

Information Seeking Pattern of Researchers of Guru Angad Dev Veterinary and Animal Sciences University, Ludhiana: A Case Study

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Abstract

The present study is aimed at exploring information seeking patterns of researchers (Ph.D students) of Guru Angad Dev Veterinary and Animal Sciences University (GADVASU), Ludhiana. There are total 66 researchers pursuing doctorate degree in various departments of College of Veterinary Science, GADVASU. Data was collected through questionnaire from all 66 researchers on their visit to library and by personally visiting concerned departments. Purpose of seeking information, use of information resources, time spent on gathering information, use of print and e-resources, etc. are the various factors explored. The obstacles faced by researchers in gathering information are also discussed.

Keywords: information seeking pattern, information use, e-resources, GADVASU

1. Introduction

User studies have been of special interest to librarians since libraries have been recognized as institutions meeting the information needs of the users. Wilson says that “Apart from information retrieval there is virtually no other area of information science that has occasioned as much research effort and writing as “user studies”. Ascertaining users’ opinion about library and information resources and services adds a qualitative element to the research studies being undertaken for improving existing library services and for introducing new library

services. User Studies, the umbrella term cover various facets under its ambit including information use studies, information seeking behaviour, assessment of satisfaction with library and information services, etc. However, there is some sort of overlapping in these concepts. Information seeking behaviour and use pattern has its own significance in library spheres. According to Case (2012) “information seeking is a taken-for-granted concept, a catchall phrase that encompasses a variety of behaviors seemingly motivated by the recognition of “missing” information.” This is an exhaustive concept involving various activities beginning from recognition of need for information to information utilization.

2. Review of Literature

Parveen Kumar (2013) found that majority of faculty members were seeking information for preparing lectures, to update their knowledge and for research work. They preferred to consult a knowledgeable person in their field for seeking information. Devaraj and Stanley (2012) say that it is imperative to regularly monitor the usage of library resources to identify the changing information needs. Kalbande et al. (2012) revealed that students visit library mainly for the purpose of their study. Majority of the students seek information for career development.

Sharma and Gupta (2012) found that most of the faculty members of Sher-e-Kashmir University of Agricultural Sciences and Technology, Jammu, preferred to use the Internet for searching information on respective subjects. Authors revealed that use of Internet has led to the improvement in professional competence of users. The use of Internet has decreased the users' frequency of using print resources. Gowda and Shivalingaiah (2010) disclosed that research scholars depend upon their respective university library for meeting information needs followed by use of Internet. They prefer to gather research articles for meeting research needs and visit library for borrowing books. Raza (2010) concluded that Central Drug Research Institute (CDRI) library has been providing effective services to researchers. Most of the users are satisfied with the services provided by the library. The study revealed that there is a good application of Information Communication Technology (ICT) in the library.

Nel (2009) explored the information needs, information behaviour and information use of veterinary practitioners in South Africa. Veterinary practitioners indicated journal articles and textbooks as preferred sources of information. The Internet was used as a source for seeking information, to keep up-to-date with new information' reading electronic books and articles and

to communicate via e-mail. Most of the respondents felt that the Internet is enough for meeting their information needs and they do not need the library for their information needs. The author suggested that the introduction of compulsory continued professional development will positively influence the information use and behaviour of veterinary practitioners in future and should lead to greater use of the library. K.P. Singh and Satija (2008) conducted a survey to find the information seeking behaviour of teachers and research scientists working in Indian Council of Agricultural Research institutions of Delhi and Punjab Agricultural University, Ludhiana. The findings of the study indicated that agriculture scientists preferred library/information centre to meet their information requirements. Agricultural scientists were highly dependent on library collection for accessing information, followed by their personal collection, collection of their supervisor and of colleagues in order of decreasing priority. Chikonzo and Aina (2001) in their study of Veterinary Researchers at the University of Zimbabwe revealed that veterinary library is the main information provider for the veterinary researchers, thus, there is a need to strengthen the library resources, as well as, to provide constant training to the library staff. The major sources of information for teaching and research were books, journals and annual reports. The veterinarians used abstracts and indexes, the Internet, CD-ROM databases, the faculty librarian, colleagues and the library as major sources for retrieving information. Majority of the staff was made aware of latest developments in their area of specialization by attending conferences, seminars, reading journals, consulting library books and through colleagues.

