

# A Study on Information Needs and Use Pattern of Faculty Members, Research Scholars and Students of Select State University of Tamil Nadu

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**Abstract** - This study has been carried out to know the Information Needs and Seeking Behaviour of Faculty Members, Research Scholars and Students of Selected State University of Tamil Nadu. In this study, survey method is adopted among the PG students, research scholars and teachings staff of Biology department of four selected state Universities of Tamil Nadu. i.e. Annamalai University, Bharathidasan University, Bharathiar University, and Madurai Kamaraj University. It is found that the majority of research scholar used internet facility available in their library and they were enhancing their knowledge on general subject areas. Also Majority of the respondents preferred print subscriptions of journal articles.

**Keywords:** Information Seeking Behaviour, State Universities of Tamil Nadu

## I. INTRODUCTION

According to Krilelas (1983), Information seeking behaviour refers to “any activity of an individual that is undertaken to identify a message that satisfies a perceived need”.

Austerd defines information seeking behaviour as “the field composed of studies that are concerned with who need what kind of information and for what reason, information is found, evaluated and used and how these needs can be identified and satisfied”.

Information seeking behaviour means individual's way manner of gathering and sourcing for information for personal use, knowledge updating and development. Wessels refers to it as the way people search for utilize information, Kakai, et al., observes that often students' information seeking behaviour involves active purposeful information as a result of the need to etc course assignment, prepare for class ions, seminars, workshops, conferences or write final year research papers. Various studies show that information seeking behaviour of various categories of user differs.

## II. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

The libraries need to have all the up-to-date and accurate information about the users as the knowledge of users is one of the prerequisites for the proper planning and development of resources and services of libraries.

Therefore, it is said that understanding the users means the half the battle in providing the information services is over. Therefore, the libraries need to know: who the users are, what their functional responsibilities are and areas of interest; how much time they spend on reading information sources, what the sources of information are most frequently used by them, how useful the collections of library are, information services used by the users, methods adopted for searching various print and electronic information sources and problems encountered in using and searching information sources. These are some of the questions for which the planners and organizers of libraries and information centers need to find answers from time to time in order -to make the resources and the services provided by the library relevant and appropriate to the user community it serves. Hence, an attempt has been made in this work to study on information needs and seeking behaviour of faculty members research scholars and students of Selected State University of Tamil Nadu.

## III. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To find out formal, informal and electronic information sources used by the respondents of state universities of Tamil Nadu;
2. To find out use of foreign / national periodical in the languages other then English languages by the respondents of state universities of Tamil Nadu;
3. To find out the respondent's opinion on level of adequacy of collection in their university library;
4. To observe the respondent's level of success in getting material from in their university library;

5. To know respondent's use of internet facility available in their university library;
6. To indicate purpose of information seeking by the respondents of state university Tamil Nadu;
7. To receive the respondent's opinion on usefulness of various section in scientific and technical journals;
8. To find out respondent's mode of acquisition of journal articles.

#### IV. METHODOLOGY

For getting the data on this present field of study, questionnaire survey method are adopted among the PG students, research scholars and teachings staff of Biology department of four selected state Universities of Tamil Nadu. i.e. Annamalai University, Bharathidasan University, Bharathiar University, and Madurai Kamaraj University. The questionnaire was distributed all the respondents of four universities of Tamil Nadu. Out of 791 total respondents, 710 filled in questionnaire are received back.

#### V. RESULTS & DISCUSSION

Table I shows that formal and informal information sources used by the respondents of state universities of Tamil Nadu. Among the different type of formal informal sources such as text book, Encyclopedia, Dictionaries, Periodicals, 100% student's respondents used text book and occupy the first position whereas thesis and dissertation comes in second position with 52.24% of the respondents. 175(51.47%) of the respondents using informal sources of information in the way of discussion with colleagues and teachers and it comes third in position, periodical, conference proceeding comes next in order.

It could be seen from the above discussion that text book, discussion with, colleagues, thesis / dissertation, periodical and conference proceeding and the major formal and informal sources of information used the majority of respondents in the state universities of Tamil Nadu.

