Information use pattern of teachers and students of Punjab University Regional Centre, Sri Muktsar Sahib: A case study

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Abstract

The present was study conducted with the aim to determine the information use pattern among the teachers and the students of Punjab University Regional Centre, Sri Muktsar Sahib. The study also investigated the frequency of library visit and to identify various purposes of library use by the academic community of regional centre under study. The other purposes include finding usage and awareness of users about digital information resources and services available in the centre. A well structured questionnaire was designed to collect the data from the respondents. The respondents of the study include teachers, students pursing M.Phil. (Punjabi), L.L.B. and M.C.A. in the centre. Total 147 questionnaires were distributed among all the academic community mentioned above and 107 questionnaires were received back proper filled in with response rate of 72.78%. The results of the study indicate that a majority of the respondents i.e. 58.87% are using libraries on daily basis. A majority of the respondents use the library for research purposes with 53.27% responses. The study concluded that in this era of information explosion, there is an instant need to educate the academic community of the centre under study on how to use effectively use and retrieve information e-resources and what kinds of services and tools are available to bridge the gap between information have and to get the exact piece of information needed.

Keywords: Information Seeking Pattern; Teachers; Students; User Study; Library Usage; Panjab University; India

Introduction

Information is a vital ingredient for educational institutions and library is the store house of information. The present study is an attempt to find out the information usage pattern among the stakeholders and to find for what purposes information and library are used by them. There is dire need to stimulate the academic community to effectively utilize the information available, because the educational institutions are investing a huge amount to run library systems. Moreover, there is shift from print to electronic resources, hence, it is, important to know, where the usage trend is going on. Thus, the investigators decided to take this study to explore the answers of queries raised above and to highlights the emergent need i.e. to bridge the gap of information and to get instantly only the desired piece of information from endless information available on the desired topic of information.

It is important to know what an information is, Orna described as "it is anything people want to know and apply in their work to achieve their, or the enterprise's objectives."[(1)] Newman and Newman added in it, "information is that which destroys uncertainty."[(2)] It is rightly said that today information has become the fourth need for human life. Megill encouraged people to use information by saying "information gains value with use."[(3)]

Technology is the main instrument to get the desired information available on the desired place at desired time. The society in which we are living, have been associated with the printing technology since last five hundred years, but the emergence and convergence of information and communication technologies has given rise to new resources and services, as well as new challenges and opportunities. Information seekers, today, are interested in real time access to information, and the Internet and the Web have the potential to provide this access instantly.[(4)]

Punjab University Regional Centre (PURC), Sri Muktsar Sahib: An Overirew

The Malwa Region of Punjab is having now a significant number of educational institutions providing higher education, but the situation is not so good yet and there is a need to establish more universities and educational institutions to upgrade the position of higher education in Malwa Region. So, realizing these facts and their responsibility towards the society in general and the development of the backward area in particular, Punjab Government and Punjab University decided to start a regional centre at Sri Muktsar Sahib. The regional centre was inaugurated by the Hon'ble Chief Minister of Punjab, S. Parkash Singh Badal on August 8, 1998 and the session was commenced from that day itself. The Regional Centre, Muktsar Campus is spread over in a 100 acre of plot of land. The Campus will comprise Teaching Department Blocks, Library Building, Administrative Offices, Hostels and a residential complex. In its present complex, the

Regional Centre has 38 rooms, an entirely Air-conditioned library hall and computer laboratories, canteen & a common room.

