# Information-Seeking Behavior of the Students of Lovely Professional University: A Survey

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## Abstract

*This study inspects the utilization of collection of resources and services at Library of Lovely Professional University, Punjab. To determine the information-seeking behaviour of the undergraduate and postgraduate users, 600 questionnaires were distributed during the November 01, 2017 to December 15, 2017. Out of 600, 528 filled questionnaires were returned by users. On the basis of that the present study focuses on utilization of resources, meaning of the library, purpose of visit of library, hours spent in library, preferred resources, searching criteria, and so on. Overall, this study reflects that the users are satisfied with the functioning of library.*

***Keywords:*** *Information-seeking behavior, library resources, Lovely Professional University, reader survey, user awareness*

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## INTRODUCTION

In the digital age, it's too difficult to attract the user for visiting the library specially for using resources available. As the basic need of the students is the study material and they are getting it through their mentor and friends via new technological tools like WhatsApp, Facebook, e-mail, and so on. Not only this due to digitization but also the books are also available online. So, it is challenging for librarian to encourage the user for visiting the library. In this context, present study is conducted to know the user behavior and purpose of users to visit the library. Thus, the scenario of study is to see the changes in present era at Lovely Professional University (LPU). It is the largest single-campus university in India, with more than 25,000+ on-campus and 1,00,000 distance education students and 3,500 faculty and staff, offering more than 200+ Diploma, Graduate, Postgraduate, and Doctoral courses. The university campus exhibits a rich diversity as the academic staff and students come from all the states of India and more than 28 countries in the world. Recognized by UGC and AIU, awarded by the government. LPU has a central library and eight departmental libraries. Library has a rich collection of varied knowledge enhancing material. More than 1,00,000 textbooks, reference books, journals, magazines, audio, videos, CD-ROMs, research reports, online databases, data analysis software, in different areas and branches of all study-disciplines, are made readily available for its users, at present. The library is also (RFID) radio frequency identification enabled.

## REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Stella Korobilli [1,2] examined the use of library resources by the faculty members of the higher educational institute in Thessaloniki, Greece. For this, they conducted a census survey, with the help of structured questionnaire for investigating the various factors. The observed that majority of faculty members uses printed resources in comparison to e-resources. The highest usage of e-resources were from the School of Business Administration and Economics.

Fatima and Ahmad [3] collected of the data of 60 students to explore the information-seeking behavior of the students of AMU. They found out that textbooks and journals were most popular sources of information.

Muhammad Tahir [4] explored the pattern of faculty members of the humanities at the University of Punjab, Lahore. For this purpose, the questionnaire was distributed among the 90

respondents. The study revealed the most of the respondents were happy from the library services but they suggested that library can increase the journals and reference materials in humanities.

An empirical study of the information-seeking behavior of practicing visual artists has been conducted by William Hemmig [5]. He performed a quantitative study on the sample of community, for analyzing the use of different information sources in the field of creative activities.

Use of e-journals by the research scholar of Goa University has been analyzed by Chirra and Madhusudhan [6]. They founded that library is providing the awareness and the training programming to the users so that they can utilized effectively the available resources. They also pointed that there is a huge role played by a UGC-Infonet digital library consortium in providing the research facilities at the library of Goa University.

The information-seeking behavior of the social sciences faculty at Kuwait University has been conducted by Laila Marouf and Mumtaz A. Anwar [7]. The analysis was done by collecting the data through questionnaire distributed among 77 faculty members. It was predicted that respondents depends on the books and journals on the great extent for teaching and research purposes. It was observed that level of satisfaction with informal sources is slightly higher than formal sources.

The satisfaction survey for improving the services at the University of Bolonga has been conducted by Citti and colleagues [8]. They have conducted two surveys, one in the year 2007, which was based on interviewer-assisted administration and in 2010, which was online. The purpose of conducting the same survey in 2010 was to judge the strategies adopted in 2007. The both the approaches were followed by the authors, that is, quantitative and qualitative.

Shajarul Islam Khan [9] investigated the use of e-journals by the students in the department of botany of Aligarh Muslim University. The aspects covered were purpose of visiting the library, services provided by the library, level of satisfaction of users, and so forth. The major purpose for conducting the survey was to know the challenges faced by the users.

