

# Information Gathering Habits of Engineering College Students: A Study

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**Abstract - Information is very basis of human existence. Information is the essential element for the progress of higher education. The major aim of this study was to find out the Information gathering habits of students from different disciplines of Velammal Engineering College in Chennai, Tamil Nadu, India. A well-structured questionnaire was circulated to collect the needed information from 9 UG Engineering Branches. This study examines several aspects of library use, including frequency of visiting the library, satisfaction with library hours, library collection and level of user satisfaction from library services, and cover the use of reference sources in the library. The study was conducted through survey by distributing questionnaires among 270 students and 91 percentage of students responded.**

**Keywords: Engineering college students, Information gathering habits, Information sources, User study.**

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The word information is used in the context of user studies research, to denote a physical entity or phenomenon (as in the case of questions relating to the number of books read in a period of time, the number of journals subscribed to etc.), the channel of communication through which messages are transferred (as when we speak of the incidence of oral versus written information), or the factual data, empirically determined or presented in a document or transmitted orally. Within the field of user studies the investigation of 'information needs' has presented seemingly intractable problems. The essential components of libraries are documents, users and librarian. The main goals of libraries are to provide pin pointed information to users. User studies play a vital role in any type of library. The User is the key person in any information system. All the luxuries of information- revolution and problems of information explosion are centred on the user and his convenience. Understanding the user's needs is half the battle won in providing information services. These studies are also essential to know the difference in satisfaction among the different categories of users. Necessary measures can be taken up in case the users are dissatisfied with the library collection, services and facilities by finding the reasons for their dissatisfaction.

## 2. NEED FOR THE STUDY

The concept of information has proved to be elusive one and difficult to define what initiates the information need has received more attention from research than definition of itself. Today information technology has developed rapidly and has had a huge impact on access to information and on information gathering habits. The librarian and library staff have to know and examine the criteria of information gathering and information utility by users for providing information services. More and more people deliberately and consciously gather information and it has become an integral part of human activity especially in the area of education, research and development. The users of information are finding difficulty in identifying and physically locating the relevant information at the time when it is required. In this context, the libraries, being the reservoirs of knowledge and the centres' of learning, have a greater responsibility in providing the right information to the right user at the right time, in the right form so that user studies are one of the interdisciplinary areas of research in library and information science.

## 3. INFORMATION GATHERING HABITS

Information Gathering Habit is the behaviour with respected to searching various sources, channels including use of those information. The terms information gathering habits, information seeking behaviour, information searching behaviour and information using behaviour are synonymous terms. The study of information gathering habits can stand on its own as a area of applied research where the motive for investigations is pragmatically related to system design and development. According to Wilson information seeking behaviour results from the recognition of some needs perceived by the user that behaviour may take several forms the user may make demands upon formal systems that are customarily defined as information systems such as libraries on lines services. Information centers or upon system which may perform information function in addition to a primary non-information function such as estate agents offices or car sales agencies that give current information of their field viz, prices and models etc.,

## 4. LITERATURE REVIEW

S.A. FazlurRahman, and M. Tamizhelvan, [1] in their study are found that the digital library infrastructure is to be improved along with digital resources, and improve the web OPAC facility overnight issue system, book bank system and photocopy facility have to be improved. Majority of the students are satisfied with the availability of number of newspapers, books and periodicals.

JogenderSingh[2] examined that academics have welcomed the automation of library. It may also be motivated by a variety of needs, including personal, professional, entertainments etc. It is recommended that library staff focus on assisting users to develop a better image for the library.

R. Lakshmi Sankari, K. Chinnasamy and A.M. Venkatachalam [3] pointed out that users are satisfied with library collections and services, but who want training in the use of online information. Although document delivery service is being provided on demand, the researchers pointed out that it would be worthwhile if the library could provide them with indexing, abstracting and interlibrary loan service as well user education about library using must and should be carried out as a seminar or workshop training.

Rajeev Kumar Gabaand KrishanGopal [4] revealed that Internet is the most important method of getting information. Periodicals are the first preference of the engineers' for getting their information and govt. documents is the last preference source of information. Above description shows that library staff is very cooperative and helpful.

Tradasal and Matesheela[5] revealed that books, newspaper, popular magazines class notes of senior are the most useful sources of information and conducted that the personal attributes, viz gender, year of study medium of institute, area of habitation, stay at hostel marital, status and frequency of visits of the university library have no bearing on the use of the specific sources of information.

