INFORMATION SEEKING BEHEVIOUR OF UNDERGRADUATE STUDENTS IN THE ELECTRONIC ENVIRONMENT: A STUDY OF PT. CHIRANJI LAL SHARMA, GOVT. P.G. COLLEGE, KARNAL

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ABSTRACT:

The present study investigated the information seeking behavior of the undergraduate students in the electronic environment of Pt. Chiranji Lal Sharma, Govt. P.G. College, Karnal. The overall purpose of the study was to explore information requirements, to know how they access information, problems faced while they seek information and awareness of library services available to them. Findings indicated that, 22(26.19%) of the total respondents preferred electronic resources and about 19(22.62%) of the respondents were faced problem as lack of time.

KEYWORDS

Information needs, Information Seeking Behaviour, Undergraduate Students, Electronic Environment.

INTRODUCTION

Information is vital to the development of human society. We are living in the information age, where information is one of the important factors of life. Everyone needs information about everything even in his day to day life. In this information age, there is so much of information being generated that we are confronted with information explosion, information pollution and exponential growth of information.

The present era is called the "Information era." Information has become the most important element for progress in society. To thrive in this modern era, one needs a variety of Information, no matter how well versed one is in a field or profession. We can reorganize the educational system and redefine scientific research only with the help of Information. Information plays a significant role in our professional and personal lives. People need Information to work properly in their fields (Psacharopoulous, 1982). The word 'information' becomes famous since 1950's. The terms information and communication are very close to each other that, they are consider to be the same meaning. "Information is the data which is processed or in other words, we can say that, data is the raw material of information and after processing, it becomes information" (Ford, 1980).

INFORMATION NEEDS AND INFORMATION SEEKING BEHAVIOUR

Information is needed in every fields of life. Everybody needs information in everyday life like in education, health, political, physical, research etc. The information need is different from one person to another which means that, it will not be the same though it might be similar. Chen (1982) defined "information need as an abstract construct used to represent why people seek, find and use information."

Information seeking behavior involves personal reason for seeking information, the kinds of information which are being sought, and the ways and sources which needed information is being sought. Information seeking behavior is expressed in various forms, from reading printed material to research and experimentation. Scholars, students and faculties actively seek current information from the various media available in libraries, e.g. encyclopedias, journals and, more currently, electronic media (Leckie et al 1996). Information seeking behaviour 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 (Fatima and Ahmad, 2008). Information seeking behaviour has been defined variously by different authors. Krikelas (1983) "information seeking behaviour is any activity of an individual is undertaken to identify a message that satisfies a perceived needs". Wilson (1999) "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".

REVIEW LITERATURE

Various studies have been carried out to examine the information seeking behaviour of different users such as academicians, researchers, students etc. there is a broad spectrum of research on library user studies across a variety of disciplines.

Kadli, H. J. and V. B. Hanchinal (2015) examined the information seeking behaviour of students of two law colleges of Mumbai. The study mainly concentrates on frequency of visit to the library, purpose of information seeking, computer acquaintance, amount of time spent on information gathering activities, problem faced in information seeking, etc. The study also revealed that,books were still most heavily used resources by the students. Majority of the students were familiar with using offline and online legal databases. Babariya et al (2014) discussed that, in technological modern era, the study was helpful to user to keep themselves updated and to provide the detail study and information regarding how many the innovative services like library software, classification and cataloguing schemes, RFID systems and Barcode system are used in library. It also indicated a detailed study on which types of information sources were available in library. Pareek and Rana (2013) explored that,preparing research, for borrowing study material and used of e – resources where the three main purpose of the users to visit the library by the respondents. The problems were faced during library visit 32% lack of information material. 10% researchers faced the problem that library opening hours were not sufficient and 10% researchers were not familiar with OPAC. Umesha and Chandershekra (2013) focused on the understanding information seeking and searching behavior of dental science professional in Karnataka. It was found that lack of training and information over load was indicated as some of the factors affecting the wage. Singh and Rani (2013) provided an insight into the information seeking behaviour of the faculty Chitkara University (Punjab). The purpose of the study were examined information seeking, sources of information, preferred place of accessing information, use of search engines etc. and the influence of information and communication technology have also explored. Ogbo (2013) investigate the information seeking behaviour of final year law students in Nigeria. The findings of the research show that the respondents use print textbooks, academic law libraries, newspaper venders, public libraries and Google as a major search engine were the main sources of information by the faculty members for seek their information. Moumen et al (2013) examined the modelling the information seeking behavior of graduate students at Kuwait University and factors influencing the student's. The student's information seeking behavior was to be related with the library awareness, information literacy, organizational and environmental issues, sources characteristics and demographics.

