Information seeking behavior of faculty members and research scholars of Bangalore University: A Case Study

N G Balaji [1]; S. Srinivasa Ragavan [2]

Research Scholar and Librarian, Govt. First Grade College, Ramanagara, Karnataka, India [1];

Professor & Head, Department of Library and Information Science, Bharathidasan University, Trichy, Tamil Nadu, India[2]

ngbalaji2020@gmail.com [1]

Abstract:

The study reveals that information need and seeking information is an need of the hour and it facilitates the faculty members and research scholars to easy access to the information. The library staff must assist the faculty members and research scholars in locating the information. The online information systems has to be improved, online journal, books and databases should be subscribed and provided for the use.

Keywords: Information, Seeking Behavior, Information Need, Bangalore University

Introduction:

Bangalore University is a public state university located in silicon city Bangalore, offers integrated, bachelors, masters and doctoral degrees. The well equipped and up-to-date library established in the 1966. The library is serving the students, faculty and research scholars and it supports all subject areas thought in the Bangalore University. The librarian responsibility is to ensure that the use of information sources, resources, databases, online information and services are improved to the benefit of its users. Hence, there is need for the assessment of needs and seeking behavior of the faculty and research scholars of the Bangalore University.

Librarians and library staff must understand the criteria of information seeking and information used by users for providing services, designing new information systems, intervening in the operation of existing systems or planning service programmes (Anwar, 2007)[7]. The information seeking behavior refers to the way people search for and utilize information. The need could not be directly observed, while how people behaved in seeking information could be observed and investigated. Information behavior as the totally of human behavior in relation to sources and channels of information, including both active and passive information seeking and information use (Wilson, 2000)[6].

Objectives of the Study:

1. To find out the purpose of information seeking
2. To find out difficulties in seeking information
3. To find out formal / informal sources of information

Research Methodology:

Survey method of research has been used for collection of primary data. The researcher has been prepared questionnaire based on the latest activates of the library and distributed to the faculty members and research scholars of the Bangalore University. The collected data has been analyzed and presented as results.

Scope of the study:

This study will mainly highlight the current information seeking behavior of faculty and research scholars of Bangalore University. The study will list and access the efficiency of and utilization of the different services provided by the library. The information seeking of the research scholar and faculty members will be collected and tabulated, which will be the basis for future expansion and management of the library.

Review of Literature:

The study of review of literature is an important aspect in any research through which one understand the past trends in research output in any particular discipline. A review is significant step to get clear picture of what has been done and suggested already with regard to problem understanding. The attempt is to highlight the findings of the studies conducted related to this topic which helps to undertake the present study in a systematic manner. To review the past studies the researcher has consulted the Library and Information Abstracts (LISA), Library and Information Science Technology Abstracts (LISTA) and Google Scholar.

K. Kumar and S. Tholkappian (2013)[1] states that information seeking behaviour is the human activities with respect to searching various sources, channels including use of that information. The terms, information seeking behaviour, information searching behaviour and information using behaviour are synonymous terms. A survey was taken among Information seeking behaviour of women's educational institutions library users in Vellore district, Tamil Nadu.

Priyanka Nagar and Shamim Aktar Munshi (2014)[2] examined the Information Seeking Behaviour of female research scholars of Faculties of Social Science and Arts in Aligarh Muslim University. The present study selected survey method to complete the study and conducted on a sample of 120 Female Research Scholars of Social Science and Arts Faculties. A total number of 120 questionnaires were distributed among the Female Research Scholars of Social Science and Arts Faculties of Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh. A total number of 120 filled questionnaires were returned back by the users. The investigator selected complete 120 questionnaires for the analysis of data. Survey result shows that the Information Seeking is very essential part of Researches. Most of the research scholars are satisfied with the sources and collection, web-services, and behaviour of Library staff of the University Library while some are not so much satisfied but overall results are satisfied.

