



Academic Information Needs of Home Science Students

Kesar Chayal¹ and Lalita Vatta²

¹Department of Home Science, University of Rajasthan, Jaipur, E-Mail: kesarchayal@gmail.Com

²Department of Home Science, MMV, BHU, Varanasi, E-Mail: lalitavatta@bhu.ac.in

Abstract: Information needs emphasize the requirements associated with identification of the right need. Information need affects the information seeking behavior and the entire information seeking process depending on the rightly determined information need. Lacuna in the process of determining information need will create a complicate state which will lead to ineffective need satisfaction. Therefore it is important to know the information needs of different group of people, to provide them need based information effectively. The present study was an attempt to explore the academic information needs of Home Science Post Graduate students of University of Rajasthan, Jaipur. Descriptive research design used to collect data through questionnaire. In present paper the results focused around the responses received from 40 Home Science students. The result of the study revealed that majority of respondents needed information at very high extent regarding curricular activities (70%), career counseling and employment (65%) followed by competitive exams (57.75%), research work (47.50%). However, majority of respondents indicated very low intensity of information need about library related issues and student union election. Findings of the study will be helpful for university administration to provide need based information for betterment of the students.

Index Terms: Academic, Career counseling, Employment, Home Science, Information needs, Students.

I. INTRODUCTION

Presently, we are living in information era, where information is considered as a vital resource that contributes towards the development of a nation. Significant role of information is depicted in people's day to day life for work, entertainment and decision making to perform personal and professional tasks. In present scenario, no one can survive without information, due to which information become inevitable need of human being. People like policy makers, planners, economists, scientist, farmers, teachers and research scholars, doctors, engineers, librarians etc. require information for their work. No matter whether they are at home, office, college and school they all need information either directly or

indirectly. Not only professionals, students also need to explore information in their daily life, for preparing lecture notes, updating their knowledge, preparing answers, presentations, participation in seminar/conferences and for examinations etc. Students are the most important part of any educational institutions. They are the largest chunk of the users of university libraries and other information sources. It is big responsibility of the university or any educational institution to provide right information at right time and in a right manner to their students. In this context, the university information resources, being the reservoirs of knowledge and the centers of learning, have a greater responsibility in providing the right information. Therefore, to provide need based information to the students, there is a great need to study the information need and information seeking behavior of students.

II. LITERATURE SURVEY

Silva and Chandrawamsa (2016) examined the information needs and information seeking behavior of students at higher educational institutes with special reference to CINEC Maritime campus. Results of the study indicate that students gather information mainly for preparing their lecture notes, updating knowledge and conducting discussions and for making presentation.

Chodha and Gupta (2017) carried out a study on pattern and seeking behavior of students of National Institute of Technology, Jalandhar, India. Study revealed that to provide effective and useful resources and to increase satisfaction level and frequency visits of users in library there is a need to assess the information needs and information seeking behaviour of students.

Poongodi and Santhi (2017) explored the information needs of students. Descriptive research design was used for the study.

Data were collected from 115 UG and PG students through structured questionnaire. Results revealed that majority of students sought information for the purpose of project work and for participation in seminar and workshop followed by preparation for class notes, for general awareness and for reading/ thinking purpose.

Ismaila (2019) carried out a study on Information needs and seeking behavior of postgraduate's students in Kwara State University. Results of the study revealed that majority of students sought information for the purpose of examinations preparation (34.1%) followed by preparing for competitive examinations (25.4%) preparing for notes (16.7%) and for preparation of project work (11.7%).

Sujata and Sushma (2017) carried out a study to assess the information seeing behavior of students. Study depicted that majority of students (80%) sought information for preparation of examinations followed by notes preparation (64%). 35 and 33 percent for completion of assignment and for research work respectively.

III. OBJECTIVE

To assess the academic information needs of the Home-Science Post Graduates students.

IV. PROPOSED APPROACH

The present study was conducted at Jaipur district, Rajasthan. University of Rajasthan was selected purposively for present research as it is the oldest (established on 8th January 1947) and largest (in terms of land area and number of students enrolled) public and state University of Rajasthan. The students studying in the Post graduation degree courses, including self finance scheme students (SFS) in the 2019-2020 academic session under the selected eight faculties of University of Rajasthan, Jaipur have been taken as the population of present research. Descriptive and exploratory research design used to collect data through questionnaire. Questionnaire includes information needs on curricular aspect, Career counseling & employment, Student union, Competitive exams, Library related, Social Security benefits, Co-curricular activities, Competency development and Research work. The tool was distributed among the selected Post Graduate students who were from selected 8 faculties (Science, Arts, Commerce, Education, Fine Arts, Law, Social Science and Engineering and Technology) of University of Rajasthan Jaipur randomly. In present paper results are focused particularly on the information needs of Home Science students. Total 40 students (Post graduation Home science) participated in present research. Frequency and percentage method was used to analyze data and intensity of information needs is categorized and presented in three categories i.e. high, moderate and low.

V. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

This section divided into two parts:

1. Assessment of the Information needs of students(Overall)
2. Aspects wise Information needs

1. *Assessment of the Information needs of students (Overall)*:- information needs of postgraduate students (Overall) with varying intensity on major aspects was assessed and presented below:

Data presented in Table 1 indicate overall information need of postgraduate students on various aspects. It obvious from the table that majority of respondents needed information at high extent regarding curricular (70.0%), Career counseling and employment (65.0%), Competitive exams (57.50 %). Further, majority of respondents needed information regarding research work (52.50 %), Social security benefits (47.50), Competency development (45.0%). Further data showed that information on Co-curricular activities and Library related issues were required at moderate extent. However, majority of respondents indicated low intensity of information need about Student union election. The present findings are in close conformity with the findings of Ismaila (2019), Sujata and Sushma (2017), Manjunath and Surendra (2018), Silva and Chandrawamsa(2016) found in their studies that students have required academic/Curricular of information mostly.

Table 1: Distribution of respondents on the basis of information needs (Overall)

n=40

Nature of information	Intensity of information need					
	High		Moderate		Low	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Curricular	28	70.0	9	22.5	3	7.50
Career counseling and employment	26	65.0	10	25.0	4	10.0
Student union election	11	27.50	7	17.50	22	55.0
Competitive exams	23	57.50	10	25.0	7	17.50
Library related	12	30.0	18	45.0	10	25.0
Social security benefits	19	47.50	11	27.50	10	25.0
Co-curricular activities	13	32.50	15	37.50	12	30.0
Competency development	18	45.0	16.0	40.0	6	15.0
Research work	21	52.50	11	27.50	8	20.0

students. Similar results were also reported by Poongodi and Santhi (2017) and Tilahun and Natarajan (2016).

2. Aspect wise information needs

The results pertaining to purpose wise information presented and discussed as below.

1) Curricular information needs

It is evident from the Table 2 that majority of the respondents indicated very high degree of information need regarding various aspects of the academic purpose. Table indicates that majority of respondents needed information to high extent for preparation of examination (70.0%) credit assessment (67.50 %), assignments and notes & collection (65.0 %). Further, more than 50 percent of respondent needed information to a moderate extent of practical/projects (52.50%), regarding Examinations and Results (57.50). Thus, these findings reveal the significance of academic information and respondent's quest for information. Findings are in line with the findings of Gani and Khazar (2014), Wijetunge (2015) and Sumandeep and Vatta (2016).

Table 2: Distribution of respondents on the basis of curricular information needs

Nature of information	Intensity of information need					
	High		Moderate		Low	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Preparing for examination	28	70.0	12	30.0	0	0.00
Practical/projects	16	40.0	21	52.50	3	7.50
Assignments and notes preparation & collection	26	65.0	14	35.0	0	0.00
Credit assessment	27	67.50	13	32.50	0	0.00
Academic visits/tour	11	27.50	19	47.50	10	25.00
Examinations and results	13	32.50	23	57.50	4	10.00
Revaluation of copies	10	25.0	14	35.0	16	40.0
Grievance mechanism	9	22.5	12	30	19	47.5

2) Career counseling and employment information needs

It is evident from the Table 3 that majority students sought information related to Career opportunities in their respective subject (100.00%) followed by Campus /Job Placement (80%), Career counseling cell (75.0%), Guidance regarding Job competencies (70.0%), Various competitive exams (60.0%), Entrepreneurship/Start up (55.0%) and Incubation center (52.50%). Results so arrived indicate the significance of information regarding job and employment opportunities for

Table 3: Distribution of respondents on the basis of information needs regarding career counseling and employment

Nature of information	Intensity of information need					
	High		Moderate		Low	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Career counseling cell	30	75	10	25.0	0	0.00
Campus /Job Placement	32	80	8	20	0	0.00
Incubation center	21	52.5	11	27.5	8	20
Entrepreneurship/ Start up	22	55	7	17.50	11	27.5
Various competitive exams	24	60	9	22.50	7	17.50
Guidance regarding Job competencies	28	70	7	17.50	5	12.50
Career opportunities in their respective subject	40	100.0	0	0.00	0	0.00

3) Information needs regarding Student election

It is clear from Table 4 that majority of the respondents needed information to low extent regarding student election. This might be due to the fact that all respondents were postgraduate students. They had gone through the student union election process in their graduation classes.

