

**INFORMATION SEEKING BEHAVIOR OF COLLEGE STUDENTS AFFILIATED TO MADURAI KAMARAJ UNIVERSITY**

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**ABSTRACT**

Information seeking is a broad term, which involves a set of actions that an individual obtains to express his information needs, seek, assess and select information, and finally uses it to satisfy his information needs. Various factors influence the information seeking behaviors of an individual or a group of individuals, i.e. purpose for information, channels and sources of information and barriers to information. Information seeking is a basic activity of an individual. This study aims at to know the information seeking behavior of the college students affiliated to Madurai Kamaraj University.

**Keywords:** Information Seeking Behaviour, Madurai kamaraj University

**1. Introduction**

Information seeking behavior is the method people or users of information seek documents or information and the way they go about searching their required information by following a complex pattern of actions and procedures. In this procedure, users may ask for assistance from the person(s) engaged in the library or in an exacting section or unit. The user's information seeking behavior is reflected in his connection to the information unit and its various services.

Information seeking behavior is the purposive seeking for information as an effect of need to satisfy some type of a goal. In the way of seeking, the individual may interact with people. Information seeking is a broad term, which involves a set of actions that an individual obtains to express his information needs, seek, assess and select information, and finally uses it to satisfy his information needs. Various factors influence the information seeking behaviors of an individual or a group of individuals, i.e. purpose for information, channels and sources of information and barriers to information. Information seeking is a basic activity of an individual. This study aims at to know the information seeking behavior of the college students affiliated to Madurai Kamaraj University.

**2. Review of Literature**

**Latheef, Omotoso and Fagbalo (2016)** studied on use of library by the students of Veterinary Medicine in two federal universities in south east zone of Nigeria. It is found that the information related to veterinary science and traced out by the students from journals, magazines, books, online resources and services and facilities provided in the university library. In general, it is concluded the library facilities are less used by the students.

**Maheswarappa (2018)** observed that the infrastructure facilities of kanataka college libraries by its buildings, organization of different sections, library collections, services rendered by its staff during 2015-16 and recommended that the State Government most allocate more funds to curb the **imbalances** among the Government College Libraries in the state.

**Sycz-Opoń, J. (2019).** Have dealt with the present's investigation into information-seeking behaviour of trainee translators, observed during translation of a legal text from English into Polish. The translator's workspace has significantly changed over the last twenty years and translators have at their disposal not only traditional printed publications but also a variety of sources available in an electronic form. This paper aims to discover how this repertoire of available sources is utilized during a specific task - legal translation. The group under scrutiny are the students of a translation programme at the University of Silesia, Poland. The method of

investigation combines observation and think-aloud protocol. The results obtained show, among others, the information most often looked-up in sources, the sources most often consulted, the level of satisfaction with source consultation, the reasons for non-satisfaction, and the problems commonly encountered during the search for information. This paper ends with the list of characteristic information-seeking behaviours exhibited by the group in question.

**Tekeli-Yesil, S., Pfeiffer, C., & Tanner, M. (2020).** Have explored the process and determinants of finding information about earthquake-preparedness and of paying attention to earthquake-related information. Data were collected in Istanbul-Turkey, where an earthquake with a magnitude greater than 7 on the Richter scale is expected in the near future, using qualitative methods. Participants were mainly exposed to earthquake-related information following an earthquake. They seldom sought information, although those with higher socioeconomic levels and those who lived in higher risk zones were more likely to do so. There were clear differences between younger people, who did not share the collective memory of the 1999 earthquakes, and the older generations. Television was the main source of information and the internet the main source of further information. Participants were attracted by information that was based on real stories, had high quality visuals, was easily accessible, understandable, practical and that influenced the emotions. Due to the competing risks and concerns of daily life, the participants needed regular reminders about earthquake preparedness. The findings of the study presented valuable insight and hints, which might enlighten further arrangement needs considering earthquake risk communication among populations. The finding regarding the influence of collective memory among younger generations is new and will open the ways for further investigations.

