

A STUDY ON USERS INFORMATION NEEDS AND INFORMATION SEEKING BEHAVIOR WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO ACADEMIC LIBRARIAN IN COIMBATORE

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Abstract *This study was undertaken to determine the information-seeking behaviour and use of information resources by Academic Librarian in Coimbatore city. The overall purpose of the study was to determine what their information requirements are and determine their awareness of library services available to them. The study collected empirical data on the information requirements of Librarian. Data were gathered from 200 Librarian in private college at Coimbatore. Findings indicate that guidance in the use of library resources and services is necessary to help students meet some of their information requirements. The study found that: journals, library books and textbooks are the most popular sources of information for course work and research and those students need to be taught how to use available library resources and services. Based on these findings, it was recommended that a questionnaire on Librarian ability to use information resources be prepared and administered during registration to all the students to establish their ability to use information resources. It was also recommended that a more aggressive information marketing strategy should be developed at both subject library professional and librarian level to create awareness among the students on the available this Journal.*

Keyword: *Digital Environment, User Information, Seeking behaviour, Library professionals.*

INTRODUCTION

Information has been described as the fifth need of man ranking after air, water, food and shelter. In one form or the other, it has consistently been a significant element in the development of human society and it has shaped over a long period of time in to the way in which we think and act. It is likely, of course, to continue to do so with even greater intensity. Information in particular becomes more meaningful when it is transferred and communicated. The information “Explodes” into power only when it is transferred and communicated. In other words, information is activated by communication.

The user is the key person in any library. All the luxuries of information revolution and problems of information explosion center around the user and his convenience. Understanding the user is half the battle in providing information services. The success of any library depends considerably on how best the system design is based on a close and accurate understanding of the users. The user is not only the most important aspect, but is also, paradoxically, a dynamic component of the library. A formal information center or Library is yet to pick up these activities in the same spirit. Hence It is necessary to know the information needs,

the motives and purpose of seeking information ways and means of gathering information and the entire user attitudes and practices in relation to information.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The field study has the following objectives.

1. To study about to know the information needs from respondents.
2. To study about the motivators of respondents to become purpose of seeking information ways.
3. To study about the significant relationship prevailing between the entire user attitudes and practices in relation to information.

METHODOLOGY

Research methods common to Social Science hold good for scientific investigations in Library and Information science also. Among such methods prescribed, case study is one of the survey approaches. It is found to fit suitably here in this study.

The choice of case study is justified for the following reasons.

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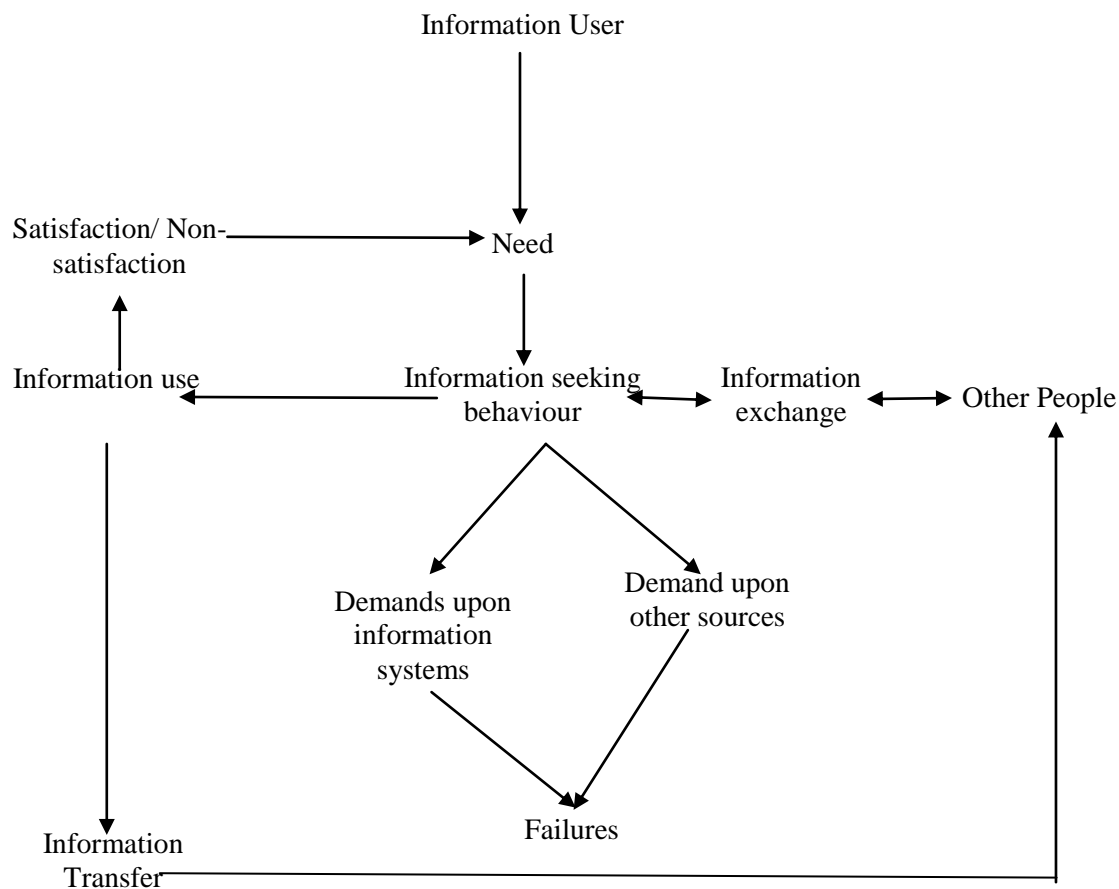


