Utilization of Information Sources by the Students of Arts and Science Colleges Affiliated to Thiruvalluvar University: A Study

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Abstract

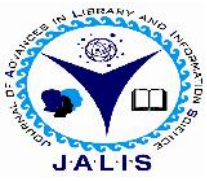
The present study deals with library utilization behavior among the students of arts and Science colleges affiliated to Thiruvalluvar University. The main focus of the study is to assess the information seeking behavior as well as information utilization behavior among the student community. In this study the researcher attempt to highlight what are the information sources periodically used for their academic and professionals need. The study gives frequency of using of different types of information sources such as primary sources, secondary sources, e-resources and unpublished information sources. The present study provided the differences among the Arts and science students among the four districts in using the above mentioned information sources.

Keywords

utilization behaviour, seeking behaviour, student community, academic needs, primary sources, secondary sources, e-resources, and unpublished information sources

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Introduction

The effectiveness of library and information system depends on the extent to which the system's characteristics correspond with the user and on how much potential the user is willing and able to make use of it. Hence a design of any library system is to be based on a proper understanding of the user. In this way, only a librarian can improve upon his role as an information transfer agent. He has to intimately and individually understand the requirements of his users and continuously update his knowledge about users through systematic studies and observations. The present study aims to analyze the information use behavior of arts and science college students affiliated to Thiruvalluvar University, Tamilnadu.

Objectives of the study

1. To find out respondents' District and subject wise use of primary information sources for their academic activities
2. To know respondents' District and subject wise use of Secondary sources for their academic needs.
3. To study respondents' District and subject wise use of E-resources for their information need in the digital environment
4. To find out respondents' District and subject wise use of unpublished information sources to fulfill and finish their study.

Methodology

The methods adopted for this study are descriptive, analytical and comparative. The target group of this study includes, graduate and post graduate students of arts and science colleges affiliated Thiruvelluvar University. The geographical area of this study is confined only the colleges situated in Villupuram, Cuddalore, Thiruvannamalai and Vellore Districts in Tamil Nadu.In this study stratified random sampling method was adopted to collect the required data. The respondents for the present study are the UG and PG students of arts and science colleges affiliated to Thrivalluvar University. About 1800 questionnaire were distributed to the users of the library and 1600 filled in questionnaire were received back as a sample of the present study.

Limitations of the study

The findings of this study are applicable to students of arts and science colleges affiliated to Thiruvalluvar

University, Tamilnadu, No other arts and science colleges affiliated to other Universities of Tamilnadu are included in the present study. The study has not been covered the research scholars and teaching staff of the sample colleges.

Results and Discussion

Table 1: District wise Respondents' Frequency of Using Primary Sources of Information

Sl. No.	Primary sources	Villupuram			Cuddalore			Thiruvannamalai			Vellore			Total			Total
		Most frequently	Frequently	Occasionally	Most frequently	Frequently	Occasionally	Most frequently	Frequently	Occasionally	Most frequently	Frequently	Occasionally	Most frequently	Frequently	Occasionally	
1.	Journal articles	28 (7.00)	168 (42.00)	204 (51.0)	31 (7.75)	138 (34.5)	231 (57.75)	34 (8.5)	162 (40.5)	204 (51.00)	62 (15.50)	174 (43.50)	164 (41.00)	155 (9.69)	642 (40.13)	803 (50.19)	1600
2.	Research reports	31 (7.75)	161 (40.25)	208 (52.0)	29 (7.25)	156 (39.00)	215 (53.75)	30 (7.50)	171 (42.75)	199 (49.75)	60 (15.00)	132 (33.00)	208 (52.00)	150 (9.38)	620 (38.75)	830 (51.88)	1600
3.	Conference proceedings	52 (13.0)	175 (43.75)	173 (43.2)	62 (15.50)	184 (46.00)	154 (38.5)	42 (10.5)	196 (49.00)	162 (40.50)	72 (18.00)	161 (40.25)	167 (41.75)	228 (14.25)	716 (44.75)	656 (41.00)	1600
4.	Newspaper clippings	46 (11.5)	108 (27.00)	246 (61.5)	31 (7.75)	164 (41.00)	205 (51.25)	24 (6.00)	132 (33.00)	244 (61.00)	36 (9.00)	182 (45.50)	182 (45.50)	137 (8.56)	586 (36.63)	877 (54.81)	1600
5.	Project reports	16 (4.00)	98 (24.50)	286 (71.5)	24 (6.00)	108 (27.00)	268 (67.00)	28 (7.00)	116 (29.00)	256 (64.00)	31 (7.75)	176 (44.00)	193 (48.25)	99 (6.19)	498 (31.13)	1003 (62.69)	1600

Table 1 shows that district wise respondents' frequency of using primary sources of information. Each 40-50 percent of the respondents belongs to Villupuram and Thiruvannamalai district frequently used journal articles, research reports, and conference proceedings, whereas in Cuddalore it is conference proceedings and newspaper clippings but in Vellore district 40-50 percent of the respondents frequently used journals articles, conference proceedings, newspaper clippings, and project reports.

