

Information Use Patterns of Post-Graduate Students: A Case Study of P. B. Siddhartha College of Arts and Sciences, India

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***Abstract:** This study investigates information use patterns of post-graduate students at Siddhartha College of Arts and Sciences, Vijayawada, Andhra Pradesh, India. It focuses on the kinds of academic information needed by post-graduate students, such as what information resources they need, their methods for locating information, and their level of satisfaction of the library collection, services, and facilities. A descriptive survey method was used, and the data was gathered via a questionnaire completed by 140 post-graduate students. Respondents were also asked for their opinions and suggestions during the data collection process.*

I. Introduction

Any library, irrespective of its type, should be user-oriented. All the services provided by the library intend to benefit users. It is imperative to conduct user studies in order to improve the existing library services, plan for new services, adjust the allocation of limited financial resources, evaluate the performance of the library, and enhance the user satisfaction. Such studies will help library administration know the satisfaction of users with existing library services and facilities, the type of new services desired, and the amount of financial resources required for their implementation.

II. Background Information about P. B. Siddhartha College of Arts and Sciences

The Parvataneni Brahmayya Siddhartha College of Arts and Sciences was established in 1975. Its Post-Graduate Center offers master's degrees in mathematics, physics, chemistry, commerce, computer applications, and business administration. The Library has 20,194 volumes and subscribed to 125 national and international journals.

III. Aims and Objectives of the Study

The aim of the study is to know the information seeking patterns of post-graduate students at P.B. Siddhartha College of Arts and Sciences, Vijayawada, India.

The objectives of the study are as follows:

To identify the various information resources post-graduate students need;

1. To find out the purpose for which they seek information;
2. To identify the methods that post-graduate students of the library adopt to locate the desired information;
3. To know the extent of satisfaction of post-graduate students with regard to library collection, services, and facilities; and
4. To suggest some remedies which may help post-graduate students to use the library in a more effective way.

IV. Research Methodology

A questionnaire is prepared to collect data from post-graduate students at P.B. Siddhartha College of Arts and Sciences, Vijayawada, India. At present, there are 894 post-students in this college. A sample of 300 (33.6% of the total population) post-students has been selected by a simple random method. The questionnaire was distributed among the different branches to the selected post-graduate students. 140 (53.33% of the sample) post-graduate students have completed and returned the questionnaire.

V. Data Analysis

The data collected are analyzed and interpreted below.

1. Frequency of using the library

The distribution of post-graduate students according to the frequency of using the library is shown in Table 1.

Table 1: Frequency of using the library

| Frequency | No. of students | Percentage |
|----------------------|------------------------|-------------------|
| Daily | 91 | 65.00 |
| Twice in a week | 29 | 20.71 |
| Once in a week | 14 | 10.00 |
| Once in fifteen days | 6 | 4.29 |
| Total | 140 | 100.00 |

It is evident from Table 1 that 65 percent of the post-graduate students use the library daily, 20.71 percent twice in a week, 10 percent once in a week, and 4.29 percent once in 15 days.

2. Purpose of using the library

The distribution of post-graduate students according to the purpose of using the library is shown in Table 2.

Table 2: Purpose of using the library

| Purpose | No. of respondents | Percentage |
|---------------------------|---------------------------|-------------------|
| To read/borrow books | 128 | 85.71 |
| To consult periodicals | 54 | 38.57 |
| To read newspapers | 74 | 52.86 |
| Photocopying of materials | 55 | 39.29 |
| To use internet/email | 94 | 67.14 |

It is evident from Table 2 that post-graduate students mainly using the library for the purpose of to read or borrow books (85.71%). The next purpose is to use internet or email. These two are followed by to read newspapers (52.86%), photocopying materials (39.39%), and consult periodicals (38.57%). Hence, it can be concluded that post-graduate students are mainly using the library for reading or borrowing books and to use internet.

3. Sources to locate information needed

Information is a basic resource for any kind of professional activity. Specific information is an object users seek. The information needs may vary among users depending upon

their nature of work. Learning how users locate needed information will help improve the information services.

The distribution of post-graduate students according to the various types of sources for locating information needed is shown in Table 3.

Table 3: Sources to locate information needed

| Sources | No. of respondents | Percentage |
|-----------------------|--------------------|------------|
| The library catalogue | 111 | 79.29 |
| Library staff | 94 | 67.14 |
| Teachers | 21 | 15.00 |
| Friends | 34 | 24.29 |
| Browsing shelves | 132 | 94.29 |

It is evident from Table 3 that post-graduate students depend highly on browsing the book shelves (94.29%) to locate the documents they need. They also depended on the library catalogue (79.29%) for locating the documents. These two are followed by assistance from the library staff (67.14%), help from friends (24.29%), and guidance of teachers (15%). Hence, it can be concluded that most post-graduates browse the book shelves or search the library catalogue for the relevant documents.

4. Adequacy of library collection

An important function of the library is to cater to the needs of the students, research scholars, and faculty members of the college. These users need highly specialized and advanced information on the subject of their specialization in a variety of sources like textbooks, reference books, periodicals, newspapers or magazines, theses or dissertations, reports, etc.

The distribution of post-graduate students according to the adequacy of various information resources is shown in Table 4.

