Information Search Pattern of Students in Women Colleges Affiliated to Madurai Kamaraj University: An Analytical Study

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Abstract

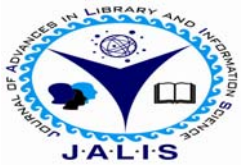
The paper investigates to find out the information search pattern in the internet and made comparison among the respondents in respect of search engines and information resources. The study was conducted among female respondents who are pursuing their education at undergraduate and postgraduate level at various women colleges affiliated to Madurai Kamaraj University. It is found that majority of the respondents are used internet to search information for their examinations. The majority of respondents are used "Google" search engine to locate information in the internet. The study is also recommended that the teachers and librarians should organize the information literacy programme regularly to increase use of the electronic resources especially scholarly content.

Keywords

Internet, Search engine, information resources, ICT, e-journals, e-books
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1. Introduction

Progress of any nation, society and individuals depends upon the provision of the right kind of information in the right form at the right time and ensuring proper utilization of the information. Information is an essential input for teaching, learning and research production and other such activities. University Libraries are primarily responsible for extending wider and deeper access to information and information resources in support of University user's needs. Over the years the Library and Information service professional have been using tools, techniques and technologies in organizing and promoting the use of information. The University Libraries are undergone significant changes both in structural and also in the functional components. There are main facilitators of scholarly communication system and have influenced a lot due to development of technologies and its profitable applications to various works and activities of libraries. Documents or Collections are essential basic requirements of libraries to meet the needs of users. Technological development or innovations has not only changed the physical format of documents but also enhanced the use of its contents through various services.

2. Review of Literature

Jeyshankar, Nachiappan, and Suresh (2016) analysed Social Networking Sites (SNSs) are very useful to connect the people in today's society. The purpose of this study was to investigate the access to and use of social networking sites among the post graduate students of rural colleges in India. A questionnaire was used for this study. The respondents have excellent skills in using social networking sites for sharing and communicating information. Nachiappan and Jeyshankar (2015) studied how the graduate students and Scholars of AIMs applied their Information Retrieval (IR) skills in accessing electronic resources. The research method was descriptive survey method was adopted in this study. The data were collected from the 79.35% of entire graduate students and research scholars in Alagappa Institute of Management through a well-structured questionnaire. Almost 90% of the students came from the rural areas where the university was established to increasing the literacy level of rural based students. Grace and Jeyshankar (2014) examined the information seeking behavior of the nursing professionals of Apollo College of Nursing, Chennai. Questionnaire (N =175) was used to collect the data

and the analysis covers mainly the type of sources used, usage pattern, services utilized by the users, information seeking behaviour, level of satisfaction and constraints faced by the nursing professionals. Concludes that the library sources and services were utilized at the maximum level by the undergraduates and users who had lecturing and research as their nature of work. Sudhier and Seethalakshmi (2011) observed that majority of respondents use e-mail services for research activities and also suggested that academic institutions and libraries should facilitate the maximum usage of resources. Malliari, Korobili andZapounidou(2011) explained that the information seeking behavior of students are influenced by their search experience, computer and web experience, perceived ability and frequency of use of e-sources, and not by specific personal characteristics or attendance at library instruction programs. Flavian-Blanco,Gurrea-Sarasaand Orus-anclemente (2011) analyzed the emotional outcomes of the online search process, taking into account the user's perceptions of success and effort exerted on the search process, initial affective state, and emotions felt during the search process.

3. Objectives of the Study

1. To identify the purpose of searching information on internet by the undergraduate students and postgraduate students.
2. To compare the preferred search engines between undergraduate students and postgraduate students.
3. To compare the preferred information resources between undergraduate students and postgraduate students.

4. Hypotheses

H_1 There is a significant difference in the purpose of searching information on internet.

H_2 There is no significant difference in the purpose of searching information on internet among
Undergraduate students and Postgraduate students.

H_3 There is a significant difference in the preferred search engines.

H_4 There is no significant difference in the preferred search engines among
Undergraduate students and Postgraduate students.

H_5 There is significant difference in the preferred information sources.

H_6 There is no significant difference in the preferred information sources among
Undergraduate students and Postgraduate students.

5. Methodology

A well structured questionnaire has been designed to collect data from the respondents. The questionnaire was distributed among Undergraduate students and Postgraduate students studying in women colleges affiliated to Madurai Kamaraj University randomly in and around Madurai. The questionnaire was divided into four sections such as personal information, purpose of searching information on internet, preferred search engine and preferred information sources. A total of 301 respondents have responded, out of 375 questionnaires and it makes 80.26 % on overall responses. The data were analyzed by using SPSS.