NEED OF THE STUDY

Undergraduate students of Pt. Chiranji Lal Sharma, Govt. P.G. College, Karnal are expected to optimally utilize the college library as one of their major sources of information. It is assumed that undergraduate students could be experiencing many technical problems in accessing information resources in the electronic environments. The present study sought to establish ways of improving the information seeking behaviour undergraduate students in the electronic environments.

ABOUT THE COLLEGE

Pt. Chiranji Lal Sharma, Govt. P.G. College was established in 1976 in the old building at Railway Road Karnal and later shifted to its present site of 20 acres in 1991. Whereas the strength of students in the old building was 1411, at present it has risen to about 4370. The college has all the three faculties, viz. Arts, Commerce and Science besides the Job Oriented courses like BMCJ, BTM, BIM, BBA BCA, Biotechnology, BSc. (IT) and Master Degree Programme in Commerce, English, Economics and Psychology.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

With the broad framework of understanding the information seeking behaviour of Undergraduate students of Pt. Chiranji Lal Sharma, Govt. P.G. College, Karnal the following specific objectives are:

- To examine information seeking behavior of students in the electronic environments;
- To know the purpose of information needs of students;
- To determine the kinds of information sources used by students for seeking information;
- To identify the use of various types of information technology by respondents;
- To study the problems faced by students while seeking and use the electronic information.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The study is undertaken with the help of structured questionnaires in order to collect data from random sampling. Keeping in view the objectives of the study, the data has been presented and analyzed by using tables and figures.

Analysis and Findings of the Study

Table 1: Frequency Distribution of Respondent's Gender

Category of users	Respondents	Percentage
Male	53	63.10%
Female	31	36.90%

Table 1 shows that, 100 questionnaires were distributed between the undergraduate students and 84 were duly filled and received back. Out of 84 respondents responded against the questionnaire, of which 31 (36.90 %) were female and 53 (63.10 %) were male.

Table 2: Frequency of Library Use

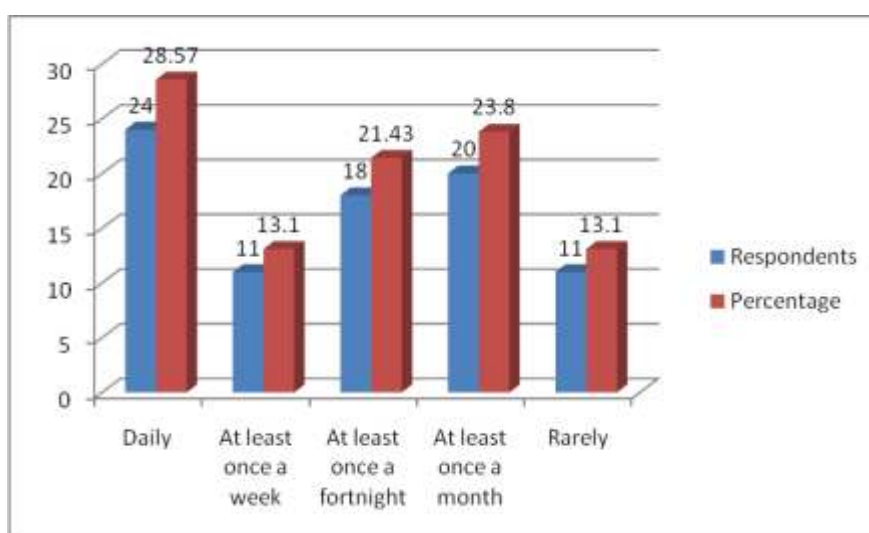| Frequency	Respondents	Percentage
Daily	24	28.57
At least once a week	11	13.10
At least once a fortnight	18	21.43
At least once a month	20	23.80
Rarely	11	13.10

