

Information Seeking Behaviour of the Students of Apeejay College of Fine Arts, Jalandhar

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Abstract:

This paper is an attempt to assess information seeking behaviour of the college students. The study is conducted to assess the level of awareness about library sources and services, reasons for making use of library, preferred sources of information and satisfaction about library services. Data was collected using a structured questionnaire. A majority of students visit the library for study purpose. Browsing the shelves is popular method for locating information in the library. Books are preferred source of information. Prominent purpose for internet browsing is to get information on current reference sources. A majority of the students are satisfied with the library services.

Keywords: *Information seeking behaviour, Information seeking, Information needs, Information channels, library services, User needs, User behaviour.*

Introduction

In the modern world information is considered as power, money and much more; libraries and information centres are doing tireless efforts to provide relevant, timely and right information to their user community. Such information disseminating agencies may belong to public, public-private, or purely private sector, but, it has been a very challenging job to satisfy one's absolute information needs, because changing world is giving birth to new information second by second, which affects mankind in different ways. Such exponential growth of information is difficult to manage. On the other hand it has become very difficult for information seekers to select relevant and quality information.

The core idea of libraries and information centers are based on gathering and processing of information. In the era of information explosion; user may not be aware about how to access the right information. There should be quality information sources and services in the library. User seeks information on their personal interest with the help of various information seeking methods. Information seeking behavior is the very first step to analyse the user needs and a significant part of user study. Information seeking is an important area or application of library science research to understand user needs and demeanor.

Proliferation of information in varying forms, formats, and amounts has made the contemporary era ‘information intensive’ with manifold choices to access and retrieve information. However, this requires the skills to exploit the best choice among the myriad. Furthermore, the current scenarios mystify users evaluating the quality and authenticity before they consume information. All these intricacies pose challenges to individuals in accessing and retrieving information efficiently, sifting and evaluating its authenticity, validity, and reliability for its effective use (Koneru, 2010).

Concepts of the Study

Information needs:-

Information needs are “strictly relative to the subject interest, type of activity, and level of sophistication of users and to the purpose for which the information is needed”. (Kwatra, 1992).

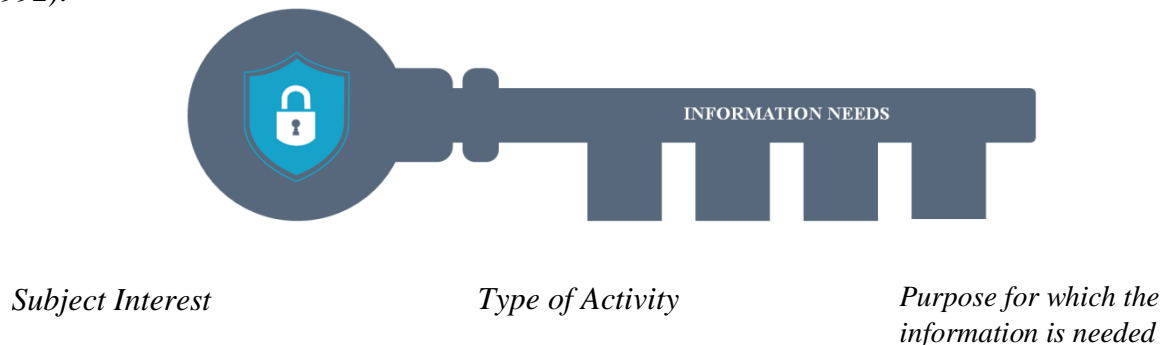


Figure-1: Information needs.

Information seeking Behaviour:-

“Information seeking can be defined as the purposive acquisition of information from selected information carriers.” (Johnson, 1997). “Information seeking behavior is the purposive seeking for information as a consequence of a need to satisfy some goal. In the course of seeking, the individual may interact with manual information systems or with computer-based systems”. (Wilson, 2000).

Need of the Study:-

In the information age, ocean of knowledge is full of information sources, but users find it difficult to find the relevant one. The spread of information has increased dramatically. A number of information broadcasting services are active. Libraries and information centers are striving hard to cope up with the dynamic needs of their users. Information is also multi format and most of the information sources are complex and interdisciplinary in nature. Due to such reasons, it becomes difficult for the user to access the right information. Libraries shoulder the responsibility of shaping human personality. But libraries can successfully deliver their dream only if they provide necessary facilities as well as relevant information sources to their users.