**Ebrahimzadeh, S., Sharifabadi, S. R., Kamran, M. K. A., & Dalkir, K. (2020)** The purpose of this paper is to identify the triggers, strategies and outcomes of collaborative information-seeking behaviours of researchers on the ResearchGate social networking site. Data were collected from the population of researchers who use ResearchGate. The sample was limited to the Ph.D. students and assistant professors in the library and information science domain. Qualitative interviews were used for data collection. Based on the findings of the study, informal communications and complex information needs lead to a decision to use collaborative information-seeking behaviour. Also, easy access to sources of information and finding relevant information were the major positive factors contributing to collaborative information-seeking behaviour of the ResearchGate users. Users moved from collaborative question and answer strategies to sharing information, synthesising information and networking strategies based on their needs. Analysis of information-seeking behaviour showed that ResearchGate users bridged the information gap by internalizing new knowledge, making collaborative decisions and increasing their work's visibility. As one of the initial studies on the collaborative information-seeking behaviour of ResearchGate users, this study provides a holistic picture of different triggers that affect researchers' information-seeking on ResearchGate.

### **3. Objectives of the study**

The study attempts to identify the user behavior with the following objectives.

1. The association between the age of the respondent and opinion on library collections, library services, library staff and their services etc.
2. The association between the gender of the respondents and opinion on library collections, library services and library staff and their services etc.
3. The association between the qualification of the respondents and opinion on library collections, library services and library staff and their services etc.

### **4. Significance of the Study**

The most important beneficiaries of the current research are affiliated Collegelibraries and their users .This study is important because

1. It helps the affiliated college libraries to identify the strengths and weakness of their collection, effectiveness of services and informationseeking behaviour of the users

2. It helps the college libraries to improve the source and facilities in older areas to meet the user needs.
3. It also helps the college libraries to identify the problem faced by the users while seeking and locating the information

**5. Sampling Method:**

Among the Arts and Science Colleges located in the catchment area of Madurai Kamaraj University, the researcher collected data from 11 Colleges. The researcher employed a well structured questionnaire for collecting the data from the respondents of the colleges. The questionnaire was prepared on such a way that the respondents could easily understand the terms. At first a pilot study was conducted to 100 students in 3 colleges to test the feelings of the respondents in answering the questions. The data collection was done through the librarians of the concerned college. Totally 1100 questionnaires to 11 colleges with 100 questionnaires each were distributed randomly to the students who were visited to the library during the time of data collection. Out of the 1100 questionnaires distributed 920 questionnaires were duly filled up and returned.

**6. Statistical Tools and Style of Writing:**

Percentage analysis, chi-square test and multiple correlation have been applied to validate the data collected for the study. APA style of rendering the bibliography is followed in this study.

**7. Limitations**

The findings of the study are applicable to students of the colleges under study. No other colleges like professional colleges related to other disciplines included in this study. The study has not been covered with the teaching staff working in the colleges under study.

**8. Analysis and Discussion:**

**Table 1: Opinion about the total collection of the library-Age group**

Age Group	Opinion about the total collection of the library			Total	$\chi^2$
	Good	Fair	Poor		
18 years and below	132	65	67	264	74.329 Df – 6 Sig. – 0.000 P < 0.001
	50.0%	24.6%	25.4%	100.0%	
19-20 years	233	130	27	390	
	59.7%	33.3%	6.9%	100.0%	
21-22 Years	140	59	7	206	
	68.0%	28.6%	3.4%	100.0%	
23 and above years	35	20	5	60	
	58.3%	33.3%	8.3%	100.0%	
Total	540	274	106	920	
	58.7%	29.8%	11.5%	100.0%	

It is observed from the table that 46.1 percent of the Undergraduate and 68 percent of the respondents in the age group of 21 to 22 years are of the opinion that the library collections in their library are good. It is also found that 33.3 percent of the respondents in the age group of 19 to 20 years and the age above 23 years are having the fair opinion about the collection of books in the library. The above result is proved by chi-square test. The calculated value (74.32) is greater than the table value and it is significant at 0.01 level. Hence the stated hypothesis is accepted. There is an association between the age of the respondent and the satisfaction on total collection of books in the library.