Figure: 1 Frequency of Library Use

Majority of respondents 24(28.57%) use library daily, followed by at least once a month with the percentage of 20(23.80%). Interestingly rarely and at least once a week both are the least used frequency for finding information.

Table 3: Mode of Information Use

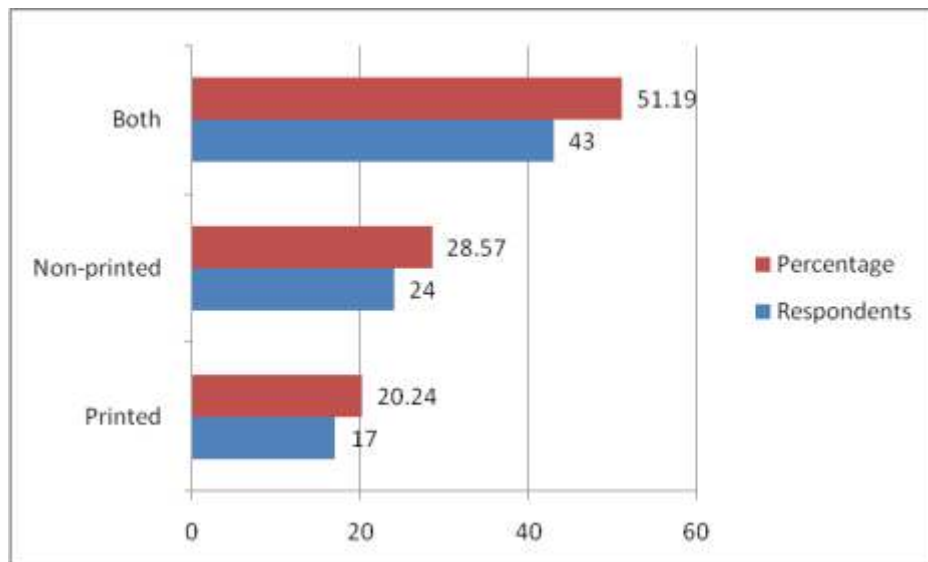| Types of Information	Respondents	Percentage
Printed	17	20.24
Non-printed	24	28.57
Both	43	51.19

Fegure: 2 Mode of Information Use

The result found that, both printed and non-printed sources were the primary source for gathering information with 43(51.19%) followed by the non-print information sources with 24(28.57%) and printed information sources were the least used by the undergraduate students for gathering information.

Table 4: Purpose of Information Seeking

Purpose	Respondents	Percentage
For updating knowledge	21	25
For entertainment	18	21.43
Preparing answers to question	23	27.38
Reading	22	26.19

It is seen from the table 4 revealed that, all the respondents need information. 23(27.38%) respondents need information for preparing answers to question, 22(26.19%) for reading, for updating knowledge with 21(25%) and 18(21.43%) students need information for entertainment.