## 5. INFORMATION ABOUT INSTITUTION

The Velammal Engineering College is one of the best of its established during the academic year 1995-96. The institute has 9 undergraduate programmes in Engineering Technology and 11 Post graduate programme and management. The Velammal Engineering College Library has 72,000 volumes of books, 150 Indian and foreign journals, 4000 back volumes. 4500 project reports and online journals publishers of IEEE, ELSEVIER, ASME, ASCE, MCGRAW-HILL, SPRINGER, ASTM, J-GATE ENGG. , J-GATE MGT, EBSCO MGT. AND DELNET database searching, And also stacks nearly 3500 non book materials which include CDs, DVDs and Audio/Video Cassettes, Anna Edusat live programme, NPTEL video courses and internet facilities are available in this library.

## 6. OBJECTIVES

The major objectives of the study are to find out:-

- i. To Assess The Use Of Information By The Student Community.
- ii. To Identify The Information Gathering Habits Of Velammal Engineering College Students.
- iii. To Understand Students Level Of Satisfaction about Their Respective Library Services.
- iv. to Compare The Information Gathering Habits Of Student Belonging To Various Departments of this Institution.
- v. To offer Suggestions If any for The Improvement of Library and Information Services In the Institute.

## 7. HYPOTHESIS

Based On The Above Mentioned Objectives The Following Hypotheses Were Framed:-

- i. The Frequent Visit To Library More Number of Students Updating their Knowledge Currently.
- ii. More Number of Information Access Pattern Leads to Acquiring More Knowledge.
- iii. Student Community Are More Satisfied With Resources of Institution Libraries, The More number of Students used Institutional Libraries and they are highly Satisfied.
- iv. Student Community Gets More Knowledge from The Bibliographical Information.
- v. Institutional Library Provides High Knowledge To The Students And More Number Of Students Get High Rate of User Satisfaction.

## 8. METHODOLOGY

In Order to Study The use and Satisfaction of The Library Collection, Services and Facilities in Velammal Engineering College Library. This Survey Conducted Nine Undergraduate Courses, Accordingly The Questionnaires were Administered to The Users of The Library And Responses of Users Were Solicited. 270 Questionnaires Were Distributed to The Students Community of Velammal Engineering College Chennai. The Well Designed Questionnaire Has Been Administered by the Researcher Directly to the Selected Samples the Collected Data from the Respondents the Data Were Checked and Analysed According to Objectives.

## 9. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

A sample of 245 students from whom the respondents out of 270, under different departments has been considered in this study drawn from first year students to final year of Velammal Engineering College. Distribution of Questionnaire and responses received are shown in Table 1, from the Table it can be seen their response rate is 90.74%.

**Table1 Distribution of Questionnaire and Responses Received**

S.NO	Department	Questionnaires distributed	Questionnaires received	Percentage
1	CSE	30	29	96.66
2	ECE	30	28	93.33
3	EEE	30	26	86.66
4	IT	30	27	90

5	MECH	30	28	93.33
6	E I E	30	28	93.33
7	CIVIL	30	27	90
8	PRO.ENGG	30	28	93.33
9	AUTOMOBILE	30	24	80
		270	245	90.74

The above Table -1 shows that the distribution of samples by Department wise i.e., Undergraduate Engineering Students. The majority of the respondents are CSE. Students (96.66 %)

**Table 2 Classification of Respondents Visit to the Institution's Library**

S.No	Description	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Once in a day	26	10.61
2	2-3 times in a day	89	36.32
3	Once in a week	84	34.29
4	Occasionally	46	18.78
	<b>Total</b>	<b>245</b>	<b>100</b>

It is evident from Table 2 that the students using the library once in a day (10.61%), and 2-3 times in a day (36.32%), once in a week (34.29%), and occasionally using the library (18.78%)

**Table 3 Purpose of Using the Library**

S.No	Purpose	No of respondents	Percentage
1	To read Books	26	10.61
2	To borrow books	48	19.59
3	To borrow periodicals	19	7.76
4	To photocopy	13	5.31
5	To access online	42	17.14
6	To prepare assignment and notes	15	6.12
7	To read news paper	32	13.06
8	To improve General knowledge	26	10.61
9	To read journals and magazine	24	9.80
	<b>Total</b>	<b>245</b>	<b>100</b>

It is evident from Table 3 that students mainly using the library for the purpose of to borrow books (19.59%). The next purpose is to access online purpose (17.14 %) These two are followed by to read newspaper (13.06%), to improve General knowledge (10.61%), to read books (10.61%) to read journals and magazine (9.80%), to borrow periodicals (7.76%), to prepare assignment and notes (6.12%), to photocopy (5.31%) Hence, it can be concluded that students are mainly using the library for borrowing books and access online to using .