**Table 2: Opinion about the total collection of the library-Gender**

Gender	Opinion about the total collection of the library			Total	$\chi^2$
	Good	Fair	Poor		
Male	288	165	75	528	89.302 Df – 1 Sig. – 0.000 P < 0.001
	54.5%	31.2%	14.2%	100.0%	
Female	252	109	31	392	
	64.3%	27.8%	7.9%	100.0%	
Total	540	274	106	920	
	58.7%	29.8%	11.5%	100.0%	

It is observed from the table that 54.5 percent of the male students 64.3 percent of the female students are having good opinion about the collection of books in the library. It is fair opinion by 31.2 percent of the male and 27.8 percent of the female respondents about the opinion of library collections in the library. The above result is proved by chi-square test. The calculated value (89.302) is greater than the table value and it is significant at 0.01 level. Hence the stated hypothesis is accepted. There is an association between the gender of the respondent and the opinion on library collections in the library.

**Table 3: Opinion about the total collection of the library-Qualification**

Education	Opinion about the total collection of the library			Total	$\chi^2$
	Good	Fair	Poor		
UG	416	218	97	731	20.313 Df – 4 Sig. – 0.000 P < 0.001
	56.9%	29.8%	13.3%	100.0%	
PG	120	55	6	181	
	66.3%	30.4%	3.3%	100.0%	
PhD	4	1	3	8	
	50.0%	12.5%	37.5%	100.0%	
Total	540	274	106	920	
	58.7%	29.8%	11.5%	731	

It is observed from the table that 56.9 percent of the Undergraduate and 66.3 percent of the post graduate students are having the good opinion about the collection of books in the library. It is fair opinion of the respondents from 29.8 percent of the Undergraduate and 30.4 percent from the post graduate students. The above result is proved by chi-square test. The calculated value (20.313) is greater than the table value and it is significant at 0.01 level. Hence the stated hypothesis is accepted. There is an association between the qualification of the respondent and the opinion on library collections of the library.

**Table 4: Opinion about Library Staff-age group**

Age Group	Opinion about Library Staff			Total	$\chi^2$
	Most Cooperative	Cooperative	Not Cooperative		
18 years and below	158	61	45	264	54.233 Df – 6 Sig. – 0.000 P < 0.001
	59.8%	23.1%	17.0%	100.0%	
19-20 years	239	126	25	390	
	61.3%	32.3%	6.4%	100.0%	

21-22 Years	78	83	45	206
	37.9%	40.3%	21.8%	100.0%
23 and above years	35	16	9	60
	58.3%	26.7%	15.0%	100.0%
Total	510	286	124	920
	55.4%	31.1%	13.5%	100.0%

It is observed from the table that 59.8 percent of the respondents in the age below 18 years and 61.3 percent of the respondents in the age level of 19 to 20 years are of the opinion that the library staff are most cooperative. It is also observed that 40.3 percent of the respondents in the age group of 21 to 22 years and 32.3 percent of the respondents in the age group of 19 to 20 years are of the opinion that the library staff are cooperative in locating relevant information. The above result is proved by chi-square test. The calculated value (54.233) is greater than the table value and it is significant at 0.01 level. Hence the stated hypothesis is accepted. There is an association between the age of the respondent and the opinion on library staff.

**Table 5: Opinion about Library Staff-Gender**

Gender	Opinion about Library Staff			Total	$\chi^2$
	Most Cooperative	Cooperative	Not Cooperative		
Male	292	165	71	528	0.015 Df – 2 Sig. – 0.992 P > 0.05
	55.3%	31.2%	13.4%	100.0%	
Female	218	121	53	392	
	55.6%	30.9%	13.5%	100.0%	
Total	510	286	124	920	
	55.4%	31.1%	13.5%	100.0%	

It is observed from the table that 55.3 percent of the male and 55.6 percent of the female respondents are of the positive opinion that the library staff are most cooperative. It is also found that 31.2 percent of the male and 30.9 percent of the female respondents are opined that the library staff are cooperative in locating information in the library. The above result is proved by chi-square test. The calculated value (0.02) is greater than the table value and it is significant at 0.01 level. Hence the stated hypothesis is accepted. There is an association between the gender of the respondents and the opinion on Library staff.