Mercy Mlay Komba and Edda Tandi Lwoga (2015)[3] assessed the information needs and information seeking patterns of citizens in Tanzania with a particular focus to three districts: Morogoro town, Njombe and Kinondoni districts. Questionnaire survey was self-administered to 450 citizens in selected districts, with a rate of return of 99.6 per cent. Findings revealed that citizens mainly required information on national examination results, which was followed by information on birth, death and marriage certificates, land, and health. Citizens relied on electronic sources and interpersonal communication with neighbours and friends more than explicit sources of information. Certain demographic factors related to education level and respondent's age determined use of various types information sources. Common barriers of citizens' information seeking behaviour were related to poor ICT infrastructure, difficulty in retrieving information, distant location and high costs of information sources. This is a comprehensive study that provides findings which might help the government in Tanzania and other countries with similar conditions to provide effective government information and services to their citizens.

Meyer, Anika, Fourie, Ina (2016)[4] explored the value of utilising a holistic ergonomic approach, covering engineering, cognitive and social perspectives, to cultivate beneficial and productive collaborative information seeking (CIS) systems and environments, specifically with regard to three main CIS pillars (control, communication and awareness). A qualitative research approach, based on a selective corpus of CIS literature, was utilised to perform a content analysis to note if terms and concepts

normally associated with engineering, cognitive and social ergonomics can be used to eliminate terms reflecting issues related to three CIS pillars (control, communication and awareness) that can benefit from a holistic ergonomic approach. The content analysis revealed that a fairly extensive amount of holistic ergonomic terminology is prominent within the CIS literature, therefore establishing a connection between the two disciplines: CIS and ergonomics. This suggests that CIS system issues could benefit from the insights of a holistic ergonomic approach.

Orlu, Aondoana Daniel (2016)[5] expressed that, the current study seeks an in-depth understanding of the emotions and behaviour associated with information seeking among Masters Students. Essentially, this does not intend to identify relationships between variables. Rather, it seeks to understand the emotional responsible to the search for information. Consequently, the study follows a descriptor-explanatory design that involves the description of the phenomenon through a review of literature and explanations of such occurrence through primary data collected via interviews with participants. Semi-structured interviews were concluded with a convenience sample of Masters Student in one United Kingdom University studying in a wide range of disciplines, and including both Home and international students. Interview questions were designed to lead interviewees through the stages of their search, including search during proposal development, research design and thesis writing. Various issues associated with decisions, actions, choices and emotions were probed. Interviews were recorded, transcribed and analysed using thematic analysis. Findings of the study confirm that the information seeking behaviour among masters students is organized, and in some cases, random. The randomness of the searching behaviour occurs during the planning stage. Essentially, the finding confirm that many students follows Kuhlthau's model in which at the planning stage the search lacks a clear focus. The findings further indicate that emotional reaction to search causes anxiety, apprehension and confusion. However, should the university seek to design systems of information that minimise emotional response? When you minimise emotions, it affect the user's curiosity to know the unknown. Therefore, systems should maximise positive emotions and minimise negative emotions. This work has contributed to the limited work on emotions within the context of library and information management. The research has benefits to librarian because it offers insights about the emotional and behavioural factors affecting search process in the library. And it has also come up with a fundamental question. Should the university seek to design systems of information that minimise emotional response? Wilson, argues that if we design systems of information that minimise emotions and behaviour in the search process, it will affects the user's curiosity to know the unknown. Therefore, systems should maximise positive emotions and behaviours and minimise negative emotions and behaviours.

Analysis and Interpretation of Data:

The researcher has distributed the questionnaires and 31 questionnaires has been collected, analyzed and interpreted below.