TABLE I FORMAL AND INFORMAL INFORMATION SOURCES USED BY THE RESPONDENTS OF STATE UNIVERSITY OF TAMIL NADU

S. No.	No. of Respondents	Text book /Handbook	Encyclopedia	Dictionaries	Periodicals	Technical reports	Proceedings of Conferences / Seminars/ Symposia	Patents	Standards	Theses/ Dissertations	Reference Books	Indexes/ Abstracts	Bibliographies	Discussion with colleagues teachers friends	Attending seminars / conference workshop
1	Students	340 (100)	41 (12.06)	53 (15.68)	162 (47.65)	-	138 (40.58)	-	-	198 (52.24)	68 (2.00)	-	-	175 (51.47)	130 (38.25)
2	Research scholars	202 (70.87)	105 (36.84)	117 (41.05)	265 (92.98)	-	212 (74.38)	-	-	278 (97.54)	112 (39.29)	21 (73.68)	18 (63.16)	285 (100)	185 (64.92)
3	Staffs	85 (100)	25 (17.65)	15 (17.65)	82 (9.47)	21 (24.70)	81 (95.29)	-	-	45 (52.94)	58 (68.24)	51 (6.00)	50 (58.03)	68 (8.00)	85 (100)
	Total	627 (88.31)	171 (24.08)	185 (26.06)	509 (71.69)	21 (2.96)	431 (60.71)	-	-	521 (73.38)	238 (33.52)	72 (10.14)	68 (9.57)	528 (74.36)	400 (54.05)

TABLE II USE OF ELECTRONIC INFORMATION SOURCES

S. No.	Details	Electronic information sources			Total
		CD-ROM / database	Internet	e-journal	
1	Students	124 (36.47)	229 (67.35)	74 (21.76)	
2	Research scholars	268 (94.04)	283 (99.30)	212 (74.38)	
3	Staffs	76 (89.42)	81 (95.29)	68 (81.18)	
	Total	467 (65.77)	593 (83.52)	355 (50.00)	1396 (100)

The data available in the Table II shows that use of electronic information sources by the respondents of the present study.

Irrespective of the status of the respondents 83.52 % of the respondents used internet and occupy the predominate position and followed by CD-ROM/ Database with 65 % of respondents. It is also fact that 50 % of respondents used e-journal for their academic needs.

TABLE III FOREIGN / NATIONAL PERIODICALS IN THE LANGUAGES OTHER THAN ENGLISH LANGUAGE

S. No.	Use of foreign / National periodicals in other than language	Students	Research scholar	Staff	Total
1	Yes	28 (8.24)	31 (10.88)	42 (49.41)	101 (11.23)
2	No	312 (91.76)	254 (89.12)	43 (50.59)	609 (85.77)
	Total	340 (47.89)	285 (40.14)	85 (11.97)	710 (100)

Table III shows that use of foreign / national periodicals in the languages other than English language by the respondents of states universities of Tamil Nadu.

Among the three different respondents, majority of the (42%) of them belongs to staff categories used foreign national periodical other than English language and only limited number of research scholar and students used other language periodical.

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TABLE IV USE OF INDEXING / ABSTRACTING PERIODICAL BY THE RESPONDENTS OF THE STUDY

S. No.		Opinion				Total
		Yes	%	No	%	
1	Students	318	93.53	22	6.47	340
2	Research scholars	260	91.23	25	8.77	285
3	Staffs	85	100	-		85
	Total	663	93.38	47	6.62	710 (100)

Table IV shows that use of indexing / abstracting periodical by the respondents of the study. Among the students respondents 318 (93.53%) of them, in the research scholar categories 260 (91.23%) and staff 85 (100%) used indexing / abstracting periodical for their work.

TABLE V RESPONDENT'S OPINION ON LEVEL OF ADEQUACY OF COLLECTION IN THEIR LIBRARY

S. No.	Collection of the library	Students				Research scholars				Teaching staff			
		Adequate	Partial adequate	Inadequate	Total	Adequate	Partial adequate	Inadequate	Total	Adequate	Partial adequate	Inadequate	Total
1.	Text book /Handbook	280 (82.35)	60 (17.65)	-	340	200 (70.18)	85 (29.82)	-	285	60 (70.59)	15 (17.65)	-	85
2.	Encyclopedia	210 (61.76)	130 (38.24)	-	340	175 (61.40)	110 (38.60)	-	285	55 (64.71)	30 (35.29)	-	85
3.	Dictionaries	225 (66.18)	115 (33.82)	-	340	194 (68.07)	91 (31.93)	-	285	50 (58.82)	35 (41.18)	-	85
4.	Periodicals	205 (60.29)	135 (39.71)	-	340	180 (63.16)	105 (36.84)	-	285	75 (88.24)	10 (11.76)	-	85
5.	Technical reports	-	-	-	-	19 (6.67)	266 (93.33)	-	285	25 (29.41)	60 (70.59)	-	85
6.	Proceedings of Conferences/ Seminars/ Symposia	216 (63.53)	124 (36.47)	-		211 (74.04)	74 (25.96)	-	285	80 (94.12)	5 (5.88)	-	85
7.	Patents	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
8.	Standards	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
9.	Theses/Dissertations	24 (72.06)	95 (27.94)	-	340	215 (75.44)	70 (24.56)	-	285	71 (83.53)	14 (16.67)	-	85
10.	Reference Books	155 (45.59)	185 (54.41)	-	340	164 (57.54)	121 (42.46)	-	285	62 (72.94)	23 (27.06)	-	85
11.	Indexes/Abstracts	75 (22.06)	265 (77.94)	-	340	89 (31.23)	196 (68.77)	-	285	45 (52.94)	40 (47.06)	-	85
12.	Bibliographies	60 (17.65)	280 (82.35)	-	340	98 (34.39)	187 (65.61)	-	285	35 (64.71)	50 (58.82)	-	85
13.	CD ROM Databases	74 (21.76)	266 (78.24)	-	340	118 (4.14)	167 (58.60)	-	285	64 (75.29)	21 (24.71)	-	85
14.	E-journals	115 (33.82)	225 (66.18)	-	340	190 (66.67)	95 (33.33)	-	285	64 (75.29)	21 (24.71)	-	85
	Total	1639 (46.57)	1880 (53.42)		3519	1853 (54.18)	1567 (45.82)	-	3420	731 (69.28)	324 (30.72)		1055