6. Data Analysis and Findings

6.1. Distribution of Respondents

The data were collected from Undergraduate students and Postgraduate students studying in women colleges affiliated to Madurai Kamaraj University who are currently pursuing their education in arts & science disciplines in various colleges located in and around Madurai, Tamil Nadu. The demographic information is given in table 1.

Table 1: Demographic Information

S. No	Description	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1.	Undergraduate Students	186	61.8
2.	Postgraduate Students	115	38.2
	Total	**301**	**100**

The majority of respondents are belonged to Undergraduate Students 186 (61.8%) and followed by Postgraduate Students 115 (38.2%).

6.2. Purpose of Searching Information on Internet

Students are searched information on internet for various purposes. It differs from user to user. In order to ascertain the purpose, the relevant data were collected among the users and analyzed. The same is given in table 2.

Table 2: Purpose of Searching Information on Internet

S. No	Description	SD	DA	UD	A	SA	Total	Mean	R	Chi-Square
1.	To prepare for the examination	34 11.3%	198 65.8%	15 5.0%	31 10.3%	23 7.6%	301 100%	2.37	4	397.920
2.	To prepare for the paper presentation	15 5.0%	22 7.3%	82 27.2%	100 33.2%	82 27.2%	301 100%	3.70	3	100.279
3.	To collect information for assignment	7 2.3%	11 3.7%	42 14.0%	129 42.9%	112 37.2%	301 100%	4.08	2	215.927
4.	To collect information for the projects	8 2.7%	10 3.3%	55 18.3%	95 31.6%	133 44.2%	301 100%	4.11	1	195.728

(SD=Strongly Disagree, DA=Disagree, UD=Undecided, A=Agree, SA=Strongly Agree, M=Mean, R=Rank), (Table Value 9.488, df 4)

Table 2 indicates the purpose of searching information on internet by the respondents. It is revealed that majority of respondents are used internet to collect information for the projects and it placed first rank as its mean secure is 4.11 on five point scale rating, followed by collecting information for assignments and its mean secure is 4.08 on five point scale rating. It is further found that only few respondents are searching information on internet for examination purpose and ranked fourth place and its mean score is 2.37 on five point scale rating. The chi-square was also used to test the hypothesis that there is a significant difference in the purpose of searching information on internet. The calculated value (195.728) for parameter is more than table value (9.488). Hence, hypothesis is not significant.

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6.3. Purpose of searching information on internet by Students

The study is also made an attempt to ascertain the purpose of searching information on internet. The respondents were categorized into two broad groups such as Undergraduate Students, and Postgraduate Students. The data were collected from UG, PG students of each category and the same is given in table 3

Table 3: Purpose of Searching Information on Internet *Vs.* Students

S. No	Description	Postgraduate Students (n=115)							Undergraduate Students (n=186)							Chi-Square
		SD	DA	UD	A	SA	M	R	SD	DA	UD	A	SA	M	R	
1.	To prepare for the Exams	17 14.8%	46 40.%	10 8.7%	21 18.3%	21 18.3%	2.85	4	17 9.1%	152 81.7%	5 2.7%	10 5.4%	2 1.1%	2.07	4	64.875
2.	To prepare for the paper presentation	3 2.6%	6 5.2%	29 25.2%	45 39.1%	32 27.8%	3.84	3	12 6.5%	16 8.6%	53 28.5%	55 29.6%	50 26.9%	3.61	3	5.478
3.	To collect information for assignment	3 2.6%	7 6.1%	19 16.5%	51 44.3%	35 30.4%	3.93	2	4 2.2%	4 2.2%	23 12.4%	78 41.9%	77 41.4%	4.18	1	6.349
4.	To collect information for the projects	3 2.6%	4 3.5%	26 22.6%	28 24.3%	54 47.0%	4.09	1	5 2.7%	6 3.2%	29 15.6%	67 36.0%	79 42.5%	4.12	2	5.322
						Average Mean	**3.67**						**Average Mean**	**3.49**		

(SD=Strongly Disagree, DA=Disagree, UD=Undecided, A=Agree, SA=Strongly Agree, M=Mean, R=Rank)

(Table Value 9.488, df 4)

Table 3 indicates the category-wise analysis of searching information on internet. It is found that the Postgraduate Students ranked first position in the overall purposes of searching information on internet and their average mean is 3.67 on five point scale rating. The students belonged to Undergraduate Students occupied the second position in their overall purposes and their average mean is 3.49 on five point scale rating. The chi-square test is also administrated to test the hypothesis that there is no significant difference in the purpose of searching information on interent.The calculated value (64.875) for parameters is more than table value (9.488). Hence, the hypothesis is not significant.

