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# INFORMATION SEEKING BEHAVIOUR OF THE NURSING PROFESSIONALS OF APOLLO COLLEGE OF NURSING, CHENNAI

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## ABSTRACT

*Aims at analyzing the information seeking behavior of the nursing professionals of Apollo College of Nursing, Chennai. Questionnaire (N =175) was used to collect the data and the analysis covers mainly the type of sources used, usage pattern, services utilized by the users, information seeking behaviour, level of satisfaction and constraints faced by the nursing professionals. Concludes that the library sources and services were utilized at the maximum level by the undergraduates and users who had lecturing and research as their nature of work.*

**KEYWORDS :** Nursing Professionals, Information Seeking Behaviour, Library Sources and Services

## Introduction

User studies are being conducted on the behaviour of the user in seeking information, instead of the needs of the use. Such studies provides a better way to modify the services and tools of the information system. The seeking behaviour differs due to many factors like knowledge of literature, availability, accessibility, information need etc. Most of the times students' information seeking behavior involves active or purposeful information seeking as a result of the need to complete course assignments, prepare for class discussions, seminars, workshops, conferences, or write final year research papers. Information needs are affected by range and knowledge of information sources / facilities available, varieties of users to which information will be put, the background, the background, motivation, professional orientation, discipline, type and area of work, and other individual characteristics of the users as well as the consequences of use.

## Need for the Study

The exponential growth of information and its users influenced the information management system. Thus, it is essential to evaluate the user's behaviour, information seeking pattern, actual information

needs and their awareness of the latest information technology. Nursing professionals need a wide variety of health information to meet their clinical and educational needs. Due to time constraints, many health care professionals prefer to obtain information from resources that are convenient, easy to use, and reliable. Professional superiors, colleagues, and other health care providers, especially physicians, are favorite resources for nursing information. Print materials are another group of preferred resources of information, including nursing textbooks and journals. Other reports, however, indicate an underutilization of the available nursing literature with a reduction in textbook use and minimal reliance on print journals.

In order to understand the new challenges, we need to examine factors such as: how users interact with information retrieval systems; different information seeking strategies and behaviour; user's tasks and goals, individual differences etc.

### **Statement of the Problem**

The study focuses on the information seeking behaviour of nursing professionals of Apollo College of Nursing, Chennai.

### **Objectives of the Study**

- To identify the potential users of the library and to know the reason for seeking information.
- To identify the types of resources / services preferred by the nursing professionals.
- To explore the information seeking behaviour of the nursing professionals.
- To identify the level of satisfaction about the library sources and services.
- To elicit the overall performance of the library.
- To identify the constraints faced in seeking information regarding library sources and services.

### **Literature Review**

A survey conducted by Romanov and Aarino (2006)<sup>1</sup> on the use of electronic scientific information resources among medical and dental students, revealed that information searching skills are correlated with the use of electronic resources. Use of electronic resources differs among students. 40% were non users of full text article. Adequate training in information searching skills will increase the use of electronic information resources.

Patitungkho and Deshpande (2005)<sup>2</sup> studied the information seeking behaviour of faculty members of Rajabhat Universities in Bangkok, Thailand. The result showed that most of respondents (41%) stated their method of seeking information by consulting a knowledgeable person in the field. Two hundred and thirteen respondents (82%) seek information for preparing lectures. Fifty-four percent of faculty members access more documents with the help of references from a book. It was revealed that most of the faculty members (57%) used textbooks.

Jeysankar, Nageswar Rao and Ramesh Babu (2009)<sup>3</sup> was conducted a study of the information seeking behavior among dentists in Chennai. Sample study was the 100 dentists in Chennai. This study emphasized that the existing infrastructure in terms of collection, services and other facilities in the libraries of dental educational institutions are to be strengthened.

Esakkimuthu, Jeysankar and Bagavathi Senthivel Murugan (2011)<sup>4</sup> was critically analysed the effective use of the library resources, internet and electronic resources by the users of selected special libraries in Tamil Nadu. They also examined the facilities, time spent, utilization, purpose, internet, search engine and problems based on retrieving information by scientists.

### **Methodology**

Non-experimental descriptive research design was adopted to explore the information needs and the information seeking behaviour of nursing professionals. Survey approach was adopted by the researcher for data collection. The courses offered in Apollo College of nursing are bachelor's degree, post certificate course, master degree in nursing. The study was conducted in the library of Apollo College of Nursing, Chennai. Information seeking behaviour assessment schedule was developed to assess the information needs, sources used, usage pattern, services utilized by the users, information seeking behaviour, level of satisfaction and constraints faced by the users. The assessment was made based on the 3 point rating scale.