Review of Literature

Pareek and Rana conducted a study on information seeking behavior and library use pattern among the researchers of Banasthali University. In this study, 100 research scholars were surveyed. The results of the study show that IT based library services are being less utilized as compared to print sources by the research scholars. It is revealed that there was little awareness of e-resources available in library. This study also found that most of the researchers i.e. (80%) are not aware about how to use documents delivery services.[5] Subramanian studied information seeking behavior and library use pattern of biotechnology researchers in the Bharathidasan University, Tamilnadu. This study reveals that most of the researchers i.e. (42%) visit the library on daily basis for their research purposes. The study also indicated that researchers have very little awareness about e-resources and there is less use of document delivery services.[6] Naick conducted a study on information use pattern of students. In this paper the investigator investigates the interest of students about the level of books. The study concluded that students preferred low standard books for examination purpose and medium standard books for subject purpose. The researchers are always use high standard books for research work. Moreover, information seeking pattern is based on their requirements.[7] Prabakaran et al conducted a study on information access pattern among faculty in arts and sciences colleges at Chidanbaram. The study reveals that one third of the faculty i.e. 24 (35.83%) visited the library on daily basis and one fifth faculty i.e. 13 (19.39%) on once a week basis. Most of the faculty members i.e. 33 (49.26%) visited the library to prepare their lectures and 15 (22.39%) to update their knowledge. The study also reveals that library catalogue is not satisfactory means of information retrieval. Mishra conducted a study about information use pattern by scientists and results reveal that e-journals were mostly consulted by the scientists with 35.27% responses followed by e-patents, e-books, e-reports and databases and e-proceedings with 14.43%, 12.83%, 12.22% and 10.02% responses respectively. The study depicted that users prefer to use the information available through electronic form rather than by traditional way.[8]

Objectives

The main objectives of the study are:
- To find the frequency of library visit by teachers and students of PURC, Sri Muktsar Sahib;
- To find the purpose of library visit;
- To find the methods of information access;
- To find the awareness and use patterns of information resources and services by the respondents.

Scope: The scope of the study was limited to teachers and students of Punjab University Regional Centre, Sri Muktsar Sahib.

Research Methodology: A structured questionnaire was designed to collect the relevant data for the study. All the respondents i.e. teachers and students were personally contacted and were interviewed also to fill in the gap, if any. There were 17 teachers 130 students (30 of M. Phil. Punjabi, 50 each from L.L.B. and M.C.A.) during the duration of study and all were included in the study. Out of 147 questionnaires, 107 questionnaires were found valid for the study and data analysis was done with the help of statistical method i.e. percentage.

Data Analysis

Table 1: Frequency of library visit

Frequency	Teachers	Students (LLB & MCA)	Students (M. Phil.)	Total
Daily	8(47.05%)	37(61.66%)	18(60%)	63(58.87%)
3-4 times in a week	5(29.41%)	11(18.33%)	10(33.33%)	26(24.29%)
Weekly	3(17.64%)	9(15%)	5(16.66%)	17(15.88%)
Occasionally	1(5.88%)	3(5%)	-	4(3.73%)
Total	17 (100%)	60 (100%)	30 (100%)	107(100%)

Table 1 shows that 58.87% of the respondents visit the library on daily basis. 24.29% of the respondents visit library on 3-4 times in a week basis. 15.88% use the library on weekly basis and there are respondents who visit the library occasionally with 3.73% responses. Hence, it can be inferred that a majority of the students use the library on daily basis as compared to teachers.

Table 2: Purpose of library visit

Purpose	Teachers	Students (LLB & MCA)	Students (M. Phil.)	Total
Research	11(64.70%)	19(31.66%)	27(90%)	57(53.27%)
Study	7(41.17%)	27(45%)	19(63.33%)	53(49.53%)
Borrowing of Information Resources	10(58.82%)	50(83.33%)	25(83.33%)	85(79.43%)
Reading Periodicals	5(29.41%)	-	9(30%)	14(13.08%)
Update Knowledge	13(76.47%)	13(21.66%)	17(56.66%)	43(40.18%)

Table 2 indicates that a majority of the respondents i.e. 79.43% use the library for borrowing of information resources. 53.27% of the teachers and students use the library for research purposes. 49.53% of the respondents use the library for study purposes. 40.18% of the respondents have indicated that they use the library to keep themselves update. Only 13.08% of the respondents are using the library for reading periodicals. It can be inferred from the results that a majority of the students use the library to borrow information resources from the library and a majority of the teachers use the library to update their knowledge followed by research.

Table 3: Methods of information access

Type	Teachers	Students (LLB & MCA)	Students (M. Phil.)	Total
Internet	15(88.23%)	47(78.33%)	17(56.66%)	79(73.83%)
Library catalogues	15 (88.23%)	55(91.66%)	30(100%)	100(93.45%)
Friends/ Colleagues	6(35.29%)	9(15%)	23(38.33%)	38(35.51%)
Television/ Radio	7(41.17%)	4(6.66%)	7(11.66%)	18(16.82%)

The respondents were asked to provide information about the various access methods used by them to get the desired piece of information. Table 3 indicates that a majority of the respondents use the library catalogues with 93.45% respondents to find their desired piece of information. 73.83% of the respondents use the Internet, followed by friends/ colleagues and television/ radio with 35.51% and 16.82% responses respectively. It can be inferred from the results that a majority of the students are still depended on the library catalogues to find their desired information but now teachers are more dependent on Internet for their information needs.

