

SOURCES USED BY THE FACULTY MEMBERS OF TEACHER EDUCATION INSTITUTIONS:A CASE STUDY

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***Abstract** - The sources used by the faculty members of teachers' training colleges whenever to seek information has been critically analysed in the present study. The present work is based on survey method through well-structured questionnaire and 43 respondents are considered under study. The analysis of the data shows that the teachers still now depend mainly on print document but a changing attitude is taking place in the present ICT environment. They also use electronic documents to meet their information needs. This work explores the sources used by the teachers for research activities. The study also reveals the attitudes of the teachers towards the services provided by the libraries.*

Keywords: [information seeking behaviour, ICT, West Bengal State University, electronic documents, and Teachers' Training Colleges]

1. Introduction

The lecture is no longer the only method available to the college teachers specially engaged in teacher education colleges. They need to explore new avenues in order to make class room teaching more interesting. Teachers' Training Colleges give the emphasis on the teaching method of different subjects rather than the exhaustive approach in the subject field. They are more concerned about the class room teaching, lesson plan, pedagogy of various subjects. So their information behaviours are some sort of different than any user community. Library is the most widely used source of information for the teachers. Librarian must be aware of the kind of information and its sources. Due to exponential increase in the cost of purchasing and archiving printed journals and electronic resources, the librarian has the duty to provide and maintain efficient services. Library and information centre affects the development of higher education system from various angles. It can make the teachers aware about the existing services provided for them. The library should reorganize its existing services to collect, preserve, and disseminate the required information of the teachers. The progress of information technology has changed the attitude and taste of the people in seeking their required information. The increase in information available on the web has affected information seeking behaviour of the present users. But any community like teachers community always seeks current information and discards the earlier data. Information seeking behaviour is expressed in various forms. Students, research scholars and teachers seek current information from different media available in the library.

Development of information technology has offered today's information seekers different opportunities to access the information resources in variety of formats, via, print, CD-ROMs, databases, Web OPAC and so on and so forth. The study is an attempt to assess the sources used for seeking information by the teachers engaged in the Teachers' Training Colleges affiliated to West Bengal State University, India.

2. Objectives of the Study

The objectives of the research work are:

- To study the sources of information used by the teachers of teacher education colleges;
- Identification of the preference-wise sources of information in research activities;
- To explore the preference of search engines in seeking information;
- Evaluation of the role played by the library and information centres to provide information to
- the college teachers;
- To find out the purposes of visit to the library.

3. Review of Research and Development of the Subject

The study of information seeking behaviour dates back to 1940s. After that a considerable volume of literature has been published dealing with information needs and seeking pattern of both individual and groups in a variety of forms. An important research work was carried out in the year 1975 by Gureja entitled "The information needs of newspaper editors". The study revealed that the majority of the respondents used dictionaries as reference tools. It was also showed that most of the participants used government reports followed by newspaper file, hand books, gazetteers and directories. FazlulHaq conducted a work on information needs of teachers of the University of Engineering and Technology, Lahore. He examined that the respondents used text books more for preparing class lectures. In order to keep their knowledge up dated they consulted journals, latest books, news magazines research reports and conference proceedings. One of the important studies carried out by Muhammad Tahir, Khalid Mahmood and Farzana Shafique in their work "Information Needs and Information-Seeking Behaviour of Arts and Humanities Teachers: A Survey of the University of the Punjab, Lahore, Pakistan". The study explores that consulting with experts in the subject field was the preferred method of getting information followed by the conversation with colleagues. The most important resource for teaching was reference books whereas consultation with knowledgeable persons or experts in the field was the most important source of information for the research activities. Most teachers in the field of humanities get information from their departmental library. Most of the humanists prefer print media for getting information, while they least prefer audio-visual material. The study also explores that consulting with the subject experts was the most common method to keep abreast with current developments in their subject fields. Most search for information for their teaching preparation or lecturing, to guide researchers or students, and to support research. Unavailability of required material was the most common problem in information-seeking. Arinola worked on information needs and information seeking behaviour of agricultural students

