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June 2010

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Raza, Dr. M. Mazoom; Fatima, Sarwat; and Upadhyay, Ashok Kumar, "Information Seeking Behaviour of Researchers in Central Drug Research Institute (CDRI), Lucknow" (2010). *Library Philosophy and Practice (e-journal)*. 384.

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Information Seeking Behaviour of Researchers in Central Drug Research Institute (CDRI), Lucknow

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Introduction

Information seeking behaviour is a complex activity, requiring access to diverse information resources to deal with work-related, personal, and social information problems. Information-seeking behaviour refers to strategies for locating information, and has three elements: people, information, and systems. The study of individual information-seeking behaviour requires understanding of the psychological state of the user that may lead to insight into their expectations make it possible to predict information-seeking activity (Ocholla 1999).

Concept of Information Seeking Behaviour

With the deluge of available information, each person needs information of increasing variety. The information needs of a particular group of users and for a specific situation or organization are difficult to determine. There is not one simple system to cope up with all information needs (Mahapatra and Panda 2001).

According to Krikelas (1983), information-seeking behaviour refers to "any activity of an individual that is undertaken to identify a message that satisfies a perceived need." Mick (1980) observed that "information- producing and information-seeking behaviour are closely linked and are the reasons why most information systems are not better accepted as they fail to provide linkage between the two activities."

Review of Related Literature

Steinerova and Susol (2007) conducted a study on user information behaviour from a gender perspective in Slovakia. Differences in orientation to information, collaboration style, and use of information were discovered, with the conclusion that gender as a variable can be productive for understanding information processing.

Asemi (2005) surveyed the search habits of Internet users at Isfahan University of Medical Sciences (MUI) in Iran, and found that training would help them obtain useful and relevant information.

Oduwole (1999) conducted a study to examine the impact of an institution's medical library on the clinical decision-making of medical officers in two Nigerian university teaching hospitals and to examine the medical information sources. The major findings revealed a heavy dependence on the journal literature.

Prasad (1998) noted that non-traditional literature such as unpublished conference and symposia papers, research proposals, policy guidelines, and project reports are also popular among scholars.

Clougherty, et al., (1998) carried out a user needs assessment at the University of Iowa in order to determine the purpose of undergraduate visits to the library and overall user satisfaction. Results indicated that more than 70 percent of respondents used the library as a place to study, use photocopiers, and borrow material. An equal number turned to library staff for assistance.

Adedibu, et al., (1997) investigated the information needs of medical students, collecting data on their library orientation and reasons for coming to the library.

Sethi (1990) studied the information-seeking behaviour of social science faculty in Indian universities. Respondents preferred journals, books, government documents and reference sources for meeting their information needs.

Pelzer and Leysen (1988) evaluated veterinary medical students' perception of the demands of their curriculum for locating clinical information to determine whether they sought current information and where they obtained it. Indexes and abstracts were used more by students in the clinical curriculum who held or were seeking advanced degrees than by the general body of students, reflecting this group's prior exposure to information sources.

Objectives of the Study

1. To discover the awareness of researchers regarding services provided by the Central Drug Research Institute (CDRI), Lucknow.
2. To identify the purpose and type of information sought by researchers of CDRI.
3. To determine the extent of IT application in the library and research awareness of these applications.
4. To examine user opinion regarding the facilities provided by CDRI.
5. To determine the researchers strategy for searching.
6. To determine the factors that influence researchers' information needs and information-seeking.

Scope and Limitations

The scope of the study is limited to the researchers of CDRI, Lucknow.

Sample Population

The present study was conducted on a sample of 54 researchers of CDRI. A total of 60 questionnaires were distributed, of which 54, i.e., 90 percent, were returned.

Data Analysis

Table 1: Frequency of Visit to the Library

| Sl. No. | Frequency | No. of Researchers | Percent |
|---------|--------------|--------------------|---------------|
| 1 | Daily | 5 | 9.26 percent |
| 2 | Twice a Week | 12 | 22.22 percent |
| 3 | Weekly | 22 | 40.74 percent |
| 4 | Monthly | 15 | 27.78 percent |
| | Total | 54 | 100.00 |

About 40 percent of respondents visit the library weekly, followed more than one quarter who visit monthly, and 22 percent who visit twice a week.