3. Objectives of the study

Objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To find the researchers purpose of seeking information.
2. To find the information resources used by researchers for gathering information.
3. To trace the average time spent by users in gathering information per week.
4. To reveal the users' preference for print v/s e-resources.
5. To find the problems faced by researchers in gathering information.

4. Methodology

Guru Angad Dev Veterinary and Animal Sciences University (GADVASU), Ludhiana came into existence in 2005 by the act of the Punjab Legislature. University started functioning

from April 2006 for promoting livestock production, health and prevention of the diseases through its teaching, research and extension programmes (<http://www.gadvasu.in/about-the-university.asp>). The university has three constituent colleges including College of Veterinary Science, College of Fisheries and College of Dairy Science and Technology. There are 66 researchers pursuing doctorate degree programmes in various departments of College of Veterinary Science, GADVASU.

The present study is based on opinion of all 66 researchers doing Ph.D. in different departments of College of Veterinary Science, GADVASU. A survey was conducted using questionnaire to know opinion of researchers. Copies of questionnaire were distributed to researchers on their visit to University Library and by personally visiting concerned departments. All distributed questionnaires were received back and found relevant for analysis. Percentage calculations have been used to analyze responses.

5. Analysis and Discussion

Out of total 66 researchers, majority i. e. 72.73% (48) comprises of male researchers and remaining 27.27% comprises of females. Responses of researchers are analyzed and discussed below:

5.1 Purpose of seeking information

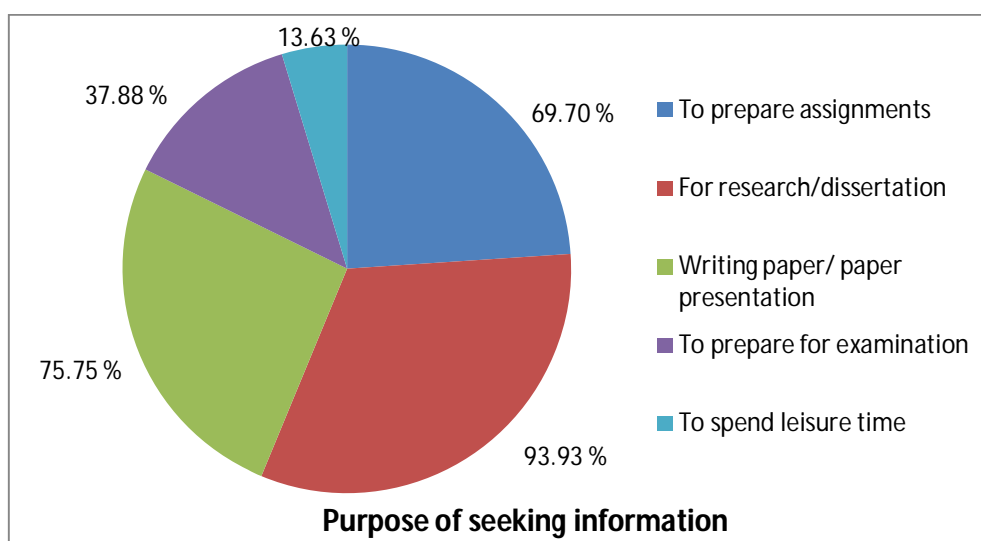
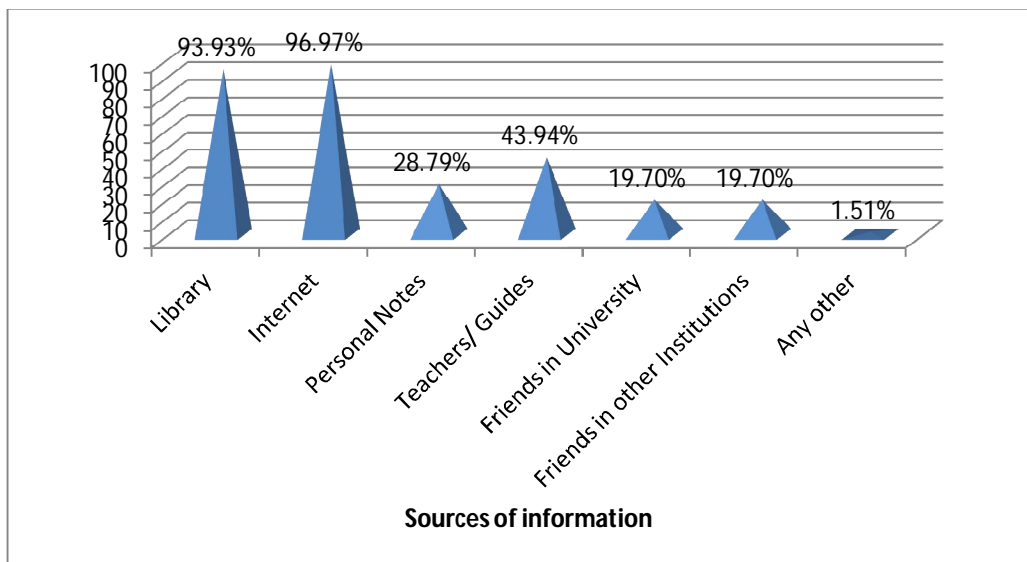


