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Information Needs of Faculty Members and Research Scholars of Chaudhary Charan Singh University: A Case Study

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Introduction

The benefits of information revolution are centered on the convenience of the user. Faculty members and research scholars are responsible for teaching and are expected to do research and publish the results throughout their careers. This study looks at the information needs and use patterns of faculty members and research scholars of Chaudhary Charan Singh University. A questionnaire was used to collect data and statistical tests were applied to the results.

Significance of the Study

This study raises awareness of the collections and services of the library, and shows the effectiveness of resources and services of college libraries and the university library of Chaudhary Charan Singh University. It focuses on the skills needed to use electronic resources and emphasises the need for user education and training in using electronic sources in the library based on user responses.

Objectives of the Study

- To study the information needs and use patterns of faculty members and research scholars of Chaudhary Charan Singh University.
- To identify the constraints faced in using and searching for information in libraries.
- To suggest remedies that may help the faculty members and research scholars to use the library in an efficient way.

Scope

The present study is confined to the teachers and research scholars working in departments colleges and departments affiliated to Chaudhary Charan Singh University. The university includes six districts: Bulandshahar, Meerut, Muzaffar Nagar, Saharanpur, Baghpat and Ghaziabad College.

Hypothesis

- The faculty members and research scholars of Chaudhary Charan Singh University visit libraries for study and research purposes.
- Users face difficulties accessing information through electronic sources.
- Users need more skill in using the electronic information sources.

Method

A random sampling technique was used to select from 63 colleges and 27 departments based on five faculties affiliated to the university. A total of 425 questionnaires were distributed and 200 were completed. In addition to a questionnaire, interview and observation were also used.

Data Analysis

The data collected through the questionnaire was analysed using FoxPro database management system software. Statistical analysis of the data for the present study was done by applying

1. Simple percentage
2. Chi-square test

Chi-square was used to compare an observed group of frequencies with an expected group of frequencies. This allowed expected frequencies to be deduced from the null hypothesis.

$$X^2 = (F_o - F_e)^2$$

F_e

This is the required X^2 Value

F_o = Observed frequency

F_e = Expected frequency

$df = (r-1) \times (c-1)$ or $df = (r-1)$

df = Degree of freedom

r = number of rows

c = number of columns

Distribution of Responses Received

Name	Users	Response	Percent
University Departments	50	30	60.00
Bulandshahar	75	38	50.66
Meerut	75	34	45.33
Muzaffar Nagar	75	31	41.33
Shaharanpur	50	25	50.00
Baghpat	25	12	48.00
Ghaziabad	75	30	40.00
Total	425	200	47.05

Analysis of Data

Purpose of Visit to the Library

Frequency does not indicate the nature and purpose of library visits. With this in mind, visitors were asked to indicate the purpose of their visit to the library.

Table 1

Purpose of Visit	Numbers	Percentage
Study/Research/Training	160	80.00
Locate information books and Journals	163	81.50
Borrow books	192	96.00
Light reading	112	56.00
Leisure time	31	15.50
Other	23	11.50

Nearly all users visit the library to borrow books, while four-fifths go to locate information in books and journals and for study and research, while a little more than half go to spend leisure time.

Information Sources for Research and Teaching Needs

Table 2

Information Sources	Preference								Total
Textbook/Handbook	133 [24] (510.51)	14 [13] (0.18)	10 [10] (0.00)	4 [8] (2.49)	2 [5] (10.76)	2 [5] (2.54)	1 [4] (1.87)	33 [29] (71.15)	200
Encyclopedia	13 [24] (4.39)	59 [13] (153.8)	19 [10] (7.56)	12 [8] (1.58)	7 [5] (3.84)	6 [5] (0.47)	2 [4.8] (3.75)	82 [129] (18.50)	200
Dictionaries	15 [24] (3.66)	17 [13] (7.56)	22 [10] (14.30)	43 [8] (142.15)	6 [5] (1.18)	6 [5] (1.08)	4 [4] (0.00)	84 [129] (18.50)	200
Periodicals	14 [24] (4.19)	45 [13] (71.58)	25 [10] (29.30)	15 [8] (4.20)	5 [5] (0.00)	6 [5] (0.74)	2 [4] (4.57)	85 [129] (13.20)	200
Technical reports	13 [24] (4.83)	9 [13] (7.83)	9 [10] (0.86)	9 [8] (0.00)	7 [5] (4.56)	6 [5] (0.74)	4 [4] (0.02)	143 [129] (8.21)	200
Proceedings	12 [24] (5.14)	16 [13] (3.06)	34 [10] (57.75)	18 [8] (9.53)	12 [5] (8.22)	5 [5] (0.02)	6 [4] (3.58)	96 [129] (8.56)	200
Patents	15 [24] (2.9)	3 [13] (8.21)	7 [10] (1.56)	2 [8] (5.62)	0 [5] (5.46)	2 [5] (1.65)	3 [4] (1.78)	169 [129] (12.10)	200
Standards	14 [24] (4.19)	12 [13] (1.05)	6 [10] (1.47)	4 [8] (18.34)	6 [5] (0.54)	8 [5] (5.17)	4 [4] (2.88)	151 [129] (3.60)	200
Thesis/Dissertations	21 [24] (0.14)	8 [13] (2.74)	4 [10] (3.07)	9 [8] (0.03)	12 [5] (0.65)	4 [5] (2.05)	6 [4] (5.27)	134 [129] (1.30)	200

