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Information Seeking Behavior of the Msc. IT Students of Kadi sarva Vishwavidyalaya, Gandhinagar

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ABSTRACT

The study investigated the information needs and seeking behavior of the post graduate students of Kadi Sarva Vishwavidyalaya, Gandhinagar. This survey was carried out, with samples of respondents from the Department of Information Technology in the Faculty of Computer Science. The sample consisted of 210 Post graduate students selected from their first, second, third and fourth semesters of study. The results provide an insight into the factors that influence students information–seeking behavior and the information sources used. The study makes recommendations that could lead to the improvement of students' information seeking behavior and use of information resources

KEYWORDS: Information, Information Seeking, Information Seeking Behavior, Information Technology

Introduction

The present era is known as information and knowledge revolution. Now days there are Innumerable types of information, in a large variety of formats and from many different locations, are all available at one place. All information resources have increased, at times dramatically, over the last several years. In the United States from 1999 to 2002, books (original print) have increased by 83% while online scholarly journals nearly doubled from 1997 - 2001 (George, Carole 1). Information seeking behavior is the purposive seeking of information as a consequence of a need to satisfy some goal. In the course of seeking, the individual may interact with manual information systems such as a newspaper or a library, or with computer-based systems such as the Web.

About Kadi Sarva Vishwavidyalaya, Gandhinagar

Kadi Sarva Vishwavidyalaya is a University established vide Gujarat State Government Act 21 of 2007 in May 2007 and approved by UGC (ref F. 9-18/2008(cpp-1) March 19,2009). The University has been setup by Sarva Vidyalaya Kelavani Mandal, a trust with more than 90 years of philanthropic existence to achieve the objectives like to provide need based education and develop courses of contemporary relevance and to be a University of excellence by providing research based activities which would foster higher economic growth. The trust was formed in 1919, and commenced its activities with a school and student residential "Ashram" at Kadi in 1921 through the generous donations from the society and through the visionary efforts of "Chhaganbha" who is the establisher of the Mandal. This university has run various courses like B.ed, M.ed. Engineering, M.Sc IT, M.Sc Maths, M.Sc. Biotechnology, BBA,BCA, MBA, MCA, B.Com, and Ph.D in various subjects.

Objectives

The purpose of this study is to describe the post graduate students' information seeking behavior and their use of information, used sources of information and why should they seek information. More specifically this study was designed to explore the following questions:

1. To determine the post graduate students' information needs.
2. To determine the post graduate students' information seeking behavior.
3. To suggest strategies of improving post graduate students' information seeking behavior.
4. To investigate the availability of information resources that affects the information Seeking patterns and communication process.
5. To establish the problems that post graduate students encounter in information seeking.

Sample Size

The population of this study consists of Post Graduate Students of Information Technology of Kadi Sarva Vishwavidyalaya, Gandhinagar. As it is not possible to study the entire population in view of time and cost, a sample of 250 Post Graduate Students has been selected by stratified random sampling method. The Post Graduate students covered in the study are from only Information Technology (Msc. IT). Out of the 250 questionnaires distributed, 216 students returned the questionnaire. However, all the returned questionnaires could not be used for data analysis. Six questionnaires were discarded since some key questions were incomplete or unanswered. The final data analysis was for 210 questionnaires representing a response rate of 84%.

Literature Review

Fulton, Crystal, Kerins, Gillian and Madden, Ronan. (2004) The report is indicated that the results of two empirical studies which explored the information seeking behavior of engineering and law students in Ireland. The findings reveal similar patterns in the information seeking behavior between students studying to become professionals and information seeking patterns of these groups. Students learned their information seeking strategies, including effective and less effective approaches, from educators. Misperceptions of the role and value of libraries and information professionals in their studies were common, and as a result, students often adopted information seeking strategies that excluded libraries and library staff.

Ganji, Dayani & foroughi (2010) conducted a study and findings show that the primary aim for Razi University faculty member for collecting information were for research activities. The population used both formal and informal channels for information retrieval. The most formal channels were books (95.1%), journals (84.7%) and most informal channels were personal practice and contribution meeting s (69.6%). Most important non problem in accessing to the internet are low network speed and Internet traffic.