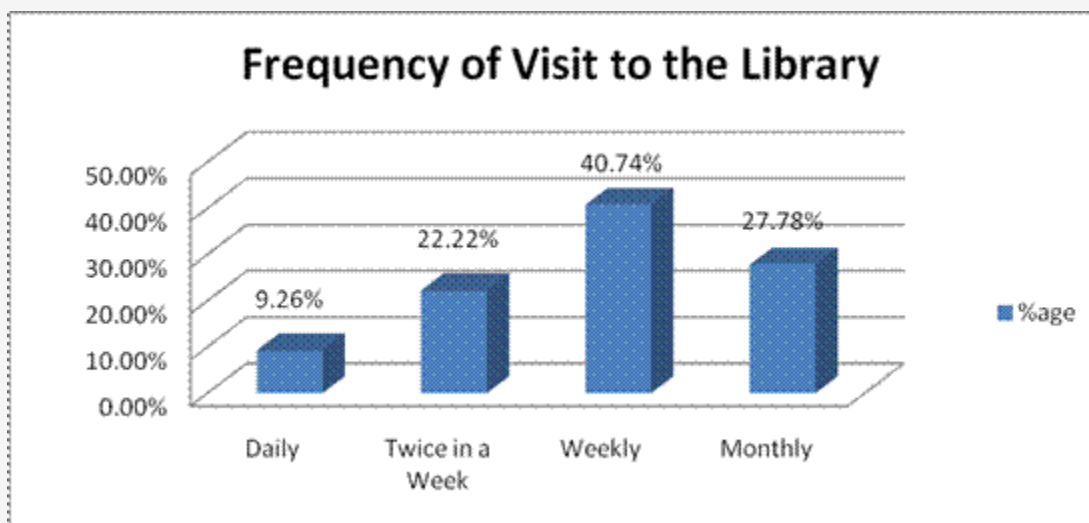


Table 2: Purpose of visit

| Sl. No. | Purpose of visit | No. of Researchers | Percent |
|---------|---------------------------------|--------------------|---------------|
| 1 | Collect reading material | 27 | 50 percent |
| 2 | Find latest arrivals in library | 19 | 35.18 percent |
| 3 | Read newspapers and magazines | 3 | 5.56 percent |
| 4 | Other | 5 | 9.26 percent |
| | Total | 54 | 100.00 |

Half of respondents visit the library to collect reading material, followed by more than one-third who visit to see the latest acquisitions.

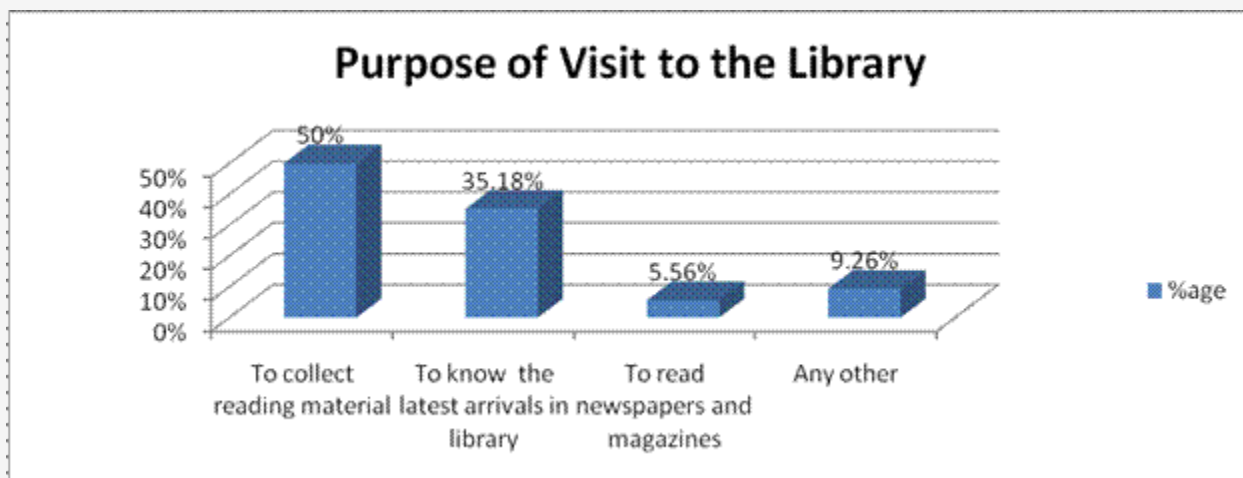


Table 3: OPAC for material searching

| OPAC Facility | No. of Researchers | | | | |
|---------------|--------------------|----|---------|-------|---------|
| | Percent | No | Percent | Total | Percent |
| Yes | 81.48 | 44 | 18.52 | 54 | 100 |