at LAUTECH, Ogbomoso where he found a lacuna to use available resources and services in the library including OPAC by the agricultural students. The users mostly used internet, reference librarian, text books and monographs, journal articles, thesis and dissertation to meet their information needs. Another work carried out by Watson, Blakeley, and Abbott on the use of communication technologies in teacher education. Results showed that educators have little idea about the use of ICT. The staff of university computer networks failed to understand users' needs of distributed and distance networks. Shanmugam (1999) investigated that the information needs of trainee teachers are different in nature. He carried out a study based on information seeking pattern of trainee teachers in Malaysia. The respondents preferred mostly informal and interpersonal sources. Journals, encyclopedia, indexes were recorded a low frequency of use. The respondents used Malaysia language to English. The level of satisfaction of the trainees was rating first to Public Library followed by University library and college library was rated third. Information seeking behaviour of professors of Arty History and Studio art was studied by Jacquelyn Challenger in 1999. He identified that respondents visited libraries frequently and a majority of them asked the librarian for help. Most of the participants used computer in seeking information. Every one used slides extensively in the class room, supplemented in most cases by textbooks, but also journal articles. Approximately fifty per cent of the respondents used computer for teaching purposes.

4. Methodology of the Study

The study was based on the questionnaire, interview, observations, and comments of the teachers and confined to the Government aided Teachers' Training Colleges affiliated to West Bengal State University, India. The unstructured questionnaires containing both closed and open ended questions were first administered to 10 teachers in different fields and 5 subject experts to observe the behavioral pattern of the college teachers. After getting feedback from them the questionnaires were partially needed to be clarified. Finally printed questionnaires incorporating all the questions in connection with demographic attributes and information seeking pattern of the teachers were put forward before the respondents. The population of the study consists of full-time teachers and principal in different subjects of 7 Teachers' Training Colleges (TRCs). The investigator personally visited the colleges more than once and questionnaires were distributed to 46 respondents. But finally 43 questionnaires were received which shows 93.48% of total population.

5. Data Analysis and Interpretation

The data collected from the respondents were analyzed and interpreted using various statistical techniques.

Table 1: Distribution of the respondents by demographic attributes

Variables		Training college	
		Frequency	%
Sex	Male	20	46.51
	Female	23	53.49
	Total	43	100
Age	25-34	2	4.65
	35-44	25	58.14
	45-54	16	37.21
	55 and above	2	4.65
	Total	43	100
Extra Qualification	M. Phil	5	11.63
	Ph. D	17	39.53
	Others	5	11.63
Discipline	Arts	23	53.49
	Science	19	44.18
	Commerce	2	4.65
	Total	43	100
Experience	0-10	18	41.86
	11-20	22	51.16
	> 20	3	6.98
	Total	43	100

The table 1 shows that 46.51% of the total respondents of the TTCs were males, where as 53.49% were females. The survey reveals that 5 respondents had M. Phil qualification, 17 respondents had Ph D and 5 had other qualifications. Of the 43 respondents, 23 (53.49%) belonged to Arts, 19 respondents (44.18%) belonged to Science and 2 (4.65%) were from Commerce discipline. In regard to experience, 18 (41.86%) respondents had 1 to 10 years, 22 (51.16%) had experience ranged from 11 to 20 years. There were 3 respondents (6.98 %) having experience of more than 20 years.

5.1 Designation-wise Distribution of the Respondents

Table-2 shows that out of 43 respondents, 20 (46.51%) were male teachers and 23 (53.49%) were female teachers. Of them, 23 (53.49%) were Assistant Professor, followed by Associate Professor 6 (13.95%). The number of Sr. Assist. Professor and Principal were 6 (13.95%) and 5 (11.63%) respectively.

Table-2: Distribution of the respondents in regard to the designation

Designation	Male	Female	Total	Percentage
Asst. Prof.	12 (27.90)	11 (18.6)	23	53.49
Sr. Asst. Prof.	2 (4.65)	4 (9.3)	6	13.95
Associate Prof.	3 (6.98)	6 (13.95)	9	20.93
Principal	3 (6.98)	2 (4.65)	5	11.63
Total	20 (46.51)	23 (53.49)	43	100.00

5.2 Use of Formal Information Sources

Sources of information consist of both formal and informal. Formal sources include books newspaper, conference papers, indexing and abstracting services, lecture notes, reference books, library catalogue, government publication, etc. Teachers engaged in colleges use formal sources to a greater extent. Newspaper, conference papers, electronic databases, research report, text books, journals and bibliographies are important sources for teachers in Training Colleges to meet their information needs. The work indicates that the text books (93.02%) were used by maximum of the teachers in Teachers' Training Colleges, out of which 60.46% mentioned frequently, 20.93% pointed out occasionally and 11.63% opined it rarely for getting information. The surveyed respondents of the TTCs maximum used research report (90.69%) after the text books, out of which 58.14% of the respondents used frequently, 18.60% used occasionally and 13.95% used rarely, followed by electronic databases 83.72% (a sum of 41.86 % frequently, 23.26% occasionally and 18.60% respondents rarely) and conference papers 79.02% (a sum total of 16.28 % as frequently, 23.26% as occasionally and 39.53% as rarely).