Refiq & Ameen (2009) examined to explore the information seeking behavior and satisfaction level of teachers at the National Textile University, Pakistan. The population of the study consisted of 38 teachers of National Textile University and the data were analyzed and interpreted using SPSS release 10.1. The study shows that respondents used a variety of both print and digital information sources to satisfy their information needs. Books are still the most preferred information sources for teaching and research followed by communication with colleagues and journals articles. Internet and email are highly used electronic services. Respondents heavily relied on Google, Yahoo and MSN while Hotmail and Yahoo ar preferred email servers, followed by Gmail. A majority of respondents visit NTU library twice a week and they prefer to go to the library rather than send someone. Respondents mentioned their overall satisfaction with the quality of NTU library services.

Analysis

Gender of the Respondents

The response rate by gender was 117(55.71%) Male and 93 (44.29%) Female.

Educational and Information Needs of Post Graduate Students of the Information Technology and Current Provision by the Library.

This study identified the data on the educational and information needs of the students and their Information-seeking behavior. This study through to examine the regarding users' knowledge about tools, preferences for information sources, purposes for using the library, using the current journals, satisfaction, and problems, preference for information channels. There are so many departments and college run by the kadi Sarva Vishwavidyalay and every departments and colleges has their own library and 90% of the students use the departmental/ college's library. 10% of the respondents use the other information centers for seeking information.

Information Sources or Methods Preferred by the Students.

Table 1: Information Sources or Methods use for Updating Knowledge.

Information Sources or Methods	Respondents	Percentage
Internet	98	46.67
Discussion with colleagues	23	10.95
Scanning current issues of print and electronic journals	19	09.05
Reading latest Books	9	04.29
Consulting experts in subject fields	22	10.48
Attending conferences, seminars, and workshops	10	4.76
Media: TV and Radio	6	2.86
Scanning library current awareness services	5	2.38
Reading Newspapers	14	6.67
Reading Newsletters	4	1.90
Total	210	100

Table 1 is indicated the information sources or methods used by respondents for updating their knowledge. Table shows that majority of the 98 (46.67%) respondents are preferred the Internet for their educational and research needs. followed by 23 (10.95%) respondents preferred "Discussion with colleagues" and 22 (10.48%) respondents preferred "Consulting experts in subject fields" for updating knowledge.

Purpose of Information Seeking

Table 2 Purpose of Information Seeking

Purpose	Respondents	Percentage
Keep up with latest development in the field	12	5.71
Preparing lectures	29	13.81
Writing PhD thesis	11	5.24
Evolving innovative ideas/ techniques	12	5.71
Doing research work	08	3.81
Writing papers & Presenting Papers	04	1.90
Guiding researchers/ students	05	2.38
General Knowledge	04	1.90
Workshop and seminar presentations	03	1.43
Writing a book	02	0.95

As per the table 2 the study find out that majority of the 29 (13.81%) respondents are preferred the "Preparing lectures" after than equal number with 12 (5.71%) respondents preferred the "Keep up with latest development in the field" and "Evolving innovative ideas/ techniques" for the purpose of information seeking. The study shows that rare number of 02 (0.95%) respondents to seek information for "Writing a book".

Frequency of Using Library by Respondents

The study shows that all the respondents of the study i.e. Post Graduate Students of university area in the habit of using the library. Among them, about 92 (43.81%) of respondents visit the library everyday, 56 (26.67%) of respondents visit the library every alternate day, 32 (15.24%)of respondents visit once in a week, 24 (11.43%) of respondents visit the library occasionally and a very negligible portion 06 (2.86%) opine that they do not use library.

Purpose of Using Library

Library should be viewed as an integral part and parcel of every academician to encourage, motivate and support not only learning and research but also to develop ideal citizens of the country. Thus, the purpose of visiting the library is equally important for optimization of respondents' knowledge to support their educational endeavor. Table 3 shows the purpose of seeking information by the respondents of the study.