The review on the patterns of information-seeking behavior of graduate students has been done by Amy Catalano [10] on the articles published from 1997 to 2013. A systematic search of databases was done for analyzing the different criteria and issues in information-seeking behavior by the graduate students. The study revealed that the information-seeking pattern depends on the disciplines and the manner in which the students are guided by the faculty advisors. As pattern seen was totally different form the doctoral to those of master's program.

H. Singh [11] studied the information-seeking pattern of users of Dr. B. R. Ambedkar NIT Central Library. He targeted all the users including facility members, research scholars, postgraduate, and undergraduate students. He studied the behavior in context to the use of resources, purpose of visiting the library, time spend by the user of library, facilities provided, use of internet services, and so on.

The information-seeking behavior of students in university libraries have been analyzed by S. Panwar [12]. He concluded that to understand the information-seeking pattern is not an easy task because every user is different in demanding the information from the library professional and the content of information provide by library professional depends on the understanding and the availability of resources.

Singh and Kataria [13] investigated the use of e-resources in the library of Banasthali University. They found majority research scholars got the awareness of e-journals from library professionals. On the other hand, majority of faculty members got the awareness from the other faculty of the university and maximum research scholar, and faculty members are compatible with the facilities provide by the library for accessing the e-resources.

## OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The main purpose of the study is to conduct a reader survey and to assess the readership

behavior and information use of the reader. So that expectations of the readers can be fulfilled and the better library services can be provided. In this context, the study was conducted.

1. To point out the different sources needed by the users.
2. To examine the information-seeking strategies of the undergraduate and postgraduate students.
3. To find out the present library services used by targeted group and their satisfaction level.
4. To know the awareness level of library tools, services, and techniques by users.
5. To study the problems faced by users while seeking and use of information.

## METHODOLOGY

Librarian should know and able to observe the criteria of information seeking and information used by users for providing information services as per the needs of users. For this, librarian should design new information or planning in service programs.

To know the information-seeking behavior of undergraduate and postgraduate students studying at LPU, Punjab, India, 600 users were selected for analyzing the information-seeking pattern. A structured questionnaire was developed for the purpose of data collection and managed personally. The questionnaire was get it filled during the time November 01, 2017 to December 15, 2017. Out of 600, 528 users filled the questionnaire. The data collected were analyzed to understand the information seeking behavior of the users.

## RESULT AND DISCUSSIONS

Data analysis is an ultimate step in the process of research. It is a link between raw data and significant results leading to conclusions.

In total, 600 number of questionnaire were distributed among the undergraduate and postgraduate students in the time span of November, 2017 to December 30, 2017 and 528 were received back. Out of 400 questionnaire, 360 (90%) were filled by undergraduate students and out of 200 postgraduate students questionnaire, 168 (84%) received from undergraduate students (Table 1).

In the age of information technology, students were asked about their views on library. Out of 528 students, 38.67% responded library is a knowledge house, and 25.76% responded library is an information center, while 16.67% students think library is a resource center, 9.47% told library is a store house of books, and 4.55% noted library is a place where one can pass free time (Table 2).

Frequency of visiting to library is one of the techniques for judging the utilization of library and documents. If the users are visiting the library daily, it means that the library is enriched with resources. Table 3 shows that 33.33% students are visiting library daily, 28.41% students are visiting frequently, and 14.39% and 4.55% students are visiting library twice and once in a month, respectively, while small percentage of student, that is, 2.65% never visit library and 16.67% students visiting library occasionally due to their friends.

*Table 1: Sample Size.*

| Respondents | Questionnaires distributed | Response received | Percentage |
|---|---|---|---|
| Undergraduate | 400 | 360 | 90.00 |
| Postgraduate | 200 | 168 | 84.00 |

*Table 2: Meaning of Library from the Point of View of Users.*

| Library is a | No of respondents | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Resources center | 88 | 16.67 |
| Knowledge house | 204 | 38.64 |
| Information center | 136 | 25.76 |
| A store house for books | 50 | 9.47 |
| The place where you pass time | 24 | 4.55 |
| Others | 26 | 4.92 |

*Table 3: Frequency of Visit to the library.*

| Frequency of library visit | No of respondents | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Daily | 176 | 33.33 |
| Frequently | 150 | 28.41 |
| Twice in a week | 76 | 14.39 |
| Once in a month | 24 | 4.55 |
| Never | 14 | 2.65 |
| Occasionally | 88 | 16.67 |

To determine the need of users, it is better to ask the user about the purpose of visiting the library. It can help in developing the library and therefore fulfilling the laws given by Ranganathan. Table 4 shows 72.73% students are visiting library for self-study, 38.67% students are visiting library for borrowing books, 19.32% students go to read magazine or newspapers, 17.05% students for reading personal books, 16.29% go for browsing Internet, 15.91% go to complete assignments, 15.15% browsing the shelves, 6.82% go to the library due to the compulsion of classmates.

