

**INFORMATION SEEKING BEHAVIOR OF USERS
OF ICT ORIENTED COLLEGES: A CASE STUDY**

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ABSTRACT

Studies on information seeking behavior have been conducted worldwide as they are very essential to measure psychological, logical and emotional approach of an information seeker in the pursuit of looking for information. Main object of this research is to make survey of users in colleges affiliated to SGBAU Amravati along with their requirements, expectations, available resources, with limited modern amenities to fulfil such demands and installation of ultra modern equipments, state of art internet connectivity and so many such other things through a model questionnaire designed to acquire all such data.



KEYWORDS : *Information seeking behavior, Library users.*

INTRODUCTION :

The era of information technology changed the status of library in 21st century. The computer age has shown great impact on information research. Long range reference services have come to an end. Ready reference service is available with the help of networking. Large amount of information is being generated every moment. The exponential growth of literature is too fast for any specialist or any individual to keep pace with. Right information to the right user at the right time with precision is becoming a need in an information society. Revolution in ICT techniques has drastically integrated Libraries into knowledge hubs, which can fetch every required information through pile of books as well as the worldwide web networking, thereby transforming into hybrid, digital and virtual libraries. Library is major resource of knowledge as well as information required by users, obviously improving responsibilities of a Librarian. A gamut of services are expected to be catered through Librarian, who acts as Information Officer, Navigator and resource person who has to be, all the time, aware of what, how, when and where to search the expected knowledge by the users, researchers, students and teachers.

INFORMATION SEEKING ATTITUDE OF USERS

According to Wilson (1999, 2000), information-seeking behavior includes "those activities a person may engage in when identifying their own needs for information, searching for such

information in any way, and using or transferring that information." [8] [4] Kakai, et al., (2004) have defined information-seeking behavior as an individual's way and manner of gathering and sourcing for information for personal use, knowledge updating, and development. [4] Information-seeking behavior of students, researchers, and professors has been the focus of enquiry for decades. Initially, however, user studies were conducted primarily to evaluate library collections.

OBJECTIVES

To study the information needs of the users.

To know the prime dependent source for information among the students.

To highlight the sufficiency on the various resources at the libraries.

To study the various kinds of needs where ICT is involved for satisfying the information needs.

To study various kinds of resources that are available for satisfying the information needs

To study the difficulties faced by the students while handling ICT in libraries

SCOPE OF THE STUDY:

The study was based on the following aspects: Status, computing, libraries and services provided and level of Satisfaction. The study confined to the users including students of Undergraduate, Post Graduate and staff of selected ICT oriented colleges affiliated to Sant Gadge Baba Amravati University, Amravati. The study was mainly focused on the use and awareness of Information Communication Technology.

METHODOLOGY:

The study has been made by surveying the different user groups from the colleges of SGB Amravati University, Amravati, which were associated with Arts, Commerce and Science streams of education and Social Science faculty. When researcher draws his sample, he wants to have a good representation of all the kinds of people in the population. At the beginning research scholar collected the names and addresses of all colleges with their status in automation of libraries and development towards Information Communication Technology in SGB Amravati University, Amravati. This formed the population for the present study.

Sant Gadge Baba Amravati University :

S.G.B. Amravati university was established on 1st May, 1983 on the auspicious occasion of Maharashtra Day & Worker's Day. Sant Gadge Baba Amravati University geographically covers the western Vidarbha belt i.e. five districts viz. Amravati, Akola, Yavatmal, Buldhana and Washim of Maharashtra State. The University, in its small span of two decades, has contributed in many ways for economic, social and cultural upliftment of the society by offering best quality education. Amravati University is recognized under Section 12(B) of the University Grants Commission (UGC) Act of the Ministry of Education, Government of India. The University received NAAC accreditation in 2002. 127 colleges are affiliated with Amravati University, with an enrolment of over 90,000 students for the undergraduate and graduate courses, together, in different faculties. The motto of this University is 'Education for salvation of soul'

Table No.1. Faculty wise distribution (N = 850)

Sr. No.	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
Faculty	Arts	Commerce	Engineering	Education	Social sci.	Science	Other	Total
Frequency	165	116	247	85	19	174	44	850

Table No.1 shows that, maximum numbers of colleges are multi faculty college's viz. Science, Arts and Commerce. While engineering, social science and education colleges are single faculty colleges. Researcher tried to get feedback from all types of respondents.