Table 1: Purpose of information seeking

Purpose of information seeking	Frequency	%	CP
Research work	19	14.17	14.17
Teaching	12	08.95	23.12
General awareness	26	19.40	42.52
Writing and Presenting Papers	29	21.64	64.16
Reading/Thinking purpose	17	12.68	76.84
Prepare the class notes	15	11.19	88.03
Observation and experiments	04	02.98	91.01
Preparing / supplementing lectures	05	03.73	94.74
Discussions	07	05.26	100
	134		

Table 1 show that, 29 (21.64%) respondents are using the library or seeking the information for the purpose of writing papers for journals and for presenting papers in conferences. 26 (19.40%) respondents seeking the information for to get acquainted with the current trends and for updating general knowledge and 19 (14.17%) respondents said that they are seeking the information for research purpose. Few of the respondents said that they are seeking the information for the purpose of prepare the reading/thinking (12.68%), class notes (11.19%), preparing / supplementing lectures (3.73%) etc. The analysis shows that, the respondents seeking the information for research, writing papers and to update the general awareness and knowledge.

Table 2: Formal Sources of Information

Formal Sources of Information	Frequency	%	CP
Books/Monographs	30	20.00	20.00
Journals/Periodicals	27	18.00	38.00
Reference sources	12	08.00	46.00
Patents/Reports/Standard/Specifications	06	04.00	50.00
Conference/workshop/Seminars Proceedings	03	02.00	52.00
Online -Journals/databases/archives	29	19.33	71.33
Internet/Intranet sources as Audio/Video, CD-ROM/DVD	31	20.66	91.99
Library Catalogue (OPAC)	08	05.34	97.33
Review articles / Theses	04	02.67	100
	150		

Tables 2 depicts that, 31 (20.66%) respondents opined that internet and intranet sources (Audio, Video, CD-ROMs/DVDs, institutional repositories) are the main formal sources for seeking information, 30 (20%) respondents opined that Books/Monographs are formal sources for seeking information, 29 (19.33%) respondents opined that online journals, databases, archives of information sources and 27 (18%) respondents opined that print journals/periodicals are sources for seeking formal information. It is also interesting to note that, 8 (5.34%) respondents opined that Library catalogue (Online Public Access Catalogue) is also a formal source for seeking information. The analysis shows that, internet, online journals, print journals and books are the main formal sources for seeking information.

Table 3: Informal Sources of Information

Informal Sources of Information	Frequency	%	CP
Email/list-server, Discussion forum etc.	22	20.75	20.75
Face-to-face Discussions / Conversations with colleagues	19	17.92	38.67
Meetings/ seminar / Conferences/Workshops	15	14.16	52.83
Previous Knowledge	31	29.24	82.07
Private Correspondences	04	03.78	85.85
Discussion with librarian or reference staff of you library	09	08.49	94.34
Consult a knowledgeable person in the field/Supervisor	06	05.66	100
	106		

Table 3 reveals that, 31 (29.24%) respondents opined that previous knowledge is the major informal source of information, 22 (20.75%) respondents opined that Email/list-server, Discussion forum etc., 19 (17.92%) respondents opined that Face-to-face Discussions / conversations with colleagues and 15 (14.16) respondents opined that meetings/ seminar / conferences/workshops are the major informal sources of information. The analysis shows that, knowledge of the individual, discussion forums, face-to-face discussions and seminars / conferences are the major informal sources for seeking information.

Table 4: Consultation of information resources

Consultation of information resources	Frequency	%	CP
By yourself	08	09.76	09.76
By seeking assistance from library staff	17	20.73	30.49
By consulting catalogue	07	08.54	39.03
With the help library website	11	13.41	52.44
Chat with the librarian	07	08.54	60.98
Through forums	08	09.76	70.74
Displays in the Library	12	14.63	85.37
Through Social Media	12	14.63	100
	82		

Table 4 reveals that, 17 (20.73%) respondents opined that consultation of information sources by seeking assistance from library staff, 12 (14.63%) opined that displays in the library and through social media respectively, 8 (9.76%) opined that by yourself and through forums respectively is the major way of consulting the information sources. The analysis shows that, by seeking assistance from the library staff, displays, social media, forums and library website (13.41%) are the major ways for consulting the information sources.

