Information Seeking Behavior of the Management Students at Sardhar Vallabhai Patel International Institute of Textiles and Management (SVP-IITM): A Survey

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Abstract - **Study of data collected from 160 students by administering questionnaires on their information seeking behaviour at SVP-IITM Coimbatore (Government of India), indicates that guidance in the use of library resources and services is necessary to help students meet their information requirements. This study finds that textbooks and journals are the most popular sources of information for the students' course work.**
Keywords: **Information Seeking Behavior**

I.INTRODUCTION

Information seeking behavior is a broad term, which involves a set of actions that an individual takes to express information needs, seek information, evaluate and select information, and finally uses this information to satisfy his/her information needs. Various factors may determine the information seeking behaviour of an individual or a group of individuals. It is, therefore, desirable to understand the purpose for which information is required, the environment in which the user operates users' skills in identifying the needed information, channels and sources preferred for acquiring information, and barriers to information.

SVIITM Coimbatore was founded with national importance under the aegis of Ministry of Textiles, Government of India. Now this premier is functioning as first grade institution of PG in Textiles and Management in India. National and international seminars, reorientation training programmes and workshops are frequently organized by the SVP-IITM.

II.REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Majid S, Tan AT. (2002) expressed his views that Information seeking is a term describing the ways individuals seek, evaluate, select, and use information. In the course of seeking new information, the individual may interact with different people, analog tools, and computer-based information systems.

Prasad H N (1995) emphasizes in his study that Information seeking is a process in which humans engage in order to advance and potentially alter their state of knowledge. It is

also an important cognitive function related to learning and problem solving, sometimes thought of as a "higher cognitive process.

Adedibu L O et al (1997) found that Information seeking behavior is different from the actual information need. The information need is a subjective, relative concept in the mind of the experiencing individual and Sethi A (1990) is defined as the recognition of the existence of uncertainty.

Lubans J (1971) reveals that Information seeking behavior is an area of active interest among librarians, information scientists, communication scientists, sociologists and psychologists. "Information seeking behaviour results from the recognition of some need, perceived by the user, who as a consequence makes demands upon formal systems such as libraries, information centers, on-line services or some other person in order to satisfy the perceived need.

Holland M P and Powell C K (1995) say that from their study that Information seeking behavior refers to any activity of an individual has undertaken to identify a message that satisfies a perceived need".

With information deluge, everyone needs information of increasing variety and diversity of level, frequency, volume and ease. This complex situation appears to be ambiguous and heterogeneous as that information need of particular groups of users and information flow from specific situations in organization are difficult to determine. This situation has given rise to the growth concept of information searching and the manner of determining the pattern of searching is said to be information seeking behaviour.

Asemi A (2005) shows that the literature on surveys about the information-seeking behavior of the students is extensive. Many studies have been conducted to investigate the information-seeking behaviour of library users based on their subject interest, occupation, information environment, and geographical location.

This study investigates the sources of information used by students studying PG in Textiles and Management at SVP-IITM Coimbatore for their academic and research work, the

extent to which they are aware and use the library resources, and the assistance they receive in using the library resources, etc.

III. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study has the following objectives:

1. To find out the awareness and use of library resources by the students,
2. To find out the type of information sources used by the students,
3. To ascertain users' opinion regarding usefulness and adequacy of information sources and services, and
4. To know the purpose of seeking information.

IV. METHODOLOGY

This study used questionnaire-based survey method. The questionnaires were personally distributed to the students of SVP-IITM at their library and class rooms in the month of March 2016. SVP-IITM falls under the Faculty of PG in Textiles and Management Textile Management which comprises seven departments and about 320 students. From such a number, a random sample of 100 students was selected. The questionnaires were distributed to the students who were present in their library and class rooms. Sixty filled-in questionnaires were returned by the users with the overall response rate being 60%. The collected data were analyzed, classified and tabulated by employing statistical methods.

V. DATA ANALYSIS

Questions like name, gender and educational qualification were asked. Out of 60 respondents, 44 (73.33 %) were male and 16 (26.66 %) were female. The frequency of students visit to the library has been classified into four time gaps as shown in Table 1. Majority of users i.e., 31 users (51.67%) were visiting the library daily, followed by 2-3 times in a week by 19 users (31.67%).

