

## **An Analytical Study of Information Behaviour of Literature Students in Thiruvananthapuram City**

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### **Abstract**

The study analyses the information seeking behaviour of literature students in the selected colleges in Thiruvananthapuram from University of Kerala. The questionnaire method was used to collect data from 170 respondents by administering questionnaires on their information seeking and requirements of the college indicate that guidance in the use of library resources and services is necessary to help teachers and students to meet their information requirements. The data collected were tabulated, analyzed and interpreted using SPSS software package. The study found that the majority of students have positive attitude towards information seeking.

**KEYWORDS:** e-journals, Information, Information Behavior, Information Seeking Patterns, Use Pattern

### **Introduction**

Information behaviour refers to different ways in which human beings interact with information including the way people seek and use information (Bates 2010). The immense boom of contemporary information communication technologies and its extensive utility has transformed the information behaviour of millions of digital citizens. The information utilization serves multilateral benefits that adapts with new necessities. Information need constantly shapes the information seeking behavior thereby the whole process of information seeking relays on focused information need. Handicapping the determination of the suitable information need will develop a confused condition resulting in inadequacy in deriving the need to be satisfied. "Information need is described as an anomalous state of knowledge" (Belkin et al 1982).

### **Review of Literature**

**El-Maamiry** (2017) evaluates the use of electronic resources by students of the College of Business Administration (CBA) and College of Information Technology (CIT). Thereby studying facts and hurdles in "their searching habits, information seeking, use and retrieval in satisfying their needs". The report aims at analyzing students' information seeking behaviours and possible inaccessibility of digital academic resources. Students of University of Dubai due to "cultural effects adopt different searching processes, use different phrases and mostly spend more time to search for information to satisfy their needs". Lack of efficient information retrieval skills are curbing their possibilities of information seeking.

**Rajesh Kumar Das** (2017) article aims to derive patterns of information seeking behavior of students of law in digital environments at the University of Dhaka. A stratified random sample survey was conducted for this study. The results show that students prefer the electronic format of information rather than printed format. Major e-resources used by them and the influential factors of use were also identified in this

study. This study also identified some crucial problems for seeking information and provides suggestions for the development of electronic legal information systems.

**Kadli** (2015) chooses to evaluate the information seeking behaviour of students of two law colleges of Mumbai. The information seeking behavior of law students on "the concerned literature has been reviewed and the questionnaire was randomly distributed to get the responses". It catalogues the "frequency of visit to the library, purpose of information seeking, computer acquaintance, amount of time spent on information gathering activities, problem faced in information seeking," etc. Still the students prefer and relies heavily on books. Most of them are efficient in managing and utilizing online database and offline resources. The analysis concludes that only advanced users training workshops and sessions can ensure better utilization of digital resources and services.

**Anyago** (2014) observes that advanced awareness on the information needs and seeking behaviour of users is proving cardinal for the advancement of "library resources, services and facilities to meet their information needs". The purpose of this study is to find out the various legal resources available to Postgraduate law students; their information needs and seeking behaviour; the sources/services utilized by them and their level of satisfaction with the information obtained from the sources in the library. The population of study consists of 323 Postgraduate law students registered at NIALS library since year 2013. Total enumeration sampling technique was used to select all the registered students. A self-developed questionnaire titled Information Needs and Seeking Behaviour of Postgraduate Law Students (INSBPLS) scale was used to collect data. In all, 323 copies of the questionnaire were distributed to Postgraduate law students, out of which 204 copies were returned and were usable for analysis. The study revealed that law books were mostly available in NIALS library with a frequency score of (F= 204), followed by law reports (F= 200). The research also found out that the major information need of the Postgraduate law students is to obtain academic information in the library.

