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Research Papers

INFORMATION SEARCHING HABITS OF ENGINEERS: A USERS' STUDY OF ENGINEERING COLLEGES UNDER THE HARYANA AND PUNJAB UNIVERSITIES

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Abstract

The function of library is an integrated component in higher study. A modern library is not a collection of printed books and printed journals. It is much than this. Today the library involves the fast changing e-environment of publishing. So the professional and academic librarians are facing a lot of problem due to static budget and exponential price hike of library collection and need of user for information is also increased. Online catalogs, electronic databases, and the internet have evolved as the predominant tools used in information seeking today.

The present paper highlights the investigate Information searching habits of engineers working in the engineering colleges under the Haryana and Punjab universities. The data of survey was collected through a structured questionnaire The questionnaires were distributed to 500 respondents randomly to the faculties and research- scholar. 310 filled in questionnaires were returned by the engineers with the response being 62%.

Keywords used: behavior, engineers, Information seeking, user.

1.INTRODUCTION

The study of information seeking behavior can be dated back to the late 1940's. Since that time a large number of studies have been carried out on the various aspects of information seeking behavior of individuals in different fields of specialization. Behavior of users towards seeking information depends upon the type of problem they undertake for research, availability of time, teaching requirements, and availability of sources of information.

Librarians ceaselessly effort to meet the information needs of their users. This requires an understanding of their users' information needs and information-seeking behaviors. This study has been confined to examine the information searching habits of engineering students and faculty members in twenty technical institutions under the universities of Haryana and Punjab. In order to better understand how engineering students and faculty are responding to changing information environment, how frequently engineers seek or access information to complete specific tasks, how engineers keep-up with current developments, how they discover less recent journal articles in their field, how often they visit the library in-person, and how important library resources and services cater their information needs. Understanding the nature of the user community and the information searching habits and practices of the users are common themes in library literature. With improved understanding of the information-seeking behavior of engineers in academic environments, librarians can better develop information services and resources, implement policies that help engineering students and faculty to access quality information, and improve collection development practices.

In the Information technology arena it is noticeable that revolutions are more than evolution. The

revolution comes after evolution. The world has been witnessing information explosion for the past several decades. The idea of increasing the effectiveness of information exchange by sharing the work nationally and internationally is fully recognized by the information professionals, seekers and information producers.

There has been a big change in the way information is accessed due to telecommunication network. This phenomenon has resulted in the formation of networks at local, regional, national and international levels.

Internet has a vital role to play in today's information communication system. Internet has come in a big way for retrieval of enormous output of information combing the concept of time, space and precision. It has become very easy to store information in the electronic form and provide it through World Wide Web technology to the users who can access the information as when required by them.

"Information is stimuli that have meaning in some context for its receiver. When information is entered into and stored in a computer, it is generally referred to as data. After processing (such as formatting and printing), output data can again be perceived as information" [1].

When information is packaged or used for understanding or doing something, it is known as knowledge. According to Wilson "Information behavior may be defined as the more common field of investigation, particularly concerned with the variety of methods people employ to discover". However, different scholars give different philosophies regarding that concept but our research gives us an idea that the most important one is the education system, which has great effect, and captures almost 70% of the mental ability to absorb the things that leads towards student's behavior" [2].

Information Searching Behavior is the 'micro-level' of behavior employed by the searcher in interacting with information systems of all kinds. It consists of all the interactions with the system, whether at the level of human computer interaction (for example, use of the mouse and clicks on links) or at the intellectual level (for example, adopting a Boolean search strategy or determining the criteria for deciding which of two books selected from adjacent places on a library shelf is most useful), which will also involve mental acts, such as judging the relevance of data or information retrieved.[3]

2.OBJECTIVES

The objective of this study is to identify the following, using a sample of engineers:

1.To find out the searching habits of engineers.
2.To identify the purpose of searching habits, nature and type of information required by the engineers.
3.To check the most important tool of information searching.
4.To understand about the search tool used by different engineers.
5.To identify the problem faced by the engineers.
6.To suggest strategies of improving engineers' information searching habits.
7.What kind of informal methods of acquiring information are used?

