



INFORMATION NEEDS AND SEEKING BEHAVIOUR OF RESEARCH SCHOLARS (M.Phil & Ph.D) OF SRIMAD ANDAVAN ARTS & SCIENCE COLLEGE (AUTONOMOUS), TIRUCHIRAPPALLI – 620 005

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ABSTRACT

Information plays an important role in teaching, research and development. Universities, Colleges, Industries, Government etc. have been showing an increasing involvement in the research. During the recent decades, information needs have increased in volume and variety, so also the information is necessary to be reprocessed and repackaged for the users. This paper finds out the information needs and seeking behavior of the research scholars of Srimad Andavan Arts & Science College (Autonomous), Tiruchirappalli.

Keywords

Information needs, Information seeking behavior, Research scholars, Users, Information sources.

INTRODUCTION

Information is a concept, an idea, a statement, a fact; news etc. there is no field of human activity where information is not a component. Information is like a nutrient to a research worker and as important as a blood transfusion to a needed patient. According to Wilson and Streat Field “Information need is a subjective relative concept existing only in the mind of experiencing individual”. Library is one of the major agencies which can provide maximum social utilization of

the knowledge stored. Studies on information needs and use pattern of users in a library are perhaps one of the most effective methods of understanding their information requirements. Their information requirements are also special type, which should be met in a special way. Hence, understanding the user requirements is a fundamental pre-requisite for libraries which aim at satisfying the information needs of the users which vary from user to user. Due to the significance and importance of information, use of new technologies is developing in the library and information science for providing library services.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

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 these interactions” Rath (1996) found the requirements of the user needs as follows which self explanatory are.

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- a) Current information
 - b) Exhaustive information
 - c) Everyday information
 - d) Catching-up information

Wilson (2000) defines that information seeking behavior is the purpose of seeking information as a consequence of a need to satisfy some goal. According to him, ‘an information need and its drives, i.e. the factors that give rise to an individual’s perception of need, and the process of action involved in that response’.

PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The main aim of the present study is to make analytical study of information needs of research scholars of Srimad Andavan Arts & Science College (Autonomous), Trichy. The other objectives are to find, to understand the information gathering behavior and to identify the various channels through which information is accessed by research scholars of Srimad Andavan Arts & Science College (Autonomous), Trichy.

METHODOLOGY

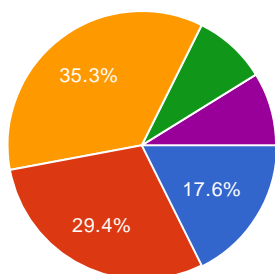
The methodology adopted to find out the information needs of the research scholars of Srimad Andavan Arts & Science College (Autonomous), library is the survey method and questionnaire was used as the tool for data collection. Most of the questionnaire consisted i) General Information ii) Information needs of users iii) Information gathering behavior of users.

The rating scale in the questionnaire used is a two point scale of ‘yes’ or ‘no’ and a three point scale of ‘adequate’, ‘fair’, and ‘needs improvement’ is also used in some questions. More than three options were provided for a few questions to get appropriate answers.

DATA ANALYSIS

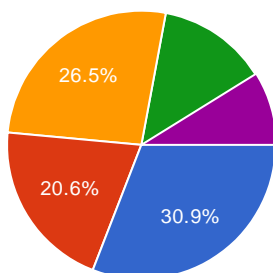
On the basis of filled up questionnaires the data have been analyzed and shown in graphical representation. Percentage technique has been adopted for data analysis.

PURPOSE OF VISIT TO THE LIBRARY



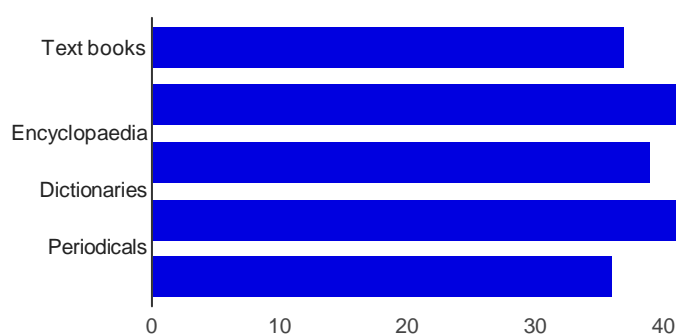
a) For study / Research	12	17.6%
b) To search information from books & ...	20	29.4%
c) To borrow books	24	35.3%
d) To read general magazines	6	8.8%
e) Dailies	6	8.8%

OFTEN USE THE LIBRARY



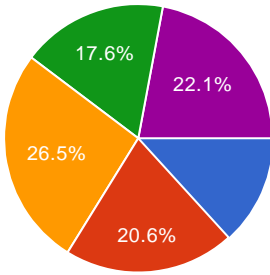
a) Almost daily	21	30.9%
b) Twice-a-week	14	20.6%
d) Fortnightly	9	13.2%
e) Once-a-month	6	8.8%

DIFFERENT TYPES OF INFORMATION SOURCES



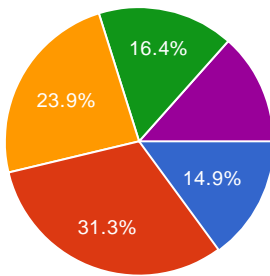
Text books	37	55.2%
Encyclopaedia	41	61.2%
Dictionaries	39	58.2%
Periodicals	50	74.6%
Reference	36	53.7%

ELECTRONIC INFORMATION SOURCES



a) CDROM	9	13.2%
b) Internet	14	20.6%
c) E-Journals	18	26.5%
d) E-Books	12	17.6%
e)	15	22.1%

