

Information Seeking Behavior of Urban School Students - A Study

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Abstract - The Higher Secondary is the base of the higher education and many other professional courses. So, the Higher Secondary students should be aware of the information source and method of searching information. The present study is to understand how they utilize school libraries, and other sources of information for their academic and personal knowledge development. The data were collected through questionnaire method from 182 Higher secondary students studying in urban area of Puducherry.

Key Words: School library, user study, Information seeking behavior, ICT usage, Urban school.

1.INTRODUCTION

Even though the information seeking behavior is a very old concept, the vitality of the topic never ends, as the study is an essential part for improving the services of the library and the librarian. The Information and communication technology has revolutionized the library and sources of information. Every now and then new information is created and various channels of information are also created. Since, higher secondary class is the threshold of Higher /professional studies where search skills and various information are essential for their academic purpose. Secondly at Higher secondary class itself, for preparation of projects and for other admission tests, students have to rely on various sources of information. Hence, the present study is to understand how far Higher secondary students utilize school libraries, other sources of information for academic and future prospects.

2.OBJECTIVE

- ✓ The objective of the present study is
- ✓ To identify how far they use school library.
- ✓ To identify the main source of information of students.
- ✓ To know students awareness about e- resources
- ✓ To find out how far they utilize ICT for academic purpose.

3.METHODOLOGY

The data have been collected through questionnaire method from students of 10 Higher Secondary school functioning in urban area of Puducherry region. Questionnaire has been distributed to 20 students in each school on random basis. Unstructured interview/ discussion also had been conducted to collect data. 182 students responded for questionnaire.

4.LIMITATION

The present study is limited to higher secondary students of urban area of Puducherry region, the capital of Union Territory of Puducherry.

5.ANALYSIS OF DATA

Table -1: Gender of the respondents

User	No, of students n-182	Percentage of respondents
Boys	99	54.4
Girls	83	45.6

Table 1 shows that 54.4 percent of the respondents were boys and 45.6 percent of the respondents were girls.

Table -2: Usage of school library

S.No	Using the Library	No of Respondents (n:182)	Percentage
1.	Frequency of visiting library		
	Daily	26	14.3
	Once in 2 days	40	22.0
	Once in a week	104	57.1
	Rarely	12	6.6
2.	Time spent in library		
	45 minutes	121	66.5
	One hour	52	28.6
	Two hours	4	2.2
	More than two hours	5	2.7

Table 2 shows that 57.1 percent of student's visits school library once in a week, 22 percent visits once in two days, 14.3 percent agreed that they visit daily to the library and 6.6 replied that they visit rarely to the school library.

Table -3: Main source of information for academic purpose

S.No.	Sources of information	Rank
1	Text books, notes, other books of library	1
2	Scientific Journals	4
3	E-resources	2
4	Newspapers/Magazines	3

Table 3 shows that students' main source of information for academic purpose are text books, notes other books of library. The e-resource has been ranked as the second main source of information, thirdly newspapers/magazines has been ranked as the source of information and scientific journals ranked as least used source of information for academic purpose.

Table -4: Main purpose of visiting the library

S.No	Purpose of visiting library	Number of respondents	Rank
1	To read Newspaper/Magazine	182	3
2	For reference purpose	182	2
3	To borrow books	182	1
4	To browse internet	182	4

Table 4 shows that the main purpose of visiting the library is for borrowing books which has been ranked 1, secondly for reference purpose, to read newspaper/magazine has been ranked 3 by students and finally to browse internet has been ranked 4th.

Table -5: Types of books borrowed from library

S.No.	Type of Books borrowed frequently	Rank
1	Recreational -Fiction/Poems	3
2	Subject of study	2
3	General knowledge books	4
4	Subject area of interest	1

Table 5 presented the students preference on type of books for home reading. The students first prefer to borrow books in the subject area of interest. Secondly they prefer books from subject area of study, thirdly they prefer to borrow recreational books like fiction poems, general knowledge books are their final choice for borrowing books.

Table -6: Number of books borrowed from library in a month period

S.No.	Number of books borrowed from library in a month	Number of Respondents	Percentage %
1.	Nil/Not responded	29	15.9
2.	1-3 books	101	55.5
3.	4 to 6 books	42	23.1
4.	7 to 9 books	7	3.8
5.	More than 9 books	3	1.7

Table 6 shows that 55.5 percent of the students borrow 1 to 3 books from library in one month period, 23.1 percent borrow 4 to 6 books from library, 15.9 percent did not respond for this question. 3.8 percent borrow 7 to 9 books and 1.7 percent borrow more than 9 books from library in one month period.