To study the comfort level of the users in library, the students were asked about the time they spend in the library. It is observed that majority of students 46.97% spend 1 to 7 hours per week, while there are 12.88% students who spends more than 21 hours per week in the library. Only few students do not feel comfortable in doing self-study in the library (Table 5).

Due to the happening campus of LPU with lots of academic and cocurricular activities, 35.61% students said that, due to the lack of time, they are not visiting the library frequently. Indeed, 11.36% of students said that they do not have interest in reading, while 18.94% respondents said that they are comfortable in reading their own books so that they do their own collection of books. Approximately, 10% of users feel that library is so far from their hostel as LPU has a huge campus (Table 6).

For developing and maintaining the library according to the needs of users. The students were questioned about the resources which they use in library. Majority of students said that their first preference is textbook and second is the reference books. Though the postgraduate students also come to browse journals (30.68%) and proceedings (6.44%) for their project and dissertation work (Table 7).

To provide the comfortable environment and searching of the resources with an ease, students were questioned about their preference in getting the resources. However, 34.85% replied that they like to search the shelves themselves and approximately same number of respondents, that is, 33.33% said that they ask the library staff. It is worth to mention that only

17.42% of users use the technology available, that is, OPAC (Table 8).

***Table 4:*** *Time Spend in Library.*

| Purpose | No of respondents | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| To self-study | 384 | 72.73 |
| To borrow books | 204 | 38.64 |
| Browsing the shelves | 80 | 15.15 |
| To complete assignments | 84 | 15.91 |
| Due to compulsion of class | 36 | 6.82 |
| Read magazine or newspapers | 102 | 19.32 |
| Read personal books | 90 | 17.05 |
| Browsing Internet | 86 | 16.29 |

***Table 5:*** *Frequency of Time Spent.*

| Frequency of time spent | No of respondents | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| 1-7 | 248 | 46.97 |
| 7-14 | 140 | 26.52 |
| 14-21 | 32 | 6.06 |
| 21+ | 68 | 12.88 |
| Never visit library for self-study | 40 | 7.58 |

***Table 6:*** *Reasons Behind Not Visiting the Library.*

| Reasons | No of respondents | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Lack of time | 188 | 35.61 |
| Lack of interest | 60 | 11.36 |
| I buy my own books | 100 | 18.94 |
| Not applicable | 136 | 25.76 |
| I find everything I need online or from other sources | 58 | 10.98 |
| Library is so far | 54 | 10.23 |

***Table 7:*** *Preferred Resources in the Library.*

| Preferred material in library | No of respondents | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Journals | 162 | 30.68 |
| Magazines | 126 | 23.86 |
| Proceedings | 34 | 6.44 |
| Newspaper | 142 | 26.89 |
| Reference books | 272 | 51.52 |
| Textbooks | 298 | 56.44 |

Majority of respondents, 72.73%, uses the library only for issue and returning only. Indeed, 23.11% uses the library for reference services. The reasons for this difference could be that there are more undergraduate students in comparison with postgraduate students and former are not aware about all the resources (Table 9).

Indeed, 58.71% and 42.80% of users use the library for developing their career and keeping themselves up-to-date, respectively. While 23.86% and 20.45% users use the library to understand the concepts by solving the numerical from different books and for being ahead in their group in context to knowledge, respectively. Only, 10.23% visits the library for writing the research article (Table 10).

In spite of the busy schedule and everyone equipped with the technology then also the majority of users, that is, 40.91% visit sometimes to the library for reading the books other than syllabus. However, 20.45% users always visit the library for reading books other than their courses. Thus, it can be said that technology cannot replace the comfort of the books (Table 11).

Majority of the users, that is, 39.02% are fascinated toward the real stories. After this, 29.92% users love to read fictions. Young generation is least interested in reading history as only 12.88% users prefer to read history. About 19.70% and 19.32% users like wild life/geographic/discovery and biographies/autobiographies, respectively (Table 12).