Here engineers mean faculty & research scholar of technical institutes under the Haryana and Punjab universities.

3.SCOPE

The scope of present study was limited to the engineers working in 20 engineering colleges situated in Haryana & Punjab. The sample included the research scholars and faculty members in the field of engineering.

4.METHODOLOGY

A questionnaire based survey method was adopted to gather the data on the information searching habits of the engineers of Haryana and Punjab. The questionnaires were distributed to 500 respondents randomly to the faculties and research- scholar of twenty engineering institute under the Haryana and Punjab universities. 310 filled in questionnaires were returned by the engineers with the response being 62%.

1.ANALYSIS AND RESULTS
5.1 Visits in lib. X number of students:

TABLE: 5.1

FREQUENCY	TOTAL USERS	PERCENT AGE (%)
Daily	71	23
Twice a week	155	50
Weekly	54	17
Fortnightly	22	7
Monthly	8	3
Never	0	0
Total no. of Respondents	**310**	**100.00**

(Source: Questionnaire)

Table 5.1: reveals the % of the visit made by faculties and research scholars out of 310 respondents 71 users visit their library daily, 155 users visit the library twice in a week, 54 users weekly, 22 users fortnightly, 8 users monthly and 0% students never visit the library. It means all the respondents visit the library. In Fig.-5.1 Highest number of candidates visit the library twice in a week i.e. 50% of the total respondents and lowest category of the respondent visit the library monthly i.e. 3%.

5.2 Use of Internet

Table – 5.2

Particular	Users	Percentag e (%)
Users who use the Internet	310	100
Users who do not use the Internet	0	0

(Source: Questionnaire)

Table -5.2 reveals that 100% users use the Internet i.e. 310 users out of 310 use the Internet. It means Internet is the important method of getting information. (See Fig.-5.2)

5.3 How helpful are the librarian and staff in finding answer to your quarries?

Table No. 5.3

Particulars	Users	Percenta ge (%)
Always	248	80
Often	37	12
Sometime	16	5
Rarely	6	2
Never	3	1

(Source: Questionnaire)

Table No. 3 reveals that librarian and library staff is very helpful to users ; 80 %users always satisfy with the librarian and staff of the library, 12% users often satisfy, only 5 % users sometime satisfy, 2% rarely and 1% users only are not very much satisfy with the librarian and library staff. Above description shows that library staff is very cooperative and helpful. (See Fig.-5.3)

5.4 Source of Information (Print and Non Print)

Table 5.4 shows that's all most engineers satisfied with the source of information. It is revealed from Fig.-5.4 that periodicals are the first preferred source of information followed by books. 128(41.3) % respondents' shown

their 1st preference to periodicals and 79(25.5) % shown their 1st preference to Books. Its show that periodicals are the first preference of the engineers' for getting their information and govt. documents is the last preference source of information. Shokeen, Ashu and Kaushik, Sanjay. K (2003) study also found that 1st preferred source was Journals [4].

Table -5.4
RANK ORDER

Source of information	1st	%	2nd	%	3rd	%	4th	%	5th	%	6th	%	Total
Books	79	25.5	124	40.0	65	21.0	20	6.5	10	3.2	12	3.9	310
Periodicals	128	41.3	56	18.1	69	22.3	45	14.5	7	2.3	5	1.6	310
Newspaper/ Press clipping	34	11.0	58	18.7	56	18.1	128	41.3	18	5.8	16	5.2	310
Govt. Documents	12	3.9	16	5.2	8	2.6	68	21.9	46	14.8	160	51.6	310
Dissertation/ Thesis	41	13.2	49	15.8	101	32.6	18	5.8	26	8.4	75	24.2	310
Conference/ Seminar Proceedings	16	5.2	7	2.3	11	3.5	31	10.0	203	65.5	42	13.5	310
	310		310		310		310		310		310		

lCONCLUSION

Internet is the most important method of getting information. Periodicals are the first preference of the engineers' for getting their information and govt. documents is the last preference source of information. Above description shows that library staff is very cooperative and helpful.

