INFORMATION SEEKING AND USE BEHAVIOUR OF FACULTY

MEMBERS OF KARNATAKA STATE WOMENS UNIVERSITY BIJAPUR, KARNATAKA: A SURVEY

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ABSTRACT

This article reports the results of a study of the information seeking and use behaviour of faculty members of Karnataka State Womens University main campus Bijapur, Karnataka. Data were collected by using a questionnaire from five faculties in Karnataka State Women's University main campus Bijapur. Results show that most of respondents (80.00%) stated their method of seeking information by consulting a knowledgeable person in the field. Forty eight (87.05%) seek information for preparing lectures. (12.72%) of faculty members access more documents was references book. It is revealed that most of the faculty members (80.00%) used textbooks. The internet had been universally accepted for searching of the required information from the library and information centers by using huge different search engines are available in the information marketing in internet world. The google.com was most used search engine for their information by respondents. The e-mail use for the communication and (60%) of respondents were very good aware of use the CD-ROM Databases in their respective subjects areas. The majority of respondents faced the common problem while seeking information i.e. unavailability of information.

KEYWORDS: Information Seeking, Use Behaviour, Search Engines, Information Searching, Faculty Members, Karnataka State Women's University Bijapur, Karnataka

INTRODUCTION

The information and communication technology is playing a pivotal role in present era that emphasizing the key to information or knowledge revolution. Many electronic resources are available in the library and the pattern of the library has been changed into the information centre or knowledge centre. The increase in information resources available on the Web has steadily affected information seeking behavior of the users. Innumerable types of information, in a large variety of containers and from different locations, are all available in one place (Fidel et al., 1999). In the modern society, the types of information resources and the media which present them have become manifold and multifarious, offering men and women a vast selection of their choice.

In spite of which group in a human society is discussed, each one bases its actions upon current information and that discards the earlier data or facts or information. Philosophies are emphasize that the direct and experiential acquisition

of knowledge in the material and the physical plane of universal existence as the most proper form of information. Hence, no one can deny that knowledge and information are vital in all time.

There is a universal assumption that man was born and brought up with inquisitive requirement of towards the actively seeking information or knowledge for the survival. "Information seeking is thus a natural and necessary mechanism of human existence" (Marchionini, 1995). Hence, the information seeking behavior is the purposive seeking for information as a consequence of a need to satisfy the requirements. In the course of seeking, the individual may interact with manual information systems or with ICT based systems.

Information seeking behaviour involves personal reasons for seeking information, the kinds of information which are being sought, and the ways and sources with which needed information is being sought Information seeking behavior is expressed in various forms, from printed form of material to research and experimentation, non-book materials or e-resources. Faculties members, Scholars and students are actively seek current information from the various sources available in libraries, e.g. encyclopedias, journals and, more currently, electronic media. Abels (2004) mentioned that the frequency of use of the Internet in 1998-2000 had enormously increased. At the same time, expenditures on printed materials also showed steady increased.

The library, therefore, is the most widely used source of information available to literate societies. The modern librarian should be aware of that what kind of information is being sought, and how it can be obtained. Due to the rapidly escalating cost of purchasing and archiving printed scholarly journals, books and electronic media, the library has the duty to provide and maintain efficient information sources and services.

REVIEW OF RELATED STUDIES

The reviews of previous studies on information seeking behaviour of academic teaching faculty members are available huge ranging. But, a researcher an attempt has been made to cover few number of works that focus similar studies on information seeking behavior and its direct applications to related topics such as information seeking, information use behaviour and user attitude towards seeking information and also includes topics like information seeking of faculty.

Shahzad (2007): conducted a survey to find out the information-seeking behavior of faculty members of Government Colleges, the University of Lahore. He acquired the data from all three faculties, i.e., science and technology, social sciences and humanities. Reported the vary attitude and behviour while seeking information with respect to the requirement and subject area in the library.