Figure 1: Purpose of seeking information

It is evident from figure 1 that majority of the researchers (93.93%) seek information for research work/ dissertation. About 75.75% researchers seek information for writing papers / paper presentation followed by 69.70% for preparing assignments. Nearly 37.88% of respondents need information to prepare for examination. About 13.63% researchers seek information for spending leisure time.

5.2 Sources of information

**Figure 2: Sources of information**

It is obvious from figure 2 that the Internet and library are main sources of information for most of researchers. Nearly 43.94% users prefer to consult their teachers/ guides, whereas 28.79% users depend upon their personal notes for seeking information. About 19.70% researchers prefer to consult their friends in university and other institutions for seeking information. A researcher also seek information from his family members.

5.3 Use of Information Resources

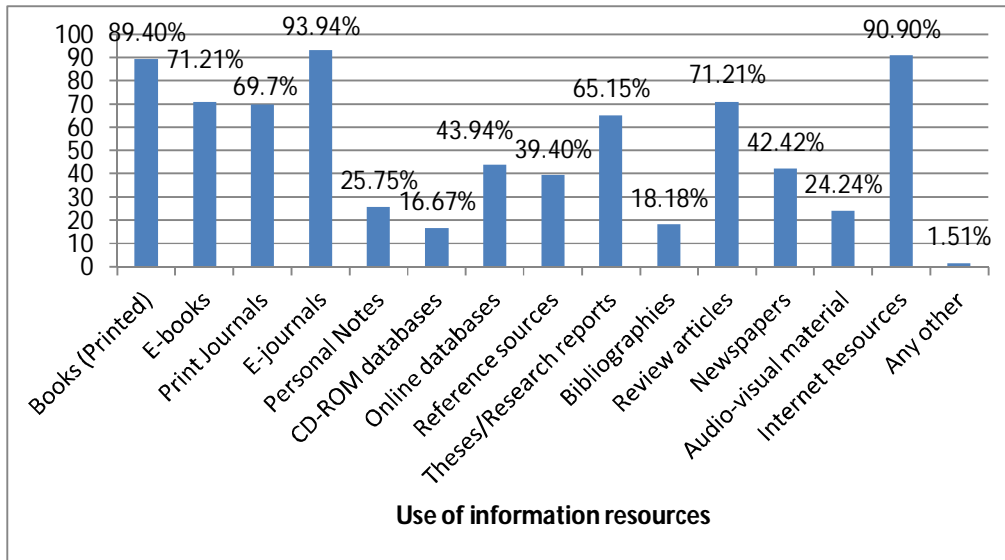
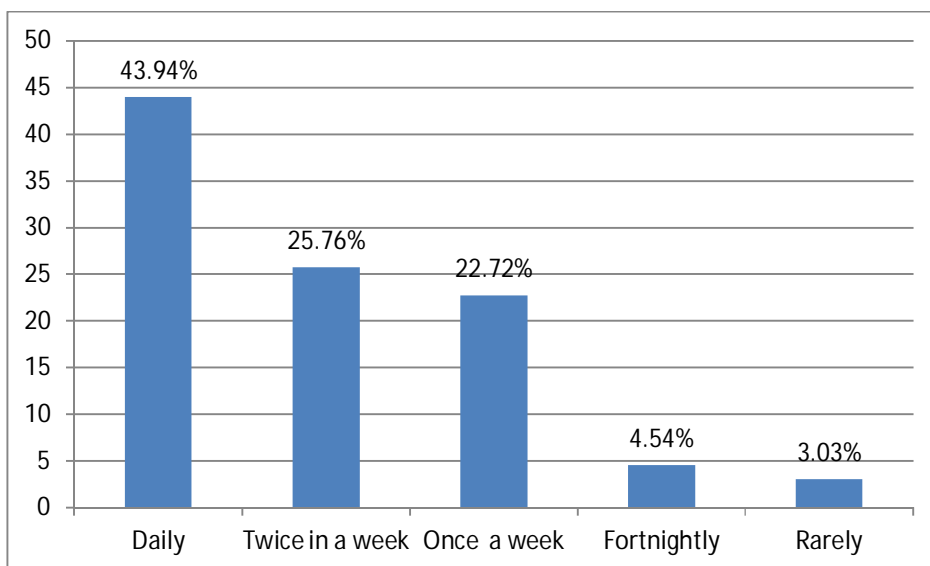


