Information seeking Behaviours of Users: A Case Study of Private Higher Technical Education Libraries in Chandrapur District.

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Abstract

The paper presents the various attitudes and behaviour in seeking information from engineering college libraries by users .Analysis shows that students ,teachers and scholars have been shown more affection to formal collection in libraries. As well as the information seeking from electronic resources with internet has given more preference.Impact of ICT has done more for users of Engineering College Libraries.Thus electronic print media are popular among users.

Keywords: Information seeking behaviour; Engineering college libraries; Users, formal resources; Informal resources,I CT uses

1.Introduction

Private Engineering College libraries are those institutions which are run by private management. All activities, functions, and aims are the same for both private-Engineering collge libraries and government Engineering college libraries. Private-Engineering college libraries get their operating expenses from donations, Tution fees from students fees, and user community grants from the Department of Social Welfare,Govt.of Maharashtra00. Private Engineeri college library funds are provided by Management , Students fees and donars.

Private managements maintain private Engineering College libraries. They have the right to allocate the funds for both recurring and nonrecurring expenses. The administrators of these libraries create policies for management and administration. Government Engineering college libraries, by contrast, must adhere to government rules and regulations for the allocation of funds and other administrative matters.

2. Some Private Engineering College Libraries (Chandrapur)

- Rajiv Gandhi College of Engineering,Research and Technology,Chandrapur
- Government College of Engineering,Ballarpur Road,Chandrapur

- Saibaba College of Engineering and Technology,Bhadravati,Chandarpur
- Ballarpur Institute of Technology,Ballarpur.Chandrapur

2.Understanding Information Seeking Attitude of Users

According to Wilson (1999, 2000), information-seeking behavior includes "those activities a person may engage in when identifying their own needs for information, searching for such information in any way, and using or transferring that information."[5] [6] Kakai, et al., (2004) have defined information-seeking behavior as an individual's way and manner of gathering and sourcing for information for personal use, knowledge updating, and development.[4] Information-seeking behavior of students, researchers, and professors has been the focus of enquiry for decades. Initially, however, user studies were conducted primarily to evaluate library collections.

These were followed by studies of the research habits of individuals or groups that would lead to the design of appropriate information systems and services. In mid 1980s, the focus shifted to holistic approaches to information-seeking behavior. According to Line (2000), new studies of information users and their needs are even more necessary in the age of the Internet. Researchers such as Callison (1997), Devadason and Pratap (1997), and Ellis (1993) have explored quantitative and qualitative methodologies for user studies [1][2][3].

Information-seeking behavior differs among user groups. Academic libraries must understand the information needs of faculty and students in order to address those needs. This study explores the information-seeking behavior of undergraduates, postgraduate students, and researchers in Undergraduate, Postgraduate Teaching staff and Research scholars.

3.Research Methodology

The closed ended questionnniars were distributed to all students and lecturere and scholars in all 4 Private Engineering Colleges. The interviews were conducted with some professors to receive special opinions about the information seeking mode from libraries of their colleges.60% responded to questionnaires. The data obtained under various headings were analyzed and are interpreted as below.

4. Responded numbers from Private Engg.Colleges

College Names	Undergraduates Students	Postgraduates Lecturers	Research Scholars
Rajiv Gandhi College of Engg.	80	40	8
Govt.College of Engg.	40	10	2

Balllarpur Instt.of Technology	10	4	-
College Engg.college,Bhadravati	10	4	-
Total responded	140	58	10

Table 1 indicates that a total 208 questionnaires responded out of 250 and consisted of 140 undergraduates students, 58 postgraduates teachers, and 10 researchers from four Engineering. colleges of Chandrapur.

5. Time spent per week in the library and Reading Room

Time	Undergraduates students	Postgraduates Teachers	Research Scholars
Less than 5 hours	25%	29%	72%
5-10 hours	48%	56%	14%
10-20 hours	21%	8%	8%
More than 20 hours	6%	7%	2%

Nearly half the undergraduate students and more than half of the postgraduate students spend about 5 to 10 hours per week in the library. Nearly three-quarters of the researchers, however, spend less than 5 hours per week in the library

6. Undergraduate Students satisfaction with Library collection

Type of material	Very good	Good	Fair	poor
Text books	12%	71%	12%	5%
Reference books	48%	34%	16%	2%
Journals	56%	36%	5%	3%
Magazines	71%	24%	12%	3%
Newspapers	76%	24%	0%	0%
Thesis	58%	30%	12%	0%

A majority of undergraduates report a good collection of textbooks in the library, and journals were rated similarly. The collection of reference books, journals, and theses was rated Very Good by nearly half.

7. Postgraduate Teachers satisfaction with Library collection

Type of material	Very good	Good	Fair	poor
Text books	54%	27%	12%	7%
Reference books	24%	51%	16%	9%

Journals	74%	21%	3%	2%
Magazines	64%	28%	5%	3%
Newspapers	69%	27%	3%	1%
Thesis	69%	27%	3%	1%

Unlike undergraduate, only about half the postgraduate students rated the textbook collection Very Good, and only about one quarter rated the reference collection similarly. A majority of postgraduates are satisfied with the journals, magazines, newspapers, and theses

8. Research Scholars satisfaction with Library collection

Type of material	Very good	Good	Fair	poor
Text books	24%	46%	24%	6%
Reference books	36%	58%	6%	5%
Journals	70%	36%	2%	2%
Magazines	70%	28%	2%	0%
Newspapers	72%	14%	1%	2%
Thesis	50%	42%	1%	5%

A majority of researchers are happy with the availability of journals, magazines, and newspapers, but are not satisfied with textbooks or reference books.