Table 4: Distribution of the respondents by the Use of formal information sources

Use of formal sources	1	2	3	Total	%
Book	10 23.26	4 9.30	5 11.63	19	44.18
Encyclopaedias	2 4.65	5 11.63	7 16.28	14	32.56
Newspaper	6 13.95	8 18.60	11 25.56	25	58.14
Conference Seminar papers	7 16.28	10 23.26	17 39.53	34	79.07
Index/abstracts	6 13.95	5 11.63	3 6.98	14	32.56

Bibliographies	7 13.28	8 18.60	9 20.93	24	55.81
Electronic Database	8 18.60	10 23.26	18 41.86	36	83.72
Lecture notes	6 13.95	4 9.30	2 4.65	12	27.90
Research report	6 13.95	8 18.60	25 58.14	39	90.69
Text books	5 11.63	9 20.93	26 60.46	40	93.02
Reference books	6 13.95	3 6.98	8 18.60	17	39.53
Journals	11 25.58	9 20.93	6 13.95	22	51.16
Library Catalogue	4 9.30	2 4.65	3 6.98	9	20.93
Govt. Publications	5 11.63	4 9.30	7 16.28	16	37.21

So it can be inferred from the above analysis that the faculty members of the teacher Education Colleges depend heavily upon text books, research report and electronic databases. The teachers of the training colleges moderately used newspapers(58.14%), bibliography (55.01%), journals (51.16%), and govt. publications (37.21%). The respondents mentioned others sources also for seeking information but very meager.

5.3 Use of Informal Information Sources

The data were also collected from the respondents to know whether they use informal information sources and findings showed that informal sources were also very useful for the faculty members of Training Colleges in seeking information. Respondents were also provided a list of informal sources. These are depicted in table-4. The study shows that the teachers maximum used Social media group (95.35%) as informal information sources, out of which 55.81% used it frequently, 25.58% used occasionally and 13.95% used it rarely. Internet search engine was used as sources of information by 93.02% of the total respondents, the sum total of frequently usage(46.51%), occasionally (25.58%) and rarely (20.93%) usage, followed by workshop/training (79.07%), the totality of frequently use (48.84%), occasionally (16.28%) and rarely(18.75%), Subject experts (65.11%), the sum of frequently (16.28%), occasionally (23.26%), and rarely (25.58%). The data also revealed that 60.46% of the total respondents consulted their colleagues, of them,28.12% consulted frequently, 15.62% consulted occasionally and 13.95% respondents rarely consulted.

Table 5: Distribution of the respondents by use of informal information sources

Use of informal sources	3	2	1	Total No.	%
Subject experts	11 25.58	10 23.26	7 16.28	28	65.11
Librarians	3 9.37	7 12.50	11 25.58	21	48.84
Colleagues	6 13.95	7 15.62	13 28.12	26	60.46
T.V/Radio	2 4.65	5 11.63	10 23.26	17	39.53
Friends	7 16.28	4 9.30	5 11.63	16	37.21
Family member	2 4.65	4 9.30	7 16.28	13	30.23
Internet Newsgroup	5 11.63	7 15.62	12 27.90	24	55.81
Internet Search engine	9 20.93	11 25.58	20 46.51	40	93.02
Bookshop	3 6.98	6 13.95	2 4.65	11	18.75
Book store Websites	11 25.58	6 13.95	3 6.98	20	46.51
Workshop/ Training	6 18.75	7 16.28	21 48.84	34	79.07
Social Media Group	6 13.95	11 25.58	24 55.81	41	95.35

Note: 1= frequently; 2= occasionally; 3= rarely

Internet news group were used by the 55.81% of the total respondents, out of which 27.90% used it frequently, 15.62% used occasionally and it was rarely by 11.63% of the total respondents. Librarians as informal sources were also consulted by 48.84% of the total respondents, a sum of frequently use (25.58%), occasionally use (12.50%) and rarely use (9.37%). The book store website was used by 46.51% respondents which consists of 6.98% frequently uses, 13.95% occasionally uses and 25.58% rarely uses. This is followed by T.V/Radio (39.53%), the totality of frequently uses (23.26%), occasionally uses (11.63%) and rarely uses (4.65%), the friends (37.21%) the sum of frequently uses (11.63%), occasionally uses 9.30% and rarely uses (16.28%) and lastly family members (30.23%) a sum of frequently uses (16.28%), occasionally uses (9.30%) and rarely uses (4.65%). Book shop was also used whenever required any information but very meagre.

