



INFORMATION ACCESS PATTERN OF USES OF HIGHER EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION IN AND AROUND CHENNAI: A CASE STUDY

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ABSTRACT

In this chapter an attempt has been made to analyze the role of information access pattern of users of selected Higher Educational Institution in and around Chennai. To achieve this, the investigator has used the survey method to collect data from the higher educational institution users.

KEYWORDS : Information Access Pattern, Higher Educational Institutions in Chennai.

INTRODUCTION

The present study is of descriptive in nature using normative survey. This is an assessment study that describes the extent of status of the parameters prevailed in the study environment. The researcher has chosen data collection methods through structured questionnaire survey and observation. A pilot study was made and the findings were used to modify and refine the data collection tool.

INFORMATION ACCESS BEHAVIOR

Information access pattern is defined here as any activity of an individual that is undertaken to identify a message that satisfies a perceived need. In this context, information is viewed as any stimulus that reduces uncertainty; need is defined as a recognition of the existence of this uncertainty in the personal, or work-related, life of an individual and the information need is defined as a function of extrinsic uncertainty produced by a perceived discrepancy between the individuals current level of certainty about important environmental objects and a criterion state he seeks to achieve.

OBJECTIVES

The following objectives are framed for the purpose of the study, To study the Total Number of Respondents Selected as Sample in the Higher Education Institutions in Chennai Surveyed, to study the Type of Information often required, to know about the Ranking on forms of E-Resources Accessed, to find the Bibliographic Databases used by the Researchers, to find the Search Options of the Respondents and to identify the Method of Acquiring Information.

Table – 1 Total Number of Respondents Selected as Sample in the Higher Education Institutions in Chennai Surveyed

Colleges in Chennai	Questionnaire Distributed	Responses Received
Annai Velankanni's College of Arts and Science, Chennai	20	18
Bharathi's Women's College (Autonomous), Chennai	20	16
Presidency College (Autonomous), Chennai	20	25
Quaid-e-Millet Government Arts College for Women (Autonomous), Chennai	20	24
Queen Mary's College (Autonomous), Chennai	20	12
Total	100	95

There are 100 structured questionnaires have been distributed among five selected Higher Educational Institution in and around Chennai. 20 questionnaires have been randomly distributed to the respondents in each selected Higher Educational Institution, which includes the faculty members (Assistant Professor, Associate Professor, Professors) and the Students. Of which, 95 (95.00 percent) filled in responses received

from the selected Higher Educational Institution in and around Chennai.

Table – 2 Type of Information often required

Type of Information often required	Students	Assistant Professor	Associate Professor	Professor	Total N=95
Information for writing research articles	31	22	13	10	76
Factual and Statistical Information	28	20	12	8	68
Product Information	25	17	10	7	59
Information for preparing project proposals	25	16	9	5	55
For guiding the Students	23	15	8	4	50
Procedural Information	22	11	8	6	47
For administrative progress	18	9	5	3	35
For special lectures and Academic activities	16	7	2	2	27

Among the various types of information often required between the categories of respondents, a majority preferred information for writing research articles (76), Factual and Statistical Information (68), Product Information (59) and Information for preparing project proposals (55). Guiding the Students (50), highest percentage of Associate Professor (22), preferred information for writing research articles, while highest percentage of Professors preferred (10) information for writing research articles and Assistant Professor (13). Students are differing with others as majority preferred information for writing research articles (31).

Table – 3 Ranking on forms of E-Resources Accessed

Information Searched	Rank 1	Rank 2	Rank 3	Rank 4	Rank 5	Total
E-books	78	14	02	01	00	95
Full text articles	69	18	7	01	00	95
Articles abstracts	45	20	13	9	08	95
Standards	24	22	21	18	10	95
Patents	12	14	18	22	29	95
Formulas	09	12	18	27	29	95

The faculty members and students from the surveyed selected Higher Educational Institution in and around Chennai have been referred and ranked the use and relevance of different forms of e-resources that were accessed for their academic research information needs. It is found that a majority of the respondents pretend e-books (78), full text articles (69) and article abstracts (45 percent) as the first preference,

while the next larger group of respondents ranked standards (24) as the first choice of e-resources format accessed. It is also interest to note that a few of the respondents ranked patents (12) and formulas (09) as their first choice of information format. 'Standards' preferred as the second (22), third (21) and fourth (18) choice of format of e-resource by the group of respondents, while formulas (29) and patents (29) were ranked as last preference among the large group of respondents.

Table – 4 Bibliographic Databases used by the Researchers

Bibliographic Database	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Web of Science	44	46.32
Dissertation Abstracts	29	30.53
Scopus	28	29.47
Scifinder	25	26.32
Biological Abstracts	19	20.00
LISA	08	8.42

Analysis of the bibliographic database used by the researchers to locate primary research journals revealed that, majority of the respondents (46.32 percent), preferred web of science as the bibliographic databases, which is followed by Dissertation Abstracts (30.53), Scopus (29.47 percent), Scifinder (26.32). It is inferred that more than half of the respondents were not used any of the leading secondary databases.

Table – 5 Search Options of the Respondents

Search Options	No. of Respondents	Percentage
By Journal Name	78	82.11
By Keywords	76	80.00
By Titles	46	48.42
By Date of Issue	41	43.16
By Authors	28	29.47
By Subjects	14	14.74
By Year/Period	13	13.68
By Publishers	10	10.53

The above table explains various search strategies followed by the users for their information needs. 82.11 percent of the respondents seek information through searching scholarly information by journals name. Here, the search beings with specified information. Next to this, 80.00 percent of the respondents search information through keywords. 48.42 percent of the respondents search information by titles of the papers.

Table – 6 Method of Acquiring Information

Access the e-Resources	No of Frequency	Percentage
From the library staff	37	38.95
From colleagues	36	37.90
Trial and error method	34	35.79
Training at workplace	28	29.47
Formal training	24	25.26
Attending workshop/seminars	22	23.16

It is found that 38.95 percent of them are getting the help of the library staff for accessing the e-resources. 37.90 percent of them are getting the details about the e-resource from their colleagues. 29.47 percent of the respondents acquired the knowledge of e-resources through training in their work place. 35.79 percent of the respondents are getting their resources themselves by trial and error method. It is inferred that the library staff, professional colleagues and trial and error method are preferred by large group of respondents as the method of acquiring information.

CONCLUSION

It is to mention that the information access pattern of the workplace community varies from that of the general readers of the library system. The work place community needed much pinpointed information in relation with their working environment and day to day activities. It is note that there is no significant studies on assessing information access pattern of selected higher education institutions library users is found in the library science literature, particularly in and around the Chennai city.

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