Information seeking behaviour of students of Management Institutions in NCR of Delhi

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Abstract

Purpose: *The study reports the most important aspects of Information seeking behaviour of the students, for whom the library and information centres are being maintained. It deals with the libraries of management institutions in National Capital Region (NCR) of Delhi. A detailed questionnaire has been circulated and the data analyzed in relation to the availability of information services, the frequency of visits to the library, the gender wise distribution of questionnaire, the nature and type of information required, the major information services used, the purpose of information seeking and the level of satisfaction.*

Methodology: *Questionnaire is used to collect the data from the students using libraries of management institutions.*

Findings: *It is found that most of the students use the library daily and the resources are utilized effectively. Internet is used as the major source of information. The respondents are satisfied with the library facilities and services.*

Future implications: *The study can be further extended to larger number of library users from different management institutions of the country.*

Social implications: *It acts as a guide to the library professionals to educate the users even in digital environment. The types of collection may be increased from local to national and international level in all subjects and as per the discipline.*

Keywords: *Information seeking behaviour, e-journals, OPAC, management institutions, information needs.*

Paper Type: *Survey cum Research*

Introduction

The study was undertaken to determine the information seeking behaviour of students of management institutions in the NCR of Delhi. Information seeking behavior is one of the important areas in user studies. The motives of users give rise to information needs and requirements. To quench the thirst for information, users adopt numerous ways and means to access various channels of communication of information. Information explosion has paved the way to seek information in increasing variety and diversity at different levels, frequency, volume and use. This situation appears to be ambiguous and heterogeneous in character so that information needs of a particular group of users and information flow from a specific situation / organization are different to determine. The present era is the era of

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information and knowledge revolution. The increase in information available on the Web has greatly affected information seeking behavior. In Wilson's (1981, 1997) models, information-Seeking behaviour stems from a perceived need for information by the user. In response to this need, the user will place demands on the information system (e.g. library or database) and on other sources of information (e.g. textbook, lecturer, handouts and suchlike). Information needs do not operate in a vacuum but in particular context. The context includes the person (physiological, the effective and cognitive states), the role (the student) and his or her environment. Very few studies draw a distinction between undergraduate users in different years of their studies in a particular discipline. A questionnaire was designed in an effort to understand how students are responding to the changing methods of information dissemination and to enable attention and resources to be directed and targeted where possible to meet those needs.

Information Needs

According to **Grover (1993)** "information is that of diagnosing needs, prescribing a service that meets those needs, implementing that service and evaluating the outcome of this interactions". **Rath (1996)** found the requirements of the user needs as follows which are self-explanatory:

➢ Current information

➢ Exhaustive information

➢ Everyday information

➢ Catching-up information

Lipetz (1970) found that the main objectives of studying information needs are "a) the explanation of observed phenomena of information use or expressed need; or better yet, b) the prediction of instances of information use, c) the control, and thereby improvement, of the utilization of information through manipulation of essential conditions, d) the description of observed information use, e) the definition of convenient and appropriate concepts for describing and dealing with information use, and f) the theorizing of casual or quantitative relationships between information use and associated factors".

Information Seeking Behaviour

Information behaviour encompasses information seeking as well as the totality of other unintentional or passive behaviours (such as glimpsing or encountering information) as well as purposive behaviours that do not involve seeking, such as avoiding information **(Case, 2002)**. The phrase Information-Seeking Behaviours has been defined variously by different

authors. According to **Krikelas (1983)** information seeking behaviours refers to — any activity of an individual that is undertaken to identify a message that satisfies perceived needs.

Wilson (2000) defines that information seeking behaviour is the purpose of seeking information as a consequence of a need to satisfy some goal. In the course of seeking, the individuals may interact with manual information systems (such as a newspaper or a library) or with computer based systems (such as the web). According to him, a general model of information behaviour needs to include at least the following elements: "an information need and its drives, i.e. the factors that give rise to an individual's perception of need , and the process of actions involved in that response". Normally people used to study small groups via observation or unstructured interviews. They have moved away from studying large groups via questionnaires and structured interviews. They attempt to generate information-seeking model. The studies have been conducted for occupational groups and for social roles and demographic groups. They are carried out by the following:

➢ Quantitative research

- Used predominately until the 1980s

- Provides statistical information

➢ Qualitative research

- Richer data

- Does not start with hypothesis

➢ Mixed methods

- Combination of qualitative and quantitative approaches.