### **Analysis**

The data was analyzed on the basis of objectives and hypothesis of the study. The data analysis was done manually by the researcher using descriptive and inferential statistics, after transferring the collected data into a master coding sheet.

**Table 1: Frequency and Percentage Distribution of Demographic Variables**

| S. No. | Demographic Variable      | n   | %    |
|--------|---------------------------|-----|------|
| 1      | Age                       |     |      |
|        | 21 – 25 years             | 93  | 53.1 |
|        | 26 – 30 years             | 54  | 30.9 |
|        | Above 30 years            | 28  | 16.0 |
| 2      | Educational Qualification |     |      |
|        | UG                        | 129 | 73.7 |
|        | PG                        | 46  | 26.3 |
| 3      | Experience                |     |      |
|        | < 1 year                  | 50  | 28.6 |
|        | 1 – 5 years               | 79  | 45.1 |
|        | > 5 years                 | 46  | 26.3 |
| 4.     | Nature of work            |     |      |
|        | Lecturing                 | 104 | 59.4 |
|        | Lecturing and research    | 71  | 40.6 |

Table 1 showed that most of the respondents (45.1%) had the experience of 1 – 5 years in their field. 26.3% of them had more than 5 years of experience. The nature of work was lecturing for majority (59.4%) of the respondents, whereas 40.6% of them had lecturing and research as their nature of work.

**Table 2: Association of Educational Qualification and Types of Sources Used.**

| S. No. | Types of Resources Used       |            | Educational Qualification |      |    |      | X <sup>2</sup> |
|--------|-------------------------------|------------|---------------------------|------|----|------|----------------|
|        |                               |            | UG                        |      | PG |      |                |
|        |                               |            | f                         | %    | f  | %    |                |
| 1.     | Text book                     | Never      | 1                         | 0.6  | 0  | 0.0  | 0.306          |
|        |                               | Rarely     | 9                         | 5.1  | 2  | 1.1  |                |
|        |                               | Frequently | 129                       | 73.7 | 34 | 19.4 |                |
| 2.     | Encyclopedia/<br>Dictionaries | Never      | 13                        | 7.4  | 1  | 0.6  | 1.828          |
|        |                               | Rarely     | 80                        | 45.7 | 21 | 12.0 |                |
|        |                               | Frequently | 46                        | 26.3 | 14 | 8.0  |                |
| 3.     | Periodicals                   | Never      | 23                        | 13.1 | 2  | 1.1  | 2.882          |
|        |                               | Rarely     | 47                        | 26.9 | 13 | 7.4  |                |
|        |                               | Frequently | 69                        | 39.4 | 21 | 12.0 |                |
| 4.     | Technical Reports             | Never      | 47                        | 26.9 | 7  | 4.0  | 2.777          |
|        |                               | Rarely     | 69                        | 39.4 | 22 | 12.6 |                |
|        |                               | Frequently | 23                        | 13.1 | 7  | 4.0  |                |
| 5.     | Conference Proceedings        | Never      | 32                        | 18.3 | 1  | 0.6  | 10.211         |
|        |                               | Rarely     | 73                        | 41.7 | 19 | 10.9 |                |
|        |                               | Frequently | 34                        | 19.4 | 16 | 9.1  |                |
| 6.     | Patents/ standards            | Never      | 53                        | 30.3 | 11 | 6.3  | 0.770          |
|        |                               | Rarely     | 64                        | 36.6 | 18 | 10.3 |                |
|        |                               | Frequently | 22                        | 12.6 | 7  | 4.0  |                |
| 7.     | Dissertations                 | Never      | 36                        | 20.6 | 2  | 1.1  | 32.304*        |
|        |                               | Rarely     | 60                        | 34.3 | 4  | 2.3  |                |
|        |                               | Frequently | 43                        | 24.6 | 30 | 17.1 |                |

