Research Article

INFORMATION SEEKING BEHAVIOR OF E-RESOURCES BY THE UNDER GRADUATE AND POST GRADUATE STUDENTS OF HORTICULTURAL COLLEGE AND RESEARCH INSTITUTE, PERIYAKULAM: A STUDY

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ABSTRACT

The major purpose of this study was to examine the Information Seeking Behaviour of Under Graduate and Post Graduate students of Horticultural College And Research Institute, Periyakulam. The aim of the study was to broaden our understanding of information seeking to personality and approach in to psychological characteristics can shed light on variability and patterns in information seeking behaviour. Information seeking behaviour is expressed in various forms, from reading printed material to research and experimentation. Specifically the study made effort to determine the sources consulted and the general pattern of information on gathering system by the UG and PG students' level of study, course curriculum & academic/ research on the student's information seeking behaviours.

INTRODUCTION

"Information-seeking behaviour is a broad term encompassing the ways individuals articulate their information needs, seek, select, evaluate, and use the needed information" (Majid, Anwar & Eisenschitz, 2000). When human beings have information needs, they start to seek information. The manner in which they realise their information needs, seek information, and use the information is referred to as information-seeking behaviour (Wilson, 2000). In the context of this study, information-seeking behaviour is regarded as any human behaviour related to information needs, information-seeking, and information use. This behaviour happens as a result of an evaluation process that help to determine the relevance of information to the identified information need, by the Under Graduate and Post Graduate students of Horticultural College and research Institute, Periyakulam.

Horticultural College and Research Institute, Periyakulam

The Horticultural College and Research Institute (HC&RI), one of the constituent colleges of Tamil Nadu Agricultural University, is located at Periyakulam. The climatic conditions are quite congenial for cultivation of a wide array of horticultural crops. This Institute provides both teaching and research opportunities of high order in an exceptionally pleasant environment. This is the only full-fledged Institute providing horticulture education in Southern Peninsular India. A Fruit Research Station was set up in 1957 at Periyakulam, with a view to meet the needs and aspirations of the fruit growers of the erstwhile Madurai District. In the year 1971, Horticultural Research Station (HRS), Periyakulam, was developed which marked the expansion of the research mandate to all major horticultural crops. Commendable progress in fruit and vegetable research is achieved. The centre was upgraded in 1990 as a full-fledged teaching and research institute.

Library, Horticultural College and Research Institute, Periyakulam

Library has a huge good collection of Textbooks, Reference books, Journals, Magazines, Back volumes and thesis in the Field of Horticulture and Allied Subjects. There are 11718 books available in this Library. There are 1780 e-

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books available across various departments in this Library. CeRA online e- resources are available in this Library. The goal of the library is to extend all support for outstanding performance in education, Research and other academic and scientific activities carried out in the college. The mission of the library is to acquire information, process, organize, disseminate and preserve the information to the users. This library is fully computerized and air conditioned with free Wi-Fi facility computerized.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Fidzani (1998) conducted a study on Information needs and information-seeking behavior of graduate students at the University of Botswana. This study indicated that guidance in the use of library resources and services is necessary to help students meet some of their information requirements. The study found that: journals, library books and textbooks are the most popular sources of information for course work and research and those students need to be taught how to use available library resources and services.

Whitmire (2001) conducted a study on The relationship between undergraduates' background characteristics and college experiences and their academic library use. This study examined the differences in library use attributed to students at different class levels. The survey investigated the library experiences of undergraduate students during their three years of study. Overall, library use was low for students in first, second and third year. However, the extent of participation by students in the various library activities did increase.

Drabenstott (2003) conducted a study on Do no domain experts enlist the strategies of domain experts? This study examined strategies used by fourteen undergraduates in a single search session employing a so-called information gateway, a university library's home page on the web that provided one entry point for access to the library's online resources. She concluded that few undergraduates were able to enlist search strategies commonly taken by domain experts (i.e., subject experts like professors) and when they did, domain-expert strategies were used infrequently and ineffectively.

Jarvelin and Ingwersen (2004) conducted a study on Information-seeking research needs extension towards tasks and technology. This study examine students and academic settings to explain competency theory admits application in analyzing information seeking behaviors in those who do not realize their own incompetence and therefore overestimate their abilities and other people's performance. Low-level information-seeking skills may then affect individuals' ability to recognize the need for information and the value of libraries and other information providers. Information professionals need to recognize low-level literacy skills and library anxiety in all service populations in order to provide outreach and systems to assist these students or patrons.

Callinan (2005) conducted a study on Information-seeking behavior of undergraduate biology students: A comparative analysis of first year and final year students in University College Dublin. This study reported on research conducted at University of Dublin comparing final year biochemistry students' and first year biology students' EIS use. Callinan found that the e-library was used by 27% of the first year

biology students and 56.5% of final year biochemistry students suggesting that first year students are under-educated in the information seeking technology and processes.