The data presented in the table indicate respondent's opinion on level of adequacy of collection in their library. Out of 340 students 82.35% of them says text book adequate 72.06% of them says thesis dissertation are adequate 62-70% of them says encyclopedia, dictionaries, periodical and conference proceeding are adequate.

Whereas in research scholar category 70 % of the respondents says that text book, conference proceeding and theses / dissertation are adequate, 60-70 % of them says encyclopedia dictionaries periodical and e-journals are adequate.

Among the teaching staff 94.12% of them says conference proceeding are adequate, 88.24% of them periodicals, 72.80% of the text book reference book CD/ROM / Database and e-journal are adequate.

Table VI shows that respondent's opinion on levels of success in getting material from the library that they regularized. It is evident from the table that more then 75% of the respondents from the staff category, below 50 % of the research scholar and below 45 % students 'mostly' successful in getting material required from different sources.

TABLE VI RESPONDENT'S OPINION ON LEVELS OF SUCCESS IN GETTING MATERIAL FROM THE LIBRARY THAT THEY REGULARIZED

S. No.	States wise respondents	Mostly	Partially	Never	Total
1	Students	140 (41.18)	180 (52.29)	20 (5.88)	340
2	Research scholars	154 (54.04)	101 (35.44)	30 (10.53)	285
3	Staff	65 (76.41)	20 (23.53)	-	85
	Total	359 (50.56)	301 (42.39)	50 (7.05)	710

It is observed from the table VII that out of 340 students respondents 184 (54.12%) of them using internet facility available in their university library whereas more than 90% and 85% of the research scholar and teaching staff also used the internet facility available in their university library.'

TABLE VII RESPONDENT'S OPINION ON USE OF INTERNET FACILITY AVAILABLE IN THEIR UNIVERSITY LIBRARY

S. No		Opinion				Total
		Yes	%	No	%	
1	Students	184	(54.12)	156	(45.88)	340
2	Research scholar	261	(91.58)	24	(8.42)	285
3	Teaching staff	74	(87.06)	11	(12.94)	85
	Total	519 (73.09)		191 (26.91)		710 (100)

Irrespective of the category of respondents three fourth of the respondents utilize the internet facility available in the library and one fourth of them not used such facility available in the library.

TABLE VIII PURPOSE OF INFORMATION SEEKING BY THE RESPONDENTS OF STATE UNIVERSITIES OF TAMIL NADU

S. No.	Subjects	Students	Research scholar	Staff	Total
1	Enhancing knowledge on general subject areas	168 (49.41)	201 (70.53)	71 (83.53)	440 (61.97)
2	Enhancing knowledge on syllabus oriented subject areas	174 (51.17)	18 (6.32)	-	192 (27.04)
3	Just to get awareness on different subject areas (not related to subject)	65 (19.12)	78 (27.37)	61 (71.76)	83 (11.69)
4	Preparing for assignments	199 (58.53)	-	-	199 (28.03)
5	Preparing for regular classes	-	-	60 (70.59)	60 (8.45)
6	Discussions	-	16 (5.62)	25 (29.42)	41 (5.77)
7	General awareness	118 (34.71)	149 (52.28)	54 (63.53)	321 (45.21)
8	Preparing answers to questions	18 (5.29)	-	38 (44.71)	56 (7.88)
9	Preparing for seminars / conference	121 (35.59)	164 (57.54)	78 (91.77)	363 (51.13)
10	Preparing for Topical Research	-	174 (62.05)	65 (76.47)	239 (33.66)
11	Preparing for research work (Thesis)	-	192 (67.37)	45 (52.94)	237 (33.38)
12	Preparing for competitive examinations	138 (40.59)	161 (56.49)	-	299 (42.12)
13	To satisfy the thrust on reading interest / need	16 (4.71)	142 (49.83)	31 (36.47)	189 (26.62)
14	State-of-art investigations	-	118 (41.41)	41 (48.24)	159 (22.39)
15	Reading / Thinking purpose	48 (14.12)	160 (56.14)	46 (54.12)	254 (35.77)
	Total	1065 (32.74)	1573 (48.36)	615 (18.90)	3253 (100)

It is observed from the above table that student giving preference for assignment preparation and enhancing knowledge on syllabus 'orient subject area at the same time

research scholar giving preference to general subject areas and research'. Whereas teaching staff giving their preference to seminar conference and general subject areas.