Figure 3: Use of information resources

Figure 3 makes it clear that majority of researchers seek information from the Internet based information resources and printed books for meeting information needs. Electronic journals and electronic books are used by 93.94% and 71.21% users respectively. Nearly 69.70% users use print journals followed by 65.15% consulting theses and research reports to get the requisite information. Only 16.67% respondents use CD-ROM databases. A user responded of listening to TV and Radio news to get information.

5.4 Frequency of library visit



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Figure 4: Frequency of library visit

Figure 4 depicts that majority of the users (43.94%) visit library daily for gathering needed information. Around 25.76% respondents visit library twice a week and 22.72% respondents visit library once in a week. Two researchers admitted that they rarely visit the library. This makes it clear that majority of them are regular visitors to library for gathering needed information.

5.5.5.6 Use of e-resources**Table 1: Use of E-journals**

Sr. No.	Use e-journals	No. of respondents	Percentage
1	Yes	62	93.94
2	No	04	6.06

It is evident from above table that number of researchers using e-journals is quite high. About 93.94% of the total 66 researchers use e-journals, whereas remaining 4 researchers responded otherwise. About 69.7% researchers use open access journals and it could be attributed to the fact that open access journals can be accessed from anywhere free of cost using the Internet. About 59.09% respondents access e-journals through Consortium for e-Resources in Agriculture.

Table 2: Use of print vs. e-resources

Sr. No.	Particulars	No. of respondents	Percentage
1	E-resources	10	15.15
2	Print resources	5	7.58
3	Both	50	75.75

It is clear from the table 2 that majority of the researchers prefer to use both print and e-resources. Only 5 researchers indicated their preference for print resources whereas 10 prefer to use only e-resources. Researchers prefer to use print resources because of their ease of use,

portability and non-requirement of technical gadgets while 24X7 access, ease of use and easy/faster access are the reasons for preference of e-resources.