Shokeen and Kushik (2002): study reveals about the information seeking behaviour of social scientists working in the universities located in Haryana. The outcome of the study highlighted most of the social scientists/faculties visit the information centre daily. They preferred the method of searching required information by the social scientists are Catalogue/OPAC followed by search through indexing and abstracting periodicals journals followed by books and citations in articles respectively.

Challener (1999): investigated artists and art historians teaching in five liberal arts colleges and three universities. The participants almost all subscribe to art journals, and many read newspapers and they visit libraries frequently more than one library. It also reveals that unlike previous reports, the majorities of the faculties are willing to ask the librarian for

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help. A large percentage of both art historians and artists are using computers for teaching. All 27 participants use slides extensively in the classroom, supplemented in most cases by textbooks.

Wilson (1994): points out that the scope of information-seeking behavior research is vast and many new concepts and methods are being developed with the help of this research. It is clear that the study of human information-seeking behavior is now a well-defined area of research to understand the different use and seeking behavour towards the information by different user community.

White (1975): reported that if academic librarians are to be realistically served to the academic researchers, they must recognize the changing needs and variations in information gathering and provide services that would be most useful for the user community.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The present study focused on Information Seeking and Use Behaviour of faculty members of the Karnataka State Womens University Bijapur, Karnataka main campus. The Information seeking is a fluid and situation dependent activity where as a seeker's actions are influenced by access to information, perceived quality and trust in the information source **Boyd** (2004). This reminds the necessity of regular study and development of information system and management information services in Karnataka State Womens University Bijapur. This work intends to study the followings in KSWUB University Library as a first model library in Karnataka state.

- To examine information seeking behaviour of faculty members in Karnataka State Womens University Bijapur.

- To determine the kind of information are used by faculty members for seeking information;

- To study the purpose of information seeking by faculty members;

- To explore the use of information technology; and

- To study the problems faced by faculties of Karnataka State Womens University Bijapur while seeking and use information.

NEED FOR THE STUDY

The nature of information is not easy to describe. Perhaps the most explicit definition in the literature defines information as recorded experience that is used in decision-making. Today, information technology has developed rapidly and has had a huge impact on access to information and on information seeking behavior. Librarian and library-staff have to know and examine the criteria of information seeking and information used by users for providing information services, designing new information systems, intervening in the operation of existing systems, or planning in service programs.

The researchers tried to get the answers from the following questions:

- What kind of information is sought by faculty members?

- What methods are used for seeking information?

- How is information technology used by faculty members?

- What are the problems of seeking information and how it can be solved?

METHODOLOGY AND SAMPLE OF THE STUDY

Research in any discipline is interlinked with methodology. Methodology involves various tools, techniques and approaches. Since the present survey is concentrating on information seeking behaviour of faculty members of Karnataka State Womens University Bijapur, the data has collected from primary and secondary sources. Primary sources data includes the questionnaire, interview scheduled and observation. The secondary sources are collected form various books, journals, conference proceedings and websites etc.

This survey confined to Karnataka State Womens University Bijapur, main campus. The questionnaires were distributed to 60 respondents by personal. Fifty five faculty members responded to the questionnaire i.e. 91.67%. The respondents are faculty members Sciences and Technology, Social Sciences Faculty, Arts and Humanities faculty, Education and Management Faculty (see Table 1).

Table 1: Response from Faculty Members

Faculties	Questionnaire Distributed		Response Received	
	No.	%	No.	%
Sciences and Technology	08	13.33	07	12.72
Social Sciences	21	35.00	19	34.54
Arts and Humanities	08	13.33	06	10.90
Education	18	30.00	18	32.72
Management	05	08.33	05	08.33
Total	**60**	**100.00**	**55**	**100.00**

SCOPE AND LIMITATION

The present research work confined to analysis of information seeking and uses behaviour of faculty members of Karnataka State Womens University Bijapur, main campus. The following limitations are identified.