Table 4: Adequacy of library resources

| Library resources | Adequacy | Inadequacy | Total |
|--------------------------|-----------------|-------------------|---------------|
| Textbooks | 114 (81.43%) | 26 (18.57%) | 140 (100%) |
| Reference books | 96 (68.57%) | 44 (31.43%) | 140 (100%) |
| Periodicals | 82 (58.57%) | 58 (41.43%) | 140 (100%) |
| Newspapers | 91 (65%) | 49 (35%) | 140 (100%) |
| Reports | 89 (63.57%) | 51 (36.43%) | 140 (100%) |
| Theses/dissertations | 94 (67.14%) | 46 (32.86%) | 140 (100%) |

It is evident from Table 4 that post-graduate students (81.43%) are satisfied while 18.57 percent are dissatisfied with regard to the textbook collection. It is also evident that 68.57 percent are satisfied while 31.43 percent are dissatisfied with reference book collection, 67.14 percent are satisfied while 32.86 percent are dissatisfied with the thesis and dissertation collection, 65 percent are satisfied while 35 percent are dissatisfied with the newspaper and magazine collection, 63.57 percent are satisfied while 36.43 percent are dissatisfied with the report collection, and 58.57 percent are satisfied and 41.43 percent are dissatisfied with the periodical collection.

5. Satisfaction of library services

The primary objective of collecting, storing, and organizing information in a college or university library is to facilitate the academic community in their academic or research pursuit. Effective services enable a library to deliver the right information at the right time to the right user in the right manner. Modern academic libraries adopt modern information techniques to render its services more effective.

The distribution of post-graduate students according to the satisfaction of different library services is shown in Table 5.

Table 5: Satisfaction of library services

| Library Services | Level of satisfaction | | Total |
|-----------------------------|-----------------------|----------------|---------------|
| | Satisfied | Not satisfied | |
| Circulation service | 129 (92.14%) | 11 (7.86%) | 140 (100%) |
| Reference service | 134 (95.72%) | 6 (4.28%) | 140 (100%) |
| Readers Orientation service | 126 (90%) | 14 (10%) | 140 (100%) |
| Interlibrary Loan service | 52 (37.14%) | 88 (62.86%) | 140 (100%) |
| Reprographic service | 117 (83.57%) | 23 (16.43%) | 140 (100%) |
| Internet/e-mail | 113 (80.72%) | 27 (19.28%) | 140 (100%) |

It is evident from Table 5 that post-graduate students (92.14%) are satisfied while 7.86 percent are not satisfied with circulation service. It is also evident that 95.72 percent are satisfied while 4.28 percent are not satisfied with reference service, 90 percent are satisfied while 10 percent are not satisfied with readers orientation service, 37.14 percent are satisfied while 62.86 percent are not satisfied with interlibrary loan, 83.57 percent are satisfied while 16.43 percent are not satisfied with reprographic service, and 80.72 percent are satisfied while 19.28 percent are not satisfied with regard to Internet and/or email.

6. Library facilities

The library has to maintain cleanliness, proper ventilation, and appropriate space for reading as well as provide drinking water and other facilities. A good environment in the library is conducive for users to use library resources more effectively.

The distribution of post-graduate students according the satisfaction of different facilities is shown in Table 6.

Table 6: Satisfaction of library facilities

| Library Facilities | Level of satisfaction | | Total |
|--------------------|-----------------------|----------------|---------------|
| | Satisfied | Not satisfied | |
| Space for reading | 124 (88.57%) | 16 (11.43%) | 140 (100%) |
| Cleanliness | 130 (92.85%) | 10 (7.15%) | 140 (100%) |
| Lighting | 120 (85.71%) | 20 (14.29%) | 140 (100%) |
| Furniture | 84 (60%) | 56 (40%) | 140 (100%) |
| Ventilation | 94 (67.14%) | 46 (32.86%) | 140 (100%) |

It is evident from Table 6 that post-graduate students (88.57%) are satisfied while 11.43 percent are not satisfied with space for reading. It is also evident that 92.85 percent are satisfied while 7.15 percent are not satisfied with cleanliness, 85.71 percent are satisfied while 14.29 percent are not satisfied with lighting, 60 percent are satisfied while 40 percent are not satisfied with furniture, and 67.14 percent are satisfied while 32.86 percent are not satisfied with ventilation.

VI. Conclusion

The sixty-five percent of the post-graduate students at P.B. Siddhartha College of Arts and Sciences, Vijayawada, India are using the library daily. Most of them are using the library mainly for the purpose of reading or borrowing the books and to use internet or email. The majority of the post-graduate students are browsing the book shelves (94.29%) and searching the library catalogue (79.29%) for getting the relevant documents as compared to the other sources. Hence the authorities should arrange the documents on shelves according to the classification orders and also shelf rectification is to be carried out regularly.

Most of the post-graduate students (67.38%) are satisfied while 32.62 percent are not satisfied with the overall library resources. Therefore the authorities may take necessary steps for allotting more funds for the purchase of books and periodicals and the funds

should be enhanced in proportion to the rising cost of books and periodicals keeping in view the increasing demand of the reading community.

The majority of the post-graduate students (81.55%) are satisfied while 18.45 percent are not satisfied with regard to overall library services.

The majority of the post-graduate students (78.85%) are satisfied while 21.15 percent are not satisfied with regard to library facilities. Therefore the library authorities should conduct user education programmes to educate the users about library facilities and services. These user education programmes will help the students use the library facilities and services to the maximum extent.

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