5.6 Place of Accessing e-Resources

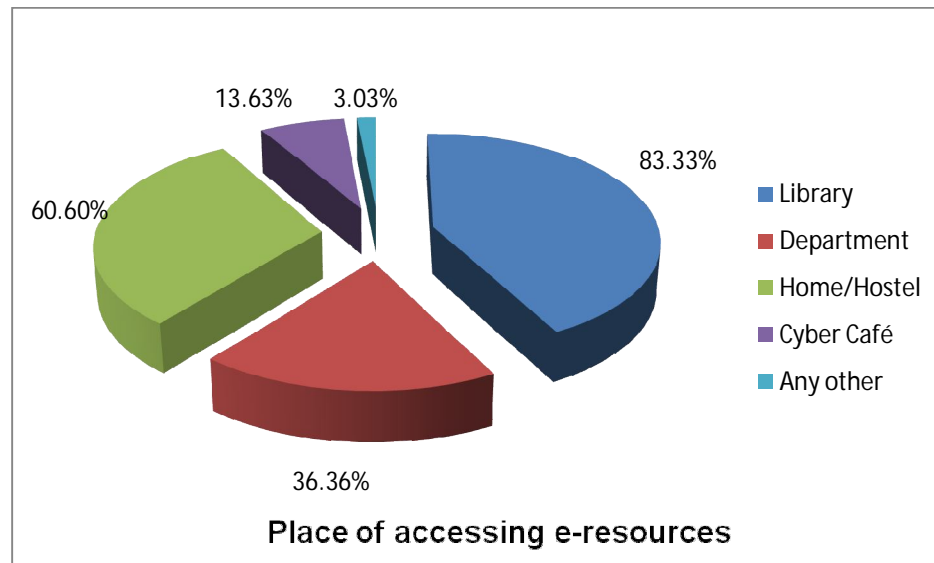


Figure 5: Place of accessing e-resources

The above figure reflects that library is the most preferred place for accessing e-resources by researchers. About 60.60% researchers prefer to access e-resources from their home/hostel. Nearly 36.36% users access e-resources from respective departments. Only 13.63% users go to cyber café to access online information resources. One respondent uses mobile phone to access e-resources and another uses personal Internet connection to have access to online information.

The open access information resources are quite useful for meeting information needs of researchers. Researchers' opinions on this are presented in following figure:

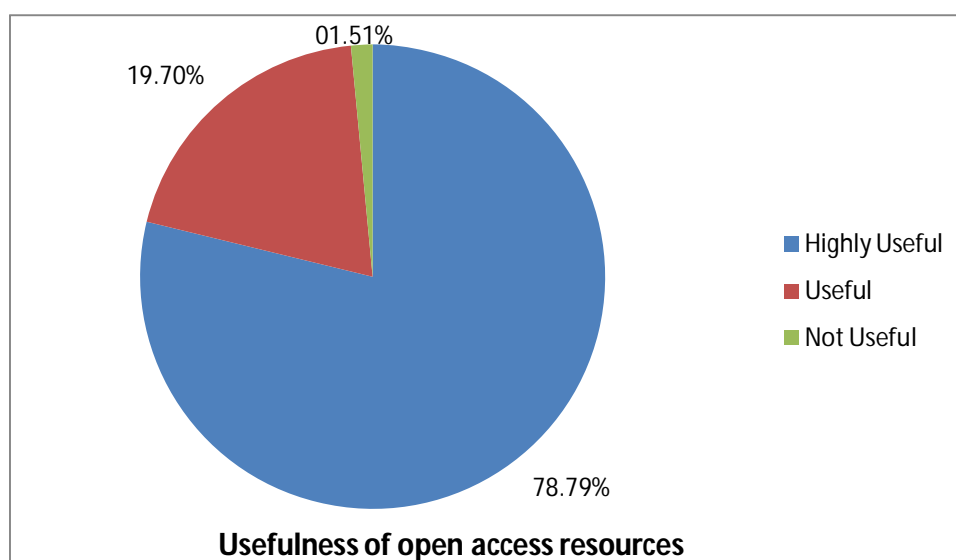


Figure 6: Usefulness of open access resources

It is evident from figure 6 that 78.79% researchers find open access information resources as highly useful for meeting up their information needs. About 19.70% considered these as useful for satisfying their needs. Merely 01.52% researchers find the open access information resources as not useful to their suitability.

All except one researcher admit that Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) have made a significant impact on their information seeking habits.

5.7 Time spent in gathering information per week

Table 3: Time spent for gathering information per week

Sr. No.	Time spent per week	No. of respondents	Percentage
1	0-5 hours	22	33.33
2	6-10 hours	20	30.30
3	11-15 hours	15	22.72
4	16-20 hours	6	9.09
5	More than 20 hours	3	4.54

Table 3 makes it clear that 33.33% researchers spend up to 5 hours and 30.30% spend 6-10 hours per week on an average for gathering information. About 22.72% users spend 11-15

hours per week. Three users spend more than 20 hours per week on an average to gather information for meeting their needs.