Table 2: Subject wise Respondents' Frequency of Using Primary Sources of Information

S.No	Primary sources	Arts students				Science students				Total			
		Most frequently	Frequently	Occasionally	Total	Most frequently	Frequently	Occasionally	Total	Most frequently	Frequently	Occasionally	Total
1.	Journal articles	86 (9.77)	258 (29.31)	536 (60.9)	880	69 (9.58)	384 (53.33)	267 (37.08)	720	155 (9.69)	642 (40.13)	803 (50.19)	1600
2.	Research reports	81 (9.20)	392 (44.55)	407 (46.25)	880	69 (9.58)	228 (31.67)	423 (58.75)	720	150 (9.38)	620 (38.75)	830 (87.88)	1600
3.	Conference proceedings	117 (13.30)	390 (44.32)	373 (42.39)	880	111 (15.42)	326 (45.28)	343 (47.64)	720	228 (14.25)	716 (44.75)	656 (41.00)	1600
4.	Newspaper clippings	98 (11.14)	267 (30.34)	515 (58.52)	880	39 (5.42)	319 (44.31)	362 (50.28)	720	137 (8.56)	586 (36.63)	877 (54.81)	1600
5.	Project reports	49 (5.57)	220 (25.00)	611 (69.43)	880	50 (6.94)	278 (38.61)	392 (54.44)	720	99 (6.19)	498 (31.12)	1003 (62.69)	1600

Table 2 shows that subject wise respondents' frequency of using primary sources of information. Among the science students, majority 53.33 percent of them frequently used journal articles but it is only 29.31 percent among arts students . It is found that 44.55 percent of arts students frequently used

research report but it is 31.67 percent among the science students. It is also found that more percent of science students frequently used conference proceedings, newspaper clippings and project reports than arts students.

Table 3: District wise Respondents' Frequency of Using Secondary Sources of Information

Sl. No.	Secondary Sources	Villupuram			Cuddalore			Thiruvannamalai			Vellore			Total			Total
		Most frequently	Frequently	Occasionally	Most frequently	Frequently	Occasionally	Most frequently	Frequently	Occasionally	Most frequently	Frequently	Occasionally	Most frequently	Frequently	Occasionally	
1.	Books	161 (40.25)	184 (46.00)	55 (13.75)	166 (41.50)	158 (39.50)	76 (19.00)	153 (38.25)	168 (42.00)	79 (19.75)	181 (45.25)	192 (48.00)	27 (06.75	661 (41.31)	702 (43.88)	237 (14.81)	1600
2.	Abstracting & indexing	102 (25.50)	136 (34.00)	162 (40.50)	111 (27.75)	146 (36.5)	143 (35.75)	120 (30.00)	128 (32.00)	152 (38.00)	130 (32.50)	161 (40.25)	109 (27.25)	463 (28.94)	571 (35.69)	566 (35.38)	1600
3.	Reviews	81 (20.25)	102 (25.50)	217 (54.25)	84 (21.00)	131 (32.75)	185 (46.25)	69 (17.25)	161 (40.25)	170 (42.50)	101 (25.25)	178 (44.50)	121 (30.25)	335 (20.94)	572 (35.75)	693 (43.31)	1600
4.	Bibliographies	101 (25.25)	122 (30.50)	177 (44.25)	108 (27.00)	106 (26.50)	186 (46.50)	79 (19.75)	182 (45.50)	139 (34.75)	120 (30.00)	164 (41.00)	116 (29.00)	408 (25.50)	574 (35.88)	693 (43.31)	1600
5.	Dictionaries &Encyclopedias	152 (38.00)	191 (47.75)	57 (14.25)	141 (35.25)	186 (46.50)	73 (18.25)	136 (34.00)	158 (39.50)	106 (26.50)	188 (47.00)	192 (48.00)	20 (5.00)	617 (38.56)	727 (45.44)	256 (16.00)	1600
6.	Annual reports	91 (22.75)	128 (32.00)	181 (45.25)	101 (25.25)	139 (34.75)	160 (40.00)	108 (27.00)	129 (32.25)	163 (40.75)	108 (27.00)	168 (42.00)	124 (31.00)	408 (25.50)	564 (35.25)	628 (39.25)	1600
7.	Year books	88 (22.00)	161 (40.25)	151 (37.75)	86 (21.50)	178 (44.50)	136 (34.00)	62 (15.50)	181 (45.25)	157 (39.25)	104 (26.00)	170 (42.50)	126 (31.50)	340 (21.25)	690 (43.13)	570 (35.63)	1600
8.	Directories	101 (25.25)	181 (45.25)	118 (29.50)	121 (30.25)	173 (43.25)	106 (26.50)	66 (16.50)	179 (44.75)	155 (38.75)	153 (38.25)	168 (42.00)	79 (19.75)	441 (27.76)	701 (43.81)	458 (28.63)	1600