More than 80 percent use the library OPAC to search for material.

Table 4: Strategy for Searching

| Sl. No. | Searching strategy | No. of Researchers | Percent |
|---------|--------------------|--------------------|---------------|
| 1 | By subject | 25 | 46.30 percent |
| 2 | By author | 8 | 14.81 percent |
| 3 | By title | 14 | 25.93 percent |
| 4. | Any other | 7 | 12.96 percent |
| | Total | 54 | 100.00 |

Nearly half search for material by subject, while about one-quarter search by title.

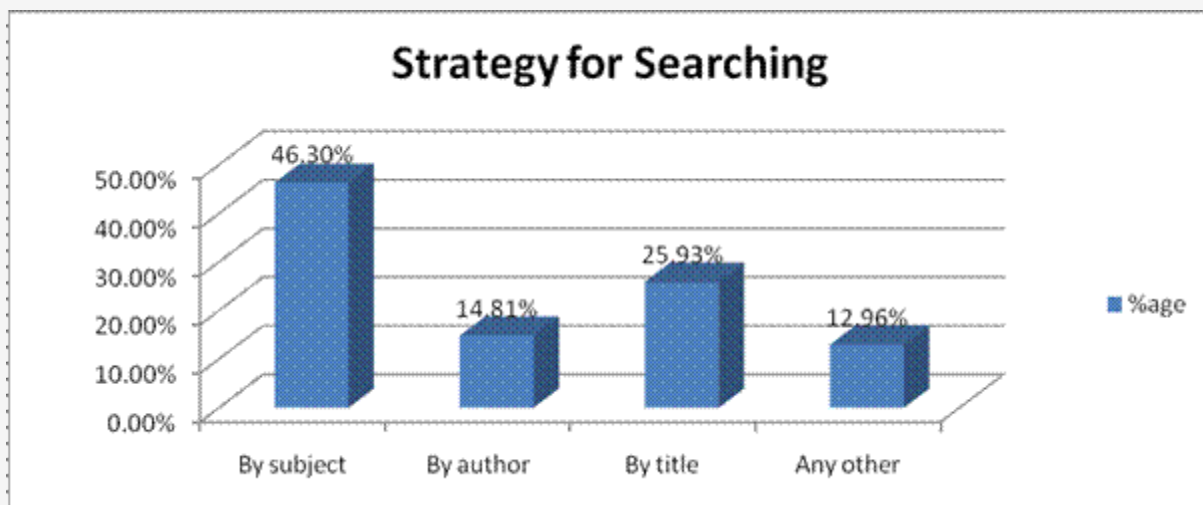


Table 5: Types of Computerized Services

| Sl. No. | Types | No. of Researchers | | | |
|---------|---|--------------------|---------|----|---------|
| | | Yes | Percent | No | Percent |
| 1. | Literature search within the library | 7 | 12.96 | 47 | 87.04 |
| 2. | Literature search through local network | 7 | 12.96 | 47 | 87.04 |
| 3. | Literature search through national network | NIL | NIL | 54 | 10 |
| 4. | Literature search through International network | 28 | 51.85 | 26 | 48.15 |

More than half of respondents search the literature through international networks, while only about 13 percent search through the local network.

Table 6: Types of Problem in Using Internet

| Sl. No. | Types | No. of Researchers | | | |
|---------|------------------|--------------------|---------|----|---------|
| | | Yes | Percent | No | Percent |
| 1. | Technical | 6 | 11.11 | 48 | 88.89 |
| 2. | Guidance | Nil | Nil | 54 | 100 |
| 3. | Slow downloading | 16 | 29.63 | 38 | 70.37 |
| 4. | Any other | 5 | 9.26 | 49 | 90.74 |

Slightly less than one-third of respondents said that slow downloading was a problem.