The study of individual information seeking behaviour requires understanding of the psychological needs of the users that may lead to insight into their expectations (Ocholla, 1999). User studies help to assess the information needs and preferences of the users and harvest

fruitful feedback. All these factors provide basis for conducting the present study to know the information needs of students to provide efficient and effective services.

Hence, the study entitled “Information Seeking Behaviour of the Students of Apeejay College of Fine Arts, Jalandhar” has been conducted. This study will provide deep insights to understand the information needs of students and their information seeking behaviour.

Research Methodology

At the initial stage, the literature search was made with the purpose of reviewing the literature. Literature related to information needs and information seeking behaviour of college students, both at undergraduate and at postgraduate level, was searched. Related literature provided blueprint for the study. Then a structured questionnaire was designed for the students of Apeejay College of Fine Arts, Jalandhar. 105 questionnaires were distributed to students randomly who visited the library. All the filled up questionnaires were received back from the students with 100% response. The data was analyzed manually and percentage method is used. Analyzed data is presented using tables.

Objectives of the Study

The study has been done with the basic objective to ascertain information needs of the college students. Specific objectives are as following:-

- To find out the level of awareness of students about information sources and services available in the library.
- To identify the reasons for making use of information sources.
- To find out the preferred sources of information by the students.
- To know the problems faced by the students in using the library.
- To find out the satisfaction level of students about library services.



Figure-2: Study Objectives.

Review of Literature

Reviewing Literature is significant part of an academic research. It enables the researcher to evaluate past trends with present one. A number of sources have been consulted on the topic. Distinctive studies had been conducted in the recent past on information seeking behaviour on different types of users. Some of them are:-

- **Bhatia (2011)** conducted a survey on Use of Electronic Resources in Degree Colleges Libraries in Chandigarh and found that 50.52% users had good knowledge of

information technology and 79.48% users had knowledge of e-resources. 56.1% users were using search engines as sources for accessing e-resources followed by OPAC (33.12%). Majority of the users were using (58.18%) use e-resources to keep themselves up-to-date on subjects of interest and 57.40% for career development and growth. 71.43% users stated that they require training for learning more about internet and search engines in order to seek information from e-resources and services.

- **Goel et al (2012)** carried out a study to indentify the use of library by medical students and found that a majority of students (64.5%) were visiting library for updating their knowledge followed by literature retrieval (31.7%). The study showed that 56.3% students were using both library and IT services, 26.1% were using only library and 2.9% were utilising IT services alone.
- **Satpathy and Satapathy (2013)** analyzed the existing situation, perception and expectations of users in medical college libraries of Odisha and revealed that issue return of books (98.3%), use of internet/e-resources (91.2%), reading magazine/newspaper (63.2%) and getting reference service (60.6%) were main purposes for visiting library. A majority of students (69.4%) perceived collection of books followed by 60.7% perceived collection of journals as excellent. The study also indicated that a number of e-resources and ICT facilities in the medical libraries are very limited.
- **Bansal (2014)** conducted a study on Library and Information Services in college Library of Hisar. The study found that majority of users visited Library to read newspapers or borrow books (32% each). Books were most preferred source by users whereas CD-ROM was least preferred.
- **Sarkar and Biswas (2015)** conducted a survey of 14 colleges of Barak Valley (South Assam) on ascertaining information needs and demands of library users. The survey provided a sketch of the needs and information seeking behavior of the teachers, students and staff. Major purpose for seeking information was teaching/learning (94%). Majority of the users (64%) were able to use the catalogue without much difficulty. 76% of the respondents felt that journals were very important for them to know about the latest developments in their field.
- **Abdulgani, Borle and Tapare (2016)** found that the 78.6% medical students visited library for self-study. It was suggested to give some more attention to increase the seating capacity and to improve the convenience and comfort conditions in the library. It was also recommended to purchase latest editions of books.
- **Partap (2016)** found that a majority of respondents (85.80%) were using the library to consult or borrow the study materials and nearly 80% respondents were using the library for general awareness or to prepare class notes. The study discovered that information needs are diverse and 100% users were using books while 85.80% respondents were using the Internet for getting their desired information. A majority of the respondents (52.45%) were not happy with the timings of the library and they wanted extension in library timings.
- **Poongodi and Santhi (2017)** surveyed selected arts and science colleges in Salem District, affiliated to Periyar University, Tamilnadu; and found that main reasons for visiting library were accessing text/reference documents, borrowing books and getting photocopy of materials.