- It investigates the information seeking and use behaviour of the different faculty members of the

- Karnataka State Womens University Bijapur (limitation by respondent);

- It covers the faculty members of Karnataka State Womens University Bijapur, main campus (by geography);

- It covers the respondents are faculty members of Sciences and Technology, Social Sciences, Arts and Humanities, Education and Management members of the Karnataka State Womens University Bijapur, main campus (by faculties/subjects)

- It includes those faculties, who hold a post of Professor, Associate Professor and Assistant Professor in the Karnataka State Womens University Bijapur, main campus (by designation);

ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

- **Method of seeking information**

The question was asked about the method used by the faculty member for seeking information. Table 2 shows that (80.00%) of the faculty members consulted a knowledgeable person in the field. (87.27%) discussed with colleagues, 85.45% discussed with librarian or reference staff of the library, and (76.04%) percent used Library catalogue for seeking the information.

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Table 2: Method of Information Seeking

Sl. No.	Method	No. of Respondents	%
1	Consult a knowledgeable person in the field	44	80.00
2	Discussion with colleagues	48	87.27
3	Discussion with librarian or reference staff of the library	47	85.45
4	Library catalogue	42	76.04
5	Indexing journals	27	50.00
6	Review articles	23	41.81
7	Discussion with librarian/ reference staff of other libraries	22	40.00
8	Abstracting journals	13	23.63
9	Consult supervisor	11	20.00

- **Purpose of Seeking Information**

As shown in Table 3, respondents indicated the purpose of seeking information. 48 (87.05%) faculty members sought information for preparing class lectures, 50 (91.66%) for keeping up-date knowledge, 45 (81.81%) for writing and presenting papers and 39 (70.81%) for doing their research work in their respective area.

Table 3: Purpose of seeking information

Sl. No.	Purpose	No. of Respondents	%
1	For preparing class lectures	48	87.05
2	For updating knowledge	50	91.66
3	For writing and presenting paper	45	81.81
4	For doing research work	39	70.81
5	For guiding researchers	27	49.18
6	For doing Ph.D.	07	12.03
7	For entertainment	09	16.43

- **Type of Information**

Faculty members were asked to indicate the type of information source which they used to seek information (Table 4). For seeking information, textbooks were the popular type of information source for all faculty members 44 (80.00%). 19 (34.54%) of faculty members used periodicals. 9 (16.04%) of faculty members were used News Papers where as reference books are used 7 (12.72%). (Brown (1999) found that all of the scientists used textbooks, journals and monographs to support teaching activities.

Table 4: Types of Information

Sl. No.	Types of Information Materials	No. of users	%
1	Textbooks	44	80.00
2	Periodicals	19	34.54
3	Newspapers	09	16.04
4	Exhibition	06	10.90
5	Government publications	05	09.09
6	Reference books	07	12.72
7	Pamphlets	03	05.45
8	Patents	03	05.00
9	General books	03	05.00
10	Thesis/Research reports	02	03.63

- **Problems with Seeking Information**

The respondents were asked to mention the problems they faced while seeking information shows in (Table 5) that the majority of faculty members 43 (78.18%) faced the same common problem i.e. unavailability of information. 33 (60.00%) faced with a lack of time for searching where as 10 (18.18%) of them faced incomplete information materials.

Table 5: Problems Faced by Faculty Members

Sl. No.	Problems	No. of Respondents	%
1	Material is not available	43	78.18
2	Lack of time	33	60.00
3	Incomplete information materials	10	18.18
4	Information sources are so far located	05	09.10
5	Information scattered in too many sources	04	07.30
6	Some of information materials are old	04	07.30
7	Lack of ICT knowledge in using the library	03	05.45
8	Information is too vast	03	05.45
9	Library staff are unwilling for service	02	03.63

- **Internet Use**

The faculty members were asked to indicate the use of the Internet. Sixty-seven percent of faculty members use the Internet daily. Fifty-two percent use the Internet for education purposes. Fifty-six percent use the Internet at home. They also mentioned that they use e-mail frequently for communication. Thus, it can be argued that using the Internet eases access to a large amount of data, saves time and money, and obtains an opportunity to consult several experts with a single request (via discussion groups), and greater independence from specific times and places for information seeking.