Reference Books	24 [24] (0.07)	17 [13] (5.320)	9 [10] (5.56)	13 [8] (12.22)	12 [5] (12.48)	21 [5] (46.56)	10 [4] (0.00)	98 [129] (7.70)	200
Indexes/Abstracts	19.6 [24] (3.74)	9 [13] (1.52)	7 [10] (4.87)	6 [8] (4.84)	2 [5] (14.4)	9 [5] (22.52)	14 [4] (24.63)	132 [129] (0.41)	200
Bibliographies	17 [24] (10.22)	10 [13] (5.55)	1 [10] (7.72)	2 [8] (32.02)	4 [5] (0.70)	5 [5] (0.414)	7 [4] (13.74)	153 [129] (27.04)	200
Colleagues	17 [24] (10.22)	2 [13] (9.55)	6 [10] (1.35)	7 [8] (1.51)	6 [5] (1.59)	3 [5] (5.35)	8 [4] (20.37)	166 [129] (18.82)	200
Conferences	21 [24] (1.01)	6 [13] (4.06)	6 [10] (1.73)	4 [8] (17.17)	5 [5] (0.24)	6 [5] (1.08)	2 [4] (1.76)	166 [129] (18.82)	200
CD-ROM	18 [24] (6.79)	3 [13] (7.94)	6 [10] (1.23)	1 [8] (6.75)	3 [5] (8.50)	0 [5] (5.35)	4 [4] (0.53)	167 [129] (58.40)	200
Internet	26 [24] (2.04)	7 [13] (3.99)	5 [10] (2.17)	5 [8] (2.96)	3 [5] (9.64)	4 [5] (3.18)	3 [4] (4.57)	124 [129] (4.95)	200
e-journals	8 [24] (7.24)	4 [13] (7.53)	2 [10] (5.95)	3 [8] (4.41)	1 [5] (4.27)	2 [5] (3.10)	3 [4] (4.57)	168 [129] (11.65)	200
Other	15 [24] (17.00)	1 [13] (10.01)	2 [10] (6.25)	1 [8] (6.78)	0 [5] (5.78)	1 [5] (4.61)	1 [4] (3.26)	179 [129] (19.25)	200
Total	425	242	172	158	95	96	84	2330	3600

Table 2 reveals that users prefer "other" sources, followed by discussion with colleagues, attending conferences, CD-ROM databases, and patents for research.

Figures in square brackets indicate the expected frequency (Fe) and those in parentheses indicate the cell Chi-square

Chi-Square 1544.997

Chi-Square at 119 df and 0.05 level of significance is 155.595

Null Hypothesis Rejected

Current Literature in the Field of Interest

It is essential that for researchers to be up-to-date in their fields of interest. In addition, they must know about developments in other broader and peripheral areas.

