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## Generation's Information Need: A Study of Pakistani University Library

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# **Generation's Information Need: A Study of Pakistani University Library**

## **Abstract:**

The goal of this paper is to define how generations influence information behavior and needs for accessing and using library resources, as well as how successfully the university library in Karachi serves both generations at the same time. In the Pakistani context needs of different age group was not detected in the literature review, and this study intended to address that space. The mixed-methods approach was used to gather the data that included observation, interviews, and questionnaires. Quantitative data was examined using Excel, while qualitative data was assessed using the study's theme. The information behavior of users' wants and preferences was measured using Likert-scale replies. Only after administering the questionnaires did the users' generation become known. As a result, the researcher targeted them based on the respondents' status (professor or student) to optimize the sample for each generation. The teachers were utilized to target immigrants in the digital age, while students were employed to target natives of the digital age. Both immigrants in the digital age and natives of the digital age were common targets for Ph.D. students. Only one location, the University of Karachi Library, was used for this research. This study looked at how different generations in Karachi's university libraries could be guided to adjust to global developments successfully and efficiently. This study looked at the impact of generational differences on information requirements and preferences, as well as how the university library in Karachi is simultaneously and successfully servicing a variety of user needs.

## **Keywords:**

Generations, Digital natives, Digital immigrants, Baby Boomers, Gen X, Millennials, Centennials

## **Introduction:**

In today's tertiary university world, there are multiple generations of staff, instructors, and students, each with particular information needs.

Mannheim (1952) defined a peer group as a group of people who part not just a common year of birth but with a set of shared worldviews and old occasions that happened throughout their initial years. The Silent Generation, whose formative years were influenced by WWII; and different age groups of peoples, who grew up in a digital world.

Our current undergraduate students are from the post-1993 Google generation. People born after 1993 displayed considerably different information-seeking behaviour than those born before, according to Fieldhouse and Marshall's (2012) research. Digital natives, who were born after 1980 and raised up in a numerical domain enclosed by skill and the net and can easily use modern things in everyday life; Digital immigrants, do not have the same level of technological expertise as digital natives. In a university library, old users who primarily use searching tools, prefer to watch instead of read, and their skills to evaluate online content (Rowlands et al., 2008). Digital natives prefer to message rather than telephonic conversation, connect more through social sites, and multitask knowledge acquisition, and obtain evidence rapidly and concurrently, according to Zur and Zur (2011).

Digital natives, according to international arrays, prefer to use digital things, whereas elder age groups are hesitant to adopt evolving skills for retrieving and consuming facts and figures.

As a result, the library is in charge of making sure that all users' information demands are met.

## **Objectives:**

- To find out how different generations of library customers use information and what they require.
- To determine how university libraries in Pakistan support various age groups of people with various demands at the same time.

## **Research Questions:**

1. What are the information behaviours and requirements of different generations of university library users?
2. How are university libraries in Pakistan successfully servicing different age groups?

## **Significance of the study:**

This study is important because it fills an enormous emptiness in the literature about the information needs of different age groups of users of the University of Karachi, Sindh Pakistan, as well as how successfully the university library in Karachi serves both generations at the same time.

## **Literature Review:**

This study looked at different generations' information habits and demands in Pakistani university libraries. As a result, the literature study looked at published papers from all over the world that highlighted these features in university libraries. University libraries are attempting to address user requirements, according to research. Libraries now confront the difficulty of creating and upgrading collections that cater to the demands of several generations of users who seek information in different ways. The user needs of different age groups are considerably diverse, according to Connaway et al. (2008), providing a challenge for library services to appropriately serve together generations. The study acknowledges that to fulfill the needs of users is critical for university

libraries, and it backs up the learning's claim that the Google generation's information-seeking behaviour and user needs differ significantly from prior generations. Khan and Bhatti (2012) reported that law teachers at university campuses in Pakistan were dissatisfied with the services offered by their libraries in a study on information needs. On the other hand, are taking notice of the trend and making adjustments to meet changing consumer wants.