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6.4. Preferred Search Engine

The information can be searched through various methods such as search engine, websites, library portals etc.In this study, search engine alone was considered to analysis. The preferred search engine is given in table 4. The weightage is assigned from least to highest

Table 4: Preferred Search Engines

S.No	Description	YES	NO	Total	Mean	Rank	Chi-Square
1.	Google	286 95.0%	15 5.0%	301 100%	1.04	1	243.990
2.	Yahoo	165 54.8%	136 45.2%	301 100%	1.45	2	2.794
3.	Ask	47 15.6%	254 84.4%	301 100%	1.84	3	142.355
4.	Bing	33 11.0%	268 89.0%	301 100%	1.89	5	183.472
5.	AltaVista	35 11.6%	266 88.4%	301 100%	1.88	4	177.279

(Table value 3.841, df 1)

Table 4 indicates the result of preferred search engine among respondents. It is found that majority of respondents were preferred “Google” to search information and also ranked first position in overall preferred search engines and its mean is 1.04 on two point nominal scale rating. It is followed by “Yahoo” and it occupied second rank based on mean score 1.45 on two point nominal scale rating. The search engine “Ask” has ranked the third place based on secure mean score 1.84 on two point nominal scale rating. It is further observed that only few respondents were preferred “Bing” search engine since it is ranked the last place based on the mean score 1.89 on two point nominal scale rating. The chi-square was also used to test the hypothesis that there is a significant difference in the preferred search engines. The calculated value (243.990) for parameters is more than table value (3.841). Therefore, the hypothesis is not significant.

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6.5. Preferred search engine by students

The search engine plays an important role to locate the information in the internet. It searches information from the various resources and retrieved the relevant information in the desired formats. The selection specific search engine is totally depended upon users’ interest. The study is also attempted to find out the preferred search engines. Five search engines are identified in this study and the same is given in table 5.The weightage is assigned from least to highest.

Table 5: Preferred Search Engines *Vs.* Students

S.No	Description	Postgraduate Students (n=115)				Undergraduate Students (n=186)				Chi-Square
		YES	NO	Mean	Rank	YES	NO	Mean	Rank	
1.	Google	104 90.4%	11 9.6%	1.09	1	182 97.8%	4 2.2%	1.02	1	8.251
2.	Yahoo	47 40.9%	68 59.1%	1.59	2	118 63.4%	68 36.6%	1.36	2	14.617
3.	Ask	20 17.4%	95 82.6%	1.82	3	27 14.5%	159 85.5%	1.85	3	.446
4.	Bing	11 9.6%	104 90.4%	1.90	4	22 11.8%	164 88.2%	1.88	5	.375
5.	AltaVista	10 8.7%	105 91.3%	1.91	5	25 13.4%	161 86.6%	1.86	4	1.557
		Average Mean		**1.66**		**Average Mean**		**1.59**		

(Table value 3.841, df 1)

Table 5 indicates the results of preferred search engines among two categories of respondents. It is found that Undergraduate Students ranked first place in overall preferred search engines and their average mean is 1.59, whereas Postgraduate Students ranked second position in overall preferred search engines and their mean score is 1.66. Further, the chi-square test is also administrated to test the hypothesis that there is no significant difference in preferred search engines among Postgraduate and Undergraduate students. The calculated value (14.617) for parameters is more than table value (3.841). Therefore, the hypothesis is not significant.

6.6. Preferred Information Resources

The information is published in a variety of forms like books, journals, reports, thesis, e-books, e-journals, online/off line databases. The usage of resources is also depended upon the users. The study is made to ascertain the preferred resources among the respondents. The relevant data were collected, analyzed and showed in table 6.

Table 6: Preferred Information Resources

S.No	Description	SD	DA	UD	A	SA	Total	Mean	R	Chi-Square
1.	E-books	21 7.0%	17 5.6%	29 9.6%	161 53.5%	73 24.3%	301 100%	3.82	4	244.199
2.	E-Journals	5 1.7%	11 3.7%	45 15.0%	92 30.6%	148 49.2%	301 100%	4.21	1	239.515
3.	Electronic Databases	9 3.0%	18 6.0%	59 19.6%	81 26.9%	134 44.5%	301 100%	4.03	2	170.811
4.	Online Course Materials	17 5.6%	22 7.3%	61 20.3%	92 30.6%	109 36.2%	301 100%	3.84	3	111.608
5.	Electronic Project Reports	25 8.3%	23 7.6%	65 21.6%	103 34.2%	85 28.2%	301 100%	3.66	5	84.598
6.	E-Thesis and Dissertations	46 15.3%	42 14.0%	124 41.2%	66 21.9%	23 7.6%	301 100%	2.92	6	100.013

(SD=Strongly Disagree, DA=Disagree, UD=Undecided, A=Agree, SA=Strongly Agree, M=Mean, R=Rank)
(Table Value 9.488, df 4)

Table 6 indicates the result of preferred information sources among respondents. It is revealed that majority of the respondents were preferred to use the e-journals for simple reasons it is easy to access and

ranked first place, secured mean is 4.21 on five point scale rating , followed by electronic databases ranked second place and its mean score is 4.03 on five point scale rating. Further, it is also observed that online course materials are also widely used by the students because it gives the content in the precious form and ranked third place based on mean score 3.84 on five point scale rating. It is also indicated that only few respondents were preferred E-Thesis and Dissertation and their mean score is 2.92 on five point scale rating. The chi-square test is also used to test the hypothesis that there is significant difference in the preferred information resources. The calculated value (244.199) for parameters is greater than table value (9.488).Therefore, the hypothesis is not significant.