Table 4: Use of information resources and services

Resources & Services	Teachers	Students (LLB & MCA)	Students (M. Phil.)	Total
CAS/SDI	7(41.17%)	17(28.33%)	6(20%)	30(28.03%)
Indexing and Bibliographies	10(58.82%)	5(8.33%)	19(63.33%)	34(31.77%)
Reference books and Journals	15(88.23%)	13(21.66%)	23(76.66%)	51(47.66%)
Inter-library Loan	3(17.64%)	-	-	3(2.80%)
Documents Delivery Services	-	-	-	-

Table 4 indicates that 47.66% of respondents referred the reference books & journals. 31.77% of respondents used the indexing and bibliography services. CAS/SDI services were used by the 28.03% of the respondents. Only 2.80% of the respondents indicated that they used the Inter-library Loan service of the library. The results also show that there is a great necessity to create awareness among the stakeholders as nobody has opted for documents delivery services. The results depict that a majority of the teachers consult the reference books and journals as compared to students and a majority of the students used the indexing and bibliographies services as compared to teachers.

Table 5: Use of e-resources

e- resource	Teachers	Students (LLB & MCA)	Students (M. Phil.)	Total
e-Journals	11(64.70%)	23(38.33%)	7(23.33%)	41(38.31%)
e-Books	8(47.05%)	5(8.33%)	-	13(12.14%)
e-Databases	9(52.94%)	7(11.66%)	3(10%)	19(17.75%)

Table 5 shows that 38.31% of the respondents use the e-journals, followed by e-databases with 17.75% responses. Only 12.14% of the respondents have indicated that they use the e-books. It can be inferred that a majority of the teachers are using e-resources as compared to students.

Major Findings

- 58.87% of the respondents visit the library on daily basis, 24.29% on 3-4 times in a week basis, 15.88% on weekly basis and 3.73% respondents use the library on occasionally basis.
- A majority of the respondents i.e. 79.43% use the library for borrowing of information resources, 53.27% for research, 49.53% for study 40.18% to update their knowledge and 13.08% for reading periodicals.
- A majority of the respondents use the library catalogues with 93.45% respondents to find their desired piece of information, 73.83% use the Internet, followed by friends/ colleagues and television/ radio with 35.51% and 16.82% responses respectively.
- 47.66% of respondents referred the reference books & journals, 31.77% of respondents used the indexing and bibliography services 28.03% CAS/SDI and only 2.80% used the Inter-library Loan service of the library.
- 38.31% of the respondents use the e-journals, followed by e-databases with 17.75% responses and 12.14% use the e-books resources of the library.

Suggestions

On the basis of the findings, the following suggestions have set forth, so that the use of information resources and services be enhanced in the centre:

- The library should organize training and awareness programmes from time-to-time.
- The library staff should also be trained so that they may be able to provide services in a better way.
- The centre should have fast Internet facility and all the departments should be inter-connected with wi-fi facility, so that e-resources access be enhanced.
- More computer systems should be added in the library.
- Photocopying and printing facilities should be added in the library.
- Information retrieval techniques should be added in the syllabus of the post graduate courses.

Conclusion

The results of the present study indicated that there is a dire need to train the teachers and students about how to use e-resources, so that the use of e-resources subscribed be enhanced in the centre. The library staff should take this initiative to arrange various training programmes about information retrieval systems and techniques, so that users may be able to get the desired information without any delay. The developments in computer and communication technology have radically changed the way, the users seeking information and there is a paradigm shift from print based publication to formless data. The libraries should also be equipped with all the latest development in the field and librarians should have to sharpen their knowledge and skill, so that they may be able to satisfy the needs of modern users. The nature of information is ever changing and now it has become fluid and transcendental. The librarians should learn the way to organize this fluidic information.[9]

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