

UNDERSTANDING OF INFORMATION SEEKING BEHAVIOR AND PATTERN OF D.PHARM STUDENTS: A STUDY

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Abstract : Information-seeking behavior refers to the process by which individuals identify their information needs, search for relevant information, evaluate the sources, and use the obtained information for academic or professional purposes. In pharmaceutical education, students require accurate and up-to-date information related to drugs, diseases, patient care, and pharmaceutical practices. This study aims to analyze the information-seeking behavior and patterns of Diploma in Pharmacy (D.Pharm) students. It focuses on identifying the types of information required by students, the sources they prefer (such as textbooks, libraries, internet resources, teachers, and peers), and the methods they use to locate and utilize information. The study also examines the frequency of library use, the role of digital resources, and the challenges students face while accessing reliable information. The findings of the study can help improve library services, digital information systems, and academic support for pharmacy students. It also provides insights for educators and librarians to develop better strategies for information literacy and resource accessibility.

IndexTerms - Information Seeking Behaviour, Information Pattern

INTRODUCTION

The most crucial area of study in information management and library science is information-seeking behavior. Without first comprehending and appreciating the library users' information-seeking practices, no one could provide better service to the library's patrons. This information is crucial for creating and delivering software and information systems with the user in mind. The fact that it examines information needs, information search, and the use of information resources makes a significant contribution to the field of library and information science studies. Information is vital for life in today's linked society. Information seeking behavior is an activity of an individual in the process of identifying information that suits his/her knowledge pursuit. One of humanity's cognitive demands is the need for information. Information-seeking behaviours are a result of information needs, and these ideas are complementary. Numerous elements influence people's information needs and information-seeking behaviours. The idea of information requirement has proven to be elusive and challenging to define. Researchers have focused more on what triggers need-seeking than on the concept of information. Information seeking behaviour or habits. It is the process of looking for information needed by various persons, including individuals, professionals, academics, researchers, consultants, etc.,. Information seeking behavior is the practice of looking for information using different communication channels. The actions a person may do while determining his or her personal information needs, looking for such information in any manner, and utilizing or conveying that information are collectively referred to as information seeking behaviour.

NEED OF THE STUDY.

The present study focuses on understanding the information-seeking behavior and patterns among Diploma in Pharmacy (D.Pharm) students. It aims to examine how students identify their information needs and the various sources they use to obtain academic and professional information related to pharmaceutical education. The study covers the different types of information sources used by students, such as textbooks, library resources, internet sources, teachers, and peers. It also explores how frequently students use library facilities and digital resources for their academic activities. Furthermore, the research attempts to analyze the methods and strategies adopted by students while searching for information, including the use of search engines, online databases, and reference materials. The study also investigates the role of libraries and digital platforms in supporting the learning needs of pharmacy students. Overall, the study provides insights that may help improve library services, access to information resources, and information literacy programs for D.Pharm students

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Data were collected using a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire included both closed-ended and multiple-choice questions designed to gather information about students' information needs, sources of information, frequency of use, and preferred methods of accessing information. A total of 51 D.Pharm students were selected as the sample for the study. The respondents were selected using a convenience sampling method, considering the accessibility and availability of the students. The questionnaire was distributed directly to the selected students. The respondents were requested to fill in the questionnaire voluntarily, and all completed questionnaires were collected for analysis. The collected data were organized,

tabulated, and analyzed using simple statistical methods such as percentages and frequency distribution to identify the information seeking behaviour and patterns of the students.

3.1 Population and Sample

The population of the study consisted of all D.Pharm (Diploma in Pharmacy) students in the selected institution. A sample of 51 D.Pharm students was selected for the study using convenience sampling, based on the accessibility and availability of the students. The questionnaire was distributed directly to the selected respondents, who participated voluntarily.

3.2 Data and Sources of Data

The data for the present study were collected from 51 D.Pharm students using a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire consisted of closed-ended and multiple-choice questions covering students' information needs, sources of information, frequency of information use, and preferred methods of accessing information. The respondents were selected through convenience sampling, based on their accessibility and availability. The questionnaires were distributed directly to the selected students, who were requested to complete them voluntarily. After collection, all completed questionnaires were organized, tabulated, and analyzed using frequency distributions and percentages to identify the information-seeking behaviour and patterns of the students. The primary source of data was the information provided directly by the 51 D.Pharm student respondents through the structured questionnaire.