Table 4: Distribution of respondents on the basis of information needs regarding student union election

Nature of information	Intensity of information need					
	High		Moderate		Low	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Eligibility criteria for participation in union election	0	0.00	13	32.5	27	67.5
Election procedure	14	35	10	25	16	40
Code of conduct	9	22.50	12	30	19	47.5
Rights and responsibilities of selected leaders	6	15.0	11	27.50	23	57.5
Casting of vote	13	32.5	6	15.0	21	52.5

4) Information needs regarding Library related

The data presented in Table 5 revealed that majority the respondents required information to low extent regarding indexes/ library catalogue (70.0 %), issuing and return of books (50.0%), and availability of thesis and project reports (42.50%). Further, majority of respondent required information to moderate extent regarding availability of books (text and reference) (47.50%), availability of periodicals (45.0%) and about use of computer and internet (45.0%). However, online public access catalogue (OPAC), e- resources/online data base was only the areas of interest where respondents needed information at high intensity. Results indicate that majority of respondents needed information about library related issues moderate to low extents.

Table 5: Distribution of respondents on the basis of information needs regarding Library related

n=40

Nature of information	Intensity of information need					
	High		Moderate		Low	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Issuing and return of books	6	15.0	14	35.0	20	50.0
Indexes/ Library catalogue	5	12.50	7	17.50	28	70.0
Online public access Catalogue (OPAC)	21	52.50	11	27.50	8	20.0
e- resources/Online data base	22	55.0	8	20.0	10	25.0
Use of computer and internet	13	32.50	18	45.0	9	22.50
Availability of Books (Text and reference)	15.0	37.50	19	47.50	6	15.0
Availability of Periodicals	11	27.50	18	45.0	11	27.50
Availability of Thesis and project reports	11	27.50	12	30.0	17	42.50

5) Information needs regarding Social security benefits

The data presented in Table 6 revealed that respondents were interested in Social security benefits at moderate level of intensity of the needs. Majority of respondents needed information regarding available scholarships (57.5 %) followed by Eligibility and benefits of various welfare schemes and fellowships (55.0%) and 52.50 percent respondents showed their interest in various types of welfare schemes for students.

Table 6: Distribution of respondents on the basis of information needs regarding Social security benefits

n=40

Nature of information	Intensity of information need					
	High		Moderate		Low	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Various welfare schemes for students	9	22.50	21	52.50	10	25.0
Available scholarships	11	27.50	23	57.50	6	15.0
Eligibility and benefits	10	25.0	22	55.0	8	20.0

6) Information needs regarding Co-curricular activities

Typically, co-curricular activities are carried out outside the normal classrooms but they supplement academic curriculum and help in learning by doing. It is evident from the Table 7 that majority of respondents showed moderate to low intensity of information need regarding various co-curricular activities being carried out in their university. Results indicate that majority of respondents needed information regarding Participation in workshop/Conference/Seminar etc (67.50%), Debate and other competitions (57.50%), Convocation (57.50%) and Youth festivals (50.0%) to moderate degree of intensity. Games/ Sports and NSS /NCC activities were less needed information areas by Home/Science post graduates students.

Table 7: Distribution of respondents on the basis of information needs regarding Co-curricular activities

n=40

Nature of information	Intensity of information need					
	High		Moderate		Low	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Games/Sports activities	4	10.0	8	20.0	28	70.0
Participation in workshop/Conference/Seminar etc	8	20.0	27	67.50	5	12.50
Youth festivals	7	17.50	20	50.0	13	32.50
Debate and other competitions	11	27.50	23	57.50	6	15.0
Convocation	13	32.50	23	57.50	4	10.0
Information about concerned faculty/coach	5	12.50	18	45.0	17	42.50
Eligibility criteria of different activities	10	25.0	18	45.0	12	30.0
Activities of NSS/NCC	2	5.0	13	32.50	25	62.50

7) Information needs regarding competency development

Competencies are the set of integrated knowledge, skills, abilities and attributes that students develop and apply for successful learning, living and working. It is evident from the Table 8 that majority of respondents needed information regarding Communication skill (77.05), Scientific writing/ writing for publication (75.0) and Presentation skill (65.0), General awareness on digital gadgets (62.50%), Computer efficiency (67.70%) to high degree of intensity. These findings were in agreement with Wijetunge (2016).