**Olorunfemi** (2014) study investigated the information behavior of law students in Nigerian university law libraries. The research paradigm followed a positivism and interpretive perspective using both qualitative and quantitative approaches. The study adopted a survey research design. The study targeted all the law students in Nigerian universities. Out of the 30 universities offering law as a course of study in Nigeria, a total of 12 universities were chosen for the study. From the 12 chosen universities, 1,534 law students were randomly selected; this represents the sample for the study. Data was collected using a questionnaire, an interview and observation methods. The findings revealed that the surveyed law students generally exhibited a positive attitude towards patronage of law libraries, and that printed information sources are the main information sources utilized by respondents in law libraries. The majority of the respondents indicated that they possessed the ICT skills required to search for information using electronic information resources in the law libraries..

### **Objectives of the study**

The main objective of the study is to ascertain the information needs and information using pattern of literature students in Trivandrum city affiliated to University of Kerala. The study was conducted with the following objectives:

- To identify the users approach to information.
- To identify the different types of information sources preferred by the students.
- To examine the awareness about online information sources.
- To find the problems faced by the students in finding the relevant information.

### Methodology

In order to assess the literature use patterns, the extent of use of library services by the students and to understand their approach to information sources, 170 questionnaires were distributed 165 questionnaires were returned back dully filled.

### Analysis

The data collected were analysed using SPSS Software Package.

### Age wise distribution of population

The students belonged to various age groups. Table 1 illustrates the distribution of respondents based on their age.

**Table 1: Age wise distribution of population**

Age	Frequency	Percentage
18 - 20	67	40.61%
21 - 23	68	41.21%
24 - 26	21	12.73%
26+	9	5.45%
<b>Total</b>	<b>165</b>	<b>100%</b>

From the above table it is clear that the majority of the population (41.21%) belongs to the age group of 21-23 and the least respondents (5.45%) belong to the age group 26+.

### Gender wise distribution of respondents

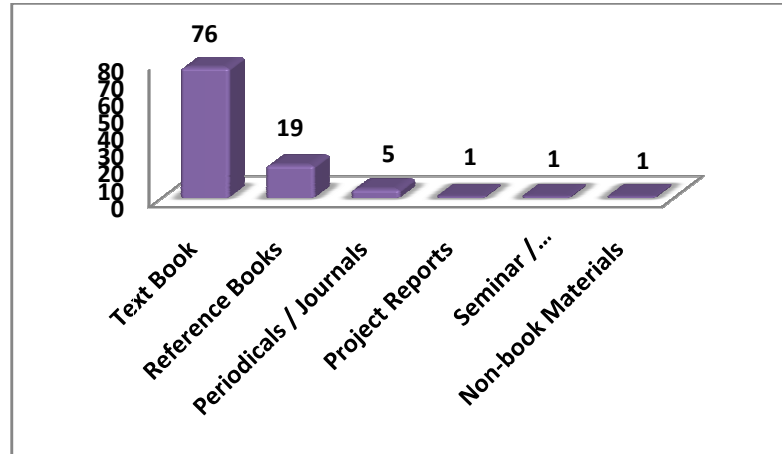
The respondents constitute both males and females. The gender wise distribution of the respondents is given in Table 2.

**Table 2. Gender wise distribution of respondents**

Gender	Frequency	Percentage
Male	125	75.76%
Female	40	24.24%
<b>Total</b>	<b>165</b>	<b>100%</b>

From the total population, male respondents contribute about 75.76%. Female respondents contribute 24.24%. Here male respondents are more in number than female.