Table 3 shows that District wise Respondents' Frequency of Using Secondary Sources of Information. Among the four district college respondents. each 40-50 percent of them belongs to Vellore district frequently used every secondary sources of information mentioned in the table. But at the same time in Cuddalore district 40-50 percent of them frequently used dictionaries & encyclopedias, yearbooks and directories
.

Table 4: Subject wise Respondents' Frequency of Using Secondary Sources of Information

S. No	Secondary sources	Arts students				Science students				Total			
		Most frequently	Frequently	Occasionally	Total	Most frequently	Frequently	Occasionally	Total	Most frequently	Frequently	Occasionally	Total
1.	Books	330 (37.50)	410 (46.59)	140 (15.91)	880	331 (45.97)	292 (40.56)	92 (12.78)	720	661 (41.3.1)	702 (43.88)	232 (14.50)	1600
2.	Abstracting & indexing journals	221 (25.11)	386 (43.86)	273 (31.02)	880	242 (33.61)	185 (25.69)	293 (40.69)	720	463 (28.94)	571 (35.69)	566 (35.38)	1600
3.	Reviews	176 (20.00)	221 (25.11)	483 (54.89)	880	159 (22.8)	351 (48.75)	210 (29.17)	720	335 (20.94)	572 (35.75)	693 (43.31)	1600
4.	Bibliographies	211 (23.98)	282 (32.05)	387 (43.98)	880	197 (27.36)	292 (40.56)	231 (32.08)	720	408 (25.50)	574 (35.88)	618 (38.63)	1600
5.	Dictionaries & Encyclopedias	310 (35.23)	408 (46.36)	162 (18.41)	880	307 (42.64)	319 (44.31)	94 (13.06)	720	617 (38.56)	727 (45.44)	256 (16.00)	1600
6.	Annual reports	201 (22.84)	321 (36.48)	358 (40.68)	880	207 (28.75)	243 (33.75)	270 (37.50)	720	408 (25.50)	564 (35.25)	628 (39.25)	1600
7.	Year books	184 (20.91)	308 (35.00)	388 (44.09)	880	156 (21.67)	382 (53.06)	182 (25.78)	720	340 (21.25)	690 (43.13)	570 (35.63)	1600

8.	Directories	204 (23.18)	402 (45.68)	274 (31.14)	880	237 (32.92)	299 (41.53)	184 (25.26)	720	441 (27.56)	701 (43.81)	458 (28.63)	1600

Table 4 shows that subject wise respondents' frequency of using secondary sources of information. 44.97 percent of science students most frequently used books but it is 37.50 percent among arts students. It is found that 33.61 percent of science students most frequently used abstracting and indexing journal but it is 25.11 percent among arts students.