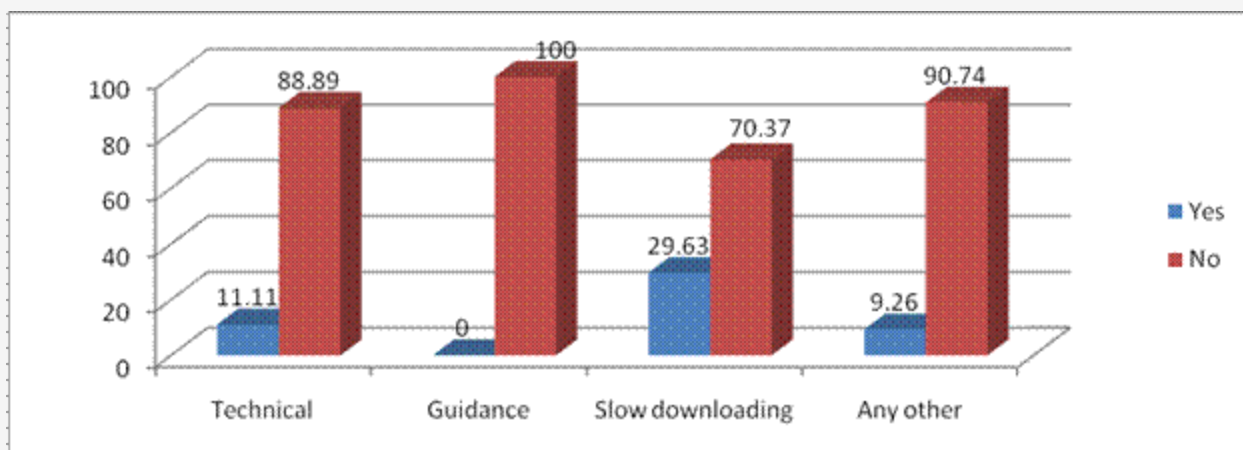


Table 7: Information Technology Based Services

| Sl. No. | IT Services | No. of Researchers | | | |
|---------|---------------------------------------|--------------------|---------|----|---------|
| | | Yes | Percent | No | Percent |
| 1. | Circulation services | 23 | 42.59 | 31 | 57.41 |
| 2. | OPAC (Online Public Access Catalogue) | 42 | 77.78 | 12 | 22.22 |
| 3. | Xeroxing | 45 | 83.33 | 9 | 16.67 |
| 4. | CD ROM | 16 | 29.63 | 38 | 70.37 |
| 5. | Microfiche Reading | 2 | 3.70 | 52 | 96.30 |

Users have a mostly-favorable view of library services, particularly photocopying and the OPAC. Circulation has a favorable rating of about 42 percent.

Table 8: Library Services

| Sl. No. | Library Services | No. of Researchers | | | |
|---------|--|--------------------|---------|----|---------|
| | | Yes | Percent | No | Percent |
| 1. | Reference Services | 37 | 68.52 | 17 | 31.48 |
| 2. | CAS (Current Awareness Service) | 38 | 70.37 | 16 | 29.63 |
| 3. | SDI (Selective Dissemination of Information) | 10 | 18.52 | 44 | 81.48 |
| 4. | Indexing Services | 37 | 68.52 | 17 | 31.48 |
| 5. | Abstracting Services | 31 | 57.41 | 23 | 42.59 |
| 6. | Bibliography | 40 | 74.07 | 14 | 25.93 |
| 7. | News papers | 43 | 79.63 | 11 | 20.37 |
| 8. | Inter library loan | 5 | 9.26 | 49 | 90.74 |
| 9. | Translation services | 3 | 5.56 | 51 | 94.44 |

Nearly 80 percent of respondents use newspapers, with large numbers also using bibliographic services, CAS, and reference services and indexing services.

Table 9: E-Journals in Library

| Sl. No. | E Journals | No. of Researchers | Percent |
|---------|----------------|--------------------|---------------|
| 1. | None | 1 | 1.85 percent |
| 2. | One | Nil | Nil |
| 3. | Two to five | 12 | 22.22 percent |
| 4. | More than five | 41 | 75.93 percent |
| | Total | 54 | 100 percent |

More than three-quarters of respondents use more than five of the library's e-journals.

