Social Science\_ Library Science

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**A study on factors influencing Information Seeking Practices among Young Adults.**

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INTRODUCTION

Human beings need information in their day to-day life. And information is being explored every single minute. Information is all pervasive and found in vernacular languages and in various sources. The sources of knowledge are acquired in print form or in non-print form. The print form of information are found in diaries, letter, oral histories, photograph, newspaper, articles, government reports, novel, drama, music etc..Which are found in raw form, are original and close to the original information? Non-print materials are found in the digital mode or electronic mode, such as CD-ROM, Kindle, Some others are the information found in email, blogs, Social Medias namely twitter, face book, whatsApp, video chatting, webinars, websites, live-chats, blogs etc.. There were times when one needs to acquire information from different places and also transfer the information to another places by means of interlibrary loans in library terms. Therefore, information has become very important in the life of human beings. Different people have different kinds of information needs. With the passage of time, this needs of the people have increased, as newer information are exploring abundantly in every field. With the advent of ICT, things made it easier to retrieve, that kind of information what a person wants.

The library staff and the librarian are to provide information services to the users. The faculties, students, researchers and other user need various types of information. The information needs of the students, researchers and the faculties are different from each other. It’s the duty of the librarian to fulfill the requirements of their information needs. The librarian must know the information seeking practice of the faculty, and then the librarian understands the information seeking behavior of his users. Thereby he will be able to solve the queries and serve them better. Here the researcher scholar wants to find out the various aspects of information seeking practices of his young adult users.

Prior to the age of information communication and technology, libraries were considered as the store house of knowledge, where information was archived for use by the people. The libraries build their resources keeping in mind the information needs and the information seeking practices of their users. So as to meet the information needs in a satisfactory way, the true principle of library science.

Information has always been an element of growth and improvement in the living standards of the human being and it’s closely linked with rise and progress in many ways such as economically, socially, financially, and other occupational growth in the technical areas. The Science and Technology, and its Research and Development, Information technology and the demand for information from Scientist to laymen are all depended on information for their respective goals. Almost everyone needs information for some purpose or the other. Access to the available information on the spot is very crucial, as information would become stale or outdated if its’ found late. The pressure of demand for information needs of the users is likely to grow with the growth of population, growth in education, growth in technology and overall growth in life expectancy of the people. Which will tremendously led to the demand and requirement of information.

DEFINITION

INFORMATION NEEDS

Information scientist Robert Taylor describes how information needs arise. Taylor also focuses on library’s reference desks, where people come to ask for reference information needs. He describes a series of stages or levels that begin with a “conscious or even unconscious need for information … a vague sort of dissatisfaction … probably inexpressible in linguistic terms’’ (1968, p. 182). Taylor calls this unexpressed need for information as the visceral need. (hunger). In the next level a person reaches to “a conscious mental description … an ambiguous and rambling statement, while seeking information”.

Khan, M.T.M.1998, has extensively used information the term in the documents of library and information science. It is used with a variety of meaning, some identify it with communication over transmission lines measured by the statistical properties of signals, some identify it facts about any subject and some with the experience stored in human mind.

INFORMATION NEEDS AND INFROMATION SEEKING

**Brittain, 1971,** denotedthe term ‘requirement’ instead of ‘needs’ ‘wants’ and ‘demands’ as it represents all the three concepts. The information requirements mentions, a relevant piece of “information given to the user in the areas of his concern and interest. This relevance of information may vary in format, content, and the variety of use of information to the user himself” **(Cott, 1970)**

“The selection and reception of the information will depend upon the individuals’ conception of his own needs; one man’s information is another man’s noise…” **McGarry,**(**1975, p. 58**) on information.

There are various studies being made on the information needs of the users. Many of the studies have observed that information needs of a user may vary from different users at different time and difficult to measure` the nature of information needs. **Menze**l has preferred to call ‘Information needs of the user as a study of the behavior and experiences of scientists and technologist’. **Hatt** (1976, pp.42-43) called them “user’s behavior studies”. Wilson (1981) recommends that the term ‘informationneeds**’** should be replaced by ‘information-seeking**’** as a goal towards the satisfaction of ‘individuals needs’.

**Oldman1976, p.23** says ‘information needs of the user are the perceived needs; but there must be given awareness about the need to create information needs among the users, if they don’t exist’ (Harris, 1985. P.2). the user of information seekers may be ignorant of the available information that would be useful to them.

**Ocholla, Dennis. N, 1999,** points out that ‘information seeking behavior refers to the strategies and actions undertaken to located discrete knowledge elements. It is concerned with the integrative utilization the three basic resources: (i). people (ii) information and (iii) system. It can be said that the behavior, yields the highest information satisfaction…is at its best’.