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2.Wilson, T.D., 1999. [2]"On user studies and information needs,' Journal of Documentation", 37(1): 3-15.
3.Wilson, T.D. 2000 [3] "Human Information Behavior" Special issue on Information Science Research, 3(2): 49-55.
4.http://searchsqlserver.techtarget.com/definition/information [1]

Fig-5.1
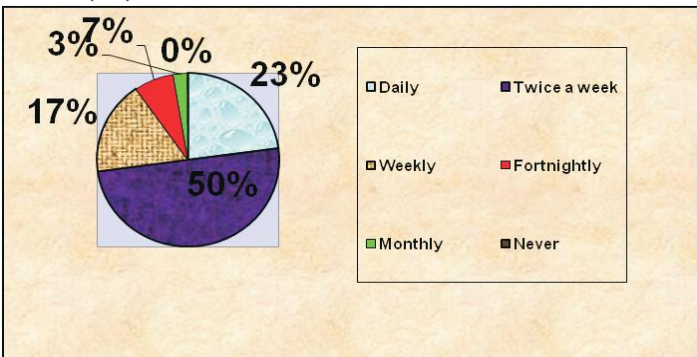**(%) OF VISIT THE LIBRARY'S USER**
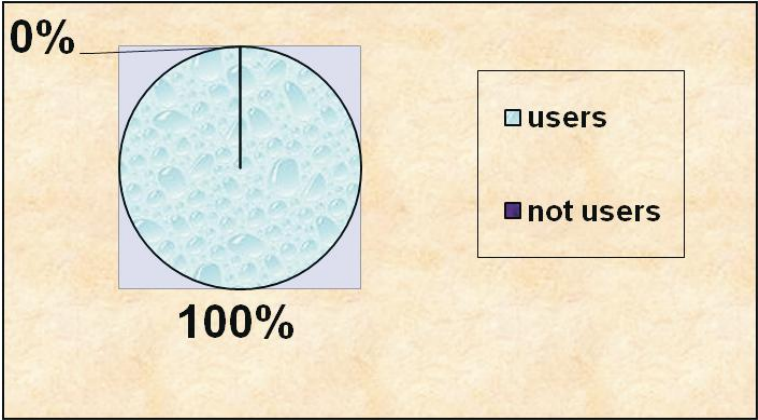
Fig-5.2
USE INTERNET

Fig.-5.3
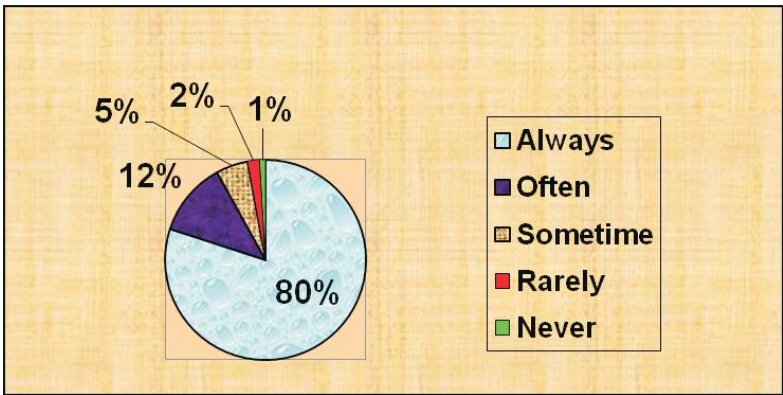**LIBRARIAN AND STAFF IN FINDING ANSWER TO RESPONDENTS' QUERIES**

Fig. - 5.4
SOURCE OF INFORMATION