Table 10: Attending Conferences, Seminars and Workshops

| Sl. No. | Conferences | No. of Researchers | Percent |
|---------|-------------|--------------------|---------------|
| 1. | Always | 15 | 27.78 percent |
| 2. | Frequently | 29 | 53.70 percent |
| 3. | Rarely | 9 | 16.67 percent |
| 4. | Never | 1 | 1.85 percent |
| | Total | 54 | 100 percent |

Nearly all respondents attend conferences frequently or always.

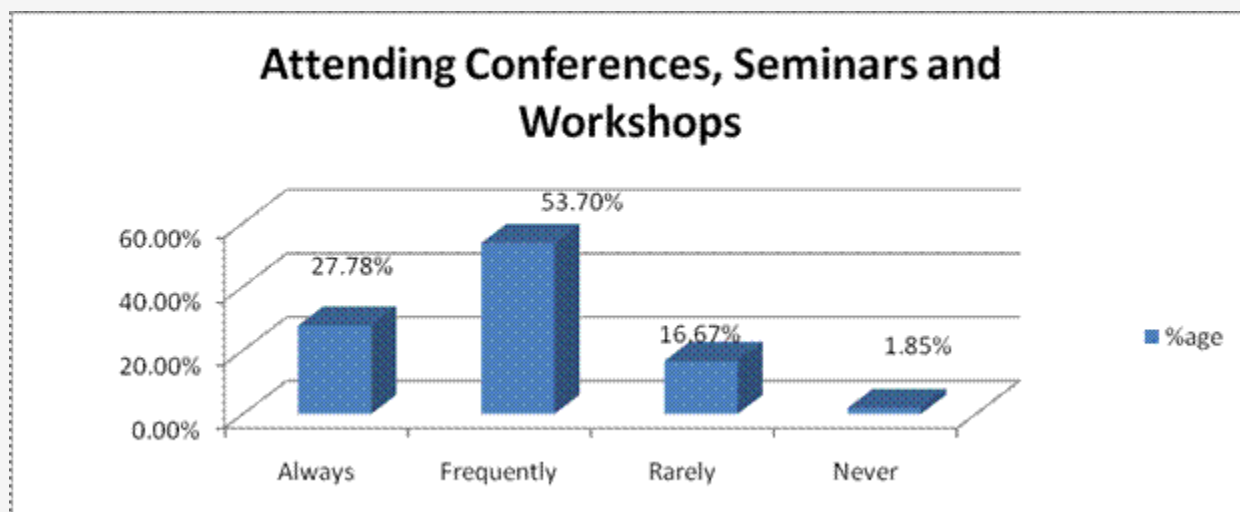


Table 11: Purpose of Seeking Information

| Sl. No. | Purpose | No. of Researchers | Percent |
|---------|---------------------------------------|--------------------|---------|
| 1. | For career development | 28 | 51.85 |
| 2. | To solve immediate practical problems | 7 | 12.96 |
| 3. | To keep up to date | 18 | 33.34 |
| 4. | To write an article | 1 | 1.85 |

| | | |
|-------|----|-----|
| Total | 54 | 100 |
|-------|----|-----|

More than half of respondents seek information for career development, followed by one-third who seek information to keep up-to-date.