INFORMATION SEEKING PRACTICES

The two concepts -I**nformationSeeking Practices** and**Information Seeking Behavior**is viewed as umbrella term as defined by Savolainen, 2008; and by Wilson et al., 2009.

Cox 2012:182 gives the reason that *‘there is no one theorist to whom one can turn for a definitive account of practice approach’.* Cox further regard that ‘*all social practices involve information use, creation and seeking, but this does not make them information practices, because only few practices are specifically information oriented’*(Cox 2012, p.185). Therefore, **Cox** (2013, p.61) proposes the use of the phrase information in social practice as an umbrella term in preference to ‘information behavior or information practice’.

**OBJECTIVES**

The objectives of the studyare as follow:

* To find out the extent of visit to the library by the students of Social Science, Sciences and Arts Faculty.
* To find out different sources of information requirement of the students.
* To know the purpose of their information seeking.
* To know the information seeking search strategy of the students.
* To know their preferred medium on information sources.
* To find about the problems faced by the students while searching the information from the library collection.

LITERATURE REVIEW

A considerable amount of literature is being published in the area of information needs, information seeking, and information practices on an individual or a group of individuals. Information seeking is the broader term which involves a set of actions that an individual or a group that takes to express information needs, information seeking, its selection and judgment to satisfy the information needs.

**a.** **Frequency of the visit to Library/ information Centers**:

Studies conducted on libraries and extent of use of information have made to the library or any other library as their main objective of the study. Annie. N. C & Dr. A Vijayakumar and Raza, M. Masoom et….al, has made the study on frequency of visit to the library or any other information centers to seek information. The population on which the study conducted is students, researchers and PG Faculty members,

Patel and Chaudhari, B.K., Sarala. R. and Poonam Rani & Jeevan conducted the frequency of visit of their Library users on engineering students, Teachers and School students, visiting the library to collect information on needed topics for assignment.

**b.** **Information Location**

Locating information is another main criterion for information seeking practice of students, teachers, engineering students, doctors, nurses.

This factor reveals that to locate information, students seek institutional library, other libraries or get help from Teachers. (Ani. N.C. & A. Vijayakumar, 2016)

The results of Singh K P & Satija M P (2008) on information location, Agricultural Scientists meet their information requirements from their institutional library as well as from international research journals.

**c**. **Purpose of Library Visit**:

Almost all the literature conducted on information Seeking have studied the purpose of visit to their institutional library or information centers to get information needed by the users. Among they are Anie M.C & A. Vijayakumar ( 2016), Sarala. G, (2017) Poonam Rani & Jeevan,(2009) Patel, U & Chaudhari. (2015),

The library users come to library for updating knowledge, exam preparation, preparing assignment/Seminar preparation, or for sake of reading. In college libraries, students visit libraries for preparing exam, seminars or for writing assignment.

Major findings of G. Sarala. (2017). Engineering students depend upon the Department library for their needs. Mostly students need information for updating knowledge and for writing assignment. Students borrow subject books for updating knowledge & preparing notes.

**d. Identify the resources**

The resources available in the library are identified by the user, students, engineering students and faculty alike. The most common resources are textbooks followed by databases and print journals. The study conducted in Karnataka University observed that commonly used materials in library are textbooks, monographs reference materials, thesis and dissertation.

**e.** **Seeking information**

Mahapatra, R.K.(2014). Conduct a study in Hi Tech Medical college in Bhubaneswar, identified the information needs of physician of borrowing books and Journals, photocopying services got the top priority.

Bhatia, Jaspal Kaur and Venkata, Rao. P(2011). The majority of the students sought information for preparing assignment and career development.

Kakai, et....al (2004, observed that the information seeking behavior of students involved active and purposeful information needs as a result of the need to complete course assignment, prepare for class discussions, seminars, workshops, conferences and for writing final year research paper.

According to **Sankha Subhra, Das & Balasubramanian (2022**). Most preferred sources are E-Resources, followed by Subject books.

**Fatima, Nishat and Ahmad** (2008). Investigates the information seeking behavior of college students to find out the awareness and usage of library resources.

**f.** **Information Search Strategy.**

Searching for information in the library, may be done by browsing on the shelf, with or without the help of the library staff. Looking in catalogue for the books available in the library, Or the (OPAC) online public access catalogue to search for books using title search, subject search, author search or the indexes, these are the various search strategies to locate information. Many literature reviewers, has made study on this search strategy adopted by the users.