- **Poongodi, Santhi and Jayachitra (2017)** in their study made an attempt to know the level of satisfaction on the provision of library resources and services. The study resulted to improve and enhance the quality of services. It revealed the necessity to help the students to fulfill their information needs and requirements for optimum use of resources. 32.17% of students visited library for accessing text/ reference books and 29.56% of the students for preparing their work related project/seminar/workshop.
- **Shah and Waghchoure (2017)** conducted a study on Information seeking behavior of students in Themm college of Engineering Boisar and found that 26.41 % of students were visiting the library for academic purpose. In case of use of information resources, books got leading response followed by newspapers. Top most problems faced by the students were low internet speed and lack of awareness about the availability and usage of scholarly journals.
- **Rajesh, Sivasubramaniyan and Kalpana (2018)** conducted a case study on B.Ed. students from Co-operative college of education in Puducherry. 64% students were reading books for improving their knowledge and skills followed by reading journals and magazines (26%). A majority of the students (66%) opined that attending training programmes were their mode of information seeking other than library. All the students (100%) responded that information seeking behaviour help and enhance their continuing professional development.

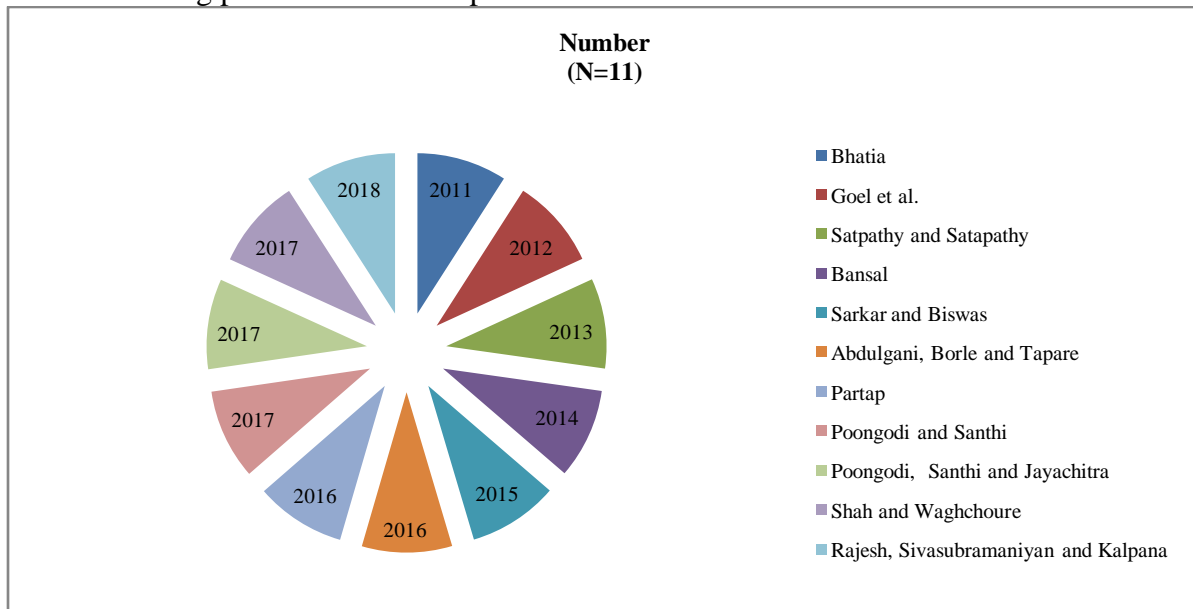


Figure-3: Review Statistics.

DATA ANALYSIS

The data collected through questionnaires has been analyzed using simple percentage technique and presented in the form of tables:-

User Characteristics

➤ Gender-wise distribution

Table 1: Gender-wise distribution of the respondents

Gender	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
Male	45	42.85
Female	60	57

Total	105	100
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Table 1 shows gender wise distribution of the respondents. Out of 105 respondents, 45 (42.85%) are male and 60 (57%) are female.

➤ **Course wise distribution of respondents**

Table2: Course wise distribution of respondents

Course	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
Undergraduate	92	87.61
Postgraduate	13	12.38
Total	105	100

Table 2 shows that 92 (87.61%) students are from undergraduate level course while 13 (12.38%) belong to postgraduate level.