Figure 1: Interrelationship among areas in the fields of user studies

1. The size of the population is very limited in number
2. All of them were available during the time of the survey.
3. They are all not geographically scattered over an area but united under one roof i.e. College campus.

This is alright so far as the method of approach to the problem taken up for study. The other side of the study is concerned with data collection.

SAMPLING METHOD

Sample size

In this study simple random sampling is applied. The sample size of the study is 200 Respondents.

Data Collection

The data collected by the researcher were purely based on the primary data and was less dependent on secondary data.

Primary data

The primary data was collected through a structured questionnaire.

Secondary data

The secondary data was collected from personal department files and records. The other information that is relevant for the study collected from books and journals.

METHOD OF DATA COLLECTION

The data collections are under various categories as follows. They are,

1. Schedule
2. Interview
3. Questionnaire

The division contained six need – based causative factors. They are as follows.

Table 1: Need for Others ‘Approval’

NEEDS	I	II	III	IV	V
Needs to have classmates I am smart	4	5	9	3	5
Need to have teacher think I am smart	7	4	9	5	3
Need to compete with classmates for teachers approval	5	2	8	6	4
Need to have friends think I am smart	3	3	7	4	5
Need to have teacher notice me	2	6	6	2	2
Need to prove myself to my family members	8	7	3	3	7
Need to do more than is required for the class so that I can feel equal to my classmates	13	11	10	9	10

Source: Primary Data

1. Need for other’s Approval
2. Need for success in chosen profession
3. Need for self – Extension
4. Need for Self – Approval
5. Need for Intellectual stimulation
6. Need related to a successful College experience

All the answers under each factor have been worded and phrased based on introvert and extravert psychology, the phenomena of education psychology.

Sample Techniques

The method of selecting portions of the ‘Universe’ for the study with a view to draw conclusion about the ‘Universe/ Population’ is known as sampling.

The researcher has employed the simple proportionate random sampling statistical tool for choosing the sampling design of the employees. 200 respondents were selected

Construction of Tools

The questionnaire schedule used in this study has been structured by the researcher himself with the guidance and help of the guide. The variables of the study have been identified by going through various available literatures and giving questionnaire to the respondents’. The variables, thus identified have been used to design the questionnaire.

Rank Analysis

All the answers are to be ranked and provided with a sequential number. i.e.,

- i) HS- Highly Satisfied ii) S- Satisfied iii) N-Neutral
iv) DS –Dissatisfied v) HDS- Highly Dissatisfied

Chi-Square Analysis

The Chi-Square Test, that tests for significant differences between the observed distribution of data among categories and the expected distribution based on the null hypothesis.

The formula for the chi-square test is $\chi^2 = \sum \left(\frac{(O - E)^2}{E} \right)$

ANALYSIS & INTERPRETATION

NEED FOR OTHERS APPROVAL

The concepts ‘others’ approval includes four factors Viz.

1. Classmates
2. Teachers
3. Friends
4. Family members

Each of all the first three factors except the family members represent two levels Viz.