Search strategy is monitored by Poonam Rani & Jeevan (2009), Ani N.C and A. Vijayakumar (2016) Sreenivasulu M and Nagabhushanam (2013) in their study. Search engines, keyword search in OPAC and personal searching on the shelf are few of them.

Shoukeen & Kushik (2002) the social scientists in the Universities of Harayana preferred search tool was indexing and abstracting periodicals

**g. Preferred Medium**

Friedlander, A. (2002).The study focused on the use of the internet and library’s online resources have huge demand in information seeking. Preferred medium of study is digital searching by the engineering students.

Nicholas, et…al(2003). Study showed that the undergraduates and post graduates were the most users of library links to access to scholarly databases, suggesting an important “hot link” role for the libraries.

**h**. **Preferred sources of information**

Singh, Harmanpreet (2013), in this survey study, General books are considered to be most used by the NIT students.

Babariys, Patel and Gohel (2014), in their study concluded that internet and electronics resources are the most vital sources of academic information.

Omidian, and Sufi Maleki (2013), have summarized their paper, that graduate students information seeking behavior on internet, found that science students are more proficiency in seeking information than arts students.

Shukla, Prachi (2015). Conducted the study on digital resources, the preference on OADR is more among scientists and researchers who need information according to the immediate needs in their research.

Preferred sources of information for Shokeen and Kushik (2002) are current journals and books.

**i. Problems faced by the Users while Searching information**

Gunasingh. N & P Balasubramanian (2021).The study emphasis the performance of selected public libraries in the district of Tirunalveli on the availability of resource and the approaches of the library staff.

Sarala. G. (2017) has examined the lack of time followed by availability of too vast information are the results of students of engineering students.

Patel, U and Chaudhari. B. K (2015). Has also reported that the respondents faced problems, while searching for information. The sought information is extensively vast or information resources are very expensive.

Anie N,C and A Vijayakumar (2016) have reported that lack of time and difficulty in locate the right information as there is vast number of books in the library.

Bahtia, Jaspal Kaur and Venkata Rao. P (2011) in their paper presented that students of Dev Samaj College, Chandigarh faced problems in using e-resources while preparing for academic assignment and for up-dating themselves in their subject of preference.

**METHODOLOGY**

This study aims to evaluate the information seeking practices among Young Adults of South India. Structured questionnaire was distributed among young adults of private colleges, government colleges and government aided colleges who are the members of their institutional library, constitute the population. The questionnaire was administered by the researcher directly to the selected samples, the data collected from the respondents were checked and analysis accordingly to the objectives using SPSS. The study mainly finds out the users satisfaction levels towards existing library resources and services.

**Statement of the Problem**

To investigate the study entitled "A study on factors influencing Information Seeking Practices among Young Adults..

**Scope and Limitations**

The scope of the study confines to analyses the information requirements for students of Social Science, Sciences and Arts faculty. Information seeking practice is an umbrella term is defined to include the purpose of information of seeking, the type of information sought, mode and means to access the information, identify the search strategy for required information for use of their own institutional libraries as well as other libraries.

**ANALYSIS**

The data analysis and interpretation is done using SPSS statistical method. This analyzing method gives exact in-depth outcomes of the statistical techniques.

Descriptive Analysis

Descriptive analysis summarizes given data set, which either represents the entire population or the sample of it. The variables considered here are ten, from the sample size of N=301. The dependent variable is Seeking Information (SE), and the independent variable (FQ, LI, VL, RI, SI, PM, PS, SM, PF). The highest mean value is problems faced (MPF=3.07). The lowest Standard Deviation is Search for Information (MSI=.711) with N(301).

Coefficient Correlation

Correlation is a statistical measure used to determine the relationship between two variables to predict the response of other variable. The degree of association is measured by correlation coefficient denoted by r where r=(.819) and R Square (.670).

The results in coefficient correlation show that Library visit is highly influencing the information Seeking Practice. Further the five independent variables (VL, RI, SI, PM, PS,) are voluntary satisfying at p=.<001 (99%), which indicates that the five factors under the study have a significant influence on the information Seeking Practice. This could be due to regular visit to the library to borrow or return the books. Similar studies have been registered earlier (Anie, NC & Vijayakumar, A. 2016).

Frequency of visit to the library must be the reason (FQ=95%) the model is significant at p level (p=.<005). Where some other factors (0.5%) is effecting the relationship of Information seeking practices of young students. This similar study is seen in the Sarala .G (2017). Patel and Chaudari (2015).

The independent variable locating of information (LI=22.4%) from the library or other than library/place is significant, P value (p=<.005). Here too some other factors (0.5%) is effecting in the relationship on the young adults in seeking information.