Library Usage:

➤ **Frequency of Library Visits**

Table 3: Frequency of Library Visits

Frequency of library visits	No. of responses	Percentage (%)
Daily	37	35.23
Weekly	31	29.52
Monthly	11	10.4
When necessary	26	24.76

The response to the question was 100%. Table 3 shows that most of the students (35.23%) visit the library daily followed by 29.52% students who visit the library weekly, 26.66% who visit library when they find it necessary and only 10.4% students visits the library monthly.

➤ **Purpose of visiting Library**

Table 4: Purpose of visiting Library

Purpose	No. of responses	Percentage (%)
Study/Education	56	53.33
Preparing assignments	28	26.66
Borrowing Material	21	20
Updating knowledge	40	38
Recreation	8	7.61
Newspaper Reading	19	18

Note:-Multiple choices were allowed.

100% response is received for this question. Students were asked about their purpose to visit the library. Table 4 clearly shows that 53.33% students visit library for their study or education prospective, 38% to update their knowledge level, 26.66% for preparing assignments and 20% for borrowing material. Least percentage of responses goes to recreation (7.61%).

➤ **Methods to locate information**

Table 5:Methods to locate information

Methods	No. of responses	Percentage (%)
By using catalogue	12	11.42
By browsing the shelves	78	74.28
Indexing/Abstracting Journals	7	6.6
By asking Library staff	37	35.23

Note: multiple choices were allowed.

Every student has his/her own way to find the information. (Table 5) Among four options students preferred to browse shelves for locating information (74.28%) followed by asking library staff (35.23%) and using catalogue/OPAC (11.42%). Only 6.6% approached indexing/abstracting journals. Response to the question is 100%.

➤ **Sources of knowledge about Library**

Table 6: Sources of knowledge about Library

Sources of knowledge about Library	No. of responses	Percentage (%)
Self Learned	52	49.52
The Reference Desk	6	5.71
Friends	32	30.47
From Workshop	4	4.4
From Teacher	29	27.61
Notice Board	5	4.7
Library Publication	4	4.4

Note: multiple choices were allowed.

Students were asked to indicate their source of knowledge about Library. Total response to this question is 100%. Students were given seven options as their sources.(Table 6)It is found that 49.52% students are self learned about the library. 30.47% are getting to know from their friends and 27.61% by their teachers.

➤ **Preferred Sources of information**

Table 7: Preferred Sources of information

Information Sources	No. of responses	Percentage (%)
Internet at Home	42	40
Internet at Library	16	15.23
Books	57	54.28
E-books	14	13.33
Electronic Databases	11	10.47
Journals	6	5.7
E-Journals	2	1.9
Magazines	18	17.14
Reference Sources	15	14.28
Competitive Exam Material	12	11.42

Note: multiple choices were allowed.

Table 7 indicates that books are more popular among students (54.28%) followed by using internet at their home (40%). Rest of the options got little interest of the students.

➤ **Use of Library Services**

Table 8: Use of Library Services

Services	No. of responses	Percentage (%)
Borrowing books	53	50.47

Reference Services	20	19.04
Current awareness Services	14	13.33
Newspaper Clipping Services	11	10.47
Photocopy Service	27	25.71
Inter Library Loan	1	0.9
Internet Searching Service	25	23.80
Bibliographic Service	2	1.90
Library Space/reading Facility	34	32.38

Note: due to multiple choices, percentage exceeds 100%.

In case of making use of library services, Table 8 explains that a majority of the students (50.47%) borrow books. Other popularly used services are using reading room facility (32.38%), photocopy service (25.71%) and internet searching service (23.80%). Response to the question was 99.04%.

➤ **Internet as a major source of information**

Table 9: Internet as a major source of Information

Internet as a major source of Information	No. of Responses	Percentage (%)
Strongly agree	53	50.47
Agree	51	48.57
Disagree	1	0.95
Total	105	100

Table 9 depicts that majority of students consider internet a major source of information. Both the options 'strongly agree' and 'agree' have got good response i.e. 50.47% and 48.57% respectively.

➤ **Purpose of internet Browsing**

Table 10: Purpose of Internet Browsing

Purpose of Browsing	No. of Responses	Percentage (%)
Literature searching	21	20
Information on current issues	68	64
Consulting online reference sources	30	28.57
Employment news	12	11.42
Entertainment/Recreation	23	21.90

Note: multiple choices were allowed.