Kim (2006) conducted a study on Capturing Metrics for Undergraduate Uses of Subscription Databases." In This study about student use of library databases found that convenient access was an important determinant of database use. Some students preferred open Internet searches to web-based subscription databases simply because of their convenience. Kim goes on to note that competing with Internet searching must be a priority for libraries in the future: To compete with open internet searches and facilitate use of Web-based subscription databases, it is crucial for libraries to increase the convenience of access and awareness of the existence of the databases.

Objectives of Study

The main objectives were to:

- To evaluate the Frequency of visit to the Library by the UG and PG students of HC&RI, Periyakulam
- To evaluate the familiarity in ICT tools by the UG and PG students of HC&RI, Periyakulam
- To determine the most preferred location for accessing e-resources
- To understand the requirement of e-resources to supplement course curriculum / research

Scope and Limitation

The study is based on the Information Seeking Behaviour of Under Graduate and Post Graduate students of Horticultural College and Research Institute, Periyakulam. The scope of the study is limited to the electronic resources available in Horticulture College and Research Institute, Periyakulam.

Methodology Adopted

The study was conducted among the UG and PG students of Horticultural College and Research Institute, Periyakulam. The raw data was collected through questionnaires. Data was mainly collected using a pre-structured interview schedule. 113 questionnaires were distributed and 98 filled in questionnaires were received.

Table 1 Respodents in HC&RI, Periyakulam

Sl. No	Respondents	Questionnaire distributed	Questionnaire received
1	Under Graduate Students	90	79
2	Post Graduate students	23	19
	Total	113	98

Analysis and Interpretations

The data presented in table 1 indicate the respondents of UG and PG students in HC&RI, Periyakulam

Table 2 The frequency of visit to the library of UG and PG students are shown in Frequency of visit to the Library

Sl. No	Frequency	Respondents	%
1	Daily	13	13.3
2	Weekly	15	15.3
3	Twice in a week	40	40.8

4	Occasionally	25	25.5
5	Never	05	05.1
	Total	98	100.0

Table 2 shows the distribution of the respondents by their frequency of visit to the Library.

It is evident that 13.3% students were visit the library daily. 15.3% students were visit the library weekly. 40.8% students were visit the library Twice in a week. 15.3% students visit the library occasionally. 5.1% students never visited the library.

Table 3 Familiarity with ICT tools

Sl. No.	Familiarity	Respondents	%
1	Highly Familiar	14	14.3
2	Familiar	51	52.0
3	Not familiar	33	33.7
	Total	98	100.0

Table 3 shows the distribution of respondents according to the familiarity with Information and Communication Technology (ICT) tools.

In this analysis 52% of students were familiar with ICT tools followed by 33.7 % of students were not familiar and 14.3% of students were highly familiar with ICT tools.

Table 4 Most preferred location for accessing e-resources

Sl. No.	Location	Respondents	%
1	At Home	06	06.1
2	At Hostel	48	49.0
3	Department	09	09.2
4	Institution Library/ computer centre	15	15.3
6	Anywhere on campus via the wireless network (Wi-Fi)	20	20.4
	Total	98	100.0

Table 4 shows the distribution of respondents according to the most preferred location for accessing e-resources.

Majority of the students 49% accessed e-resources at hostel, 20.4% from anywhere on campus via the wireless network (Wi-Fi), 15.3% accessed e-resources from institution Library/ computer centre, 9.2% accessed e-resources from department and 6.1% accessed e-resources at home.

Table 5 Require to supplement of course curriculum & academic/ research

Sl. No.	E-Resources	Respondents	%
1.	E-Journals	10	10.2
2.	E-books	40	40.8
3.	E-Databases	15	15.3
4.	E-reports	13	13.3
5.	CD-DVD ROMS	20	20.4
	Total	98	100.0

Table 5 shows the distribution of respondents according to the opinion on the supplementation of e-resources for their curriculum by course wise. It is observes that 40.8% of respondents opined insufficiency of E-books for their curriculum followed by 20.4% of respondents opined insufficiency CD-DVD ROMS, 15.3% of respondents opined insufficiency of E-Databases, 13.3% of respondents opined about insufficiency of E-reports and 10.2% of respondents opined about insufficiency of E-Journals.

Findings

The following are the major observations based on the study:
1. Most of the students visit the library Twice in a week.
2. Most of the students were familiar with ICT tools
3. A majority of the student's (49%) accessed E-Resources at hostel.
4. Most preferred location for accessing e-resources by the student's was at hostel.

CONCLUSIONS

The exponential growth of digital information resources has necessitated electronic information services for the economic and effective delivery of information to the end users. Strengthening of E-Journals, E-books, E-Databases, E-reports and CD-DVD ROMS by adding more resources and facilities will provide strong information support for the education, course curriculum & academic/ research .

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