- **Internet Search Engines**

Table 6 shows that, all respondents (96.36%) use search engines especially Google, followed by Yahoo (43.64%), MSN (29.10%), and AltaVista were used (05.45%). The Google search engine is mostly used because it is fast in access, regularly updated and links are provided to web sites in the world (Asemi, 2005).

Table 6: Search Engines

Sl. No.	Search Engines	No. of Respondents	%
1	Google	53	96.36
2	Yahoo	24	43.64
3	MSN	16	29.10
4	AltaVista	03	05.45
5	Lycos	00	00.00

Use of CD-ROM

A question was asked to the faculties about the use and awareness of CD-ROM and subject gateways/portal services. (60%) faculty have very good awareness followed by (25%) were good awareness. Whereas (20%) of faculty have poor and (10%) are very poor in database access awareness. (5%) are un-certain of database awareness.
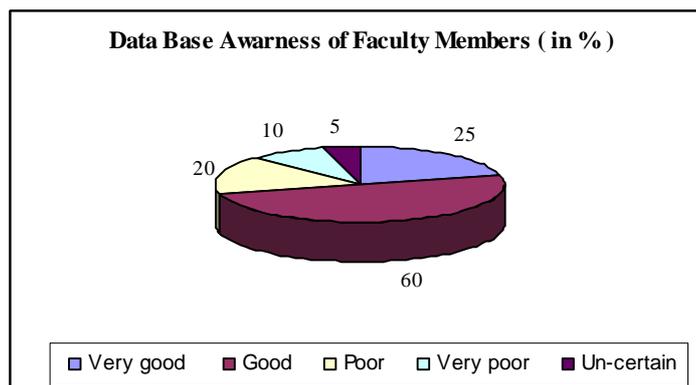
Figure 1

CONCLUSIONS AND DISCUSSIONS

The successful operation of any library depends to a large extent on the choice of library collections. The choice of the collection should meet the need and requirements of the end users. Consequently, librarians must be aware of how the faculty members seek information and their use behviour. The first three preferences given by the faculty for seeking information are textbooks, periodicals and newspapers. It is also observed that the majority of faculty members sought information for preparing lectures, keeping up-to-date knowledge and research work. **Wales** (2000) reveals that journals appear to be the most popular source for current awareness purpose. Faculty members used several methods to seek information, but they prefer to consult a knowledgeable person in the field. In reality, it was found that they use the Internet strongly at home for education. E-mail is specifically used for communication because it saves time and money. Faculties are very good use and awareness of CD-ROM and subject gateways/portal services. The problems they faced while seeking information are incomplete information, lack of information and time, etc.

In regard to information seeking and behaviour of users of Karnataka State Womens University main campus, Bijapur. It is recommended that library staff or reference librarians could use their time in a better way by focusing on assisting users. Reference librarians should help users to improve their skills in information seeking activities and to find the different type of information they need. IT skilled technical assistants should also assist the users in learning the use of OPAC, search engine, e-mail, and CD-ROM techniques, and inform them of the web sites available through the various networks. Hence, the library must provide adequate ICT facilities for reference librarians, such as Internet, laser printers, scanners, fax machine, telephone, etc to offer various services in the library.

Although the faculties were expressed their appreciation about information resources available in the library, (a) a rich collection of printed journals and electronic journals in both National and International level. (b) Advance training and orientation programs on usage of information resources in library at different level. (c) Basic introduction to library services and facilities; (d) Using OPAC; (e) Methods and tools for searching information resources; (f) using the Internet; (g) using online and CD-ROM databases; (h) using electronic journals; (i) Introducing reference books; (j) Introducing audio/video materials; and (k) Introducing appropriate indexes and abstracts.

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