Table 8: Distribution of respondents on the basis of information needs regarding competency development

Nature of information	Intensity of information need					
	High		Moderate		Low	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Communication skill	31	77.50	9	22.50	0	0.00
Presentation skill	26	65.0	14	35.0	0	0.00
General awareness on digital gadgets	25	62.5	8	20.0	7	17.5
Computer efficiency	27	67.70	5	12.50	8	20.0
Scientific writing/ writing for publication	30	75.0	3	7.50	7	17.50

n=40

Table 9: Distribution of respondents on the basis of information needs regarding research

Nature of information	Intensity of information need					
	High		Moderate		Low	
	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
Selection of problem	20	50.0	11	27.5	9	22.50
Writing research Proposal	19	47.50	10	25.0	11	27.50
Review writing	25	62.50	8	20.0	7	17.50
Thesis writing	18	45.0	16	40.0	6	15.0
Plagiarism	21	52.50	7	17.50	12	30.0
Process of publication	22	55.0	15	37.50	3	7.50

n=40

8) Information needs regarding research work

Table 9 overtly exhibits that a vast majority of respondents needed information regarding important aspects of research work including Review writing (62.50%), Process of publication (55%), Plagiarism (52.50%), Selection of problem (50.0%), Writing research Proposal (47.50%), Thesis writing (45.0%) to high extent. The results so arrived might be due the fact that good information is essential for effective research work,

decision making and support at all levels in research process. The results are in conformity with the results of Uugwanga (2017) Wijetunge (2015).

CONCLUSION

The result of the study highlights that majority of student required information regarding curricular activities, career counseling and competitive exams, research work and regarding competency development. Life of students is called a formative period of their life because it is a period of reading, learning and acquiring maximum opportunities and knowledge and as they are the most important part of any educational institutions. It is big responsibility of any educational institution to provide right information at right time to their students. Findings of the study will help the university administration to provide need based information for betterment of their students. Study recommended for development of Integrated University Management System to provide various types of information on a single portal to satisfy the information needs of the students.

REFERENCES

- Chodha, N. & Gupta, N. (2017). Use Pattern and Seeking Behaviour of Students in National Institute of Technology, Jalandhar, India. *DESIDOC Journal of Library and Information Technology*, 37(5), 372376, DOI 0.1429/djlit.37.10749. Retrieved from file:///C:/Users/ACER/Downloads/10749Article%20Text-34727-1-10-20171023.pdf on 15/06/2020 at 7.10 am
- Gani, S.A. and Khazar, M.(2014). Information seeking behaviour among Post Graduates Students of University of Kashmir: An Analytical Study. *Journal of advancement in library Science*, 1(1), 64-72
- Ismaila, Y.A. (2019). Information needs and seeking behavior of postgraduate's students in Kwara State University, Malet. *Library philosophy and Practice (e-journal)*, 2363.
- Manjunath, N. & Surendra, B.K. (2018). Information needs and information seeking behaviour of research scholars in Bangalore University, Bangalore: A Survey. *International journal of Library and Information Studies*, 8 (1), 332-342.
- Poongodi, K. and Santhi, J.(2017).Information seeking behaviour among students in selected Arts and Science college at Salem district affiliated to Periyar University- A case study. *International Journal of Librarianship and Administration*, 8(1), 1-6. <http://www.ripublication.com>
- Silva, A.U. & Chandrawamsa, P.S. (2016). Information needs and information seeking behavior of students at higher educational institutes: with special reference to CINEC Maritime campus. *Sociology and Anthropology*, 4(6), 494-499. http://www.hrpub.org/journals/article_info.php?aid=3783
- Sujata, R. and Sushma P. (2017). Information seeking behavior of B.Ed. students in education college in Mumbai. (Doctoral dissertation, department of SHPT School of library Science, SNDT Womens University). <http://hdl.handle.net/10603/195303>.

- Suman, D. and Vatta, L.(2016).Information needs and information seeking among Home-Science Graduates. *International contemporary research journal in management and Social Science*,2(2):197-201.
- Tilahun and Natarajan (2016). Information seeking behaviour of Undergraduate students of Agriculture and Veterinary Medicine of jimma University. *International research journal of library and Information Science*, 6(2).
- Ugwanga (2017). *Information seeking behaviourof faculty of agriculture and natural resources' students at Neudamm campus, University of Namibla*. (Doctrol dissertation, University of Cape Town). Retrieved from <https://open.uct.ac.za/handle/11427/26201> on 02.01.2020 at 10.35 am
- Wijetunge, P. (2015) information seeking behaviour and issues of agriculture Undergraduates of University of Peradeniya, Sri Lanka. *Annals of library and Information studies*, 62,73-83.
<http://nopr.niscair.res.in/bitstream/123456789/31964/4/ALIS%2062%282%29%2077-83.pdf>
- Wijetunge, P. (2016). A Comparative analysis of the information resource usage of the Agriculture students. *Journal of the University Librarians Association of Sri Lanka*. 19(1): 6–31. DOI: 10.4038/jula.v19i1.7873