3.3 Theoretical framework

The theoretical framework of the present study is based on the concept of information-seeking behaviour, which explains how individuals recognize their information needs, identify appropriate sources, access information, and use the information obtained to fulfil their academic and professional requirements. In the context of D.Pharm students, information-seeking behaviour is influenced by their academic needs, awareness of available information sources, accessibility of resources, frequency of information use, and personal preferences. The framework assumes that students first experience a particular information need, such as obtaining information related to pharmaceutical subjects, medicines, clinical practices, or academic assignments. They then select information sources such as textbooks, reference books, teachers, libraries, journals, websites, search engines, and other electronic resources. Their choice and frequency of using these sources may be influenced by factors such as convenience, availability, reliability, accessibility, and familiarity with the source. The information obtained is subsequently used for learning, completing assignments, preparing for examinations, and improving subject knowledge. Thus, the present study examines the relationship between information needs, sources of information, frequency of information use, and preferred methods of accessing information to understand the information-seeking behaviour of D.Pharm students. The framework provides a basis for systematically analyzing the patterns and preferences of the 51 student respondents and identifying the major information sources and access methods used by them.

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATIONS

4.1 Frequency of Information Need

The majority of respondents, 61.2%, indicated that they need information daily, suggesting a high and consistent demand for academic resources. A significant proportion, 34.7%, reported needing information weekly, indicating regular but less frequent engagement compared to daily users. Only a small percentage of respondents 2% are selected monthly and rarely, each accounting for a minimal share of the total responses.

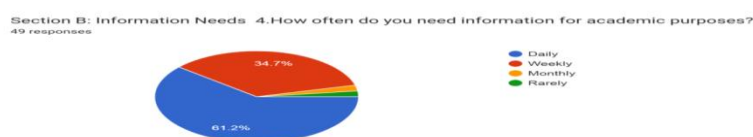


Fig. 1 frequency of information need

4.2 Purpose Of Seek Information

The majority of the respondents 55.3% usually seek information for exam preparation. Significant portion 31.9% respondents seek information for class assignments and 10.6% for general knowledge. Only a small percentage of respondents 2.1% selected projects or seminars for seek information

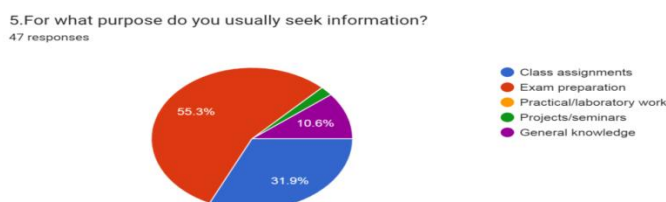


Fig.2 purpose of seek information

4.3 Most Searching Subject

The majority of the respondents 30.6% require the most information searching subject is Pharmaceutical chemistry. 24.5% the most require hospital and clinical pharmacy. 16.3% most searching pharmaceuticals & Pharmacology. The small portion of respondents, 12.2%, is searching for the information from the subject Pharmacognosy

6. Which subjects require the most information searching
49 responses



Fig. 3 most searching subject

4.4 Source of Information

The majority 75.5% use the source to obtain information is internet. Significant portion 53.1% respondents use class notes and library book for obtaining information, 49% used textbooks and 46.9% depends teachers/faculty and friends/classmates.

Section C: Sources of Information 7. Which sources do you usually use to obtain information? (Tick all that apply)
49 responses



Fig. 4 source of information

4.5 Most Frequently Using Source

The majority of respondents 63.3% use textbooks. 18.4% respondents depend frequently by teachers and 12.2% frequently use textbooks. The least number of respondents 6.1% access library resources.

8. Which source do you use most frequently?
49 responses

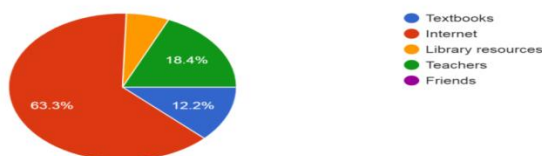


Fig. 5 most frequently using source

4.6 Frequency Of Visiting Library

Most of the respondents 69.4% visit college library weekly for the information access. 18.4% respondents visit daily for information access. And the minority of respondents 6.1% visit monthly and rarely.

9. How often do you visit the college library?
49 responses

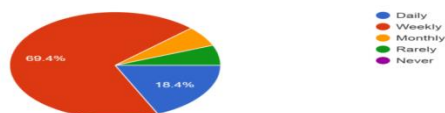


Fig. 6 frequency of visiting library

4.7 Use of Digital Resources

61.2% is the majority of respondents that use Google for the academic information. Then, the second majority 32.7% respondent's use educational websites and 4.1% YouTube lectures for academic purpose. The minority 2% respondents use online journals for academic information.

