

An Intersectional, Mixed Methods Analysis of 1st Year 1st Generation Students' Library Perceptions and Use

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the problem

First-generation students comprise up to **77% of U.S. undergraduates**. Despite their prevalence, limited library research on first-gen students exists. Extant research often takes a deficit perspective and assumes students are monolithic. However, first-gen students' **intersecting and often marginalized social identities** likely manifest in **differing library needs**. Academic libraries must understand first-gen students' experiences before they can effectively support them.

more info

Hodge, M. (2022). First-generation students and the first-year transition: State of the literature and implications for library researchers. *Journal of Academic Librarianship* 48(4). <https://doi.org/10.1016/j.acalib.2022.102554>

Hodge, M. (2021). Identifying and better serving latent patrons on subgroups through the use of clustering techniques. In *Book of Proceedings* (p. 172–177). Paper presented at the 14th International Conference on Performance Measurement in Libraries.

METHODS

survey

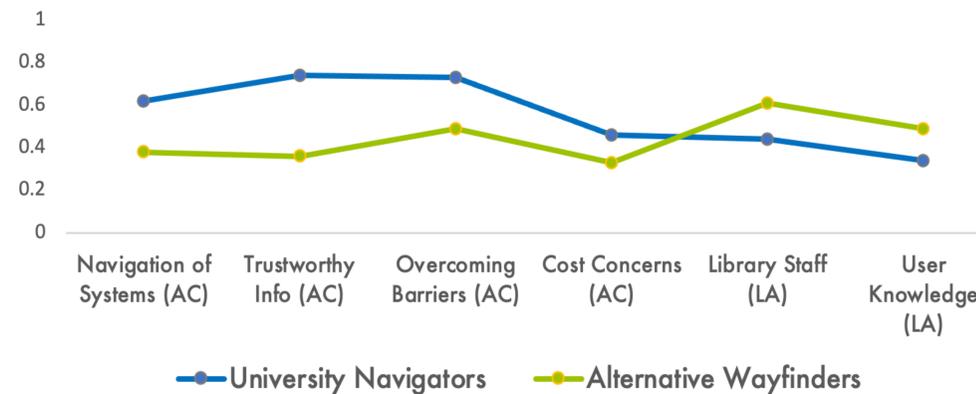
Winkler & Sriram's Academic Capital Scale & Anwar et al.'s AQAK Library Anxiety Scale)

cluster analysis



semi-structured interviews

Mean Academic Capital (AC) and Library Anxiety (LA) Subscale Scores by Cluster



81% female, 19% male

52% did not work, 48% worked

12% Asian, 12% Black, 24% Latine, 5% MENA, 36% white, 12% two+ races



University Navigators

77% female, 13% male, 10% genderqueer/nonbinary

71% did not work, 29% worked

16% Asian, 39% Black, 13% Latine, 3% MENA, 16% white, 13% two+ races



Alternative Wayfinders

favorite library aspects



STARBUCKS

"I also like that we have a Starbucks right there, so I don't have to go very far for food, and they're open pretty late compared to other places."



DIFFERENT NOISE LEVELS

"The quietness levels as well because that accommodates everyone's needs just because not all of us can study at the same volume."



QUIET SPACES

"I study best when it's really quiet and it's really hard to find places on campus that are quiet."



COMFY SEATING

"The seating was the biggest thing because I just love being comfortable when I'm sitting somewhere for a long time."



STUDY ROOMS

"There's rooms for group projects. Like, I've never seen that before."



MULTI-FUNCTIONAL

"I guess my favorite aspect of library thus far is definitely the different variety in terms of how the space is used. I just like a quiet space versus like a talk, eat, working space, so I appreciate that."

obstacles to library use



COMPLEX PRINTERS

"I started using my own printer because I didn't know how to use the printer in the library."



CAN'T FIND/IDENTIFY STAFF

"I've struggled with identifying librarians outside of their desk, so maybe a lanyard or a t-shirt, nothing crazy, just something that I could look at them and be like, 'They're a librarian, this is great, I need help.'"



WI-FI

"The Wi-Fi, it sucks, but that's not the library's fault."



IRREGULAR BUSYNESS

"On Google, it tells you when the place is most busy during the hours of the day. I wish they could have that somewhere on the website where it could show how busy the library is and when it's not."



UNINTUITIVE SEARCH

"Every couple of hours or so, the website would sign me out, and then I'd have to sign back in and pull up what I was looking at"



LIMITED SIGNAGE

"The floor plan is confusing sometimes, and they don't have signs to tell you where rooms are located, and so I will be walking in circles until I find the room that I'm looking for."