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TABLE IX INFORMATION ABOUT AWARENESS OF RESPONDENTS ABOUT LESS RECENT JOURNAL ARTICLES

S. No.	Subjects	Students	Research scholar	Staff	Total
1	Citations at end of book chapters	110 (32.36)	78 (27.36)	31 (36.42)	219 (30.85)
2	Browsing through older volumes	-	11 (3.86)	25 (29.42)	36 (5.07)
3	Retrospective searching of indexes / abstracting tools (e. g. A&A abstracts, Physics Abstracts etc.)	-	62 (21.75)	33 (38.84)	95 (13.38)
4	Citations at end of journal articles	61 (17.94)	201 (70.53)	42 (49.42)	304 (42.82)
5	Personal communication	101 (29.71)	184 (64.56)	58 (68.24)	343 (48.31)
	Total	272	536	189	997

The table IX gives the information about awareness of respondents about less recent journal articles. It could be seen from the table that 62.36% of students aware the less recent journal articles through citation at end of book

chapter whereas research scholars aware through citation at end of journal articles. But staffs aware through personnel communication with 68.24 %.

TABLE X RESPONDENT'S OPINION ON USEFULNESS OF THE VARIOUS SECTION IN SCIENTIFIC AND TECHNICAL JOURNAL

S. No.	Sections of journal	Students	Research scholar	Staff	Total
1	Professional News	26 (7.65)	34 (11.92)	21 (24.71)	81 (11.41)
2	Review of progress	10 (2.94)	24 (8.431)	30 (24.1)	64 (9.02)
3	Original Research Papers	256 (75.29)	268 (78.83)	85 (100)	609 (85.77)
4	Editorial comments	25 (7.35)	48 (16.84)	31 (26.35)	104 (14.65)
5	Summaries of originals paper	116 (34.12)	198 (69.47)	85 (36.47)	399 (56.19)
6	Advertisements	-	-	-	-
7	New Equipments / Systems products	-	-	-	-
8	Training & Education articles	-	-	-	-
	Total	433	572	252	1257 (100)

Table X shows that respondent's opinion on usefulness of the various sections in scientific and technical journal.

It is observed from the table that the highest percent (100%) of staff respondents, 78.83% of research scholar, and

75.29% of students respondents preferred original research papers. It is also observed that nearly 70 % of research scholar stated summaries of original papers also useful for their academic and research purpose.

TABLE XI RESPONDENT'S MODE OF ACQUISITION OF JOURNAL ARTICLE

S. No		Students	Research scholar	Staff	Total
1	Personal subscription to print journals	-	64 (22.46)	35 (41.18)	99 (13.94)
2	Personal subscription to online version	-	54 (18.95)	39 (48.88)	93 (13.09)
3	Library's online/electronic version	25 (7.35)	112 (39.30)	48 (56.47)	185 (26.06)
4	Library's print subscription	65 (19.12)	206 (72.28)	74 (87.06)	345 (48.59)
5	From database, E-archive, etc	-	31 (10.88)	21 (24.71)	52 (7.33)
6	Interlibrary loan	-	4 (1.41)	10 (11.76)	14 (1.97)
7	Document delivery	-	-	-	-
	Total	90	471	-	788 (100)

The data available in the Table XI respondent's mode of acquisition of journal article. The highest percent (72.28%) of the research scholar and 74 (87.06%) of the staff members obtained the journal articles through library's print subscription.

## VI. FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

- Majority of the respondents preferred text book as a formal sources discussion with colleagues as an informal sources;
- Majority of the respondents used internet and it is followed by CD-ROM;
- Majority of the staff respondents used foreign / national periodical other than English language;
- Majority of the respondents from every category used indexing / abstracting periodical;
- Majority of the respondents says text books are adequacy for their academic need;
- The highest 91.58 per cent of research scholar used internet facility available in their library;
- Majority of the respondent's purpose of information seeking was enhancing knowledge on general subject areas;
- Majority of the research scholar and teaching staff aware less recent journals article through citations at end of journal articles;
- Majority of the respondents preferred original research paper in scientific and technical journals;

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