|     |                                 |            |     |      |    |      |       |
|-----|---------------------------------|------------|-----|------|----|------|-------|
| 8.  | Reference Books                 | Never      | 3   | 1.7  | 1  | 0.6  | 4.265 |
|     |                                 | Rarely     | 15  | 8.6  | 0  | 0.0  |       |
|     |                                 | Frequently | 121 | 69.1 | 35 | 20.0 |       |
| 9.  | Indexes/ Abstracts              | Never      | 31  | 17.7 | 3  | 1.7  | 4.114 |
|     |                                 | Rarely     | 40  | 22.9 | 10 | 5.7  |       |
|     |                                 | Frequently | 68  | 38.9 | 23 | 13.1 |       |
| 10. | Bibliographies                  | Never      | 30  | 17.1 | 1  | 0.6  | 7.001 |
|     |                                 | Rarely     | 35  | 20.0 | 12 | 6.9  |       |
|     |                                 | Frequently | 74  | 42.3 | 23 | 13.1 |       |
| 11. | Discussion With Colleagues      | Never      | 9   | 5.1  | 0  | 0.0  | 2.497 |
|     |                                 | Rarely     | 13  | 7.4  | 4  | 2.3  |       |
|     |                                 | Frequently | 117 | 66.9 | 32 | 18.3 |       |
| 12. | Attending Seminars/ Conferences | Never      | 16  | 9.1  | 0  | 0.0  | 9.515 |
|     |                                 | Rarely     | 59  | 33.7 | 10 | 5.7  |       |
|     |                                 | Frequently | 64  | 36.6 | 26 | 14.9 |       |
| 13. | CDROM D atabases                | Never      | 58  | 33.1 | 9  | 5.1  | 5.573 |
|     |                                 | Rarely     | 54  | 30.9 | 14 | 8.0  |       |
|     |                                 | Frequently | 27  | 15.4 | 13 | 7.4  |       |
| 14. | E journals                      | Never      | 55  | 31.4 | 8  | 4.6  | 4.242 |
|     |                                 | Rarely     | 51  | 29.1 | 15 | 8.6  |       |
|     |                                 | Frequently | 33  | 18.9 | 13 | 7.4  |       |
| 15. | Internet R esources             | Never      | 38  | 21.7 | 1  | 0.6  | 9.964 |
|     |                                 | Rarely     | 41  | 23.4 | 14 | 8.0  |       |
|     |                                 | Frequently | 60  | 34.3 | 21 | 12.0 |       |

Table 2 depicts that majority of the nursing professionals consider that the text books, reference books and discussion with the colleagues are their preferable resources for getting their information in the given priority irrespective of the educational qualification. Among the post graduates (26.3%), dissertations were used by 17.1% of the users. Not only electronic resources, all the resources were utilized well by the under graduates than post graduates.

**Table 3: Association Between the age and Characteristics of the Users in Information Seeking.**

| S. No. | Characteristics of the Users Reg. Information Seeking |                | Age       |      |           |      |          |      | χ <sup>2</sup> |
|--------|---|----------------|-----------|------|-----------|------|----------|------|----------------|
|        |   |                | 21-25 yrs |      | 26-30 yrs |      | > 30 yrs |      |                |
|        |   |                | f         | %    | f         | %    | f        | %    |                |
| 1.     | Types of Resources Preferred                          | Never          | 5         | 2.9  | 3         | 1.7  | 3        | 1.7  | 3.907          |
|        |   | Rarely         | 31        | 17.7 | 13        | 7.4  | 5        | 2.9  |                |
|        |   | Frequently     | 57        | 32.6 | 38        | 21.7 | 20       | 11.4 |                |
| 2.     | Usage Pattern   | Never          | 1         | 0.6  | 5         | 2.9  | 2        | 1.1  | 8.142          |
|        |   | Rarely         | 49        | 28.0 | 30        | 17.1 | 18       | 10.3 |                |
|        |   | Frequently     | 43        | 24.6 | 19        | 10.9 | 8        | 4.6  |                |
| 3.     | Utilization of Services                               | Never          | 19        | 10.9 | 11        | 6.3  | 7        | 4.0  | 5.956          |
|        |   | Rarely         | 61        | 34.9 | 32        | 18.3 | 12       | 6.9  |                |
|        |   | Frequently     | 13        | 7.4  | 11        | 6.3  | 9        | 5.1  |                |
| 4.     | Information Seeking Behaviour                         | Never          | 14        | 8.0  | 6         | 3.4  | 3        | 1.7  | 2.825          |
|        |   | Rarely         | 62        | 35.4 | 35        | 20.0 | 16       | 9.1  |                |
|        |   | Frequently     | 17        | 9.7  | 13        | 7.4  | 9        | 5.1  |                |
| 5.     | Level of Satisfaction                                 | Unsatisfactory | 10        | 5.7  | 10        | 5.7  | 7        | 4.0  | 6.965          |
|        |   | Good           | 52        | 29.7 | 32        | 18.3 | 17       | 9.7  |                |
|        |   | Excellent      | 31        | 17.7 | 12        | 6.9  | 4        | 2.3  |                |
| 6.     | Constraints Faced                                     | Never          | 44        | 25.1 | 23        | 13.1 | 14       | 8.0  | 2.973          |
|        |   | Moderately     | 39        | 22.3 | 28        | 16.0 | 13       | 7.4  |                |
|        |   | Extremely      | 10        | 5.7  | 3         | 1.7  | 1        | 0.6  |                |

It can be noted from the table 3, that the users who were in the age group of 21 -25 years had utilized the resources and services rendered by the library and had high level of satisfaction and few of them (22.3%) had difficulties in utilizing the library moderately. There relation between the age and the other characteristics of the users in seeking information is not significant.