**Table 6: Opinion about Library Staff-Qualification**

Educational Qualification	Opinion about Library Staff			Total	$\chi^2$
	Most Cooperative	Cooperative	Not Cooperative		
UG	419	222	90	731	8.959 Df – 4 Sig. – 0.062 P < 0.10
	57.3%	30.4%	12.3%	100.0%	
PG	85	63	33	181	
	47.0%	34.8%	18.2%	100.0%	
PhD	6	1	1	8	
	75.0%	12.5%	12.5%	100.0%	
Total	510	286	124	920	
	55.4%	31.1%	13.5%	100.0%	

It is observed from the table that 57.3 percent of the Undergraduate and 34.7 percent of the post graduate students are of the opinion that the library staff are most cooperative. It is also observed that the library staff are cooperative is opined by by 30.4 percent of the respondents from Undergraduate and 34.8 percent from the post graduate students. It is 75 percent in the case of Ph.D scholars regarding the opinion that the library staff most cooperative in locating the information. The above result is proved by chi-square test.

The calculated value (8.9) is greater than the table value and it is significant at 0.01 level. Hence the stated hypothesis is accepted. There is an association between the qualification of the respondent and the opinion on library staff.

**Table 7: Opinion about services offered - Reference Service-Age group**

Age Group	Opinion about service offered - Reference Service		Total	$\chi^2$
	Satisfactory	Not Satisfactory		
18 years and below	91	173	264	27.720 Df – 3 Sig. – 0.000 P < 0.001
	34.5%	65.5%	100.0%	
19-20 years	195	195	390	
	50.0%	50.0%	100.0%	
21-22 Years	109	97	206	
	52.9%	47.1%	100.0%	
23 and above years	17	43	60	
	28.3%	71.7%	100.0%	
Total	412	508	920	
	44.8%	55.2%	100.0%	

It is observed from the table that 52.9 percent of the respondents in the age group of 22 to 22 years and 50.0 percent of the respondents in the age group of 19 to 20 years are having the satisfactory opinion about the library reference services. The above result is proved by chi-square test. The calculated value (27.72) is greater than the table value and it is significant at 0.01 levels. Hence the stated hypothesis is accepted. There is an association between the age of the respondent and the opinion on reference services of the library.

**Table 8: Opinion about service offered - Reference Service-Gender**

Gender	Opinion about service offered - Reference Service		Total	$\chi^2$
	Satisfactory	Not Satisfactory		
Male	246	282	528	1.639 Df – 1 Sig. – 0.201 P > 0.05
	46.6%	53.4%	100.0%	
Female	166	226	392	
	42.3%	57.7%	100.0%	
Total	412	508	920	
	44.8%	55.2%	100.0%	

It is observed from the table that 46.6 percent of the male and 42.3 percent of the female respondents are of the satisfactory opinion on library reference services. The above result is proved by chi-square test. The calculated value (1.639) is greater than the table value and it is significant at 0.01 level. Hence the stated hypothesis is accepted. There is an association between the gender of the respondent and the library reference services.

**Table 9: Opinion about service offered-Qualification**

Education	Opinion about service offered - Reference Service		Total	$\chi^2$
	Satisfactory	Not Satisfactory		

UG	316	415	731	8.430 Df – 2 Sig. – 0.015 P < 0.05
	43.2%	56.8%	100.0%	
PG	95	86	181	
	52.5%	47.5%	100.0%	
PhD	1	7	8	
	12.5%	87.5%	100.0%	
Total	412	508	920	
	44.8%	55.2%	731	

It is observed from the table that 43.2 percent of the Undergraduate and 52.5 percent of the post graduate students are having the satisfactory opinion about the library reference services.

The above result is proved by chi-square test. The calculated value (8.43) is greater than the table value and it is significant at 0.01 level. Hence the stated hypothesis is accepted. There is an association between the qualification of the respondent and the opinion on library reference services.

### 9. Findings:

It is found from the study that the calculated value is greater than the table value and it is significant at 0.01 levels. Hence there is an association between the different variables.

1. Age of the respondents and opinion on library collection, library staff and reference services are positively associated.
2. Gender of the respondents and opinion on library collection, library staff and reference services are positively associated.
3. The qualification of the respondents and opinion on library collection, library staff and reference services are positively associated.

### 10. Conclusion

The study reveals that there is a significant role of the variables such as age, gender and qualification of the respondents and its impact on user behavior and opinion and level of satisfaction on library collection, the facilities and services and the skills of the library staff and their services is varied. It is also understand from the study that higher the qualification, the user behavior of the respondents are different in their information search pattern. The awareness about the available resources and the facilities provided to be created by the library personnel to the new users and encourage them to make use of the library in the maximum level.

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