TABLE 1 FREQUENCY OF VISIT TO THE LIBRARY

Sl. No.	Frequency	No. of respondents	Percentage
1	Every day	31	51.67
2.	2-3 times in a week	19	31.67
3.	Weekly	6	10
4.	Monthly	4	6.66
Total	60	100	

TABLE 2 RESPONSES FROM MULTIPLE OPTIONS FROM PURPOSE OF VISIT TO THE LIBRARY IS CONSIDERED

Sl. No.	Purpose of visiting library	No. of Respondents	Percentage	Rank
1	References	47	78	2
2	Borrowing Books	43	72	3
3	Browsing Internet	39	65	4
4	Reference Materials	18	30	7
5	Journal Reference	22	37	6
6	Course Material Collection	29	48	5
7	Latest Arrivals	5	8	8
8	Reading Newspapers and Magazines	51	85	1

From Table 2, it is seen that 78% users visited the library to study, 72% users to borrow books, 65% for browsing the shelves, 30% to use reference materials, 37% to read journals and 85% to read newspapers and magazines.

Table 3 exhibits the use of library resources and services. It was found that majority of the students used newspapers followed by the use of books and journals. It was found that majority of the students used newspapers followed by the use of books and journals. Further it was found that

information services such as Online Database, Statistical software, and abstracting services were marginally used and translation services were unavailable. Most students found the library collection satisfactory with 57.5 per cent stating that it was adequately stocked, while 31.3 per cent stating it was moderately stocked. Only 7 per cent said it was inadequately stocked and 0.7 per cent said it was very inadequately stocked in their field of specialization.

TABLE 3 USE OF LIBRARY SOURCES AND SERVICES

S. No.	Services	Yes	No	No response
1	Issue/Return	33 (55%)	15 (25%)	12(20%)
2	Reference service	9 (15%)	24 (40%)	27(45%)
3	Books and journals	43 (71.66%)	8 (13.33%)	9 (15%)
4	Seminar/Conference proceedings	24 (40%)	20 (33.33%)	16 (26.66%)
5	Indexing service	4 (6.66%)	26 (43.33%)	30 (50%)
6	Abstracting service	4 (6.66%)	26 (43.33%)	30 (50%)
7	Bibliography	12 (20%)	23 (38.33%)	25 (41.66%)
8	Newspaper	45 (75%)	4 (6.66%)	10 (16.66%)
9	Inter-Library Loan	3 (5%)	25 (41.66%)	32 (53.33%)
10	Translation service	-	29 (48.33%)	31 (51.66%)
11	Online Database	3 (5%)	27 (45%)	30 (50%)
12	Statistical software	-	26 (43.33%)	34 (56.66%)

TABLE 4 PURPOSE OF SEEKING INFORMATION

S. No.	Purposes	Rank				Total
		1	2	3	4	
1	For career development	30 (50%)	15 (25%)	15 (25%)	-	60 (100%)
2	To solve immediate practical problem	28 (46.66%)	12 (20%)	10 (16.66%)	10 (16.66%)	60 (100%)
3	To keep up to date	33 (55%)	17 (28.33%)	6 (10%)	6 (10%)	60 (100%)
4	To write an article / research paper	8 (13.33%)	32 (53.33%)	10 (16.66%)	10 (16.66%)	60 (100%)

Table 4 indicates the decreasing rank order of information seeking on a scale of four. Career development with 30 (50%) out of the 60 respondents was the most preferred response for seeking information. This was followed by the reasons that include seeking information for problem solving, keeping up-to-date and the need to write an article or research paper.

Ninety three per cent of the respondents in this study agreed with the statement that for more effective and efficient use of the library, students need instruction on how to use information sources in their subject areas. The finding is similar to those of Lubans (1971) and Holland & Powell (1995) which indicated that graduate students need instruction in the use of the library to enable them to make more effective and efficient use of information sources and services to which the library provides access.

VI.CONCLUSION

The usage of the SVP-IITM library, its resources and services needs to be increased. Student oriented information resources such as text books, reference material, journals, internet facility, database etc., should be facilitated. Importantly, the library should provide initial orientation workshops and ongoing seminars for students to train them in using resources so that utilization of resources and services is maximized.

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