As expected in this digital era, majority of the students, that is, 41.67% are surfing net and 30.30% are chatting with friends. It is worth to mention that still 25.00% of the users are utilizing their free time in the library. In Table 13, it is clear that technology has advantages as well as many disadvantages, and it is taking away younger generation far from the real-world (Table 13).

Majority of the users want pure and comfortable environment inside the library. They want peace in the library and also believe that books should be worshipped and should be taken care of. It is clear that, still there are ancestral values in them (Table 14).

*Table 8: Preferred Searching Tool.*

| Preferred searching tools | No of respondents | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Search the shelves on their own | 184 | 34.85 |
| Ask the library staff | 176 | 33.33 |
| Through web OPAC (library search) | 92 | 17.42 |
| Ask to friends | 76 | 14.39 |

*Table 9: Library Sources and Services Uses.*

| Library sources and services | No of respondents | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Issue/return | 384 | 72.73 |
| Reference service | 122 | 23.11 |
| Index services | 38 | 7.20 |
| Abstracting service | 40 | 7.58 |
| Interlibrary loan | 26 | 4.92 |
| E-library | 96 | 18.18 |

*Table 10: Purpose of Using Library.*

| Purpose | No of respondents | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| For career development | 310 | 58.71 |
| To solve immediate practical problem | 126 | 23.86 |
| To keep up-to-date | 226 | 42.80 |
| To write an article research paper | 54 | 10.23 |
| To show more knowledgeable in your group | 108 | 20.45 |

*Table 11: Preference in Reading Other Than Syllabus.*

| Prefer reading other than syllabus | No of respondents | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Always | 108 | 20.45 |
| Sometimes | 216 | 40.91 |
| When get time | 96 | 18.18 |
| During travelling | 76 | 14.39 |
| Never prefer reading | 32 | 6.06 |

*Table 12: Preferred Types of Books.*

| Types of books preferred | No of the respondents | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Fictions | 158 | 29.92 |
| Biographies/autobiographies | 102 | 19.32 |
| Real stories | 206 | 39.02 |
| History | 68 | 12.88 |
| Wild life/geographic/discovery | 104 | 19.70 |
| Others | 52 | 9.85 |

***Table 13:*** *Utilization of Leisure Time.*

| Utilization of leisure time | No of respondents | Percentage |
|---|---|---|
| Net surfing | 220 | 41.67 |
| Chatting with friends | 160 | 30.30 |
| In the play ground | 100 | 18.94 |
| Library | 132 | 25.00 |
| Canteens | 96 | 18.18 |
| Others | 54 | 10.23 |

***Table 14:*** *Users Demand Inside the Library.*

| Users demand inside the library | No of respondents | | Percentage | |
|---|---|---|---|---|
| | Yes | No | Yes | No |
| Serenity/silence should be observed | 452 | 76 | 85.61 | 14.39 |
| Sanctity should be maintained | 420 | 108 | 79.55 | 20.45 |
| Rules and regulations of library should be respected | 474 | 54 | 89.77 | 10.23 |
| Books should be handled with good care/up keep | 454 | 74 | 85.98 | 14.02 |

## CONCLUSION

The present study revealed the following major points:

1. Majority of students (38.67%) responded that library is a knowledge house.
2. Most of the users were visiting the library often. However, 33.33% students were visiting the library daily, 28.41% students are visiting the library frequently, while small percentage of student, that is, 2.65% never visited the library.
3. It is worth to mention that 72.73% students are visiting the library for self-study and 38.67% students are visiting for borrowing books, and rest of the students are visiting the library for reading magazine or newspapers, reading personal books, browsing Internet, to complete assignments, and so on.
4. It is good to notice that the majority of the students (46.97%) spend 1 to 7 hours per week, while there are 12.88% students who spend more than 21 hours per week in the library.
5. Majority of students said that textbooks are their first preference and reference books are their second preference. Also, the postgraduate students come to browse journals (30.68%) and proceedings (6.44%) for their project and dissertation work.
6. Indeed, 34.85% like to search the shelves themselves and approximately same

number of respondents, that is, 33.33% said that they ask the library staff. It is worth to mention that only 17.42% of users use the technology available, that is, OPAC. Hence, the training session can be arranged for the awareness of the users.

7. It was seen that 58.71% and 42.80% of users use the library for developing their career and keeping themselves up-to-date, respectively. Thus, library is proving a platform to the students.
8. Majority of the users want peace in the library and they also believed that books should be worshipped and should be taken care of. It is clear that, still there are ancestral values in them.

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