Review of Literature

The literature survey reveals that the published literature in this field is enormous and scattered. It was not possible to record all the literature and as such few omissions could not be avoided. Various studies have been carried out to examine the information needs and behaviour of different library user groups such as academicians, researchers, graduates and undergraduates, while other studies distinguish between these groups on the basis of their faculty **(Hiller, 2002)**. There is a broad spectrum of research on library user studies across a variety of disciplines. **Majid and Ai (2002)** studied the use of information resources by computer engineering students in Singapore and found that the top four information resources in order of preference were books (94 percent), lecturers (89 percent), the internet (86 percent) and friends (84 percent). They relied heavily on printed sources of information and their use of electronic journals and databases was very low. According to

Hartmann (2001), undergraduate students experienced difficulty in locating items from the library collection and did not understand the processes for retrieving journal articles. Another study on undergraduate students reported that all participants felt that they had little need to look for information outside what faculty provided for them in their courses, and where information was needed they were able to acquire it using general search engines **(Seamans, 2001)**. It was also found that the participants were comfortable using technology to learn and that web-based modules could be used in the future to teach library instruction. Another study by **Kerins, Madden and Fulton (2004)** on graduate engineering students reveals that the internet was the first source of information used , and in another similar study on incoming first-year undergraduate students in Quebec, many reported that they used the internet extensively for finding course-related information **(Mittermeyer et al, 2003)**.

Information seeking is a highly subjective process influenced by many factors and interactions between them **(Weiler, 2005)**. **Karlsson et al (2012)** studied the information seeking competencies, practices and knowledge of university actors. It was done through the interview and observation study for the Finnish students, researchers and information specialists. **Al-Muomen, Morris and Maynard (2012)** employed a number of different approaches like questionnaire, face-to-face and online interviews for finding out the information seeking behaviour of graduate students at Kuwait University and revealed various significant factors like library awareness, information literacy, organizational and environmental issues, source characteristics and demographics. **Khosrowjerdi and Iranshahi (2011)** analyzed the information seeking of graduate students at Tehran University and its dimensions in different disciplines, contexts and the relationships to other variables such as gender, task, knowledge, personality, experience and expertise. The relationships between information seeking behaviour and prior knowledge were tested and found positive. The study by **Malliari, Korobili and Zapounidou (2011)** on information seeking behaviour of graduate students at the University of Macedonia revealed that their behaviour seems to be influenced by search experiences, computer and web experiences, perceived ability and frequency of use of e-resources and not by specific personal characteristics. **Vezzosi (2009)** while analyzing information seeking behaviour of doctoral students in the field of biological sciences explored the use of various types of information sources and revealed that Doctoral students heavily rely on internet for their research work.

Objectives of the Study

Management colleges play a pathfinder's role to facilitate business competitiveness in a global context. Information is a human asset that can be exploited for the improvement of the human condition. Management education should also develop the analytical skill and improve the ability to assimilate complex external and internal factors influencing an organization. The study has been conducted with the following objectives:

➢ To find out collection available in the management institutions' library.
➢ To identify the frequency of visits by male and female students.
➢ To identify the information sources consulted by the students.
➢ To find out the information services used by them.
➢ To determine the extent of use of library resources and the satisfaction level.
➢ To study the problems faced by the students while seeking the information.

Scope and Methodology

This study is carried out for 10 libraries of management institutions in NCR region, using a detailed questionnaire. They are i) Jagannath International Management School, New Delhi, (JIMS) ii) JK Business School Gurgaon (JKBSG) iii) K R M Institute of Management, Delhi (KRMIM) iv) Lal Bahadur Shastri Institute of Management, New Delhi (LBSIM) v) Lingaya Institute of Management and Technology, Faridabad (LIMAT) vi) Management Development Institute, Gurgaon (MDIG) vii) New Delhi Institute of Management, Delhi (NDIM) viii) OPJ Global University, Sonipet (OPJGU) ix) Royal Institute Management Technology, Sonipet (RIMTS) and x) Shri Ram College of Commerce, Delhi (SRCC). The collection details of these ten libraries are as in Table 1 below:

Table 1: Collection details of the selected libraries

Library	Books	Ref. Books	Periodicals	Theses & Dissertation	Technical Reports	Standards & Patents
JIMS	16,000	4000	102	550	-	-
JKBSG	5000	1000	48	1000	-	-
KRMIM	4266	336	27	567	-	-
LBSIM	20,000	6000	150	4000	4000	
LIMAT	1,20,000	10,000	230	550	800	70
MDIG	60,000	6000	350	25	-	-
NDIM	22000	3000	100	1500	200	-
OPJGU	25,000	5000	200	-	10	150
RIMTS	14,412	3548	69	55	-	-
SRCC	68,000	3000	01	-		

Analysis and Findings

A detailed questionnaire was prepared and a total of 250 questionnaires were distributed (25 per institution) among student users of Management Libraries in NCR. A total of 197 out of 250 responded and the response rate is 78.8%. MDIG and RIMTS have responded 100%, NDIM (92%), JKBSG and LIMAT (80% each), JIIMS, KRMIM and SRCC (72% each), LBSIM and OPJGU (60% each).

The respondents include male and female students of the management institutions. It is evident from Table 2 that male students are more in numbers, in comparison with the female students in almost all colleges.

Table 2: Gender wise categorization of student users

S. No.	Name Of Mgt Inst Lib	Male	Female	Total
1	JIMS	11(8.8%)	7(9.7%)	18
2	JKBSG	12(9.6%)	8(11.1%)	20
3	KRMIM	10(8%)	8(11.1%)	18
4	LBSIM	10(8%)	5(6.9%)	15
5	LIMAT	13(10.4%)	7(9.7%)	20
6	MDIG	17(13.6%)	8(11.1%)	25
7	NDIM	16(12.8%)	7(9.7%)	23
8	OPJGU	9(7.2%)	6(8.4%)	15
9	RIMTS	18(14.4%)	7(9.7%)	25
10	SRCC	9(7.2%)	9(12.5%)	18
	TOTAL	125	72	197

The frequency of visits has been grouped under four categories as shown in the Table 3. Majority of respondents (66.5%) visit libraries daily, followed by 14.2% once in a week and least of 9.2% respondents visit very rarely. From the data it is inferred that higher the frequency of visits, greater the number of respondents.

Table 3: Classification of Respondents by the Frequency of Visit

S. No.	Frequency of Visit to the Library	No. of students
1	Daily	131 (66.5%)
2	Once in a Week	28(14.2%)
3	Twice in a Week	20(10.1%)
4	Very Rarely	18(9.2%)
	TOTAL	**197**

Nature and Type of Information Required

A total of six types of information resources were identified, as the nature and type of information required by the respondents and the responses were analyzed using statistical tools. The sources consulted by the students were Internet (55%), e-Journals and e-books (15%),

Text/other books and Print journals (10% each) and Theses and dissertations, and others (5% each). The same is depicted as pie chart below:

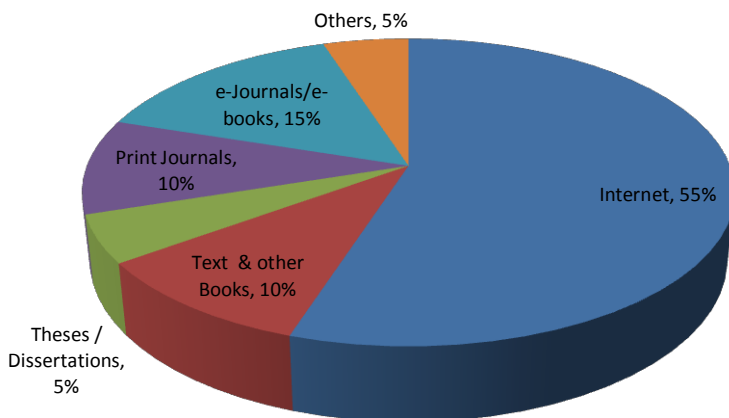## Fig.: Sources Consulted

Table 4 reveals that the reprography services are used mostly (26.3%), followed by the use of online databases/e-journals (20.8%), book borrowing (17.2%), OPAC usage being (10.2%) and less used is the abstracting/indexing service (4.5%).The students were asked to rate the library services and 137 (69.5%) respondents mentioned that they are very much satisfied, 30 (15.4%) respondents are only satisfied and only 9 (4.5%) of the respondents are not at all satisfied with the services provided.