1. Striving for equality
2. Thriving with competition

Chi-Square Analysis

$$X^2 = \frac{\sum (O-E)^2}{E} = 18.3$$

Level of signification	0.05
Degree of freedom	24
calculate value	18.3
Table value	36.4

NEED FOR SUCCESS IN CHOSEN PROFESSION

This concept contains two sides Viz.

1. Keep one – self well informed in the subject
2. Keep one – self fit for the job (Job market competition)

Table 2: Need for Success in Chosen Profession

Need	I	II	III	IV	V
Need to have broader understanding of the subjects that relate to my chosen profession	13	15	11	12	14
Desire for more information about my major	4	5	3	1	6
Need to meet requirements for employment in my chosen profession	3	7	2	5	4
Need to know wide variety of things so I can feel secure in terms of the job market	4	4	5	8	7
Desire to compete better in job market	9	6	3	4	5

Source: Primary Data

It is a fact that a professional degree is a via media to get a job. It does not mean that everyone is so mindful to prepare his studies in order to get a job only.

Chi-Square Analysis

$$X^2 = \sum(O-E)^2 / E = 17.36$$

Level of signification	0.05
Degree of freedom	24
calculate value	17.36
Table value	37.65

NEED FOR SELF — EXTENSION

Egoism is the basis for altruism. Study of self-extension is related to the student’s social outlook also.

Chi-Square Analysis

$$X^2 = \sum(O-E)^2 / E = 12.3$$

Level of signification	0.05
Degree of freedom	16
calculate value	12.3
Table value	26.29

NEED FOR A SELF APPROVAL

Self – Approval is the basis for self-confidence wherein lies the success of every man. Self – Approval has many sides.

Chi-Square Analysis

$$X^2 = \sum(O-E)^2 / E = 6.23$$

Level of signification	0.05
Degree of freedom	12
Calculate value	6.23
Table value	21.02

NEED FOR INTELLECTUAL STIMULATION

Intellectual stimulation is the result of man’s curiosity to know. The effect of intellectual stimulation ends up temporarily with obtaining the set of relevant information. The cause and effect follows a linear path while the motivating factors for ISB creating the need for intellectual stimulation are multi – dimensional.

Chi-Square Analysis

$$X^2 = \sum(O-E)^2 / E = 5.48$$

Level of signification	0.05
Degree of freedom	16
Calculate value	5.48
Table value	26.29

Table 3: Need for Self – Extension

NEEDS	I	II	III	IV	V
Need to know more so that I have children I can do a better job of raising	8	4	6	3	5
Desire to have a broader outlook towards life and people	6	8	7	10	9
Need to know more in order to help others	8	9	2	12	8
Need to become a whole person in terms of the mental, physical and spiritual	15	14	13	12	11
Need to understand different people and their environments	7	4	8	6	5

Source: Primary Data

Table 4: Need for Self-Approval

NEED	I	II	III	IV	V
Desire to know and understand in order to feel better about myself	8	5	5	8	7
Need to avoid feeling frustrated by lack of knowledge	11	4	7	12	9
Need to live up to my expectations of myself	15	17	9	11	16
Need to feel intelligent. A feeling of insecurity when I think I should know same thing but I don't	14	10	8	13	11

Source: Primary Data

Table 5: Need for Intellectual Stimulation

NEED	I	II	III	IV	V
Enjoyment of learning for its own sake	9	9	6	8	5
Personal interest in subject of class	6	8	4	6	4
Inner drive to learn more about the subjects that make me curious	19	13	16	17	14
Need for the excitement and fun of finding answers	7	6	8	5	6
Personal Satisfaction	6	4	3	7	4

Source: Primary Data

NEEDS RELATED TO A SUCCESSFUL COLLEGE EXPERIENCE

Naturally in an Indian academic environment, one may think that students seek information primarily to get good grades in the examination. This study proves that it is not so.

Chi-Square Analysis

$$X^2 = \frac{\sum(O-E)^2}{E} = 7.19$$

Level of signification 0.05

Degree of freedom 20

calculate value 7.19

Table value **31.41**

FINDINGS AND SUGGESTION:

The present study identifies the principal motivating factors creating the need for ISB and also the sources satisfying

their information needs. The concept need factors have been borrowed from educational Psychology. A rare combination of psychology and information science has given birth to a new concept Information-Seeking Behaviour.