Table 3

Information Sources	Preference									Total
Book Trade Catalogue	7 [921.8] (7.68)	2 [18.1] (14.840)	12 [17.5] (10.30)	6 [5.60] (0.12)	6 [7.5] (1.29)	4 [2.95] (4.47)	6 [2.9] (4.47)	4 [5.9] (0.60)	78 [124.6] (17.84)	200
Bibliographies	24 [21.8] (1.37)	50 [18.1] (347.27)	10 [17.5] (0.55)	6 [5] (0.74)	4 [7.5] (7.87)	10 [2.95] (3.38)	4 [2.9] (7.03)	4 [5.9] (0.60)	95 [124.6] (43.64)	200
Addition list issued by library	20 [121.8] (0.470)	15 [10.1] (1.86)	45 [17.5] (267.22)	9 [5.60] (8.50))	5 [7.5] (14.95)	22 [2.95] (1.02)	4 [2.9] (7.03)	0 [5.9] (5.88)	14 [124.6] (20.14)	200
Book reviews in News papers and periodicals	24 [21.8] (2.61)	22 [18.1] (4.47)	32 [17.5] (79.90)	13 [5.60] (44.74)	29 [7.5] (391.5)	5 [2.95] (14.88)	8 [2.9] (2.49)	0 [5.9] (5.88)	4 [124.6] (124.12)	200
Internet	21 [21.81] (0.02)	15 [18.1] (2.14)	14 [17.5] (3.71)	22 [5.60] (4.24)	7 [7.5] (0.28)	10 [2.95] (3.38)	7 [2.9] (3.41)	0 [5.9] (5.88)	135 [124.6] (5.72)	200
e-journals	6 [21.8] (17.40)	7 [18.1] (6.82)	9 [17.5] (20.20)	3 [5.60] (7.53)	30 [7.5] (4.19)	6 [2.95] (18.76)	3 [2.9] (1.23)	3 [5.9] (1.41)	160 [124.6] (910.33)	200
CD-ROM	14 [21.80] (17.28)	31 [18.1] (9.10)	26 [17.5] (9.50)	4 [5.60] (2.38)	11 [7.5] (4.28)	20 [2.95] (0.29)	10 [2.9] (25.33)	8 [5.9] (11.60)	68 [124.6] (11.60)	200
Other	10 [121.8] (1.53)	4 [18.1] (17.50)	13 [17.5] (1.15)	1 [5.60] (19.88)	7 [7.5] (5.63)	6 [2.5] (7.78)	4 [2.9] (7.03)	28 [5.9] (83.32)	124 [6] (1.08)	200
Total	190	146	151	65	99	81	45	68	706	1600

Table 3 reveals that respondents find current literature in e-journals, followed by the Internet.

Figures in square brackets indicate the expected frequency (Fe) and those in parentheses indicate the cell Chi-square.

Chi-square =592.983

Chi-square at 56df & 0.05 level of significance is 74.451

Null Hypothesis Rejected

Difficulties Accessing Information

Faculty and researchers needs the assistance of others to access information. Difficulties faced include lack of time, inaccessibility, incomplete collections, lack of knowledge of sources and library services, as well as “unfriendly library staff.”

Table 4

Details	Numbers	Percentage
Lack of time	24	12.00
Lack of access to all the information	56	28.00
Lack of reading material	94	47.00
Lack of knowledge of information sources	132	66.00
Lack of knowledge in use of library service	153	76.50
Unfriendly library staff	44	22.00

Table 4 shows faculty members and research scholars face difficulties in accessing information because of multiple factors. Three-quarters of respondents have difficulty because of lack of knowledge about using library services, while two-thirds lack knowledge of information sources.

Conclusion and Recommendations

Information Needs

Most users visit the library to borrow books, study and do research, locate information from books and journals, and do light reading. The purpose of visits depends on time available and the need to keep up-to-date.

Use Patterns

Library use patterns are an effective method of understanding information requirements. Most users gave priority to book trade catalogues, bibliographies, indexes and abstracts, addition lists, and book reviews for being aware of the current literature. The lower ranking given to the Internet, e-journals, and CD-ROMs is due to the lack of availability and skill to use them, although they do use seminar papers, projects from colleagues, contact with original authorities, Information/Documentation centres, and the Internet. Respondents like to visit other libraries as well, and suggested networking among local, university, state, public, subject, national, and government libraries.

Constraints

Every user faces constraints. Faculty members and research scholars face difficulties in access because of multiple factors. Most face a considerable problem of time to read or look for information in the library. They also face problem of lack of library automation. Automation is a key factor in improving library services for researchers. Faculty and researchers are not familiar with appropriate sources, and they need skill maintenance activities to update their knowledge of reference tools and other sources.

Recommendations

Librarians who were interviewed want to develop their collections, improve their services, and stand out in this competitive age. Due to the rapid growth of information, varied application of information technology, and financial constraints, it has become a big challenge for library professionals, especially in academic libraries. Improving quality does not just mean the adoption new and expensive technologies. It is also possible to work continuously on improving service as budgets permit. Users attach maximum importance to the relevancy of the needed material for research and teaching, more than to any other aspect of the library.

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