This type of study on information seeking behavior is seen in Annie NC & A. Vijayakumar (2016) and Singh K P & Satija M P (2008).

The Search Method (SM) and Problems Faced (PF) also to some extend influence the information seeking among Young Adults. (22.5%) and (33.3%) significant (p=<.005) respectively. Play a significant role in information seeking practice of the young adults. This study is found in Bahtia, Jaspal Kaur and Venkata Rao. P (2011).

The result refer, that out of nine independent variable, Five seems to be far influencing the dependent variable (SE) further they are also satisfactory significant at 99%. On the dependent value (SE) of information Seeking Practice of young adults.

Regression Analysis

Regression technique is used to assess the strength of a relationship between one dependent variable and independent variable (s). It helps in predicting value of a dependent variable from one or more independent variable. Regression analysis helps in predicting technique how much change is being accounted in a single dependent variable by a set of independent variable.

In the study, as there are more than three independent variable (FQ, LI, VL, IR, SI, PM, PS,SM PF); Multiple Regression analysis is studied here. The study is based on the prediction and explanation of simple R Value (.819) Correlation Regression between observed value and predicted value. R square value (.670) means the independent variable in the model can predict 67% of the variance in Dependent variable (SE).The adjusted R Square value(.660) takes into account these things and gives more accurate information about the fitness of the model. R Square value tends to be inflated as there are number of independent variables present in this case.

Descriptive Statistics

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Variables | N | Minimum | Maximum | Mean | Std. Deviation |
| MFQ | 301 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 2.9585 | .84109 |
| MLI | 301 | 1.00 | 4.60 | 2.4213 | .75935 |
| MVL | 301 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 2.6837 | .76553 |
| MRI | 301 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 2.4844 | .81400 |
| MSE | 301 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 2.3394 | .79002 |
| MSI | 301 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 2.4100 | .71108 |
| MPM | 301 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 2.1262 | .84104 |
| MPS | 301 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 2.3441 | .75713 |
| MSM | 301 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 2.3940 | .75778 |
| MPF | 301 | 1.00 | 5.00 | 3.0731 | .86955 |

Valid N (listwise) 301

Model Summary

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Model | R | R Square | Adjusted R Square | Std. Error of the Estimate | Durbin- Watson |
| 1 | 819a | .670 | .660 | .46081 | .901 |

a Predictors: (Constant), MPF, MPM, MFQ, MSM, MLI, MVL, MRI, MSI, MPS

b Dependent Variable: MSE

ANOVAa

|  |  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  |  | Sum of Squares | Df | Mean Square | F | Sig. |
| Model | Regression | 125.447 | 9 | 13.939 | 65.642 | <.001b |
| 1 | Residual | 61.792 291 | .291 |  |  |  |
|  | Total | 187.239 | 300 |  |  |  |

a Dependent Variable: MSE

b Predictors: (Constant), MPF, MPM, MFQ, MSM, MLI, MVL, MRI, MSI, MPS

Coefficientsa

|  |  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Model 1 Variables | Unstandardized Coefficients | SE B | Standardized Coefficients | T  Value | P Value |
| Constant) | -.292 | .137 | ------ | -2.134 | .34 |
| MFQ | .015 | .041 | .137 | .363 | .717 |
| MLI | .109 | .049 | .106 | 2.241 | .026 |
| MVL | .169 | .055 | .164 | 3.067 | .002 |
| MRI | .179 | .051 | .185 | 3.497 | < .001 |
| MSI | .157 | .059 | .142 | 2.671 | .008 |
| MPM | .129 | .041 | .137 | 3.152 | .002 |
| MPS | .219 | .057 | .210 | 3.843 | < .001 |
| MSM | .067 | .055 | .064 | 1.215 | .225 |
| MPF | .031 | .032 | .034 | .969 | .333 |

a. Dependent Variable: MSE

**FINDINGS**

From the statistical inferences independent variable (PS, PM, SI, RI, VL, LI) have high impact on the dependent variable (SE). Overall the model is satisfactorily valid and solid, is fit (f=65.64) which is significant impact at (<.001). Thus, Information seeking practices among the young adults is significantly fit with this model.

**CONCLUSION**

Need for information arise in all walks of human being in the society? To human, information is very useful be it any information on the news of 'Mandous' the huge cyclonic wind which hit the coast of Tamilnadu in December 2022 or the month long FIFA World Cup held in November to December, 2022. The touch of the button can bring in the needed news weather report in its printed format or in the electronic format, or in the audio-video mode from the television. The various media used for mass communication are readily available for information seeking; young adults are well versed in using the technology.

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