Table 5: Distinct wise Respondents' Frequency of Using E-Resources

	E-Resources	Villupuram			Cuddalore			Thiruvannamalai			Vellore			Total			Total
		Most frequently	Frequently	Occasional	Most frequently	Frequently	Occasional	Most frequently	Frequently	Occasional	Most frequently	Frequently	Occasional	Most frequently	Frequently	Occasional	
1.	E-Journals	108 (21.00)	172 (43.00)	120 (30.00)	103 (25.75)	164 (41.00)	133 (33.25)	94 (23.50)	152 (38.00)	154 (38.50)	120 (30.30)	170 (42.50)	110 (27.50)	425 (26.56)	658 (41.13)	517 (32.31)	1600
2.	E-Books	124 (31.00)	203 (50.75)	73 (18.25)	131 (32.75)	198 (49.50)	71 (17.75)	121 (30.25)	188 (47.00)	91 (22.75)	122 (30.50)	209 (52.25)	69 (17.25)	498 (31.13)	798 (49.88)	304 (19.00)	1600
3.	E-Database	102 (25.50)	156 (39.00)	142 (35.50)	110 (27.50)	172 (43.00)	118 (29.50)	101 (25.25)	142 (35.50)	157 (39.25)	101 (25.25)	176 (44.00)	123 (30.75)	414 (25.88)	646 (40.38)	525 (32.81)	1600
4.	E-resources	104 (26.00)	168 (42.00)	128 (32.00)	112 (28.00)	153 (38.25)	135 (33.75)	92 (23.00)	167 (41.75)	141 (35.25)	121 (30.25)	164 (41.00)	115 (28.75)	429 (26.81)	652 (40.75)	519 (32.44)	1600
5.	Other website information	181 (45.25)	174 (43.50)	45 (11.25)	174 (43.50)	192 (48.00)	34 (8.50)	158 (39.50)	162 (40.50)	80 (20.00)	193 (48.25)	182 (45.50)	25 (6.25)	706 (44.13)	710 (44.38)	184 (11.50)	1600

Table 5 shows that distinct wise respondents' frequency of using e-resources. In every district colleges more than 40 percent of the respondents most frequently used other website information except Thiruvannamalai District where the percentage is 39.50. It is found that each more than 30 percent of the respondents in every district colleges most frequently used e-books. It is also found that more than 50 percent of the respondents in Villupuram and Vellore district frequently used e-books but it is below 50 percent among Cuddalore and Thiruvannamalai district
.

Table 6: Subject wise Respondents' Frequency of Using E-Resources

S.No	E-Resources	Arts students				Science students				Total			
		Most frequently	Frequently	Occasionally	Total	Most frequently	Frequently	Occasionally	Total	Most frequently	Frequently	Occasionally	Total
1.	E-Journals	225 (25.57)	368 (41.82)	287 (32.61)	880	200 (27.78)	290 (40.28)	230 (31.94)	720	425 (26.56)	658 (41.13)	517 (32.31)	1600
2.	E-Books	165 (18.75)	435 (49.43)	280 (31.82)	880	333 (46.25)	363 (50.42)	24 (3.33)	720	498 (31.31)	798 (49.88)	304 (19.00)	1600
3.	E-Database	209 (23.75)	326 (37.05)	345 (39.20)	880	205 (28.47)	320 (44.44)	180 (25.00)	720	414 (25.88)	646 (40.37)	525 (32.81)	1600
4.	E-ref.sources	218 (24.77)	285 (32.39)	377 (42.84)	880	211 (29.31)	367 (50.97)	142 (19.72)	720	429 (26.81)	652 (40.75)	519 (32.44)	1600

5.	Other website information	354 (40.23)	361 (41.02)	165 (18.75)	880	352 (48.89)	349 (48.47)	19 (2.64)	720	706 (44.12)	710 (44.38)	184 (11.50)	1600

Table 6 shows that Subject wise respondents' frequency of using e-resources. It is found that 46.25 percent of science students most frequently used e-books but it is only 18.75 percent among the arts students. In the same way 48.89 percent of science students most frequently used other website information but it is 40.23 percent among arts students. 44.44 percent and 50.97 percent of science students frequently used e-databases and e-reference sources but it is 37.05 percent and 32.39 percent among the arts students respectively.

Table 5.7:District wise Respondents' Frequency of Using Unpublished Information Sources