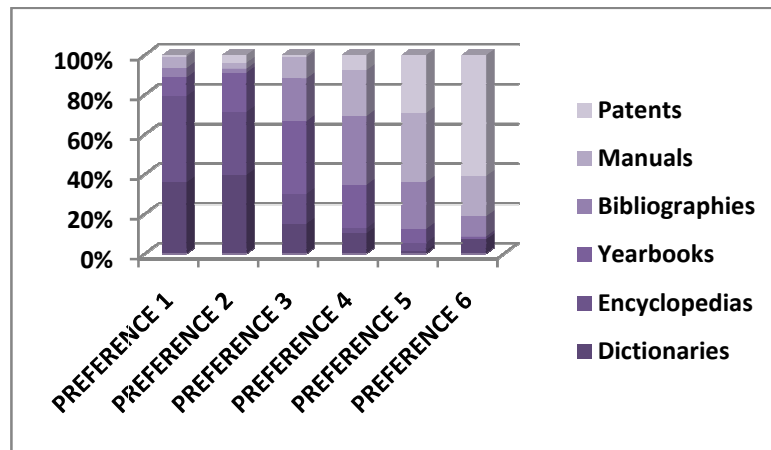
**Preference of information sources**



*Fig 1: Preference of information sources*

The first preference is given to text books (76) by most of the students. Majority (68) gave second preference to reference books. Third preference (27) is given to two sources; they are periodicals / journals and non-book materials. Fourth preference (28) is given to periodicals / journals. Seminar / Conference Proceedings (28) are given fifth preference and non-book materials are given sixth preference (32) by most of the users.

**Preference of reference sources**



*Fig 2: Preference of reference sources*

From the above figure it is evident that majority (46) of the students gave first preference for encyclopedias. A good number (40) of the students gave preference to dictionaries, 34 of students gave preference to Yearbooks, and 27 to Bibliographies and 25 to Manuals and 42 of the students gave preference for Patents.

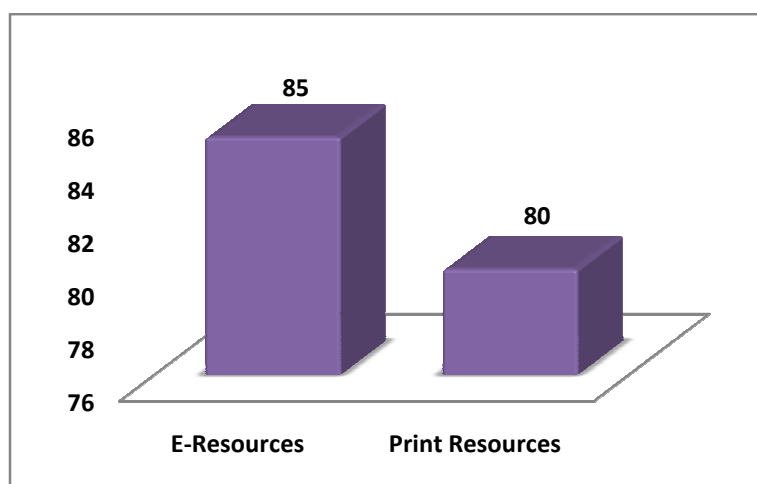
### Information needs

**Table 3: Information needs**

Information Needs	Percentage	Ranking
Asking the librarian	24.84%	III
Consulting your colleagues	55.15%	II
Others	12.12%	IV
Referring Books , Journals etc.	93.93%	I
From Internet	93.93%	I

From the above table we can find that majority (93.93%) of users of students satisfy their information needs to referring books, journals and from internet etc. A good number (55.15%) of users are focused with consulting their colleagues to satisfy their information need. A few numbers (24.84%) seeks help from the librarian and the least users (12.12%) seek other methods.

### Types of resources



**Fig 3: Types of resources**

By analyzing the above figure it is clear that the majority (51.52%) of the students preferred electronic resources and the remaining (48.48%) are in favor of print resources.