**Table 4: Association Between Educational Qualification and Characteristics of the Users in Information Seeking**

| Sr. No. | Characteristics of the Users Reg. Information Seeking |                | Educational Qualification |      |    |      | $\chi^2$ |
|---------|---|----------------|---------------------------|------|----|------|----------|
|         |   |                | UG                        |      | PG |      |          |
|         |   |                | f                         | %    | f  | %    |          |
| 1.      | Types of Resources Preferred                          | Never          | 11                        | 6.3  | 0  | 0.0  | 7.069    |
|         |   | Rarely         | 43                        | 24.6 | 6  | 3.4  |          |
|         |   | Frequently     | 85                        | 48.6 | 30 | 17.1 |          |
| 2.      | Usage Pattern   | Never          | 6                         | 3.4  | 2  | 1.1  | 2.216    |
|         |   | Rarely         | 81                        | 46.3 | 16 | 9.1  |          |
|         |   | Frequently     | 52                        | 29.7 | 18 | 10.3 |          |
| 3.      | Utilization of Services                               | Never          | 34                        | 19.4 | 3  | 1.7  | 16.778*  |
|         |   | Rarely         | 87                        | 49.7 | 18 | 10.3 |          |
|         |   | Frequently     | 18                        | 10.3 | 15 | 8.6  |          |
| 4.      | Information Seeking Behaviour                         | Never          | 22                        | 12.6 | 1  | 0.6  | 7.676    |
|         |   | Rarely         | 91                        | 52.0 | 22 | 12.6 |          |
|         |   | Frequently     | 26                        | 14.9 | 13 | 7.4  |          |
| 5.      | Level of Satisfaction                                 | Unsatisfactory | 20                        | 11.4 | 7  | 4.0  | 0.839    |
|         |   | Good           | 80                        | 45.7 | 21 | 12.0 |          |
|         |   | Excellent      | 39                        | 22.3 | 8  | 4.6  |          |
| 6.      | Constraints Faced                                     | Never          | 63                        | 36.0 | 18 | 10.3 | 0.304    |
|         |   | Moderately     | 65                        | 37.1 | 15 | 8.6  |          |
|         |   | Extremely      | 11                        | 6.3  | 3  | 1.7  |          |



It is seen from the table 4, that among the users, mostly (48.6%) undergraduates were utilizing the library sources and services at the maximum level. Most of the under graduates (37.1%) had difficulties in utilizing the library. There is significant relation between the educational qualification and utilization of services at the level.

**Table 5: Association Between the Experience & Characteristics of the Users in Information Seeking.**

| Sr. No. | Characteristics of the Users Reg. Information Seeking |                | Experience |      |           |      |         |      | $\chi^2$ |
|---------|---|----------------|------------|------|-----------|------|---------|------|----------|
|         |   |                | < 1 year   |      | 1 – 5 yrs |      | > 5 yrs |      |          |
|         |   |                | f          | %    | f         | %    | f       | %    |          |
| 1.      | Types of Resources Preferred                          | Never          | 2          | 1.1  | 6         | 3.4  | 3       | 1.7  | 4.236    |
|         |   | Rarely         | 13         | 7.4  | 27        | 15.4 | 9       | 5.1  |          |
|         |   | Frequently     | 35         | 20.0 | 46        | 26.3 | 34      | 19.4 |          |
| 2.      | Usage Pattern   | Never          | 1          | 0.6  | 6         | 3.4  | 1       | 0.6  | 10.100   |
|         |   | Rarely         | 23         | 13.1 | 41        | 23.4 | 33      | 18.9 |          |
|         |   | Frequently     | 26         | 14.9 | 32        | 18.3 | 12      | 6.9  |          |
| 3.      | Utilization of Services                               | Never          | 7          | 4.0  | 20        | 11.4 | 10      | 5.7  | 4.804    |
|         |   | Rarely         | 36         | 20.6 | 44        | 25.1 | 25      | 14.3 |          |
|         |   | Frequently     | 7          | 4.0  | 15        | 8.6  | 11      | 6.3  |          |
| 4.      | Information Seeking Behaviour                         | Never          | 7          | 4.0  | 13        | 7.4  | 3       | 1.7  | 6.596    |
|         |   | Rarely         | 31         | 17.7 | 54        | 30.9 | 28      | 16.0 |          |
|         |   | Frequently     | 12         | 6.9  | 12        | 6.9  | 15      | 8.6  |          |
| 5.      | Level of Satisfaction                                 | Unsatisfactory | 4          | 2.3  | 14        | 8.0  | 9       | 5.1  | 3.544    |
|         |   | Good           | 31         | 17.7 | 43        | 24.6 | 27      | 15.4 |          |
|         |   | Excellent      | 15         | 8.6  | 22        | 12.6 | 10      | 5.7  |          |
| 6.      | Constraints Faced                                     | Never          | 22         | 12.6 | 39        | 22.3 | 20      | 11.4 | 2.456    |
|         |   | Moderately     | 24         | 13.7 | 32        | 18.3 | 24      | 13.7 |          |
|         |   | Extremely      | 4          | 2.3  | 8         | 4.6  | 2       | 1.1  |          |

