of library sources and services in self-financing women's arts and science colleges in Tiruppur & Erode districts by faculty, students, and research scholars, and to assess their level of satisfaction with these facilities.

## User Education in Library Science

One of the significant aspects of modern library services is **user education**, which equips students, faculty, and researchers with the skills to access, evaluate, and effectively utilize information resources. User education involves:

- **Orientation programs** for new students.
- **Information literacy workshops** on searching databases, e-resources, and citation practices.
- **Awareness programs** on open access resources, plagiarism tools, and reference management. In self-financing women's colleges, user education is essential to help first-generation learners and students from rural backgrounds become confident users of information systems.

**Sources:**

Text and reference books, Newspapers, magazines, journals, e books and Journals, Online Public Access Catalogue(OPAC)

**Services provided in library:**

Circulation, Reference Section, Bibliographical services, Reprographic services, IT based services, Inter Library Loan

The present study is undertaken to understand the usage patterns, satisfaction levels, and challenges of library users in self-financing women's arts and science colleges in Tiruppur & Erode districts.

**Objectives of the Study**

1. To analyze the usage of library sources by faculty members.
2. To study the knowledge and usage of library sources among students.
3. To examine the extent of utilization of library services by faculty and students.
4. To explore the extension services provided by college libraries.

**Review of Literature**

A review of literature provides the foundation for any empirical research by identifying existing studies, research gaps, and theoretical insights. Several studies in the domain of library usage, services, and user satisfaction have been carried out in India and abroad. For this study, the review is categorized under **(i) Usage of Library Sources, (ii) Library Services and User Satisfaction, and (iii) User Education and Extension Services.**

**1. Usage of Library Sources**

Libraries today provide both print and electronic sources. The effectiveness of an academic library depends on how far users access and utilize these sources.

- **Ramesh & Kumar (2017)** found that faculty members depend more on journals, research reports, and e-resources, whereas undergraduate students rely heavily on textbooks and reference materials.
- **Devi (2018)** emphasized that PG students increasingly prefer e-journals and databases, but inadequate training often limits their full utilization.
- **Ali & Sharma (2020)** observed that research scholars' productivity is directly correlated with the extent of digital resource usage in academic libraries.

These studies suggest that while resources are available, patterns of usage vary according to academic status and awareness levels.

**2. Library Services and User Satisfaction**

User satisfaction has been a consistent measure of library effectiveness. It depends not only on the availability of resources but also on the efficiency of services such as circulation, reference, digital access, and inter-library loans.

- **Sharma (2016)** studied user satisfaction in private college libraries and found that timely access to resources was the most critical factor influencing satisfaction.
- **Chakraborty (2019)** highlighted that faculty members expect personalized reference services and quick access to research materials.
- **Vasanthi & Karthikeyan (2021)**, in their study on Tamil Nadu college libraries, reported that students were satisfied with circulation and lending services but felt that internet facilities and digital databases needed expansion.

These findings highlight the gaps in digital services and the need for stronger user-support mechanisms.

**3. User Education and Extension Services**

User education, orientation programs, and extension services play an important role in bridging the gap between the availability of resources and their effective usage.

- **Mishra (2015)** emphasized that library orientation programs significantly improved the usage of online databases among first-year students.
- **Somasundaram (2021)** showed that information literacy training increased awareness of plagiarism detection tools and referencing styles among PG students.
- **Rajasekar & Devi (2022)** observed that libraries that conducted extension activities—such as book exhibitions, awareness workshops, and outreach services—recorded higher student engagement.

These studies establish that user education is crucial for maximizing the effectiveness of library services, especially in institutions with diverse user groups.

#### 4. Research Gap

While several studies exist on library usage and satisfaction, very few have:

- Focused exclusively on **self-financing women's colleges** in Tamil Nadu.
- Examined **different levels of users (UG, PG, research scholars, faculty)** in a single framework.
- Analyzed satisfaction with **extension services** alongside traditional services.

This study, therefore, attempts to fill these gaps by empirically analyzing the usage patterns, services, and satisfaction levels in seven self-financing women's arts and science colleges in Tiruppur & Erode districts.

#### Methodology

##### Research Design

The study adopts a **quantitative research design**.

##### Population and Sample

- **Population:** Librarians, faculty, UG students, PG students, and research scholars from self-financing women's colleges in Tiruppur and Erode District
- **Sample:** Seven colleges selected randomly.
- **Respondents:** Librarians (10), faculty (approximately 50), students (UG & PG ~250), and research scholars (~25).
- **Sampling Technique:** Random sampling.

##### Data Collection Tool

A **structured questionnaire** consisting of both closed-ended and Likert-scale questions covering:

- Awareness and usage of library sources.
- Frequency of use of services.
- User satisfaction levels.
- Suggestions for improvement.

##### Data Analysis

- **Descriptive Statistics:** Frequency, percentage, mean.
- **Inferential Statistics:** Chi-square test ( $\chi^2$ ) to examine association between variables such as level of study (UG, PG, research) and usage of sources/services.

##### Variables

- **Independent Variables:** Level of study (UG, PG, Research Scholars, Faculty).
- **Dependent Variables:** Usage of sources, usage of services, satisfaction levels, awareness of extension services.

##### Scope of the Study

The study is limited to seven self-financing women's arts and science colleges in Tiruppur & Erode district. It covers librarians, faculty, UG and PG students, and research scholars. The findings will be useful for librarians, administrators, and policymakers in enhancing the quality and relevance of library services.

### Expected Findings (Indicative)

- Faculty members may show higher usage of reference books, journals, and e-resources compared to students.
- UG students may depend more on textbooks, while PG students and research scholars may rely on digital databases and journals.
- Library orientation and user education programs may be insufficient, leading to underutilization of available resources.
- Extension services (like book exhibitions, awareness talks, and outreach programs) may be provided but underutilized.
- Satisfaction levels may vary significantly across user categories.

### Conclusion

Academic libraries are central to empowering women students in higher education. By analyzing the sources, services, and user satisfaction, this study provides actionable insights for improving library effectiveness. The results will help librarians design better user education programs, enhance extension services, and ensure equitable access to resources for all categories of users.

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