### Preference of journals

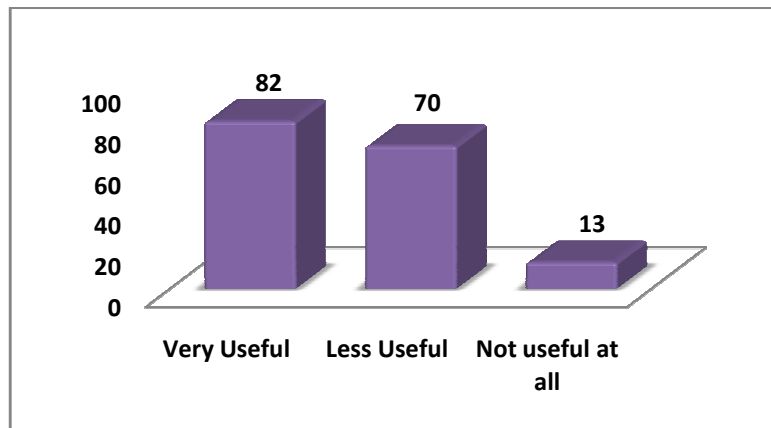
**Table 4: Preference of journals**

Preference	Frequency	Percentage
Indian Periodicals / Journals	98	59.39%

Foreign Periodicals / Journals	67	40.61%
<b>Total</b>	<b>165</b>	<b>100%</b>

The above table depicts that the major part of the population (59.39%) prefers Indian periodicals/journals and the remaining (40.61%) prefers foreign periodicals/journals.

**Usefulness of CD-ROMs**



*Fig 4: Usefulness of CD-ROMs*

From the above figure it is clear that majority (49.70%) argues that CD-ROMs are very useful media for providing information. A good number (42.42%) of students considered it as less useful and for the least (7.88%) it is not useful at all.

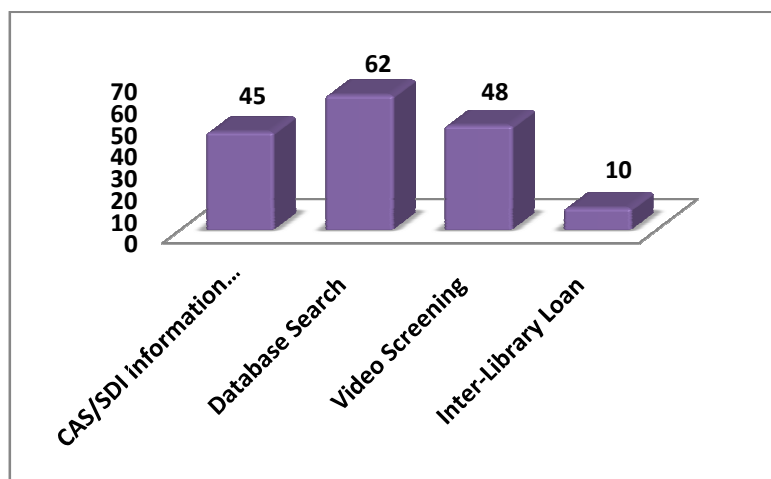
**Frequency of conducting online search**

*Table 5: Frequency of conducting online search*

Frequency of conducting online search	Frequency	Percentage
Very often in a day	49	29.70%
Daily	76	46.06%
Rarely	40	24.24%
Never	0	0%
<b>Total</b>	<b>165</b>	<b>100%</b>

From the above table it is clear that the majority (46.06%) of students conduct online searches daily. A good number (29.70%) of students conduct online searches very often in a day and 24.24% rarely.

### Services offered by the library



**Fig 5: Services offered by the library**

From the above table majority (37.58%) of the students avail database search offered by libraries. A good number (29.09%) of students use video screening. A few (27.27%) students avail CAS/SDI information search and the rest (6.06%) preferred Inter-Library Loan services.

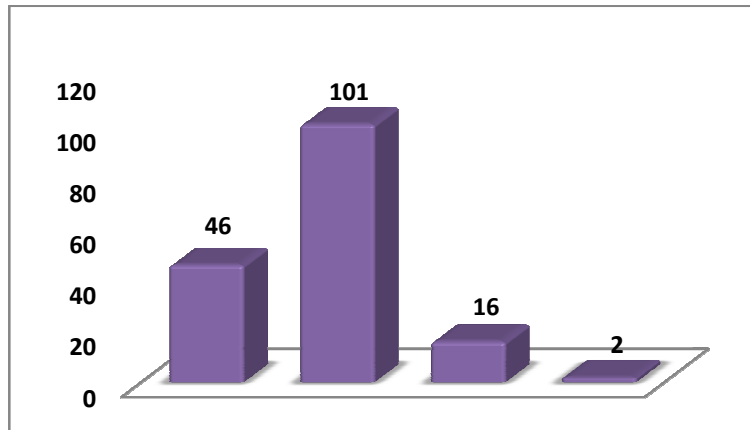
### Opinion about library stock in the subject

