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INFORMATION SEEKING BEHAVIOUR OF PG STUDENTS: A SPECIAL REFERENCE TO ST. JOHN'S COLLEGE, TIRUNELVELI-A STUDY

Dr. Ravi Kumar Kennedy, I. and Dr. Raja, T.

Abstract

This study deals with information-seeking behaviour among PG students of St. John's College, Tirunelveli District, an Arts and Science College. A questionnaire was administered to the respondents. Majority of the students are female. The study reveals that 39% of the students are using the library for assignment-cum-project work, 39% are using reference books and 72% are using the internet for subject search. The study concludes majority of the PG students are using the library for subject-related work.

Key words: Information Seeking Behaviour, Internet usage and Post Graduate Students

Introduction:

The University Grant Commission has sanctioned liberal grants for higher education specifically colleges, Universities and Research activities importance to Colleges Libraries. An Arts and Science colleges has gradually increased the books in the Libraries. In Arts and Science Colleges 30% of the students are using the Library. Students come to the library for borrowing books, reading newspapers, magazines and references for assignment or project work. Normally post-graduate students are using the library regularly for Dissertation, Seminar preparation, Class assignment etc. This paper is a study on the user's satisfaction and improvement of library facilities and services, with special reference to the St. John's College, Palayamkottai, a leading Arts and Science college in Tirunelveli.

Institute Profile:

The St. John's College was established in 1878. It now offers 9 aided UG Courses, 5 aided PG Courses and also research programmes in various departments. The Library was established in 1962. The present Accession Register started with the same year. The distinctive feature of the library is that it is considered a department of academic support services. The emphasis of the library is on the increase of its holdings. The central library is housed in a ground floor at the entrance of the college and accommodates more than sixty thousand books and subscribes to 38 journals. With the grants from the UGC and annual budgetary provisions of the college the library has built up a huge collection representing various disciplines for all levels of its users. The library also receives reading materials as gifts from individuals and institutions including international missions. It offers special services like reprographic and bibliographic services and Internet browsing services. It is equipped with Internet facilities and is also preparing for library automation. The Library can accommodate more than 180 students at a time.

Review of Literature:


Fawz Abdallah (2015) assessed the nature and effectiveness of library services and information resources provided at four academic libraries in Lebanon from the users' perspectives. The study employed a quantitative research method and a survey design approach. A survey questionnaire was distributed to 1100 students at Beirut Arab University (BAU), the Lebanese University (LU), the Lebanese American University (LAU) and the Holy Spirit University of Kaslik (USEK). A total of 865 questionnaires were returned (78.63%). Findings of this study will be useful to professional librarians, staff, and administrators in Lebanon and the Arab World who wish to develop user-centered library services and resources and to identify problem areas where improvements are needed. Tanveer Haider Naqvi (2014) discussed the use of Govind Ballabh Pant University of Agriculture & Technology (GBPUAT) library collection and services by postgraduate students and research scholars. The scope of the study was limited to the use of library collection and services by the postgraduate students and research scholars. Questionnaires were administered randomly among 250 students. 137 questionnaires were returned and taken up for analysis and interpretation. The Likert's scale was used for designing the questionnaire. It was also observed that CD-ROM databases, e-journals and online databases were the most highly used e-resources. Moreover, electronic and online databases such as AGRIS, AGRICOLA, CAB Abstract and Agriculture & Natural Resources were the most highly used databases. The study puts forward its recommendations in regard to enhancing the use of collection and services.

Objectives of the study

- To find out the frequency of visit
- To find out the time spent in the library
- To study the purpose of visit
- To find out the methods for searching book through OPAC
- To find out the usage of library resources
- To find the purpose of using the internet

Limitations of the study:

- PG Students were taken up for study.
- Only the PG students from an arts and science college only (St. John's College, Tirunelveli) were chosen.


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Methodology:

The present study is the descriptive method. Questionnaire is used to collect the primary data. The questionnaire distributed to 110 PG students of St. John's College, Tirunelveli. 103 filled questionnaires were received back by investigators. Hence 103 questionnaires are used for data analysis and interpretation.