	Unpublished information sources	Most frequently	Frequently	Occasionally	Never	Most frequently	Frequently	Occasionally	Never	Most frequently	Frequently	Occasionally	Never	Most frequently	Frequently	Occasionally	Never	Most frequently	Frequently	Occasionally	Never	Total
1.	Correspondence and meetings	-	-	-	400	-	-	-	400	-	-	-	400	-	-	-	400	-	-	-	400	1600
2.	Unpublished reports	-	10 (2.50)	35 (8.75)	355 (88.75)	-	25 (6.25)	20 (5.00)	355 (88.75)	-	18 (4.50)	28 (7.00)	46 (11.5)	-	32 (8.00)	51 (12.75)	83 (20.75)	-	85 (5.31)	134 (8.38)	1381 (86.31)	1600
3.	Thesis and dissertation	-	36 (9.00)	110 (27.50)	254 (63.5)	-	22 (5.50)	105 (26.25)	127 (31.75)	-	29 (7.25)	102 (25.50)	269 (67.25)	-	42 (10.25)	111 (27.75)	153 (38.25)	-	128 (8.00)	428 (26.75)	1044 (65.25)	1600
4.	Private papers	-	-	-	400	-	-	-	400	-	-	-	400	-	-	-	400	-	-	-	400	1600
5.	Telephone communication	-	-	-	400	-	-	-	400	-	-	-	400	-	-	-	400	-	-	-	400	1600
6.	Fax communication	-	-	-	400	-	-	-	400	-	-	-	400	-	-	-	400	-	-	-	400	1600
7.	E-mail, group mail, list forums	218 (54.50)	121 (30.25)	61 (15.25)	-	216 (54.00)	108 (27.00)	76 (19.00)		201 (56.25)	126 (31.50)	73 (18.25)	-	221 (55.25)	104 (26.00)	75 (18.75)	-	856 (53.50)	459 (28.69)	285 (17.81)	-	1600

Table 5.7 Shows that district wise respondents' frequency of using unpublished information sources. In every district college, majority i.e., more than 50 percent of the respondents most frequently used e-mail, Group e-mail and list forums. Whereas 20-30 percent of the respondents in every district occasionally used thesis and dissertation.

Table 5.8: Subject wise Respondents' Frequency of Using Unpublished Information Sources

S.No	Unpublished information sources	Arts students					Science students					Total				
		Most frequently	Frequently	Occasionally	Never	Total	Most frequently	Frequently	Occasionally	Never	Total	Most frequently	Frequently	Occasionally	Never	Total
1.	Correspondence and meetings	-	-	-	880	880	-	-	-	720	720	-	-	-	1600	1600
2.	Unpublished reports	-	42 (4.77)	76 (8.64)	762 (86.59)	880	-	43 (5.97)	58 (8.06)	619 (85.97)	720	-	85 (5.31)	134 (8.38)	1381 (86.31)	1600
3.	Thesis and dissertation	-	71 (8.07)	254 (28.86)	555 (63.07)	880	-	57 (7.92)	174 (24.17)	489 (67.92)	720	-	128 (8.00)	428 (26.75)	1044 (65.25)	1600
4.	Private papers	-	-	-	880	880	-	-	-	720	720	-	-	-	1600	1600
5.	Telephone communication	-	-	-	880	880	-	-	-	720	720	-	-	-	1600	1600
6.	Fax communication	-	-	-	880	880	-	-	-	720	720	-	-	-	1600	1600
7.	E-mail, group mail, list forums	461 (52.39)	289 (32.84)	130 (14.77)	-	880	395 (54.86)	170 (23.61)	155 (21.53)	-	720	856 (53.50)	459 (28.69)	285 (17.81)	-	1600

Table 5.8 Shows that subject wise respondents' frequency of using unpublished information sources. Majority more than 50 percent of the respondents in both arts and science students most frequently used e-mail and group e-mail but in case of use of thesis and

dissertation 28.86 percent of arts students occasionally used but it is 24.17 percent among science students.

Findings

- It is found that among the four district colleges, each 40% of the Vellore district college respondents frequently used all the primary information sources except project report.
- It is found from the study that more percent of science students frequently used primary sources of information than arts students except research reports.
- The result shows that 45.25% and 47% of the respondents belongs to Vellore district most frequently used books and dictionaries & encyclopedias.
- The findings shows that among the arts and science students, more percent of science students most frequently used every secondary sources than arts student except year books.
- The finding shows that more than 40% of the students in Vellore district frequently used all e-resources and 52.25% of the students in the same district frequently used E-books.
- It is found from the study that more percent of science students frequently and most frequently used e-resources than arts students.
- The findings shows that in every district colleges no one used correspondence and meetings, private paper, telecommunication, fax communication. This may be due to non-availability of these sources.
- It findings shows that majority of the respondents in both arts and science colleges used only e-mail, group mail and list forums.

Conclusion

From the above study, it is obvious that majority of the students of arts and science colleges frequently used secondary and e-resources for their academic and professional requirements. The study also revealed that primary and unpublished information sources are not much used because of their nature and availability. In this situation, there is a need to create awareness among the students about the importance of primary sources of information. Further, there is a need to promote use habits of e-journal among the PG students for their project and paper presentation in seminar classes and during conferences attending.

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