

## **INFORMATION SEEKING AND BEHAVIORAL ASPECTS OF USERS: A CONCEPTUAL PERSPECTIVE**

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### **Abstract:**

This paper deals with information seeking and behavioral aspects of users. Library users are exposed to new possibilities of getting the information they in the electronic era. It also identifies the patterns of information seeking behavior of users with the help of new technology especially "Internet". Discussed need and importance of information and its retrieval weight age has been given to the search oriented techniques for the users. The user behavior has been discussed and the need of information communication highlighted. The concept and perception of the information need is given and also the agencies involved in the generation of knowledge have been discussed. Some suggestions have also been provided for result oriented search with the help of new technologies.

**Key words:** Information, Information seeking, behavioral aspect, internet, Information communication Technology

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## Introduction

Information is being created at the tremendous speed in every aspect of life and we observe information explosion in every field of life. We are living in the information society or information age where information is one of the most important factors of life and it is impossible to carry research and other day to day functions without proper information. Information is as vital to the scientists, scholars, teachers, engineers and to the common man as blood is necessary for the sinking patient. Of course, information is very vital ingredient in the modern world but the communication of information properly to proper persons at proper time is more vital. The new technology plays very imminent role in the faster communication of information; to the proper persons. The research is going on in all fields of the knowledge and development and also in the field of library and information science. The new technology will definitely empower the researchers and will help in becoming effective and self sufficient information seekers in the field of their interest. Information technology has progressively assumed increasing significance in our society. Our modern civilization depends on proper and effective use of information technology. The technology has already shrunk the world into a global village and every fact of human activity including education, agriculture, health, industry, feminism, human development, library management library science education, and research are greatly affected by information technology. With the exponential growth in size of storage phenomenal increase in processing speed, decreasing cost of hardware and user friendly software, the new technology provides new services, new products and new information software. The computer with its ability to store and process vast amount of information' and communication technology with its ability to transmit the information from one location to another converged to from information technology. Information technology has come to the rescue of all walks of life and especially the library and information science is highly indebted to it. Indeed information has been described as the fifty needs of human beings ranking after, air, water, food and shelter. Everyone needs information about everything. People needs information right from the organizational level to the personal level, from the highly educated person to the school children and even every house wife also needs information. In this present age of information there is so much information being generated that we are confronted with information explosion and information pollution. And due to this information chaos the people are confused about the information need information access and information sources. With the

impact of new technology most people are interested in accessing the information through these sources because of faster accessibility as the old gadgets of information retrieval and techniques are not sufficient to meet the challenges of the information explosion. So there is a paradigm shift from old technology/ techniques to the new sophisticated technology for retrieval of information at an accelerated speed and new subject/ new information is zooming up in every sphere of life. It is beyond doubt a fact that if a piece of information so valuable and precious but its availability lies in its proper retrieval and communication. The recorded and printed sea of knowledge cannot put to task without exploiting new gadgets and techniques. The researchers can utilize the modern technology so that they will be able to become effective and self sufficient information seekers. Like other areas/ aspects/ walks of life research is going on process and this essential aspect of research and development cannot keep pace with changing without the proper and deliberate use of modern technology and services that has been gifted by science. The document delivery industry is now moving to a stage where the real issues are considered with electronic copying, storing and transmission and the flexibility which paves way for repackaging to meet users specific information needs.

### **Objectives**

- Discuss the information seeking behavior of user
- To know behavioral aspect for information
- Highlight ICT impact on users for information needs

**Methodology** The methodology used in this paper is observation and analysis of documentary resources. Books, Journals and magazines and searching information from web source have been consulted during the compilation of this paper. Various books and literature related to the topic has been perused.

### **Scope of information retrieval-**

Information as we know is proceeds by all means but its utility lies in its proper retrieval and communication to the users. The scholars, researchers, scientists, organization, institution are creating new information at very terrific speed which is different to be controlled and accessed with naked hands. So with the advent of new technology we know all things about the ways and

means to control and access the information at a very good speed. Internet and online system are fast developed tools and techniques for accessing and retrieval of information.

### **Information origin and need<sup>10</sup>**

The word information became famous in 1970's. The term information and communication are very close to each other that they are considered to be of the same meaning. The dictionary meaning of term information is "knowledge, intelligence, a fact, data, a message, a signal and a stimulus. Debars, defined information as a cognitive state of awareness, of given representation facilitates the process of knowing information is the data which is processed as in other words we can say that data is the new raw material of information and after processing it becomes information. Information is needed in every field of life. Everybody needs information in everyday life like in education; research, LIS etc. Information need is a gap a person's knowledge which when experienced at the conscious level as a question, gives rise to a search for an answer. If the need is urgent, the search may be pursued with diligence often end up at the reference desk of a library where it is the responsibility of a reference librarian to determine the precise nature of the need. User needs are different as per their field of study or situation keeping in view the following points

1. Attitudes and beliefs
2. Goals and objectives
3. Capabilities
4. Users
5. Communication attitudes
6. Experiences and habits
7. Cultural and educational backgrounds
8. The sources they used

### **Information Seeking and Information seeking behavior<sup>2,3,9</sup>**

Information seeking means when a human being search something which they want to get. It means that the thing which they do not have but they need it. So information seeking is the process of searching the information from the information resources. Information seeking differs from person to person, organization to organization; that is the ways

and means they are using in seeking information they need are different in nature and format. Information seeking behavior is the technique or the process of searching for the information. Information seeking behavior depends on the types of information need of the people: So information seeking behavior arises when the person is able to recognize what type of information is needed which are the goals or objectives and what kind of information resources to use. The term information seeking behavior used here includes information searching and information gathering which means that after identification what type of information they need they search for it and gather it from different sources following the techniques or processes of searching. The LIS researchers also follow the certain ways and means for effective knowledge seekers.