It is noted from the Table 3 that, about 72 (34.29%) of respondents' purpose of visiting the library is preparing project work. This is followed by respondents using the library to prepare for Preparing for examination (24.28%). 46 (21.9%) of respondents use the library to prepare the notes. Least of the respondents are preparing for dissertation work (10.48%) and Preparing for competitive examination (7.14%). And 14 (6.67%) were use the library for general reading. It was asked to the Post Graduate students as to whether they need instruction on how to use information sources in their subject areas for more effective use of libraries.

Need for Instruction/Guidance for Using Various Information Sources

It is clear from the Table 5 that, 82 (39.04%) and 70 (33.33%) of respondents agree and strongly agree that they need instruction on how to use information sources in their subject areas for more effective use of the library. While 52 (24.76%) of respondents are neutral in their attitude towards need for instruction on using information sources in their subject areas and very negligible portion of 4 (1.90%) and 2 (0.95%) respondents disagree and strongly disagree for undertaking instructions in using the library resources. Thus, most of the respondents of the study opined the need for instruction on using information sources in their subject areas.

Purpose of Using Internet Technology

It is seen from the table 6 that, quite surprisingly internet is used mainly for research project 28.10% than from downloading programs 26.67%, Means of Communication 15.24% and 10.95% respondents are preferred Professional Development and Entertainment. However, the other purpose of using internet by the respondents is for 7.14% respondents are preferred "Chatting" and 0.95% are preferred "Do not use internet". Thus the result shows that, research projects, communication and downloading programs are the purposes of using internet.

Table 3: Frequency of Using Library Services. (In Percentage)

1= Not at all Important, 2= Somewhat Important, 3=Important, 4=Very Important, 5= Extremely Important

Library Services	1	2	3	4	5
Inter Library Loan Services	7	25	20	23	25
Reference Services	11	13	15	29	32
Photocopy Services	14	16	18	21	31
CD-ROM Search	16	17	18	24	25
Book Reservation Circulation	25	22	18	17	18

As per the Table 3 majority of the 32% respondents were ranked the extremely important to the "Reference Services" after than 31% respondents preferred the "Photocopy Services" and 25% respondents preferred the "Inter Library Loan Services" and "CD-ROM Search". The result also found that majority of the 18% respondents think not at all important to the "Book Reservation Circulation".

Preferred format of Information

Respondent were asked about the preferred format of information required in terms of Print, Electronics an Audiovisual and they were sought Least Preferred, Preferred and Most preferred.

The study shows that majority of the 75% respondents selected prints as a "most preferred" format of information required. 13% respondents selected "Preferred" and only 12% selected "Least preferred" to print format of information. Regarding the electronic format, 56% respondents preferred the "most preferred" format of information required. 25% selected "preferred" and 19% selected "Lest Preferred". Regarding the Audiovisual, 16% respondents selected "most preferred" format of information required. 22% selected "Preferred" and 62% respondents selected "Least Preferred".

Conclusion

This study investigated the information needs and seeking behavior of the post graduate students of the Information Technology. This study

investigate regarding information sources or methods use by post graduate students, their purpose of information seeking, used sources for information seeking, used information resources for project works, purpose of using library, frequency of library visit, purpose of using internet technology, frequency of using library services, preferred the formats of seeking information material.

It was found that the respondents use a variety of legal information sources for academic and project work purposes. Legal textbooks, general books, and references sources were considered most important. The study reveals that internet is the best source for preparing the examination and important source for information seeking. They use computer and internet in their search for information, retrieval and email communication. The study found that their purpose of information seeking was to keep up with latest development in the field an evolving innovative ideas / techniques.

The majority of students prefer information in print format and English language. The majority of the students were satisfied with collection sources, resources and IT facilities in their libraries. They visit libraries for reading newspapers or borrowing books on daily basis.

The majority of the students were satisfied with the library services like Reference Services, Photocopy Services, Inter library loan services, CD ROM Database etc.

The study also found that the student were fully used Internet facilities. Majority of the students used internet for research projects, download programmes, means of communications, entertainment etc.

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