Table -7: Source of clearing doubts other than academic subject

S.No	Approaching person for needed information other than academic subject	Rank
1	Librarian	1
2	Teacher	4
3	Parents	2
4	Friends	3

Table 7 shows that Librarian is the first source, students approach for clearing other than academic subject doubts. The parents of students has been ranked as second source of clearing doubts, Friends has been ranked as the third choice and teachers were ranked as the final source for clearing doubts other than their academic subject.

Table -8: School Library and Information needs of students

Students get needed information from library	Number of respondents (n-182)	Percentage %
Yes	101	55.5
No	28	15.4
Some time	53	29.1

Table 8 presented that 55.5 percent of the students get needed information from the library. 29.1 percent of the students replied that only some time they get needed information from library and 15.4 percent replied that they did not get needed information from school library.

Table 9 presented the ICT skill of students, 90.1 percent of students have good knowledge on computer, 6.6 percent answered that they are poor in computer knowledge and 3.3 percent were neutral in respect of knowledge to work on computer. For Internet usage skill, 91.8 percent replied that they have good skill in using internet, 4.4 percent were neutral for the question and 3.8 percent agreed that their skill in internet usage is poor. For the question awareness/knowledge on digital resources, 60.5 percent replied that they have good knowledge about digital resources, 25.8 percent responded that their knowledge in digital resources were poor and 13.7 percent were neutral for this question. For the question related to awareness about social network, 69.2 percent agreed that they have good knowledge about social network, 24.2 percent responded that their knowledge about social network were poor and 6.6 percent were neutral for the question.

Table -9: ICT skill of students

	ICT skill of students	Number of respondents	Percentage
1.	Knowledge to work on computer	(n-182)	
	Poor	12	6.6
	Neutral	6	3.3
	Good	164	90.1
2.	Knowledge to use internet	(n-182)	
	Poor	7	3.8
	Neutral	8	4.4
	Good	167	91.8
3.	Knowledge of digital resources	(n-182)	
	Poor	47	25.8
	Neutral	25	13.7
	Good	110	60.5
4.	Aware of Social net work	(n-182)	
	Poor	44	24.2
	Neutral	12	6.6
	Good	126	69.2

Table -10: Usage of ICT for academic purpose

Response	Number of respondents (n-182)	Percentage
Yes	30	16.5
No	152	83.5

Table 10 shows the usage of ICT for academic purpose, 83.5 percent of the students answered that they did not use ICT for academic purpose and 16.5 percent replied that they use ICT for academic purpose.

Table -11: Internet access Point

Access Point of Internet	Number of respondents (n-182)	Percentage
Internet cafe	68	37.4
Home	73	40.1
Library	21	11.5
Friends house	20	11.0

Table 11 shows that, 40.1 percent of the student's access internet from home, 37.4 percent from Internet café, 11.5 percent from School library and 11 percent from Friends' house.

6.FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

Majority, 57.1 percent of the students visit the school library once in a week and 66.5 percent of the students spent 45 minutes in library. Based on the ranking, the major purpose of visiting library is for borrowing books. It is found that text books, class notes and other books available from the library are the most preferred sources of information for academic purpose and e-resources ranked second. The type of books borrowed from library showed that, students preferred to borrow books which they are interested to read ranked first. Secondly the subject books for study purpose. Majority of students borrow 1 to 3 books from library in one month period. For clearing doubts other than academic subject, students prefer to approach librarian which has been ranked one and secondly they prefer to approach parents. 55.5 percent of students agreed that, school library could provide needed information they want for academic purpose. In respect of ICT skill of students, High majority agreed that they had good knowledge on using computer. High majority (91.8 percent) have good knowledge in using internet. 60.5 percent have knowledge on digital resources and 69.2 percent of students have knowledge on social networks. In respect of utilization of ICT for academic purpose 16.5 percent only uses ICT for academic purpose. 40.1 percent of the students agreed that they use internet from home for their academic purpose. 37.4 percent agreed that they use internet from Internet café.

7.SUGGESTIONS

Internet resource centre of the school should be brought under the control of the library with more number of computers with internet facility for providing easy accessibility.

Library orientation class should be conducted to make aware of the various sources of information and how to utilize it.

Library should be automated for easy access of the library resources.

Library should purchase online journals and books.

Teachers should give assignments to maximize the utilization of various sources of information.

8.CONCLUSIONS

The present study reflects the picture of Information seeking pattern of urban community. The present society is a knowledge society. To survive in the technologically enabled world, high level skill is required to retrieve process and disseminate information. Hence, students should be made information literate by teaching on various sources of information and reliability of information, search skills etc. More facilities should be provided by the government to enable the students to learn about e-resources. Similar studies can also be conducted at rural areas of Puducherry and other regions of Puducherry to compare rural urban difference in utilization pattern.

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