100% students responded to the question. Table 10 indicates that prominent purpose for internet browsing is to get information on current reference sources (64%). Other purposes are consulting online reference sources (28.57%), entertainment/recreation (21.90%) followed by literature searching (20%).

➤ **Awareness about e-Library**

Table 11: Awareness about e-Library

Statement	No. of Responses	Percentage (%)
Yes	57	54.28
No	18	17.14
Partly	30	28.57
Total	105	100

As Table 11 reveals awareness of the users on the term e-library, 52.38% of the students are aware of e-library and 28.57% students are partly aware about this term. On the

other side, 17.14% are not aware of the term e-library. 99.04% respondents responded to this question.

➤ **Satisfaction of students with the library services**

Table 12: Satisfaction of students with the library services

Rating	No. of Responses	Percentage (%)
Strongly satisfied	14	13.33%
Satisfied	67	63.80%
Slightly satisfied	20	22.22%
Slightly dissatisfied	3	3.3%
Strongly dissatisfied	4	3.85%

Note: multiple choices were allowed.

Table 12 measures the satisfaction level of the students with the library services. It shows that 63.80% are satisfied with the library services whereas 22.22% are slightly satisfied with library services. Only 13.33% are strongly satisfied and the rest are not satisfied with the library services. 99% respondents responded to the question.

➤ **Opinion about last visit**

Table 13: Opinion about last visit

Opinion	No. of Responses	Percentage (%)
Yes	71	67.61%
No	7	6.6%
Partly	27	25.71%

Note: multiple choices were allowed.

Students were asked about whether have they found their required information from library during their last visit or not? 100% respondents responded the question. Table 13 depicts that majority of the students 67.61% found their required information, followed by 25.71% who found it partly.

➤ **Problems faced during information searching**

Table 14: Problems faced during information searching

Problems	No. of Responses	Percentage (%)
Inadequate library collection	29	27.61%
Poor organisation of library materials	6	5.7%
Restriction on borrowing	14	13.33%
Unhelpful attitude of the library staff/insufficient help	5	4.7%
Lack of time to visit library	27	25.11%
Busy schedule in classes	35	33.33%
Lack of awareness about library sources and services	17	16.29%
Insufficient networking/computers	12	11.45%

Note: multiple choices were allowed.

The respondents were asked to find out the barriers in using library services. The question got 99.04% response. As shown in Table 14, most of the students i.e. 33.33% have their busy schedule in classes. 27.61% find inadequate library collection followed by Lack of time to visit library (25.11%).

Major Findings

The present study found that the students of the college go to the library almost daily for study purposes or for preparing assignments. They approach the material by browsing the shelves. Most of them are familiar with the books only and they preferred internet as source of information at their home. A large number of students visit the library only to make use of its reading space. Students use internet for information on current issues rather than newspapers or magazines. They are quite busy with their lectures schedules. In spite of all these, students found their library appreciable.

Suggestions/ Feedback

Some suggestions were given by the students, which may be fruitful for improving library services. These are given as follow:-

1. Students demanded acquisition of latest and quality literature of every domain. They require some spiritual and motivational literature in their college library. They feel current competitive literature and more newspapers should be added.
2. Students feel that the best readers and best users should be appreciated. There should be some activities to promote the effective use of the library like special training to the students, book-fairs, lectures, promotional campaigning, speech and debates sessions should be organised time to time.
3. Library met all expectations of almost students, but they have demanded that the environment of the library should be more disciplined and peaceful. Respondents found the editions of the books available in the library are very old and they always face space problem while sitting in the library.
4. Students wanted to get free photocopy and print out facility for them. They suggested that borrowing days should be extended on special demand and first delay in book return should be exempted.
5. In spite of all complaints students found their library as best place of knowledge or best learning place. They found the behavior of library staff is very supportive. Respondents found E-Zone beneficial.

Conclusions

The study concludes that students of the college have different approaches to find out the information. It may vary from individual to individual. Some awareness programmes need to be introduced like user orientation, group discussions, debates, workshops, seminars, speeches and some other promotional activities to enhance the reading habits of the students e.g. book-fairs. Training programs should be organised to train students on how to retrieve information from e-resources. The present study will help the library professionals to design strategies for organization of library services in a better way.

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