It can be observed from the table 5, that utilization of the library services and sources were more by the users who had 1-5 years of experience than others. There is no significant relationship between the experience and the information seeking characteristics of the users.

**Table 6 : Association Between the Nature of Work and Characteristics of the Users in information Seeking**

| Sr. No. | Characteristics of the Users Regarding Information Seeking |                | Nature of Work |      |                      |      | $\chi^2$ |
|---------|--|----------------|----------------|------|----------------------|------|----------|
|         |  |                | Lecturing      |      | Lecturing & Research |      |          |
|         |  |                | f              | %    | F                    | %    |          |
| 1.      | Types of Resources Preferred                               | Never          | 10             | 5.7  | 1                    | 0.6  | 13.674*  |
|         |  | Rarely         | 37             | 21.1 | 12                   | 6.9  |          |
|         |  | Frequently     | 58             | 33.1 | 57                   | 32.6 |          |
| 2.      | Usage Pattern  | Never          | 5              | 2.9  | 3                    | 1.7  | 6.444    |
|         |  | Rarely         | 66             | 37.7 | 31                   | 17.7 |          |
|         |  | Frequently     | 34             | 19.4 | 70                   | 20.6 |          |
| 3.      | Utilization of Services                                    | Never          | 31             | 17.7 | 6                    | 3.4  | 23.607*  |
|         |  | Rarely         | 65             | 37.1 | 40                   | 22.9 |          |
|         |  | Frequently     | 9              | 5.1  | 24                   | 13.7 |          |
| 4.      | Information Seeking Behavior                               | Never          | 16             | 9.1  | 7                    | 4.0  | 3.124    |
|         |  | Rarely         | 70             | 40.0 | 43                   | 24.6 |          |
|         |  | Frequently     | 19             | 10.9 | 20                   | 11.4 |          |
| 5.      | Level of Satisfaction                                      | Unsatisfactory | 21             | 12.0 | 6                    | 3.4  | 4.264    |
|         |  | Good           | 58             | 33.1 | 43                   | 24.6 |          |
|         |  | Excellent      | 26             | 14.9 | 21                   | 12.0 |          |
| 6.      | Constraints Faced  | Never          | 51             | 29.1 | 30                   | 17.1 | 3.789    |
|         |  | Moderately     | 49             | 28.0 | 31                   | 17.7 |          |
|         |  | Extremely      | 5              | 2.9  | 9                    | 5.1  |          |

It can be noted from the table 6 that 32.6% of them who had lecturing and research as their nature of their work utilizing the variety of sources and services at the maximum level and their satisfaction level is also higher than the users (22.9%) who had lecturing alone as their nature of work. There is a significant relationship between the nature of the work and types of resources and services used at the level ( $p < 0.005$ ).

### **Conclusion**

The study concluded that the print media and the informal resources were utilized more than the online resources to meet their information needs. The curriculum requirements, awareness of resources and the availability of resources influence the information seeking behaviour. Many of them were not aware of the online databases available in their subject field. Hence the facilities provided are utilized at the maximum level and had moderate level of satisfaction about the service and sources provided. User level, educational qualification, experience, nature of work and individual's capability also influence seeking to some extent and attaining satisfaction from dissemination of information by various organizations and documentation centers.

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