Analysis and Interpretation:**Table – 1: Status of Respondents – Area Wise**

No	Status	Respondents	Percentage
	Rural	44	43%
	Urban	59	57%
Total		103	100%

Source: Primary Data

Table 1 reveals that out of the 103 respondents 57 % (59) of the respondents are coming from urban area and the remaining 43% (44) are coming from rural areas.

Table – 2: Distribution of Respondents – Gender Wise

No	Status	Respondents	Percentage
	Male	23	22%
	Female	80	78%
Total		103	100

Source: Primary Data

Table 2 reveals that out of the 103 respondents 78% (80) of the respondents are female and the remaining 22% (23) are male respondents.

Table – 3: Frequency of Library Visit by the Respondents

No	Frequency	Respondents	Percentage
	Daily	5	5%
	Weekly	40	39%
	Twice in Monthly	2	2%
	Occasionally	34	33%
Total		103	100

Source: Primary Data

Table 3 indicates that only 39 % (40) of the respondents are using the library on a regular weekly basis.

Table – 4: Time Spent in the Library by the Respondents

No	Time	Respondents	Percentage
	30 Minutes	54	52%
	1 Hour	34	33%
	1-2 Hours	10	10%
	Above 2 Hours	05	5%
Total		103	100

Source: Primary Data

Table 4 shows that majority of the students (52%) spend 30 minutes during a visit to the library, 30% 1 hour, 10% 1-2 hours and 5% above 2 hours.

Table – 5: Purpose of Visit to the Library

S.No	Purpose	Respondents	Percentage
1	Borrow Books	38	37%
2	Read Journals	04	4%
3	Read Magazines /Newspapers	21	20%
4	Assignment / Project work	40	39%
Total		103	100

Source: Primary Data

Table 5 shows that majority (39%) of the students are using the library for assignment-cum- project work, followed 37% to borrow books, 20% to read magazines and newspapers and 4%, for reading journals.

Table – 6: Methods used for searching the Books through OPAC

S.No	Methods	Respondents	Percentage
1	Author- Wise	31	30%
2	Title-Wise	26	25%
3	Subject-Wise	44	43%
4	Keyword	02	2%
Total		103	100

Source: Primary Data

Table 6 shows that majority (43%) of the students are using the subject-wise method for searching the books through OPAC, followed by 30% Author-Wise, 25% Title-Wise and 02% by keyword method.

Table – 7: Usage of Reference Sources by the Respondents

S.No	Methods	Respondents	Percentage
1	Dictionaries	31	30%
2	Encyclopaedias	17	16%
3	Reference Books	40	39%
4	General Knowledge Books	15	15%
Total		103	100

Source: Primary Data

Table 7 shows that majority (39%) of students are using reference books, followed by 30% dictionaries, 16% encyclopaedias, and 15% General Knowledge books.

Table – 8: Purpose of Using the Internet by the Respondents

S.No	Methods	Respondents	Percentage
1	Subject Search	74	72%
2	E-Mail	09	9%
3	Job Search	14	14%
4	Online Goods	06	5%
Total		103	100

Source: Primary Data

Table 8 shows that majority (72%) of students are using the internet for subject search, followed by 14% for job search, 9% for e-mail and 5% for online goods.

Findings of the study

- 57 % of the students are coming from urban area.
- 78% of the students are female.
- 39 % of the students are using the library weekly.
- 39% of the students are using the library for assignment-cum-project work.
- 43% of the students are using the subject-wise method for searching the books through OPAC.
- 39% of the students are using reference books in the library.
- 72% of the students are using the internet for subject search.

Recommendations for further research-study.

- In future separate studies for post-graduate arts faculty students and post-graduate science faculty students.
- Separate study for awareness and usage of internet and social networks for study.
- Separate study awareness and usage of internet by students coming from rural areas.
- Library and Internet facilities in Arts and Science Colleges in Tirunelveli District: A comparative study.

Conclusion

Normally the PG students in arts and science colleges are using the library for research cum dissertation work. Majority of the PG students are female students. The library can also provide more online resources for the PG students and offer training courses for using the online resources. The library staff members must conduct awareness programmes for enhancing the usage of the learning resources in the library.

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