Table 4: Information services used by the students

S. No.	Information Services	No. of Respondents
1	Book Borrowing	34 (17.2%)
2	Online database / e-journals	41(20.8%)
3	Abstracting / Indexing Service	9(4.5%)
4	OPAC Search Browsing	20(10.2%)
5	Inter Library Loan	10(5.2%)
6	Newspapers Clipping Service	17(8.6%)
7	SDI / CAS	14(7.2%)
8	Reprographic Service	52(26.3%)
	TOTAL	**197**

Distribution of the Purpose of information seeking
Table 5 gives a detailed picture of the distribution of the purpose of information seeking. The data were analyzed based on the responses which indicates that out of 10 listed items, 92.3 % respondents seek

information to keep abreast with current developments, followed by 91.3% to develop competence, 81.2% to Improve General knowledge, 77.1% for Workshop and seminar presentations, 74.6% Support research and so on.

Table 5: Purpose of Information seeking

S. No	Purpose of Information seeking	No. of responses
1	Keep up with current Developments	182 (92.3%)
2	Develop Competence	180 (91.3%)
3	Improve General Knowledge	160 (81.2%)
4	Workshop and Seminar Presentations	152 (77.1%)
5	Support Research	147 (74.6%)
6	Service or job Requirement	134 (68%)
7	Preparation for Lecturing	110 (55.8%)
8	Reading Purposes Only	102 (51.7%)
9	Writing a book or article	90 (45.6%)
10	Preparation for audio-video Programmes	40 (20.3%)

The respondents were asked to mention the problems faced while seeking information. Table 6 shows that majority of students 98 (49.7%) are not aware of the existing resources in the library, followed by 80 (40.6%) not aware of using the information retrieval tools, 71 (36%) informed that the documents are old, 67 (34%) said that the materials are not available as per their requirements, 60 (30.4%) informed that sources are scattered and so on.

Table 6: Problems to Seeking Information

S. No	Problems	No. of Respondents
1	Materials are not available	67 (34%)
2	Library Staff are unwilling for service	30 (15.2%)
3	Information sources are so far located	41 (20.8%)
4	Lack of time	53 (26.9%)
5	Do not know how to use the information retrieval tools	80 (40.6%)
6	Information scattered in too many sources	60 (30.4%)
7	Information materials are old	71 (36%)
8	Don't know the sources available in the library	98 (49.7%)

The students were also asked whether they use libraries of their own institutions or libraries of other management institutions as well. 35% of the students informed that they also use library resources from other management institutions. This quantitative part of the research helped to find out, how students view information seeking behaviour in terms that make sense to them for learning more about resources available and their use.

Conclusion

The success of any library depends to a large extent on the selection of library resources. The selected resources should meet the needs and requirements of the end users. Libraries and information centers should take utmost care while selecting and acquiring resources, keeping in view the demands of their clientele. The availability of useful resources within the library will be beneficial to greater number of user to cater their information needs which in turn will increase the frequency of visits by users. This scenario will be beneficial for the libraries and will convince the parent organizations that their fund is utilized effectively. The study reveals that Internet is the major source of information, as it is online and available anytime from anywhere. Libraries should enable high level internet connectivity for providing access to quality e-resources within and outside the libraries. Reprographic services must be provided for users in order to photocopy necessary materials not allowed outside libraries. The other most used services include Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC), book borrowing and Selective Dissemination of Information (SDI) service and most of students are very much satisfied with the facilities and the services. Majority of the students are interested in keeping up with current developments in their concerned fields of study. Libraries as such must employ latest techniques for dissemination of Current Awareness Services (CAS) and Selective Dissemination of Information (SDI) such as Short Message Services (SMS), Instant Messaging, Bulletin Board Services and e-mails etc.The study also discovered that most of the students aren't aware of the available resources and the means of using information retrieval tools. Resources should be properly organised and guided by way of establishing latest arrival racks at different places in the library, proper advertisement of resources etc .It is also suggested that library professionals ought to train the students within the e-environment as per the changing needs and should guide them in using varied information retrieval tools with efficiency.

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