**Table 4 Adequacy of Library Resources**

S.No	Library resources	Adequacy	Inadequacy	Percentage
1	Tex books	164 (66.94 %)	81 (33.06 %)	245 100 %
2	Reference books	212 (86.53 %)	33 (13.47 %)	245 100 %
3	Journals	196 (80 %)	49 (20 %)	245 100 %
4	Magazines	208 (84.90 %)	37 (15.10 %)	245 100 %
5	CD-ROM	157 (64.08 %)	88 (35.92 %)	245 100 %
6	Video and Audio cassettes	194 (79.18 %)	51 (20.82 %)	245 100 %

It is evident from Table 4 that (66.94 %) students are satisfied with regard to text books collection while (33.06 %) are not satisfied and follows (86.53 %) are satisfied with reference books collection while (13.47 %) are not satisfied, (80 %) are satisfied with journal collection while (20 %) are not satisfied, (84.90 %) are satisfied with magazine while (15.10 %) are not satisfied, (64.08 %) are satisfied with CD-ROM collection while (35.92 %) are not satisfied, (79.18 %) are satisfied with Video and Audio cassettes collection while (20.82 %) are not satisfied, Hence it can be concluded that students are highly satisfied with adequacy of library resources.

**Table 5 Satisfaction of Library Physical Facilities**

S.No	Facilities	Level of satisfaction		Total
		Satisfied	Not satisfied	
1	Seating for reading	167 (68.16%)	78 (31.84%)	245 (100 %)
2	Drinking water	161 (65.71%)	84 (34.29%)	245 (100 %)
3	Lighting	170 (69.39%)	75 (30.61%)	245 (100 %)
4	Ventilation	194 (79.18%)	51 (20.82%)	221 (100 %)

Table 5 reveals that satisfaction of library physical facilities that (68.16%) students are satisfied with Seating for reading facilities while (31.84%) students are not satisfied, (65.71%) students satisfied with Drinking water while (34.29%) students are not satisfied, (69.39%) students are satisfied with lighting facilities while (30.61%) students are not satisfied, (79.18%) satisfied with ventilation while (20.82%) students are not satisfied it concluded that most of the students are satisfied with physical facilities of library.

**Table 6 Satisfaction on the Institution's Library Services**

Sl.No.	Library services	Level of satisfaction		Total
		Satisfied	Not satisfied	
1	Lending services	201 (82.04%)	44 (17.96%)	245 100%
2	Reference services	193 (78.78%)	52 (21.22%)	245 100%
3	Reservation services	137 (55.92%)	108 (44.08%)	245 100%
4	CAS	149 (60.82%)	96 (39.18%)	245 100%
5	SDS	157 (64.08%)	88 (35.92%)	245 100%
6	Reprographic services	142 (57.96%)	103 (42.04%)	245 100%

As per the above Table 6, it can be seen that satisfaction level of the students in the institution's library services that (82.04%) students are satisfied with Lending services while (17.96%) are not satisfied, (78.78%) students are satisfied with Reference services while (21.22%) are not satisfied, (55.92%) students are satisfied with Reservation services while (44.08%) are not satisfied, (60.82%) students are satisfied with CAS services while (39.18%) are not satisfied, (64.08%) students are satisfied with SDS services while (35.92%) are not satisfied, (57.96%) students are satisfied with Reprographic services while (42.04%) are not satisfied. it concluded that most of the students are satisfied with library services.

#### 10. SUGGESTIONS AND CONCLUSION

- i. Library should focus on providing more number of online resources, CDs and DVDs
- ii. Library should provide an user education program has to conducted which include how the students themselves identify their information needs.
- iii. Library should take the initiatives to prepare a list of subject web sites that are useful to the users.
- iv. Computer print-out and CD writing services should be provided with nominal charges at the college libraries.

Librarian must understand information seeking behavior of users to re –engineers their services and provide information efficiently. The results of this study reveals users are highly satisfied with library collection and services of inter library loan, reference, lending. User education about library using must and should be carried out as a seminar or workshop training. Therefore the library authorities should conduct user education programmes to educate the users about library resources and services. These user education programmes will help the students use the library resources and services to the maximum extent.

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