Table 12: Opinion Regarding Librarian and Library Staff

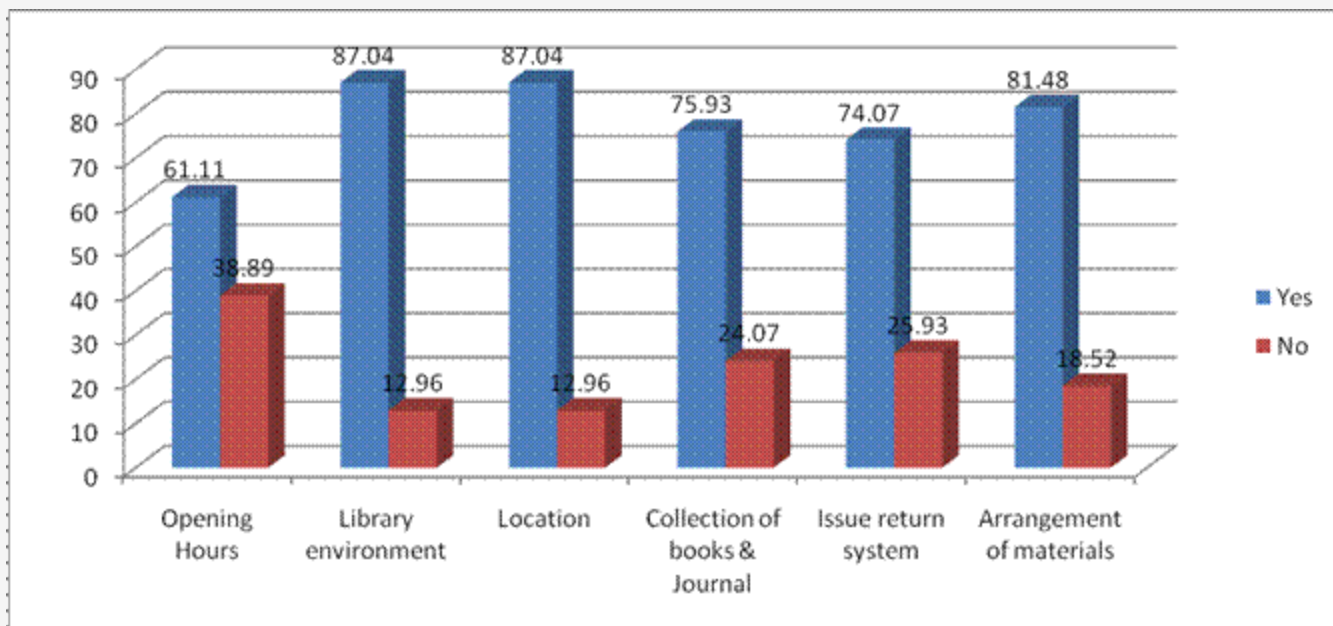
| Sl. No. | Opinion | No. of Researchers | Percent |
|---------|--------------------|--------------------|---------|
| 1. | Helpful | 33 | 61.11 |
| 2. | Most helpful | 6 | 11.12 |
| 3. | Less helpful | 7 | 12.96 |
| 4. | Least helpful | 7 | 12.96 |
| 5. | Not helpful at all | 1 | 1.85 |
| | Total | 54 | 100 |

More than three-fifths of respondents found the library staff helpful.

Table 13: Facilities in Library

| Sl. No. | Facilities in Library | No. of Researchers | | | |
|---------|-------------------------------|--------------------|---------|----|---------|
| | | Yes | Percent | No | Percent |
| 1. | Opening Hours | 33 | 61.11 | 21 | 38.89 |
| 2. | Library environment | 47 | 87.04 | 7 | 12.96 |
| 3. | Location | 47 | 87.04 | 7 | 12.96 |
| 4. | Collection of books & Journal | 41 | 75.93 | 13 | 24.07 |
| 5. | Issue return system | 40 | 74.07 | 14 | 25.93 |
| 6. | Arrangement of materials | 44 | 81.48 | 10 | 18.52 |

A large majority responded very positively about the environment and facilities of the library.



Summary of Findings

Most researchers visit the library weekly, generally to collect reading material. The OPAC is the most-used resource for searching, and most researchers prefer to search by subject. Literature searches are performed using the library's international network. Most use Internet services for email and face the problem of slow downloading. Photocopying and the OPAC are the most-used services in the library. Newspaper and bibliography services are the most used research services. Most researchers use the library's e-journals, and most attend conferences, seminars, and workshops frequently. Most researchers feel that library staff is helpful and most find the library facilities satisfactory, although a sizable number are not satisfied with the opening hours.

Conclusion

The CDRI library has been providing effective services to researcher. Most users are satisfied with the services provided by the library and the study reveals that there is a good application of Information Communication Technology (ICT) in the library. Information-seeking behaviour differs from one discipline to another and from one institution or library to another. Library information systems, however, must be capable of handling the complex information need and demands of researchers.

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