Section D: Use of Digital Resources 10. Which online resources do you use for academic information?
49 responses



Fig. 7 use of digital resources

4.8 Most Using Search Device

More respondents 89.8% use smart phones to search information and the least respondents 10.2% use laptop to search information.

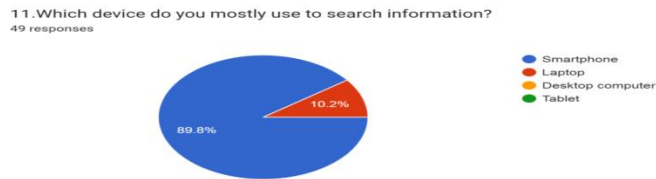


Fig.8 using search device

4.9 Information Seeking Behaviour

When they need information most of the respondent 73.5% firstly searches on Google and 24.5% consult textbooks. And the least number 2% ask librarian for information.

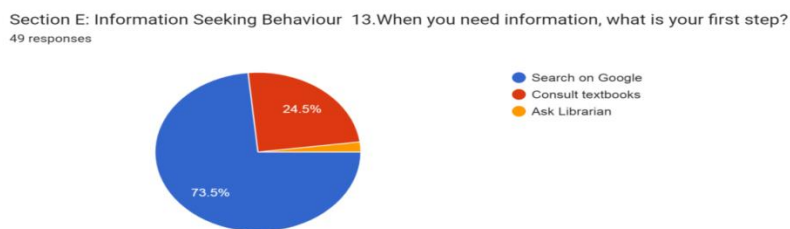


Fig.9 information seeking behaviour

4.10 Reliability Of Information From Online

Most of the respondents, 46.9%, evaluate the reliability of information online through comparison with textbooks and by checking multiple websites. A minority of respondents, 6.1%, are checking the reliability of information through the author or source

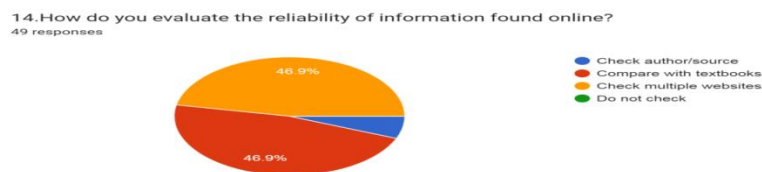


Fig.10 reliability of information from online

4.11 Difficulties While Searching Information

Majority of the respondents 53.1% faces the difficulties while searching for information and 46.9% of respondents do not have any difficulties for searching information. The difficulties while searching the information that majority 44.1% facing slow internet, 29.4% facing lack of reliable sources and the least of the respondents 26.5% facing the lack of searching skills

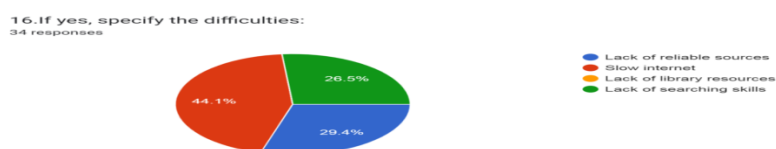


Fig.11 difficulties while searching information

4.12 Satisfaction

Majority of the respondents 75.5% are satisfied with the information source available in the institution, 10.2 % of respondents are neutral, 8.2% of respondents are highly satisfied and the least respondents 6.1% are dissatisfied.

Section F: Satisfaction with Information Sources 17. Are you satisfied with the information resources available in your institution?
49 responses

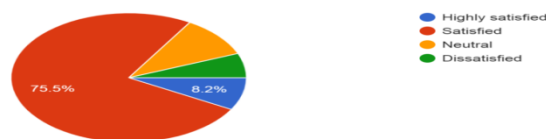


Fig.12 satisfaction

V. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

The study revealed that the majority of respondents need information daily, mainly for academic purposes and exam preparation. The Internet, particularly Google, is the most preferred source for obtaining academic information, while smartphones are the most commonly used devices. Most respondents visit the college library weekly and begin their information search with Google. To evaluate the reliability of online information, students commonly compare it with textbooks and consult multiple websites. The majority of respondents are highly satisfied with the information and library resources available in the institution. However, slow Internet connectivity and lack of information-searching skills are the major barriers faced by students while seeking required information.

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