**Table 6: Opinion about library stock in the subject**

Library Stock	Frequency	Percentage
Seriously Inadequate	24	14.55%
Adequate	56	33.94%
Excellent	26	15.76%
Inadequate	28	16.97%
Good	31	18.79%
<b>Total</b>	<b>165</b>	<b>100%</b>

The above table shows the opinion about the library stock of the institution by MBBS students. Majority (33.94%) of the students are of opinion that the library stock of their institution is adequate. A good number (18.79%) of students rated the library stock is good. A few number (16.97%) of students rated that their library stock is inadequate and, only 14.55% of students are of opinion that the library stock is seriously inadequate.

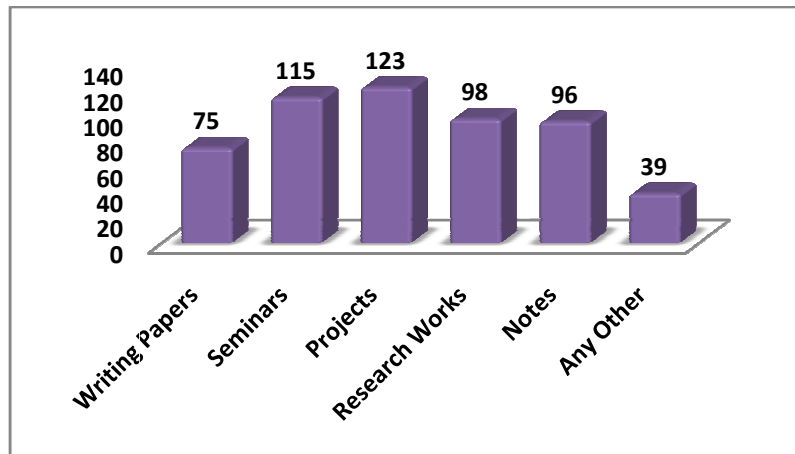
### Libraries used for accessing e-journals



**Fig 6: Libraries used for accessing e-journals**

From the above figure it is clear that majority (61.21%) of the student’s access e-journals from their home. A good number (27.88%) of students use medical college library for accessing e-journals and University library is used by few (9.70%) of the students. Only 1.21% of students used other libraries for their e-journal access.

### 6.13 Purposes of using e-journal

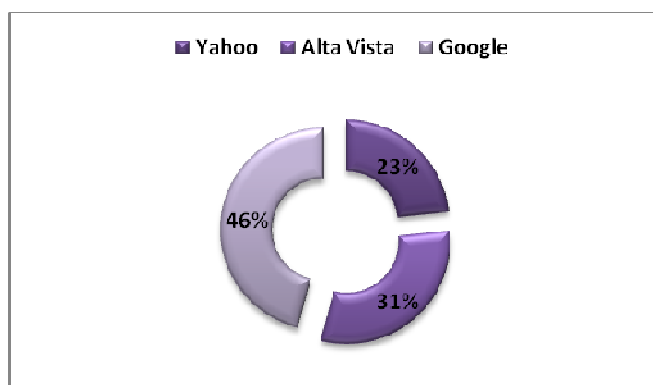


**Fig 7 : Purposes of using e-journal**

The above figure shows that majority (74.54%) of the students use e-journals for their project works. A good number (69.69%) of the students use e-journals for preparing seminar papers. 59.39% of the students use e-journals for research works, 58.18% of the students use e-journals for preparing their notes, 45.45% of the students use e-journals for writing papers, and only 23.63% of students use of e-journals for other purposes.



### 6.14 Preferred search engines



**Fig 8: Preferred search engines**

From the figure it is evident that majority (57.58%) of the students use Google as their most preferred search engine. A good number (30.30%) of the students use Alta Vista and only 12.12% of the students use Yahoo as their most preferred search engine.