Table 5: Use of E-Resources

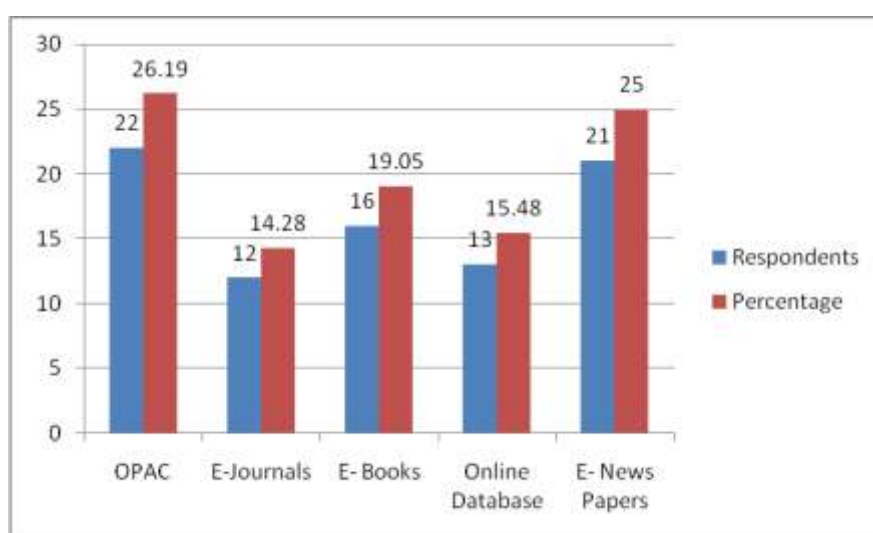| Types of E-resources	Respondents	Percentage
OPAC	22	26.19
E-Journals	12	14.28
E- Books	16	19.05
Online Database	13	15.48
E- News Papers	21	25.00

Figure: 3 Use of E-Resources

It is indicated that, 22(26.19%) of the total respondents preferred electronic resources as OPAC and 21(25%).respondents preferred E- News Papers for their seek information. It is clear that, the most electronic resources were preferred among the students.

Table 6: Use of Information Sources

Types of Information Sources	Respondents	Percentage
Discussion with colleagues	13	15.48
Discussion with librarian or reference staff of your library	11	13.09
Online Journals	18	21.43
Books	28	33.33
Library catalogue	14	16.67

It is noted from the table 6 that, about 28(33.33%) of respondents use books for seek their information followed by using the Online Journals with 18(21.43%). About 14(16.67%) of respondents use the library catalogue and discussion with colleagues 13(15.48%). Least of the respondents were 11(13.09%) discussion with librarian or reference staff of your library.

Table 7: Use of File Formats

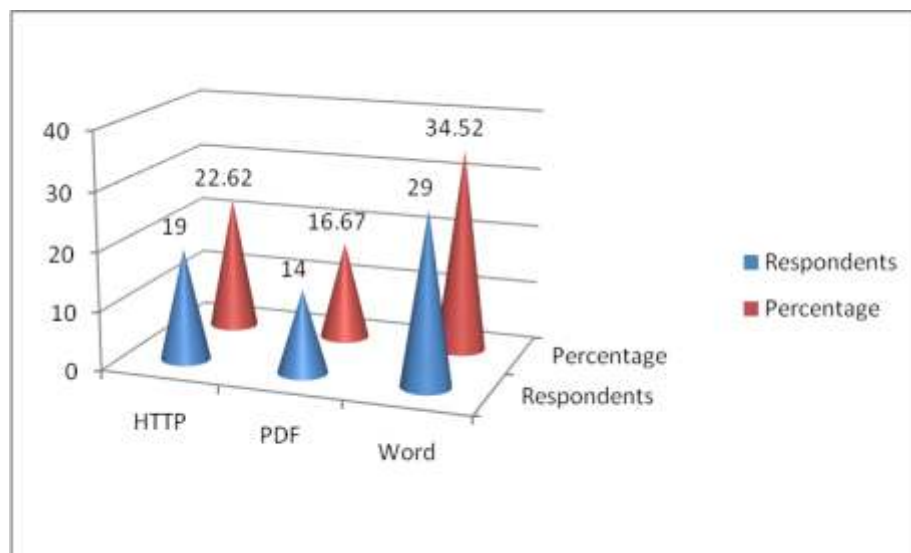| Types of Formats	Respondents	Percentage
HTTP	19	22.62
PDF	14	16.67
Word	29	34.52
Excel	22	26.19

Figure: 4 Use of File Formats

It is clear that, all the respondents of the study were used the file formats for seeking information. Among them, about 29(34.52%) of respondents use Words as the file format, 22(26.19%) were used Excel, 19(22.62%) were used HTTP and 14(16.67%) of the respondents were used PDF as the file formats for seek their information.