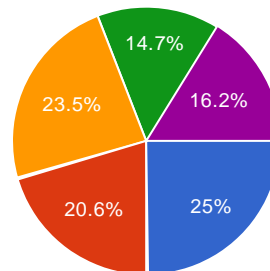
REASON FOR SEEKING INFORMATION



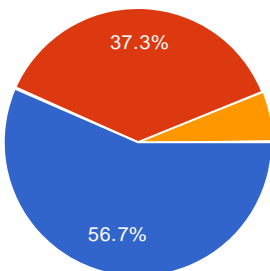
- a) For research work 10 14.9%
- b) To write articles 21 31.3%
- c) For participating in the seminars / conferences / workshop 16 23.9%
- d) To write text books 11 16.4%
- e) General awareness of new knowledge 9 13.4%

DEFINITE TOPIC OF INTEREST

- a) Searching the shelves 17 25%
- b) Asking the library staff 14 20.6%
- c) Through Internet 16 23.5%
- d) Ejournal 10 14.7%
- e) OPAC 11 16.2%

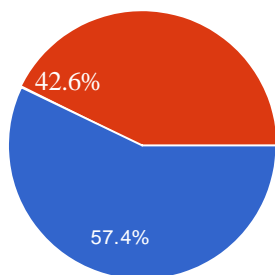


GETTING THE MATERIAL FROM DIFFERENT SOURCES



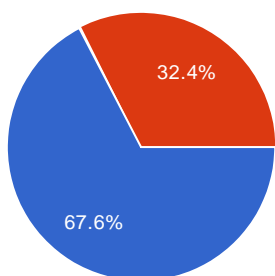
a)Mostly	38	56.7
b)Partially	25	37.3
c)Never	4	6%

TYPE OF PERIODICALS USUALLY REFERRED



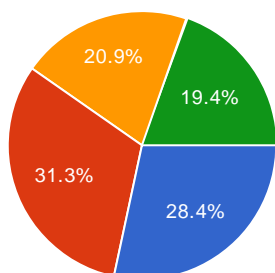
a)National **29** 42.6%
 b)International **39** 57.4%

USING ELECTRONIC DATA BANKS



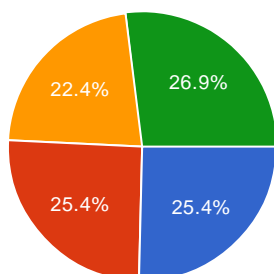
a) YES 46 67.6%
 b) NO 22 32.4%

CIRCULATION OF REFERENCE MATERIALS



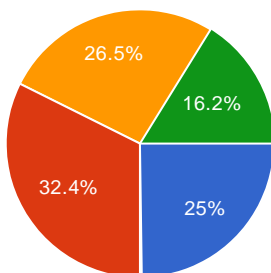
a)Stronglyagree **19** 28.4%
 b)Agree **21** 31.3%
 c)Disagree **14** 20.9%
 d)Stronglydisagree **13** 19.4%

WHEN THE DOCUMENTS ARE NOT AVAILABLE



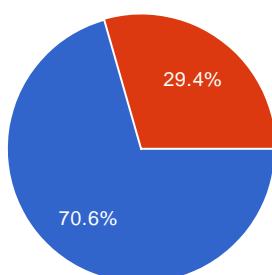
a) Purchase personally 17 25.4%
 b) Visit other libraries 17 25.4%
 c) Through Interlibrary loan service 15 22.4%
 d) Borrow from others collection 18 26.9%

LIBRARY COLLECTION IS.....



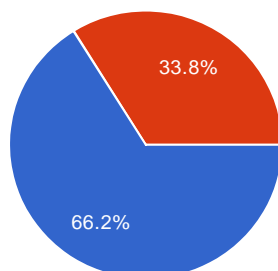
- a) Excellent 17 25%
- b) Fair 22 32.4%
- c) Adequate 18 26.5%
- d) Needs improvement 11 16.2%

FEEL COMFORTABLE TO READ



- a) YES 48 70.6%
- b) NO 20 29.4%

LIBRARY TIMINGS SUITABLE



- a) YES 45 66.2%
- b) NO 23 33.8%

FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

Following findings are derived from the research scholars of Srimad Andavan Arts & Science College (Autonomous), Trichy.

- Most of the respondents use the library almost daily
- Majority of the research scholars visit to the library for the purpose of borrowing books
- Many users pointed out, that the 'periodicals' sources are met their needs
- In electronic information sources, 'e-journal' is maximum utilized by the users
- More respondents are successfully getting their required information

- Many users pointed out, national type of periodicals is usually referred for their academic work.
- About 31.3 % of the users seeking information is primarily to write articles
- Most of the research scholars pointed out, they are tried to find out their required materials in the shelves.
- Maximum users find that the number of collection in library is fair
- Majority of the research scholars indicated their satisfaction in ‘comfortable reading’ environment in the library
- Maximum respondents indicated that the library timings is suitable
- Most of the users pointed out, possessing their adequate skills in using electronic data banks.
- Circulation of reference materials – most of the respondents need this option
- More respondents pointed out, that they borrowed sources from the other’s collection, when their required sources are not available in the library

CONCLUSION

The present study creates awareness among the users regarding the types of sources, their importance and usefulness for getting the information. The users should also be made aware of the different services available in the library and additional services should be introduced to increase the use of library and provide training to the research scholars for locating of information. Hence, information is a vital and indispensable product of the modern society. Moreover, nature of information needs varies from one individual to another, depending upon subject of interest, area of specialization and available time.

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