INFORMATION SEEKING BEHAVIOUR OF FACULTY IN ST ALOYSIUS COLLEGE, THRISSUR, KERALA

Sruthy A V
Librarian
Bharatheeya Vidhya Vihar School
Mazhuvancherry, Kerala

Shehitha Salim
Asst. Professor
SB College
Kottayam, Kerala

Abstract

The examined the information seeking behaviour of faculty in St Aloysius College, Elthuruth, Thrissur. Information seeking behaviour is a process where people search for information and utilize the same to complete their assigned task. Questionnaires are the technique applied under survey methods. 67 questionnaires were distributed to the faculty of St Aloysius College and 60 questionnaires received. As regards the details of the existing infrastructure facilities and service subscribed by St Aloysius College and qualification of the librarians, the investigator has collected relevant data from the librarian in St Aloysius College through questionnaire. The study found that problems affecting the information seeking behaviour such as lack of personal contact, barriers in language/time/ geographical. Most of them suggested that working hours of the library should be increased.

Keywords: Information seeking behaviour, Faculty, Libraries

Introduction.

Information seeking is a relevant topic where most of the library users are not aware of choosing authentic information from different sources. The faculties and the librarians thus have a huge responsibility for dissemination of the right information to the students who are the future of our nations. Faculty members undertake research, teaching, and service roles to carry out the academic work of their respective institutions. Each of these roles enables faculty members to generate and disseminate knowledge to peers, students, and external audiences. St. Aloysius College, Thrissur is situated in Elthuruth, Thrissur city of Kerala state. It is a first-grade college affiliated to the University of Calicut. The journey of St. Aloysius began on 1 June 1968 with a Vision and mission of St. Kuriakose Elias Chavara "to mould intellectually competent, morally upright, socially committed and spiritually inspired individuals". The University was ranked 54th among Indian Universities by National Institutional Ranking Framework in 2020 and 76th overall. (St. Aloysius College, 2019)

SCOPE AND LIMITATIONS

The present study helps us to know the existing library and service and facilities. The study examines the kinds of information needed by faculties, if they are satisfied with the present library collection and services and also examines the effectiveness of the library. By studying the information seeking behaviour of faculty members will enable libraries to deliver standard service, thus they can improve the searching and teaching skill and also research output. It is important for developing library collections, upgrading facilities and improving services to effectively meet the information needs of faculties at St Aloysius College, Elthuruth. The major problem of this study is the time limit. Because of this only one institution is taken into consideration. Students are excluded in this study, concentrated only on faculties.

OBJECTIVES

1. To know information needs of faculty in St Aloysius College, Elthuruth.
2. To examine the information seeking behaviour of faculty in St Aloysius College, Elthuruth.
3. To examine the problem encountered by the faculty.

METHODOLOGY

The investigator distributed the questionnaires among the faculty members of different departments in the St Aloysius College, Elthuruth. 67 questionnaires were distributed among the faculty members in the month of July 2022. 60 questionnaires were received within three days of data collection. So this study is based on the 60 questionnaires received from the respondents. The respondent's information is gathered, analyzed, and presented in tables with detailed justification for each table.

ANALYSIS OF DATA

Channels used for Seeking Information

The question was asked to know which are the channels used by them for seeking information.

Table 1 Channels used for seeking information

Sl. No.	Channels	No. of respondents	Percentage of respondents
1	E-mail	47	78.33%
2	Telephone	31	51.67%
3	Colleagues	46	76.67%
4	Subject expert	37	61.67%
5	College library	52	86.67%

Table 1 shows that multiple responses were received for this question. Majority 86.67% of respondents prefer the college library as the channel for information seeking, whereas 78.33% of respondents prefer e-mail followed by colleagues 76.67%, subject expert 61.67% and telephone 51.67%.

Format of Information Sources

The question was asked to know which are the most preferred format of information sources need by the users in seeking information

Table 2 Format of information sources

Sl. No.	Format	No. of respondents	Percentage of respondents
1	Print	7	11.67%
2	Electronic	7	11.67%
3	Audio visual	15	25%
4	Both print and electronic	47	78.33%

Table 2 shows that multiple responses were received for this question. Majority 78.33% of respondents prefer both print and electronic format of information source while seeking information whereas, 25% prefer audio visual format of information sources, 11.67% prefer both print as well as electronic format.