This backs up the study's findings that elder people, especially teachers, are hesitant to use technology to learn. Although the few studies are old, the features of preceding generations in terms of information behavior remain similar. Ojohwoh (2018) surveyed undergraduate students to determine the amount of social media awareness among digital natives and discovered that they were informed and aware of the platform. Digital natives, unlike their peers, employ technology not only in their social life but also in their scholastic pursuits. According to Gibbons (2007), young people prefer to use technology to obtain and utilise information, as opposed to elder people who are wary of new things and social media. This research supports the idea that millennials rely on technology to admittance and consume information.

Although these works represent the views of the majority of millennials, it excludes the views of the minority of millennials who, despite growing up in the contemporary era, do not have access to technology and are hence less technology-dependent than their peers in other parts of the world. Dealing with late adopters is also critical. Instructors and librarians should consider individual characteristics as well as the ages of their students.

To effectively use information, Net-generation users, like older generations, require information literacy instruction. It will be required to classify the needs of patrons in order to understand if the findings of this study agree with the literature. For grownup peers, the library is an introverted place to study and absorb knowledge, however, for young people, it is a place to study alone, see classmates, and gain knowledge in study groups (Gibbons, 2007; Kresh, 2007). Girven (2016) finds that university libraries can meet the needs of millennials in terms of space, services, and collections in a long-term manner. Libraries used to be isolated places to research and study, not sociable spaces to mingle with colleagues. The literature studied agrees on the necessity for young students to

have get-together places in libraries, and it will be essential to see if this is mirrored in the Pakistani situation.

This research looked at how university library information workers are satisfying the requirements and likings of both elder and younger groups. According to the research reviewed, mental tendencies and demographic characteristics such as age, as described in the hypothetical background for this study, influence information-seeking behaviour.

Digital natives require technology, information literacy programmes, and social spaces in university libraries; older generations want physical copies and isolated study rooms.

The study did not say whether the needs were fulfilled in university libraries currently, despite the fact that it showed how user demands changed over time. It was critical to determine whether these demands were mirrored in the Pakistani context, as well as how information professionals at Pakistani university libraries responded to these needs in order to meet user information needs and ensure that the library was used by people of all generations.

### **Research Methodology:**

In this study, a mixed-methods investigation was used. According to Hesse-Biber (2010), mixed-methods research is when a researcher uses both research approaches in a single study to address a topic or a group of queries. This study looked at how the information-seeking activities of elder and young immigrants in Pakistani university libraries impact their wants and favorites for accessing and using data properties. Only one university library, the University of Karachi, was investigated.

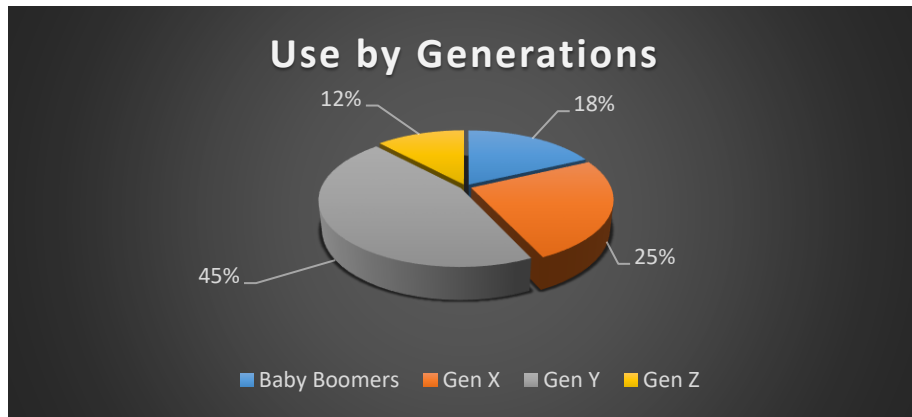
### **Data Collection and Analysis:**

Observation, structured interviews, were used for data collection. Respondents were questioned using in-depth structured questions, while library employees were interviewed using self-completion questionnaires. The checklist was utilized in the library to look at the arrangements available, the occurrence of usage of the library, the types of assets accessed, and the reflectiveness of persons using