Table 5: Difficulties in seeking information

Difficulties in seeking information	Frequency	%	CP
Location of the library is inconvenient to access	03	05.56	05.56
Library collection is inadequate	05	09.26	14.82
Library does not provide current/specialized information	02	03.70	18.52
Inconvenient for group study	04	07.40	25.92
Working hours of the library is inconvenient	19	35.19	61.11
Library staff are not helpful	03	05.56	66.67
Getting the information from other libraries/other sources	12	22.22	88.89
Lack of Electronic resources/ Digital Resources	06	11.11	100
	54		

Table 5 depicts that, 19 (35.19%) respondents opined that working hours of the library is inconvenient, 12 (22.22%) opined that getting the information from other libraries/other sources are major difficulties in locating the information for the faculty members and research scholars of the Bangalore University. Only few respondents opined that, lack of Electronic resources/ Digital Resources (11.11%), inadequate library collections (9.26%) and Library staff is not helpful (5.56%) are minor difficulties in locating the information from the library. The analysis reveals that, respondents opined that working hours of the library is inconvenient (35.19%) and getting the information from other libraries/other sources (22.22%) are major difficulties in locating the information for the faculty members and research scholars of the Bangalore University.

Findings and Discussions of the study:
1. The faculty members and research scholars seeking the information for research, writing papers and to update the general awareness and knowledge.
2. Faculty members and Research Scholars are revealed that, internet, online journals, print journals and books are the main formal sources for seeking information.
3. Faculty members and Research Scholars are exposed that, knowledge of the individual, discussion forums, face-to-face discussions and seminars / conferences are the major informal sources for seeking information.
4. The respondents opined that, by seeking assistance from the library staff, displays, social media, forums and library website (13.41%) are the major ways for consulting the information sources.
5. Faculty members and research scholars opined that working hours of the library is inconvenient (35.19%) and getting the information from other libraries/other sources (22.22%) are major difficulties in locating the information for the faculty members and research scholars of the Bangalore University.

Conclusion:
The findings of the study indicate that the information seeking behavior of faculty and research scholars are varied. The large libraries will depend on the strength of the collections and available online resources to facilitate the easy access to the information. The library staff must aware how the faculty and research scholar will seek the information and their needs. The reference librarian should help the users in locating the information and their by help the faculty and scholars to improve the seeking behavior and find the needs of the users of the library.

References:
[1] K. Kumar & S. Tholkappian (2013). Information Seeking Behaviour of Library Users in Women's Educational Institutions: A Survey. *International Research:* Journal of Library & Information Science, 3(4), 738-750.

[2] Priyanka Nagar & Shamim Aktar Munshi (2014). Information Seeking Behavior of Female Research Scholars of Faculties of Social Science and Arts in Aligarh Muslim University: A Comparative Study. *International Research:* Journal of Library & Information Science, 4(4), 459-474.

[3] Mercy Mlay Komba & Edda Tandi Lwoga (2015). Government information seeking behaviour of citizens in selected districts of Tanzania. *International Research:* Journal of Library & Information Science, 5(4), 751-769.

[4] Meyer, A., & Fourie, I. (2016). Collaborative information seeking environments benefiting from holistic ergonomics. *Library Hi Tech*, *34*(3), 439–459.

[5] Orlu, A. D. (2016). Information Seeking Behaviour of Masters Students: Affective and Behavioural Dimensions. *Library Philosophy & Practice*, 25–79.

[6] Rubina Bhatti (2009). Information Needs and Information-Seeking Behaviour of Faculty Members at the Islamia University of Bahawalpur. *Library Philosophy & Practice.*

[7] Anwar, M. A. (2007). Research on information seeking and use in Pakistan: An assessment. *Pakistan Journal of Library and Information Science,* 8, 15-32.

[8] Information seeking behavior: Wikipedia, https://en.m.wikipedia.org/wiki/Information_seeking_behavior