5.8 Number of articles downloaded per week

Table 4: Articles downloaded per week

Sr. No.	Time spent per week	No. of respondents	Percentage
1	1-5	26	39.39
2	6-10	25	37.88
3	11-15	5	7.57
4	16-20	5	7.57
5	More than 20	5	7.57

Table 4 reveals that majority of the researchers download 1-5 articles per week using the Internet for meeting their information needs. Nearly 37.88% download 6-10 articles per week on an average. Five users download more than 20 articles per week from the Internet.

5.9 Obstacles faced in gathering information

Table 5: Obstacles faced in gathering information

Sr. No.	Obstacles faced	No. of respondents	Percentage
1	Lack of computer hardware & software	7	10.60
2	Non-availability of Internet in hostels	37	56.06
3	Level of information available	15	22.72
4	Information scattered at too many places	21	31.81
5	Lack of time for searching and browsing	15	22.72
6	Frequent power failure	20	30.30
7	Required information not available	8	12.12
8	Information overload	1	1.51
9	Internet speed	29	43.33
10	Reluctance in using ICT tools and techniques	1	1.51

Table 5 shows that non-availability of the Internet in hostels is the major obstacle for researchers in gathering information. About 43.33 % users cited that slow speed of the Internet is also a problem for accessing information, while 30.30% users cited frequent power failure as hindrance to have access to information. Lack of time for searching and browsing information is

also a barrier for 22.72% researchers. Besides, level of information available, lack of computer hardware and software, non-availability of required information, information overs load, etc. are the problems faced by researchers in gathering information.

5.10 Satisfaction with the resources and services of university library

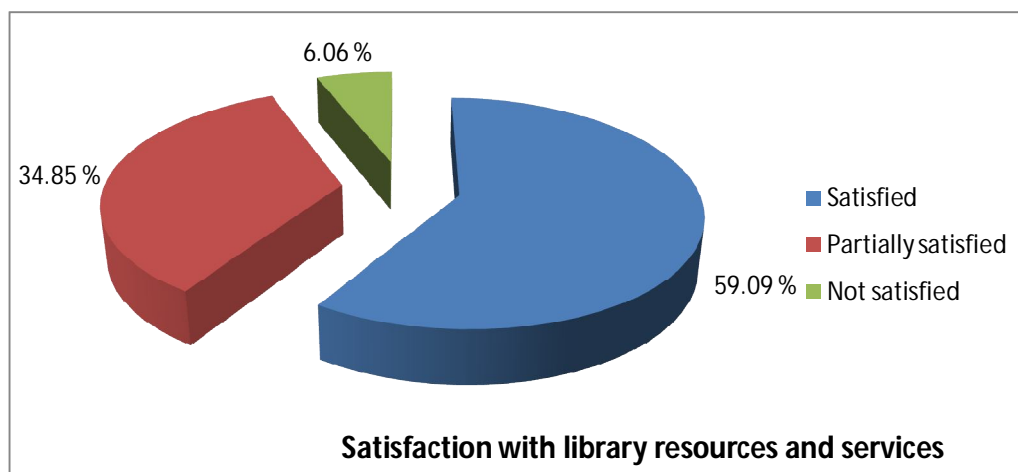


Figure 7: Satisfaction with library resources and services

It is clear from figure 7 that 59.09% researchers are satisfied with the resources and services of the Library of Guru Angad Dev Veterinary and Animal Sciences University, Ludhiana. About 34.85% researchers expressed partial satisfaction with library resources and services, whereas 6.06% are not satisfied.

6. Conclusion:

The results of the study indicate that majority of the researchers seek information for research/dissertation work. The Internet and library are major sources of information for 96.97% and 93.93% users respectively. Researchers prefer to use Internet resources followed by books and e-journals to access information. 98.48% researchers admit that Information and Communication Technology has made a significant impact on their information seeking pattern.

7. Acknowledgement:

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