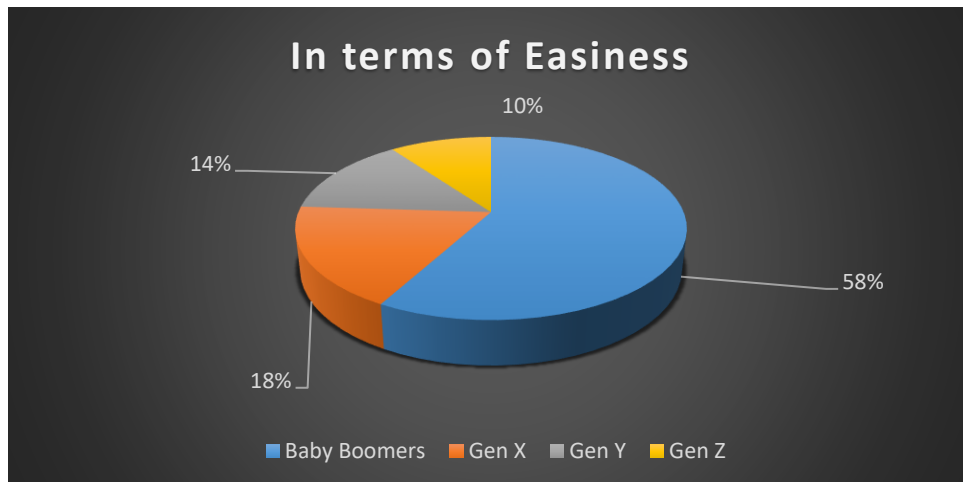
information materials. Users' information activity was measured using Likert-scale responses to uncover their wants and preferences, and quantitative data was evaluated using Excel.

### Result and Findings:

The purpose of the study was to see if and how often consumers used the University of Karachi Library. Refer to Figure 1. The frequency with which respondents utilised the library was queried, with one representing never, two denoting rarely, three denoting occasionally, four denoting frequently, and five denoting regularly.

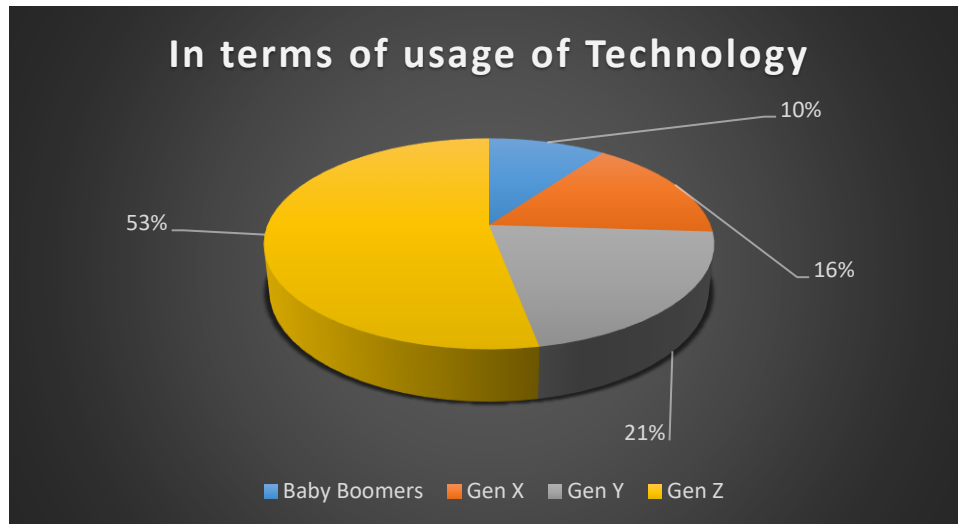


Selecting one =not at all important, two =slightly important, three =moderately important, four = very important, and five =extremely essential indicated the importance of the library being easy to use. According to the research, all generational groups agreed that the library should be simple to use.





The users were requested to rank the importance of technology use in libraries, with one indicating it is not very significant, two suggesting it is slightly important, three indicating it is moderately important, four indicating it is very important, and five indicating it is extremely important.



## Conclusion:

The purpose of this research was to see how age disparities affected user information behaviour and needs. Young people wish to use technology to admittance and use library material while elderly peoples escape it, according to the study. The library serves two diverse age groups with distinct demands, according to the findings:

Elderly users require information properties primarily for research, while young people require information material primarily for academic studies. Contrary to popular belief, both age groups require the use of expertise in order to admittance and utilise information material, and the library is providing appropriate preparation to mutually user groups. These results could help university libraries provide better service to their patrons.

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