Table 8: Use of Communication Channels

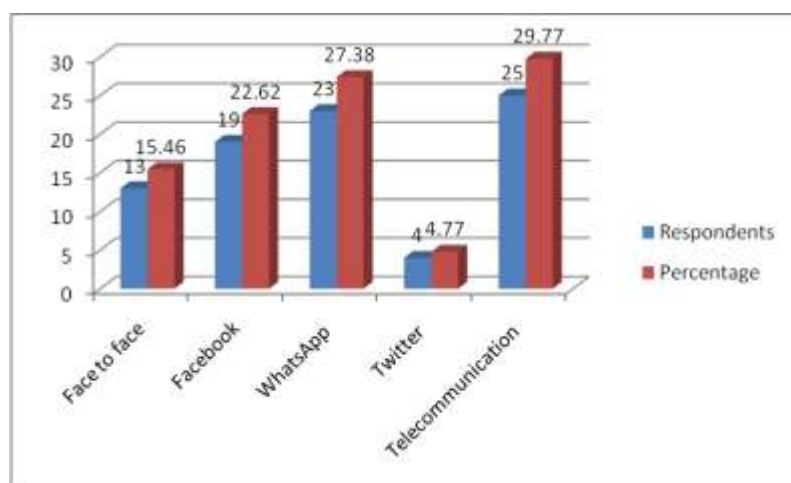| Communication Channels	Respondents	Percentage
Face to face	13	15.46
Facebook	19	22.62
WhatsApp	23	27.38
Twitter	4	4.77
Telecommunication	25	29.77

Figure: 5 Use of Communication Channels

It is noted about 25(29.77%) of respondents were used telecommunication as the information communication channels for seeking information followed by 23(27.38%) whatsApp. About 19(22.62%) of respondents were used the Facebook and 13(15.46%) of the students used face to face communication. Least of the respondents were used Twitter as the communication channel for seek their information.

Table 7: Problem in Seeking Information

Problem	Respondents	Percentage
Material is not available	13	15.48
Library staff are unwilling for service	11	13.1
Incomplete information materials	17	20.24
Lack of time	19	22.62
Do not know how to use the e- resources	16	19.04
Lack of knowledge in using the library	8	9.52

It is indicate from table 8 deals with the difficulties faced by students in keeping themselves up to date and obtaining required information. About 19(22.62%) of the respondents were faced problem as lack of time, followed by 17(20.24%) incomplete information materials.

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

• Majority of respondents 24(28.57%) use library daily,
• 23(27.38%) respondents need information for preparing answers to question,
• 22(26.19%) of the total respondents preferred electronic resources as OPAC,
• Majority of respondents were used telecommunication as the information communication channels for seeking information and
• About 19(22.62%) of the respondents were faced problem as lack of time.

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTION

Pt. Chiranji Lal Sharma, Govt. P.G. College, Karnal study is the educational phenomena, which is affected by its immediate environment to a great extent. So, the undergraduate students have to depend more on the sources, which are relevant to their environment. A Majority of the students need information for reading purpose. Most of respondents were used telecommunication as the information communication channels for seeking information and a majority of the respondents were faced problem as lack of time. Undergraduate students have cited in adequate resources in the main library as the most frequently encountered problem by them. The main library should be provided more funds to increase its resources base, so that is able to satisfy maximum information requirements of largest numbers of its users. It is suggested that, reference librarians should help users improve their skills and to find the information they need.

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