



# Electronic resources and services in Pakistani university libraries: A survey of users' satisfaction

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## KEYWORDS

Pakistan universities;  
Electronic resources  
and services;  
University libraries;  
User satisfaction

**Abstract** This study is an attempt to evaluate the effectiveness of electronic resources and services in Pakistani university libraries on the basis of users' satisfaction. A survey method was employed to conduct the research. Using convenience sampling, eight university libraries; four each from Islamabad and Lahore including two from the public sector and two from the private sector having IT applications, were included in the users survey. The total population (i.e., 40,236) of library users was very large; therefore, a reasonable, manageable and convenient sample of 800 library users, including 100 users each from the eight libraries was selected. A semi structured questionnaire was designed to collect data, while a five-point Likert Scale from 1 (Dissatisfied) to 5 (Extremely satisfied) was used to measure the satisfaction level of the respondent. The study concluded that Pakistani university libraries are offering effective electronic resources and services to their users.

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## Introduction and literature review

In today's library and information services, electronic resources are considered an integral part of information sources to provide efficient services to the information seekers. According to Dadzie (2005) electronic information sources are important research tools that complement the printed information sources in traditional library service. Ryan, McClure, and Bertot (2001) stated that electronic resources and services can include an information resource, such as an online/offline database, or

a service, such as a virtual help desk, provided via a network, such as a local area network, intranet, or the Internet.

Pakistan, located in South Asia, is a developing country that was born on August 14, 1947, as a result of the partition of British India. According to the 1998 Census, the total population was 135.57 million. At present, Pakistan is the sixth most populous country in the world, with an estimated population of 179.8 million at the end of May 2012 (Population Census Organization, 2012). Two thirds of the population lives in villages with agriculture as the main source of livelihood. Pakistan is a multiethnic and multi linguistic state. Urdu, the national language, is the language of instruction in secondary schools. English is the official language of Pakistan. It is also the language of instruction at the higher levels of education, particularly

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for science and technology courses. Pakistan's literacy rate is about 50 percent. Politically, Pakistan is a federation of four provinces (Punjab, Sindh, Khyber Pakhtun Khawa, and Balochistan) and the Federal Capital Area of Islamabad. Administratively, the provinces are made up of divisions, districts, and subdivisions.

At the time of Pakistan's birth, there were only two university libraries and another was just newly established. The Punjab University Library, Lahore is the oldest established in 1882 (Khan, 1960). Presently there are 136 chartered universities in the country both in public and private sector (Higher Education Commission, 2012). The importance of a library as "central organ of the university" or a "core agency" is yet to be recognized in its true sense in this part of the world (Haider, 2003). After the constitution of the Higher Education Commission of Pakistan (HEC) in 2002, the scenario of university libraries is changing. HEC has extended access to information facilities including Pakistan Education and Research Network (PERN) connectivity, the National Digital Library Program (NDLP), and video conferencing facilities. NDLP is a core source of electronic information available to all public sector universities in the Country. Its limited access is also available to the private sector universities; public, special and government libraries and other institutions involved in teaching and research.

Erens (1996) studied "How recent developments in university libraries affect research" and found that academics were making great use of electronic resources and services. University library services had significantly improved during the last decade and most of the faculty members were satisfied with e-services and the support staff.

User satisfaction is one method of evaluating the effectiveness of library services (Andaleeb & Simmonds, 1998; Cullen, 2001; Niyonsenga & Bizimana, 1996) (As cited in Bergman & Holden, 2010). Madhusudhan (2010) has suggested that libraries should introduce a feedback system (both online and offline) for observing the use of e-resources. According to Zhang, Ye, and Liu (2011) understanding users' demands to improve the efficiency and value of the utilization of e-resources has become a great challenge for electronic resource producers and providers. Dhanavandan, Esmail, and Nagarajan (2012) conducted a study to determine the level of satisfaction with current e-resources using the questionnaire tool among the students & faculties of Krishnasamy College of Engineering

& Technology Library, India. Nearly 150 questionnaires were distributed among the faculty and students, and 118 (78.7%) were responded. The study found that the overall assessment of service quality and user satisfaction was rated as moderate.

Rehman (2012) studied expectations of Pakistani libraries users using the LibQUAL instrument. He conducted a questionnaire based cross-sectional survey using a sample of 426 faculty members, 501 graduate students, and 546 undergraduates of both genders, and of different ages, disciplines, sectors and qualifications selected from 22 university libraries of Pakistan.

The above reviewed literature shows the gap in studying users' satisfaction regarding electronic resources and services being offered by university libraries of Pakistan. This study is an attempt to evaluate effectiveness of electronic resources and services in Pakistani university libraries on the basis of users' satisfaction.

## Objectives

1. To measure users' satisfaction levels regarding electronic resources and services being offered in their libraries.
2. To know users' opinions about user education/information literacy related to electronic resources and services.
3. To identify problems faced by users in using electronic resources and services.

## Methodology

The survey method of research was employed to achieve the research objectives. Using convenience sampling, eight university libraries; four each from Islamabad and Lahore, including two from the public sector and two from the private sector, having IT applications were included in the user survey (Table 1). The total population (i.e., 40,236) of library users is very large and it was not practical to survey the entire population and to conduct in-depth research. Therefore a reasonable, manageable and convenient sample of 800 library users, including 100 users each from the eight libraries, was selected. A semi structured questionnaire was designed to collect data, and a five-point Likert Scale from 1 (Dissatisfied) to 5 (Extremely satisfied) was used to measure the satisfaction level of the

**Table 1** Number of library users participated in the survey.

Sr.	Name of the University	Population	Sample
1	Fast National University, Islamabad (FAST-NU)	2200	100
2	Government College University, Lahore (GCUL)	4536	100
3	International Islamic University, Islamabad (IIUI)	6000	100
4	Lahore University of Management Sciences, Lahore (LUMS)	3500	100
5	Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad (QAU)	3000	100
6	Ripha International University, Islamabad (RIUI)	3000	100
7	University of Management and Technology, Lahore (UMTL)	3000	100
8	University of the Punjab, Lahore (PUL)	15,000	100
	Total	40,236	800

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