6.7. Preferred Information Resources

The preferred information sources were further analyzed internet among Undergraduate Students and Postgraduate Students and the same is given in table 7.

Table 7: Preferred Information Resources

S. No	Description	Postgraduate Students (n=115)							Undergraduate Students (n=186)							Chi-Square
		SD	DA	UD	A	SA	M	R	SD	DA	UD	A	SA	M	R	
1.	E-books	10 8.7%	9 7.8%	13 11.3%	48 41.7%	35 30.4%	3.77	5	11 5.9%	8 4.3%	16 8.6%	113 60.8%	38 20.4%	3.85	3	10.626
2.	E-Journals	4 3.5%	5 4.3%	18 15.7%	26 22.6%	62 53.9%	4.19	2	1 .5%	6 3.2%	27 14.5%	66 35.5%	86 46.2%	4.23	1	8.711
3.	Electronic Databases	3 2.6%	6 5.2%	15 13.0%	28 24.3%	63 54.8%	4.23	1	6 3.2%	12 6.5%	44 23.7%	53 28.5%	71 38.2%	3.91	2	9.213
4.	Online Course Materials	7 6.1%	5 4.3%	27 23.5%	33 28.7%	43 37.4%	3.86	4	10 5.4%	17 9.1%	34 18.3%	59 31.7%	66 35.5%	3.82	4	3.528
5.	Electronic Project Reports	4 3.5%	2 1.7%	22 19.1%	39 33.9%	48 41.7%	4.08	3	21 11.3%	21 11.3%	43 23.1%	64 34.4%	37 19.9%	3.40	5	26.244
6.	E-Thesis and Dissertations	17 14.8%	11 9.6%	53 46.1%	26 22.6%	8 7.0%	2.97	6	29 15.6%	31 16.7%	71 38.2%	40 21.5%	15 8.1%	2.89	6	3.833
						Average Mean	**3.85**						**Average Mean**	**3.68**		

(SD=Strongly Disagree, DA=Disagree, UD=Undecided, A=Agree, SA=Strongly Agree, M=Mean, R=Rank)
(Table value 9.488, df 4)

Table 7 indicates the result of preferred information sources among Undergraduate Students and Postgraduate Students. It is found that Postgraduate Students occupied the first place in overall preferred information sources and their secured mean score is 3.85.The second position is occupied by Undergraduate Students in over all preferred information sources and their secured mean score is 3.68.The chi-square is also used to test the hypothesis that there is no significant difference in the preferred information source. The calculated value 26.244 for parameters is more than the table value (9.488). Hence, hypothesis is not significant.

7. Major Findings of the Study

1. It is found that majority of respondents were used internet to collect information for their projects (Table 2, Mean 4.11)
2. It is also analyzed that the Postgraduate Students are widely used internet to collect information pertaining to their academic performance when it is compared with Undergraduate Students (Table 3, Average Mean Score 3.67).
3. It is further observed that most of the respondents were preferred “Google” Search Engine to locate information (Table 4, Mean 1.04).
4. It is also ascertained that majority Undergraduate Students were used “Google” search engine to locate information in the internet. It is highest rate when compared with Postgraduate Students (Table 5, Average Mean Score 1.59).
5. It is further found that most of the respondents were used electronic journals to collect information for their academic performance (Table 6, Mean 4.21).
6. It is indicated that majority Postgraduate Students were preferred the electronic resource

to collect information when it is compared with Undergraduate Students (Table 7, Average Mean score 3.85)

8. Conclusion

The higher education institutions are established not only to impart education and award degrees to the students but also to make them self-learners and life-long learners by providing all the required information and services. The libraries attached to higher education institutions, focus numerous challenges in procuring, storing, organizing and disseminating their information sources. Establishment and maintenance of a resource rich library with need based facilities and services are an important prerequisite for universities. It plays an important role by connecting the faculty members, research scholars, and students with current and timely information. Now a day, library users are no longer obliged to visit the library at regular open hours to meet all their information needs. Information Technology has made simple to users to sit comfortably in their office or home to do research, employing a computer to search electronic information sources and services. The information and information products and services have recently received much attention from all the users, which is also the important factor for socio-economic well being of the people.

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