5.4 Visits to Libraries for Information Needs

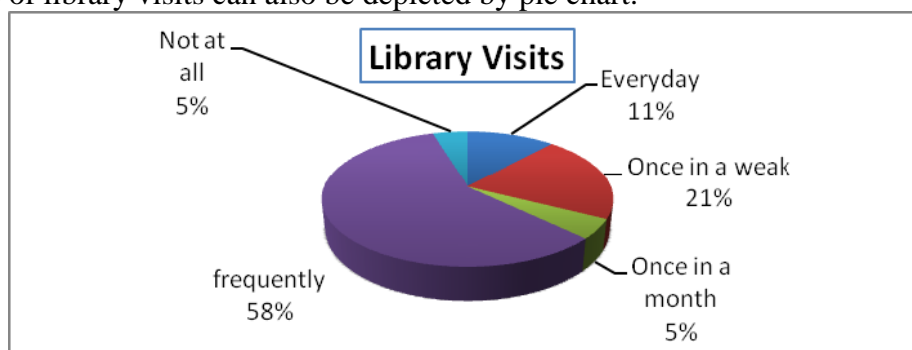
Respondents were asked about their frequency of visits to libraries when they required information. The data shows that the majority of the respondents (58.14 %) visited to the

libraries frequently, 20.93 % of the respondents visited once in a week, 11.63 % visited the libraries every day and 4.65 % visited to the libraries once in a month. Only 4.65 % of the total respondents did not visit libraries because they thought their institution's libraries are not enough to meet the needed information (Table-7).

Table 7: Distribution of the respondents by frequency of visit to the library

Frequency of visit	Training college	
	No.	%
Every day	5	11.63
Once in a Week	9	20.93
Once in a Month	2	4.65
Frequently	25	58.14
Not at all	2	4.65
Total No. of visiting the library	41	95.35

The purpose of library visits can also be depicted by pie chart.



5.5 Use of Search Engine while Seeking Information

The college teachers use various search engines for seeking information in their daily life. Respondents were asked to indicate the search engine through which they sought information.

Table8: Distribution of the respondents by use of Search Engine in seeking information

Use of Search Engine	1	2	3	Total	%
Google	23 53.49	8 18.60	3 6.98	34	79.07
Yahoo	11 25.58	13 30.23	2 6.25	26	60.46
M S N AltaVista	1 2.32	2 4.65	6 13.95	9	20.93

Majority of the respondents (79.07%) of Teachers' Training Colleges indicated the use of Google as search engine to seek information, the totality of frequently use (53.49%),

occasionally use (18.60%) and rarely use 6(6.98%). The second most frequency of using search engine was yahoo (60.46% of the respondents), of them 25.58% used it frequently, 30.23% used occasionally and 6.25% used rarely. The others search engines like MSN, Alta Vista were used by 20.93 % of the total respondents.

So it can be inferred from this data that the teacher education college teachers nowadays very much depend on search engine whenever they seek information.

5.6 Preference of Version

The attitude of the respondents towards the preference of version for using the document has been changed. Some respondents prefer printed version of the document, some like electronic and some intend to use both. When the respondents in Training Colleges were asked about use of version of documents it was revealed that majority of them ((44.18%) indicated the printed version as best preference. Of them, 23.26% indicated most preferred, 13.95% revealed it preferred and 6.98% respondents less preferred. Again 32.56% of the total respondents preferred electronic documents out of which 25.58% respondents indicated most preferred, 6.98% preferred and 4.65% preferred less.