Table No.2. Course wise distribution (N = 850)

Sr. No.	1	2	3	4	5	6
Computer Course	MS-CIT	CCIT	DIT	Other	No Course	Total
Frequency	570	50	23	319	91	1053

Table No.2 shows that, 67.07% respondents completed MS-CIT course, While 5.83% respondents completed CCIT course. DIT course was completed by 2.70% respondents. Other courses that are completed by 37.52% respondents and 10.70% respondents had not completed any computer courses.

MS-CIT is the Maharashtra State certificate course in information technology. This course was recognized by Maharashtra government. So maximum colleges run this course from their institutions at minimum fees. From the above table it's also found that, more than 10 % students are unaware about computers and computer courses. While some have completed more than one.

Table No.3. Surveyed libraries in SGBAU Amravati and selected population for Survey (N = 850)

Sr. No.	ICT Oriented colleges in SGBAU Amravati		Number of Users		Staff		Total Population SGBAU Library 28 College libraries
	Districts	No of ICT oriented Libraries surveyed	Mail	Female	Mail	Female	
1	SGBAU Amravati	University departments (20 Depts.)	39	66	18	21	144
2	Amravati	08 Colleges	53	76	21	17	167
3	Akola	05 Colleges	46	35	12	14	107
4	Buldhanaa	04 Colleges	52	39	19	12	122
5	Washim	03 Colleges	38	20	14	07	79
6	Yavatmal	08 Colleges	113	78	21	19	231
		Total	341 (40.11)	314 (36.94)	105 (12.35)	90 (10.58)	850

* SGBAU- Sant Gadge Baba Amravati University

Table No.3 shows that, the researcher distributed 1400 questionnaires, out of which 1120 questionnaires were received from the respondents of 28 colleges in Sant Gadge Baba Amravati

University, Amravati. The researcher selected 40 respondents from each college from the total of 28 colleges. For the sampling of subjects, the researcher used stratified random sampling and collects 15 students from Under-graduate, 15 students from Post-graduate, 10 staff members from each college. Some questionnaires were found incompletely filled, some were blank and some were wrongly responded. So after discarding all these questionnaires the total sample at the last consists of 850 respondents, which were sufficient enough for the present study.

Table No 4. The purpose of information seeking N-850

Name of the colleges	User Category	No. Of Respondent	For Research (%)	For General awareness (%)	For recreation (%)	Preparing class notes (%)	Reading / Thinking Purpose (%)	To read journals & Magazines	Discussion	Internet Browsing
SGBAU Amravati	Students	105	7%	20%	9%	14%	21%	13%	6%	10%
	Faculty	39	22%	9.5%	2.5%	6%	13.5%	27.5%	3.4%	3%
Amravati	Students	129	4%	19%	12%	11%	18%	7%	18%	11%
	Faculty	38	11%	17%	09%	21%	12%	9%	13%	8%
Akola	Students	81	4%	19%	21%	16%	13%	4%	14%	09%
	Faculty	26	2%	11%	19%	23%	12%	12%	8%	13%
Buldhan	Students	91	2%	15%	14%	16%	19%	7%	18%	9%
	Faculty	31	15%	11%	2%	21%	12%	12%	19%	8%
Washim	Students	58	5%	8%	13%	21%	15%	18%	12%	8%
	Faculty	21	7%	17%	11%	19%	8%	12%	16%	10%
Yavatmal	Students	191	3%	15%	17%	23%	12%	15%	7%	8%
	Faculty	40	4%	21%	9%	28%	8%	5%	20%	19%

Source: Computed from the survey data

Frequency of the visit to the library does not indicate the nature and purpose of visit by its users. Keeping these aspects in mind, the visitors were asked to indicate the purpose of their visit to the library. Their responses were given in the above table.