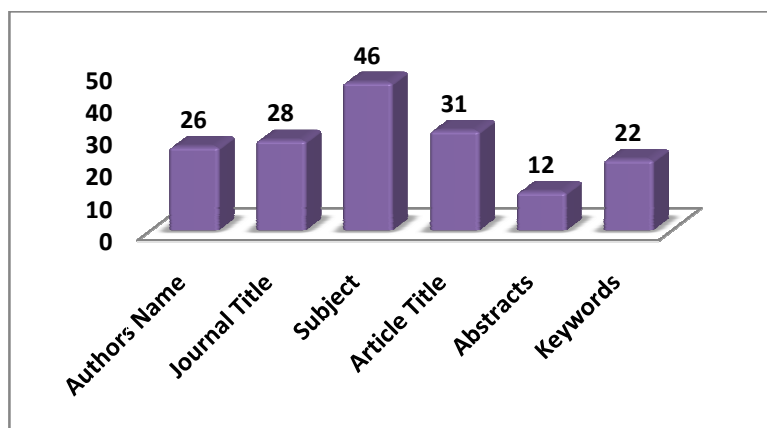
### 6.15 Usefulness of e-journals

**Table 7: Usefulness of e-journals**

Usefulness of e-journals	Frequency	Percentage
Most Helpful	55	33.33%
Helpful	99	60%
Least Helpful	11	6.67%
<b>Total</b>	<b>165</b>	<b>100%</b>

From the above table it is clear that majority (60%) of the students are of opinion that e-journals are helpful for them. A good number (33.33%) of the students are of opinion that e-journals are most helpful for them and only 6.67% of the students said that the usefulness of e-journals is least helpful for them.

### 6.16 Frequently used searching methods



**Fig 9 : Frequently used searching methods**

The above figure shows that majority (27.88%) of the students use subject wise searching. A good number (18.79%) of the student's preferred title search. 16.97% of the students used journal title format. Fourth majority (15.76%) of the students used author's name for searching. 13.33% of students use keyword searching and only 7.27% of students use abstracts for their search method.

## 7. Findings

1. Users satisfy their information need through various techniques. Majority (93.93%) of users of students satisfy their information needs to referring books, journals and from internet etc.
2. Information on current developments reaches students through various sources and services. Majority of students used journals/periodicals (92.12%) for getting current information.
3. Preference of types of resources differs from user to user. Majority (51.52%) of the students preferred electronic resources and the remaining (48.48%) are in favor of print resources.
4. There are different types of information sources available today. Text books were preferred by most of the students. Majority gave second preference to reference books.
5. The reference sources are used widely by the students. Majority of the students gave first preference for encyclopedias.
6. Students use different types of periodicals/journals including general and subject specific periodicals. The major part of the population (56.36%) prefers subject specific journals.
7. The major part of the population (59.39%) prefers Indian periodicals/journals.
8. Majority (49.70%) argues that CD-ROMs are very useful media for providing information.
9. Technological, legal and social barriers may create hindrance in accessing e-journal resources. Majority (59.39%) of the students are of opinion that electronic resources often detract them from doing other works.
10. There are various types of services are offered by the libraries. Majority

(37.58%) of the students avail database search offered by libraries.

11. Students used various methods for accessing e-journals. 70.30% of the students use search engines for accessing e-journals.
12. The students use various libraries for accessing e-journals. Majority (61.21%) of the students access e-journals from their home.
13. The frequency of accessing e-journals varies from person to person. Majority (32.73%) of the students access e-journals once in a week.
14. The students use e-journals for various purposes such as writing papers, preparing research articles, projects, research works etc. 74.54% of the students use e-journals for their project works.
15. Majority (33.33%) of the population use below one hour for their e-journal use.

### Conclusion

The behaviour of students and seeking information is responsive to their situation. The students rely on easily accessible media to get an answer to their question quickly. Ease of use as well as quick access of relevant results in easily readable format holds the key to retaining their loyalty to the digital media. While the students increasingly try out the digital media in the form of search engines, websites etc. The students seek the help of library to get the current journals and books. Even though majority of the users are satisfied with the services offered by the library. The outcome of the investigative study helps to improve the library capabilities of the library. The result can be made elaborate to a number of future investigations can be conducted.

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