Table 9: Distribution of the respondents by preferred format of information resources

Format of information	Total	1	2	3
Print	19 44.18	10 23.26	6 13.95	3 6.98
Electronic	14 32.56	9 20.93	3 6.98	2 4.65
Both print and electronic	10 23.26	6 13.95	3 6.98	1 2.32

Note: 1= Most preferred; 2= preferred; 3= less preferred; 4= Not preferred

5.7 Most Preferred / Useful Sources for Research Work

In order of research works the respondents were asked about the most sought after items to arrive a precise idea on information, its availability, use and updating for research in the concern subject of information. Their responses are reflected in table 12. It is seen that 39.53% of the respondents in Teachers' Training Colleges College Reference books as the most preferred sources for research work after items of information, while journals were named as the second most preferred sources of information by 23.26% respondents. The third most preferred source was electronic databases to 13.95% of the total respondents, followed by subject experts (9.30 %), dissertation/theses (6.98%), newspaper (4.65%), and lastly 2.32 % respondents named conference papers/ proceedings as the most useful sources of information.

Table 10: Distribution of the respondents by evaluation of the libraries

Types of library	Training College			
	1	2	3	4
Public library	3 6.98	24 55.81	5 11.63	11 25.58
College library	11 25.58	26 60.46	2 4.65	4 9.30
University library	8 18.60	22 51.16	0	13 37.5
Other libraries	4 9.30	8 18.60	3 6.98	28 65.11

5.8 Level of Satisfaction about the Libraries

The most important source of information perhaps is the library. As more or less all the teachers visited the library and many visited more than once in a week, their evaluation of various types of libraries are important factors of their information seeking behaviour. The respondents were asked to rate the degree of usefulness to meet their information needs.

Table 11: Distribution of the respondent by level of satisfaction about the libraries

Sl.No.	Preference wise sources of information	No. (%)
1	Reference books	17(39.53)
2	Journal	10(23.26)
3	Electronic databases	6(13.95)
4	Subject experts	4(9.30)
5	Preference wise sources of information	No. (%)
6	Reference books	17(39.53)
7	Journal	10(23.26)
8	Electronic databases	6(13.95)
9	Subject experts	4(9.30)
10	Dissertation/Theses	3(6.98)
11	Newspaper	2(4.65)
12	Proceedings/ Conf. papers	1(2.32)
13	Preference wise sources of information	No.(%)
14	Dissertation/Theses	3(6.98)
15	Newspaper	2(4.65)
16	Proceedings/ Conf. papers	1(2.32)

Note: 1= Excellence; 2= Good; 3= Poor; 4= Not used

The study reveals that only 25.58% of the respondents rated college library as excellence, however it was rated as good by maximum of the teachers (60.46%). A big portion of the

respondents did not use university libraries and public libraries. So the hypothesis can be established that there is significant difference of usefulness among various types of libraries mentioned by the respondents.

6. Suggestions

Based on the findings of the research work the following suggestions are made to improve the education system of the colleges.

1. The college libraries must be well equipped with sufficient collections and internet facilities including electronic documents to fill the lacuna of non availability of information of the college teachers.
2. There should be proper awareness of the services and programmes about the resources of the libraries.
3. There is the necessity of orienting the users in handling computer software in searching information and process about how to locate the information online with and without charges.
4. The State Government should provide financial support to the college libraries in West Bengal to make all the libraries computerized.
5. There is the need of the college librarians to enhance their communication power and skill to provide services in the present electronic environment.
6. The State govt. should arrange training programmes for the teachers and librarians on computer software in handling electronic documents.
7. The UGC must provide more financial support to the colleges regarding research.

7. Conclusion

The teacher education institutions use several avenues for seeking information. They use mainly research reports, text books, conference papers, electronic databases, subject experts, internet search engines, social media groups and attending training or workshop as sources of information to seek information. So the college libraries must provide journals, reference books, text books and electronic documents. They still now depend mainly on print document but a change is taking place in academic community. Many of them prefer electronic documents in lieu of printed documents. The teachers seek information through various sources but search engines are used by large number of college teachers. Audio-visual materials and electronic documents have become useful sources in seeking information. This has brought about a marked and sustained change in the attitude of the college teachers.

The study also shows that the college teachers mainly use journals, reference books, electronic databases, text books and research reports, but informal information sources like discussion with colleagues and friends, librarians are also consulted. The faculties in teacher education colleges most prefer reference books, then journals and electronic databases for their research work. They frequently use their colleagues, subject experts and friends as informal sources for seeking information to meet the needs of class note lectures rather than librarian. The College libraries are enough to meet the required information for most of the college teachers. They also visit to

other libraries. So the role of the library profession has been changed to greater extent, but methods and tools used for information storage and retrieval continue to grow and change dramatically. Libraries nowadays understand information-seeking behaviour of users to re-engineer their services and provide information efficiently.

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