Above table no 4 depicts that, most students move towards library for preparing class notes for examinations or college studies integrating general awareness, effective use of internet and refer journals and magazines whereas all the researchers seek information related to their research through journals and Magazines, discussions and general awareness is favored by respondents. As per above table, it was observed that, the response for Internet browsing was very low. The reason behind this was various colleges had computers but due to financial problems or due to not having the support from management, to maintain computers for internet facility was difficult for them.

Thus the visit to the library and its use indicate that most of the users consult the library to participate in the process of Reading/Thinking, Preparing class notes and for general awareness.

Which of the following services do you use from your library?

Nowadays information services are the important services of any library/information centre. Information services are usually provided through the information sources, where the required information is likely to be available. The librarians according to time, place & circumstances, provide information services on the basis of various available sources.

Table No 5.

N-850

Services	Lending service (to borrow books)		Book Bank		Internet Services		Reading Room Service		Xerox		Reference /Information Service		Display of new arrivals	
	Students	Teachers	Students	Teachers	Students	Teachers	Students	Teachers	Students	Teachers	Students	Teachers	Students	Teachers
SGBAU Amravati	43%	21.5%	34%	-	31.5%	9.5%	21.5%	19%	34.5%	5.5%	39.5%	28.5%	32.5%	20.5%
Amravati	14%	13.29%	10%	-	11%	2%	17%	2%	2%	0.70%	8%	2%	3%	1%
Akola	10%	2%	7%	-	6%	1%	11%	2%	1.52%	2%	6%	1%	3%	1%
Buldhana	10.47%	2%	5%	-	3%	1%	10%	1%	3%	1%	7%	1%	7%	2%
Washim	6%	3%	3%	-	2%	0.47%	7%	1%	2%	1%	5%	1%	3%	1%
Yavatma I	13%	8%	8%	-	1%	0.47%	10%	2%	1%	1%	2%	1%	2%	1%

Above table no 5 depicts that, maximum no. of users of any library use this service. But its percentage was also dependent on the support of the circulation section or lending section and how many borrowers ticket issued by the library.

Book Bank service is offered by library on the merit basis as well as on the deserving status of students. Thus students can avail this amenity whenever offered by library itself. It may be due to, though internet service is modern amenity, it is not yet so resonate to make it affordable for all end users of libraries.

Even in electronic era and tech savvy users, the prioritisation of readers is more to lending service, reading rooms and internet service in this order of importance. As per above table, it was observed that, very few respondents agree that, their libraries do not have reading room facility. Reading room facility is an important prerequisite for an effective functioning of a library. A conducive atmosphere of a library is essential for study and research but unfortunately it is not available in maximum libraries.

Most of libraries, due to financial constraints and lack of space, cannot offer photocopiers. But if such amenity is offered at reasonable cost then it can survive and even help libraries to be a source of income generation. Reference service is a personalized service offered to users when they visit the library for seeking information from books and other documents. Most of libraries do not have display boards to flash notices, new arrivals and such other things to be noticed by end users.

How do you locate information from your library?

Table No 6.

N-850

Sources	Use of Library Catalogue	Approach to librarian / Library Staff	Ask the colleagues	Bibliographies /references in books & journals	Directly from the stack
SGBAU Amravati	40%	31.5%	22.5%	23.5%	5.25%
Amravati	17%	16%	21%	10%	9%
Akola	13%	6%	14%	5%	5%
Buldhana	8%	4%	8%	3%	5%
Washim	5%	3%	5%	4%	3%
Yavatmal	15%	13%	18%	8%	11%

From table 6, in order to seek some specific information or knowledge, the users primarily go through the catalogues or OPAC narrating collection and compilation of knowledge, then approach to librarian to short list their hunt and lastly rely on the colleagues to further integrate their search for more knowledge to depth and grass root level

How successful are you in getting information through librarian?