**Information Policy** A governing principal, plan, or course of action concerning information resources and technology, adopted by a company, organization, institution, or government. For example the political decision to use public funds to subsidize INTERNET access for school and public libraries.

**Objective of ascertain of information needs**<sup>1</sup> hale, 1986 summarized the purpose identifying information needs for:

1. Optimizing the allocation of operating resources by customizing services to selected clientele;
2. Fine tuning the delivery of information within existing systems. The importance of user studies cannot be undermined. In view of the reducing financial support to libraries and information services, such study play their own role.

**Genesis of information** Wilson; has said that the genesis of information need is primarily from the person himself or herself, person's work or the environments in which he lives. Wilson; has given sound foundation to the circumstances in which information need arises.

**Generation of information** Knowledge and information is being generated by various agencies and individuals at an accelerated speed. Zooming of interdisciplinary subject day in and day out are adding to information and spectrum of knowledge. The following organization and individuals are actively engaged with the creation of new information and knowledge.

1. Research and development
2. Institution and organization
3. Authors and inventors
4. Interaction
5. Scientists and engineers
6. Universities and colleges
7. Geologists and physiologists
8. Governments and physiologists
9. Agencies and individuals
10. Astronauts and Navigators
11. Horticulturists and agriculturists

Various factors are responsible for active research in various fields. Growing human needs and specific needs at the hands of human endeavor are also responsible for more information and research.

**Behavioral aspects**<sup>6</sup> According to Marchionine, "information seeking is a process in which human beings purposefully engage in order to change their state of knowledge. Toilibert and Langford have identified user behavior as;

1. Users do not know what they want
2. User keep changing their mind
3. User want everything immediately
4. User react emotionally and illogically
5. User resist change
6. Invariably impatient and casual
7. Does not know how to use resources effectively
8. Prefer to miss information if not readily available
9. Their needs are short lived and changing
10. Lack aptitude for regular browsing of latest literature
11. lack inquisitiveness to know new development
12. Unable to express and translate their actual needs

Need was also felt for conducting use study by S.R Rangattan in his second law of library science (every Reader his/ her Book)

**Models of information use and information seeking behavior** Research in user studies, information seeking behavior and information retrieval process has no doubt accumulated large quantities data and findings. In fact information seeking behavior and information needs are two separate components of user studies

### **Internet Communication Tools<sup>5,8,11</sup>**

Email: An asynchronous communication tool between individuals

Listserv: An asynchronous communication tool to send messages to a large number of subscribers via email.

FTP: A tool for transferring files between two computers.

Web: A hyper-text and multi-media tool for authoring and publishing content, and for ccessing information.

Blog: A Web-based diary on a particular subject and maintained by a blogger (person/organization).

Wiki: A Web-based collaborative tool: users can create, remove, and edit contents; changes are logged.

Instant messaging: A real-time communication tool using text chat, voice and video between individuals.

Social networking sites: such as facebook,twitter, linkedin etc.

### **Internet-enabled Formal Information Resources<sup>5</sup>**

Online library catalog : Online library catalog has evolved from a tool to access library collections to providing links to various databases (free or subscribed), e-journals, or other library catalogs (supported by federated search).

Database : Many bibliographic databases, numerical databases, full text databases through library subscription or free are now available online via Web.

E-Journal: Two kinds of electronic journals co-exist: (i) with a print equivalent (evolved); (ii) pure e-journal (born in electronic format)

Digital library: The most diverse notions and often mentioned as a known portal, consortia, repository, and databases.

**User Friendly tools of Internet<sup>4,8</sup>:** - The internet has many user friendly tools which help the user to interact with the internet and get their information they need. Some of these tools are WWW, Google, Youtube, scholarly sites etc. The Internet is rich resource of information and provides the information to its users faster than any other resources. Internet is playing a very vital role in the retrieval of information at a very good speed. Email addresses are being used for transfer of data form one place to another place very quickly. The students enjoy searching web because it had a variety of formats. Students want to use web as an information resources in time; in the sense of obtaining information quickly and easily not experiencing difficulties in locating the required information on the web has affected information seekers. The information gathering tasks takes longer time than the fact finding tasks but both are search based with heavy use of Google.

**Suggestion for information seekers to become effective and self— sufficient:**

1. User must be specific in their queries
2. Follow norms adopted by the particular search engines
3. Do not browse at randomly
4. Maintain proper and full addresses of cites for accurate results
5. Do not misuse the "INTERNET"
6. Update knowledge regarding Internet and access
7. Instruction and Training of use is most

**Conclusion:-**

Knowledge empowers an individual and a community, but knowledge in itself does not empower. The LIS personnel make it possible to provide pinpointed and exhaustive information to users. The use of modern technology will reduce the energy and finance constrains. By exploiting the technologies time and space can be reduced and fruitful result has been obtained. Information seeking on web is a complex phenomenon. It evolves many search engines and it depends on the users to choose search engine because various search engines are meant for a specific search. The ICT (information communication technology) revolution and the advent of the internet has had drastic and for reaching impacts on the knowledge and information sector and added a new dimensions to information retrieval platforms. The internet is trying to bridge



the digital divide. The use of Internet with the help of modern computer technology has really revolutionized the whole spectrum. With the ardent and use of modern intimation technology and its application research work has become easier and duplication of research work has become easy to check. So exploitation the modern/ technology have made it possible to become effective and self sufficient. Change is the law of nature. A shift from traditionally techniques to modern/ new technology will really help in fast research and development.

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