Tools used for Locating Information

Question was asked to specify how they locate needed information from the library.

Table 3 Tools used for locating information

Sl. No.	Tools	No. of respondents	Percentage of respondents
1	Direct search in shelf	37	61.67%
2	Consulting library staff	25	41.67%
3	Through catalogue card	16	26.67%
4	Through OPAC	12	20%

Table 3 shows that multiple responses were received for this question. Majority 61.67% of respondents locate information by direct search on the shelf whereas 41.67% consult library staff and 26.67% find their information through catalogue cards. Only 20% of respondents find their information by using the OPAC.

Type of Information Needed

Question was asked to specify the types of information needed by the users.

Table 4 Types of information needed

Sl. No	Information	No. of respondents	Percentage of respondents
1	Information about previous work done	45	75%
2	Information about current development work done	45	75%
3	Information about patent, standards and trademarks	7	11.67%
4	Information about work done in other relevant fields	26	43.33%
5	Information about laboratory procedures	8	13.33%

Table 4 shows that multiple responses were received for this question. 75% of the respondents need information about previous work done and current developments in their field, 43.33% need information about work done in other relevant fields, 13.33% need information about laboratory procedure followed by 11.67% information about patents, standards and trademarks.

Problems

The question was asked to know which are the barriers of communication faced by the respondents in seeking the information.

Table 5 Problems

Sl. No.	Parameters	No. of respondents	Percentage of respondents
1	Lack of publishers in the specialised field	18	30%
2	Lack of technical journals	14	23.33%
3	Lack of personal contact	21	35%
4	Lack of support from the parent institution	7	11.67%
5	Lack of facilities such as computer, telephone, etc.	8	13.33%
6	Financial stringency	16	26.67%
7	Language barrier /Time barrier / Geographical barrier	19	31.67%
8	Personal problems (Being introvert)	8	13.33%

Table 5 shows that multiple responses were received for this question. Majority 35% lack of personal contact as main problem, 31.67% of respondents encountered language/ time barrier/ geographical barrier, 30% faced lack of publishers in the specialized field, 26.67% face financial stringency, 23.33% lack of technical journals, 13.33% face lack of facilities such as computer, telephone and face personal problems and 11.67% lack of support from the parent institution.

Table 5.24 Problems relating to library

Sl. No.	Problems relating to Library	No. of respondents	Percentage of respondents
1	Inadequate sources and services	5	8.33%
2	Lack of knowledge about library facilities and services	13	21.67%
3	Inconvenient working hours	10	16.67%
4	Unhelpful mentality of library staff	0	0
5	Inadequate qualified staff	1	1.67%

Table 5.24 shows multiple response were received. 21.67% face lack of knowledge about library facilities and services, 16.67% face the inconvenient working hours, 8.33% inadequate sources and services and 1.67% is inadequate qualified.

MAJOR FINDINGS

Majority of the faculty members seek their required information through the college library. E-mail is also their preferred channel for seeking information. It is evident from the analysis that the majority of users prefer to use their information in both print and electronic format. Analysis revealed that faculties locate their required information through direct search in the shelf. It is evident from the analysis that faculty members seek different types of information to carry their academic activities efficiently. Majority of the faculty members seek previous work done and current developments in their field whereas those seek patent, standards and trademarks is minimal. The major problem faced by the faculty members is lack of personal contact followed by language barrier/time barrier/ geographical barrier. With regard to libraries they face problems such as lack of knowledge about library facilities and services and inconvenient working hours.

CONCLUSION

The study concluded that lack of knowledge about library facilities and services is the major problem of the faculty members. It will be eliminated undergo orientation programmes. It helps to access the sources and services. Findings also revealed that that inconvenient working hours is the other major problem for the majority of the faculty members. It will be eliminated by extending library hours. In order to suit the faculty's demands for teaching and research, the library should make sure to obtain additional information resources, particularly academic literature.

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