Table No 7

N-850

Success of getting information through Librarian	SGBAU Amravati	Amravati	Akola	Buldhana	Washim	Yavatmal
Mostly	91 (63.19%)	148 (88.6%)	72 (67.2%)	71 (58.1%)	39 (49.3%)	169 (73.1%)
Rarely	53 (36.80%)	19 (9.5%)	35 (32.7%)	51 (41.8%)	40 (50.6%)	62 (26.83%)

From table 7, Librarian is supposed to be knowledgeable person who is expected to be capable & knowledge of every information, which he comes across through the prospective readers or users, who is well aware of every corner of Library establishment under his kind control.

Do you fill that reading materials/services available in the library are adequate to meet your requirements?

The prime function of any library is to provide efficient services to its users. User's awareness about the services provided by the library is essential for effective use of its collection.

Table No 8.

N-850

Library services adequate to meet your requirements.	SGBAU Amravati	Amravati	Akola	Buldhana	Washim	Yavatmal
Mostly	88 (61.11%)	116 (69.4%)	89 (83%)	69 (56.55%)	49 (62.2%)	137 (59.3%)
Rarely	36 (25%)	51 (30.5%)	18 (17%)	53 (43.4%)	30 (37.9%)	94 (40.6%)

From table 8, though library is a growing organisation & while speaking about conventional materials, no library can be able to fulfil the demand of their users. On the other hand while speaking about ICT resources today's era of knowledge globalisation, Library can hardly be self sufficient in all respects of ICT, because the technology is changing every day in day out and the techniques turn outdated within very short span. Hence libraries could meet the expectations of users and readers between 35 % to 80% and not beyond.

Satisfaction with present library services by Users

Table No 9

N-850

Sources	Text Books				Reference Books				Periodicals/ Magzines				News Papers			
District wise performance of the colleges	Satisfaction level				Satisfaction level				Satisfaction level				Satisfaction level			
	25 %	50 %	75 %	100 %	25 %	50 %	75 %	100 %	25 %	50 %	75 %	100 %	25 %	50 %	75 %	100 %
SGBAU Amravati	7	34	69	-	15	19	79	10	27	33	16	26	65	20	25	14
Amravati	32	27	40	3	17	47	21	15	31	35	15	19	13	33	47	07
Akola	27	32	15	26	11	32	53	04	21	41	19	19	41	16	17	26
Buldhana	37	32	19	12	33	12	37	18	14	32	43	11	37	13	22	28
Washim	3	27	17	53	-	07	31	62	10	12	33	45	4	08	33	55
Yavatmal	15	11	62	12	18	22	27	33	02	29	18	51	14	16	21	49

According to the Table 9, Maximum no. of users prefers to use newspapers in college libraries & they are very much satisfied also. Afterwards, students preferred to use books or shows highly satisfied with the collection of books. Afterwards they preferred to use periodicals; Online resources.

Some of the Users felt that reading materials/services available in the library were not adequate, Reasons were.

1. Lacking of latest additions of books.
2. Some times at the time of recess library staff were not available.
3. Books of popular authors were less in stock.
4. Library did not have enough stock to provide efficient book bank.
5. There were no standard books available in the library, which a student really wants.
6. The scope of subject was increasing day by day and more material has to be available.
7. Some reference books were not available
8. Finding of materials was quite difficult compared to search engines.
9. Important books were not available and if available then in one or two copies only.
10. Some books which were essential to our syllabus were not available in library

CONCLUSION

Academic Libraries are such libraries which deal mainly with the Higher Education and main object of such libraries is to promote research works. Simultaneously these libraries play very important role in learning as well as in teaching to appreciate every aspect of teaching/learning. These libraries have collection and compilation of references to various research works, which can provide ready beckoners' and supportive information related to various subjects and topics. Revolution in ICT techniques have drastically integrated Libraries into knowledge hubs, which can fetch every required information through pile of books as well as the worldwide web networking, thereby transforming into hybrid, digital and virtual libraries. Library is major resource of knowledge as well as information required by users, obviously improving responsibilities of a Librarian.

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