9. Assistance Getting Users from library staff

Services	Undergraduates students	Postgraduates Teachers	Research Scholars
Manual catalogues	94%	99%	100%
OPAC	99%	97%	100%
Location of documents	86%	89%	76%
Use of reference books	92%	96%	86%
Bibliographies	0%	0%	0%
Newspaper clippings	0%	0%	0%
Circulation	96%	98%	98%
Interlibrary loan	0%	0%	0%

Most respondents are satisfied with the assistance provided by the library staff with searching information in the manual catalogue, OPAC, and reference books. Most also indicated the helpful behavior of staff in locating and checking out materials. On the

other hand, no respondent was satisfied with help in compiling bibliographies, newspaper clippings, and interlibrary loan. When asked the reason, respondents said that they were not aware of any such service being provided by the library.

10. Satisfaction with present library services by Users

Satisfaction level	Undergraduate students	Postgraduates Teacher	Research Scholars
20%	4%	5%	7%
50%	7%	13%	31%
75%	63%	59%	46%
100%	26%	23%	16%

A majority of respondents rated the library services at 75 percent of their satisfaction level.

11. Purpose of information-seeking by Users

Purpose	Undergraduates students	Postgraduates Teachers	Research Scholars
Reading	68%	52%	44%
Preparing notes	100%	98%	0%
General awareness	50%	56%	72%
Discussions	6%	24%	62%
Research work	0%	84%	100%

Most students seek information to prepare notes for examinations, whereas all the researchers seek information related to their research. Seeking information for discussions and general awareness is favored more by the researchers than other respondents.

12. Time spent by Users per week on information gathering

Time	Undergraduates Students	Postgraduates Teachers	Research Scholars
0- 2 hours	58%	32%	0%
3-5hours	38%	46%	4%
6-8 hours	4%	14%	12%
More than 8 hours	0%	8%	84%

It is clear from the table that the researchers spend more than 8 hours per week on information gathering because it is important for their research. Most students spend less time on information gathering because it is provided in the classroom or available in textbooks.

13. Formal sources of information for Users

Formal sources	Undergraduates students	Postgraduates Teachers	Research Scholars
Books	94%	86%	48%
Journals	58%	76%	96%
Reference sources	46%	49%	36%
Conference proceedings	36%	42%	76%
Online databases	24%	58%	100%

Students rely more on books than other sources, whereas researchers rely more on journals, conference proceedings, and databases, because they need current information in their research areas.

14. Informal sources of information for Users

Informal sources	Undergraduates students	Postgraduates Teachers	Research Scholars
Email	93%	96%	100%
Discussion with teachers	96%	98%	100%
Deminars	34%	46%	92%
Discussion with librarians	47%	44%	48%

Email and discussion with teachers is preferred by most respondents, who feel that friends and teachers direct them to various sources of information that may be useful. Teachers even provide them with journal articles and books. Researchers also attend seminars and conferences to acquire information by establishing new contacts or hearing lectures and discussions. It is interesting to note that discussion with librarians as provider of information is not much favored.

15. Method of seeking current information by Users

Method	Undergraduates students	Postgraduates Teachers	Research Scholars

Current issues of journals	56%	72%	100%
CAS/SDI	14%	14%	23%
Personal communication	68%	74%	48%
Seminars/ conferences	24%	56%	92%
Internet	67%	83%	98%

Researchers prefer current issues of journals and the Internet more than students. Although the library provides a current awareness service, it is not fully used. When users were asked about it, most, especially students, were not aware of it.

16. Impact of ICT on information seeking by Users

Impact	Undergraduates students	Postgraduates Teachers	Research Scholars
Yes	98%	99%	100%
No	2%	1%	0%

Since information is available in different formats as a result the implementation of ICT, users were asked to indicate its impact on their information-seeking behavior. Virtually all users were aware of its impact and found it beneficial.

17. Preference for formats by Users

Format	Undergraduates students	Postgraduates teachers	Research Scholars
Print	14 %	16%	8%
Electronic	35 %	23%	12%
Both	51%	61%	80%

Users prefer information in both print and electronic form; however, students desire more exposure to electronic sources, and they also expressed a need for training in the use of these resources.

18. Conclusion

The central role of the library profession remains the same, but methods and tools for information storage and retrieval continue to grow and change dramatically. Libraries must understand information-seeking behavior of users to re-engineer their services and provide information efficiently. The results of this study reveal users who are are more or less satisfied with library collections and services, but who want training in the use of

online information. Although document delivery service is being provided on demand, the researchers pointed out that it would be worthwhile if the library could provide them with indexing, abstracting, and interlibrary loan service as well.User education about Library Using is must and should be carry out as a seminar or workshop training.

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