Finding Based on Rank Analysis Method

Table – 1: Reveals that 13 (7%) of the total respondents highly Satisfied have been chosen 'Need to do more than is required for the class so that I can feel equal to my classmates' The motive of students to seek information basically arises to impress his/her classmates and then to become impressive among the family members. **Table – 2:** Reveals that 15 (8%) of the respondents realizes satisfied the pleasure of seeking information in order to have a broader understanding of the subjects and to quench their thirst for more information / knowledge about his major. The trend to equip one – self with only such information that may help to secure a job is on the decline. Moreover this trend reflects a similar syllogism that man eats to live but he does not live to

Table 6: Needs Related to A Successful College Experience

NEEDS	I	II	III	IV	V
Need to get my Money's worth out of College	7	9	6	8	5
Need to get Good Grades	6	7	4	6	4
Need to get feel that my parents money is well spent on my college education	8	5	3	3	2
Need to get Everything I can out of my College Education	2	6	4	3	4
Need to know in order to do better in upcoming classes	16	4	2	2	3
Need to Understand basic content of course	5	22	13	19	12

Source: Primary Data

eat. Hence the conclusion in this case study is that students are job motivated but not totally job – oriented in a narrow sense.

Table – 3: Reveals that 15 (8%) has highly satisfied rightly ascertained that they seek information based on the need to become a whole person in terms of the mental, physical and spiritual aspects. Desire to have a broader outlook towards life and people and the need to know more in order to help others, combined together rank second each forming 20%. Students show more interests to utilize information for self-extension in order to serve the society.

Table – 4: Reveals that 17 (9%) satisfied seek information because of the need to live up to his expectations of himself. Only 2% seek information because of the need to avoid feeling frustrated by lack of knowledge.

Table – 5: Reveals that 19 (10%) highly satisfied Inner drive to learn more tops the various factors for intellectual stimulation. It is the personal satisfaction that drives to seek information. Personal interest and the excitement of finding answers fall next only to personal satisfaction. Learning for its own sake and getting one’s money worth do not find to be the causes for ISB to many.

Table – 6: Reveals that 22(11%) satisfied (Highest among the scores) seek information based on the need to understand the basic contents of the course. 8% works on their information based on the need to know in order to do better in upcoming classes. This is an evidence of a healthy trend among students and their farsightedness.

Finding based on Chi-Square Analysis

Table – 1 Value is greater than Calculate value. So we accept the Null hypothesis. So there is no significant relationship between the Need for other’s Approval and user attitudes and practices in relation to information.

Table – 2 Value is greater than Calculate value. So we accept the Null hypothesis. So there is no significant relationship between the Need for success in chosen profession and user seeking information needs.

Table – 3 Value is greater than Calculate value. So we accept the Null hypothesis. So there is no significant relationship between the Need for self – Extension and user attitudes and practices in relation to information.

Table – 4 Value is greater than Calculate value. So we accept the Null hypothesis. So there is no significant relationship between the Need for Self – Approval and user seeking information needs.

Table – 5 Value is greater than Calculate value. So we accept the Null hypothesis. So there is no significant relationship between the Need for Intellectual stimulation and user attitudes and practices in relation to information.

Table – 6 Value is greater than Calculate value. So we accept the Null hypothesis. So there is no significant relationship between the Need related to a successful College experience and user seeking information needs.

The first part of the questionnaire containing need factors was of much interest to the respondents. They all agreed that though information – seeking is goal – oriented, the objectives of which are well known, the other side of ISB the motivating factors causing a group of needs are not known popularly. They frankly admitted that a chance to fill up this questionnaire helped them to identify their own motives.

SUGGESTIONS

The researcher gives the following suggestion based on the findings.

- Need to have teacher notice individual to be improved.
- Need for success in chosen profession desire for more information should be provided.
- Need for self extension they can do a better job of raising must be sufficient.
- Need for self-approval to feel better about their self to be improved.
- Personal satisfaction in need for intellectual stimulation should be included.
- Need to know in order to do better in upcoming classes should be improved for successful colleges experience.

CONCLUSION

Among the 34 factors under the concept need factors, the ‘need to live up to my expectation’ got the major score. Psychologically speaking self-conviction of primary importance for any action or reaction.

In general the score given for other factors reveals that they have understood the values of education. Further a majority does not think that a post-graduate degree is not a passport for a job. They believe that their knowledge and information should be useful to maintain as well as improve their image among classmates, friends and family members. A broader understanding of the subject and a helping attitude to the society figure out to be the motivating factors for their ISB.

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