

INFORMATION NEEDS OF SCHEDULE TRIBE STUDENTS: A STUDY

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Abstract:

The study examined the Information needs and seeking behaviour of research students in the vidarbha region information seeking behaviour model. A total of 600 students selected from the PhD degree programme at the various faculties in the university constituted the population of the study. Through a survey design, questionnaire was administered to gather data from the respondents. Four research questions were developed and answered by the respondents. The results indicated that major information needs of research students at the various faculties were considered for academic purpose and their primary purpose of seeking for information is for their reading activities. They also acknowledged that uses fellow students and internet as their first point of call whenever needs for information arises. Overall, the respondents are satisfy with the information sources consulted when seeking for information even as they majorly use the credibility of the author to evaluate the information sources consulted. But they have incompleteness of the materials as their major problem in their seeking process.

Keywords: Information, Information Needs, Information Seeking Behaviour, Research Students, Schedule Caste students

Introduction

The word 'Tribe' denotes a group of people living in primitive or barbarous conditions. It is a social group with territorial affiliation, endogamous with no specialization of functions. They have a headman or a chief who controls the activities of that group. Tribals have several sub-groups all of them together known as 'Tribal Society'. It is

really difficult to say whether they are Indigenous or not but they are earliest settlers of India. They were living in forests since early times and even now some of the groups follow the same trends and live in forests. Tribals constitute around 8.08% of the total Indian population, and of the total tribal population around 80% found in central India. Since they are older settlers and living in forests they are known as Vanyajati,

Vanvasi, Pahari, Adivasi, Anusuchit Jati, Anusuchit Jamati, etc. in Indian languages. The word implies the meaning itself i.e. old settlers Adi = old Vasi = those who stay.

Tribals have their own culture and social life and this is important in India. With culture they also have their own folklore, folk songs, dances etc. Almost all tribal communities possess rich mythologies, folk tales, stories which illustrate their affinity and relationship with tradition and traditional characters. With traditions they have their own general beliefs. There are around 636 schedule tribe categories in India some of the larger and more prominent tribes are Muria, Santal, Maria, Bhattra, Halba, Nocte, Bhils, Paradhi, Gonda etc. They are situated all over India. Even though they have a rich culture they are socio-economically disadvantaged and marginalised.

The present era is called the “Information era.” Information has become the most important element for progress in society. To thrive in this modern era, one needs a variety of information, no matter how well versed one is in a field or profession.

Literature Reviews

Graves and Seliq have emphasized the importance of Medical library’s role, in developing life-long learning skills in medical students. They pointed out that developing skills in information management and the usage of information tools and databases are in need among students.

Undergraduate students often do not comprehend the necessity of learning the usage of library resources, which are available to them nor do they always realize that research skills will be a necessary part of their future practice of Medical Profession³.

Findings of Fidzani indicated that guidance in the use of library resources and services are necessary to help students face their information requirements. The study found that Journals, Library Books, and textbooks are the most popular sources of information for course work and research, and students are in need to be taught how to use library resources and services. Fidzani pointed out that many graduate students lack basic skills in using the library and its resources effectively⁴.

Whitmire indicated that disciplinary differences affected a number of information seeking activities (e.g., use of online catalogues, indexes and library books frequency). She also found that ethnic backgrounds also influenced some aspects, such as students use of the library catalogue and seeking help from librarians⁵.

Majid and Ai studied the use of information resources by computer Engineering students in Singapore. They found that undergraduate Students experienced Difficulties, in locating items from the library collection and did not understand the processes for retrieving journal Articles⁶.

Hartmann concluded that undergraduate students experienced difficulties, in locating items from the

library collection and did not understand the processes for retrieving journal articles⁷.

Objectives of the study

There are following objectives of the study:

- To identify Information Needs of the Schedule Tribe Students and used the sources of Information by Schedule Tribe Students.
- To study the purpose of Information seeking and Information Seeking Behavior.

Hypotheses of the study

- Schedule Tribe Students used formal and informal sources to fulfill their information needs.
- Schedule Tribe Students do not use World Wide Web to acquire latest information of their need.

Data Collection Method

Data will be collected by using the Random Sampling method, by Questionnaire and Interview method. Also the data will be collected by primary and secondary sources of information.

Sample of the Study

'Information Needs and Information Seeking Behaviour of Schedule Tribal Students in Area of Vidarbha', this study is limited to Vidarbha. Sample of the present study will be the schedule tribe students in the tribal area of Vidarbha.

Gender of Respondents

Table 1: Genderwise distribution of Respondents

Gender	Respondents	Percentage
Male	514	85.7
Female	86	14.3
Total	600	100.0

Chi-square 305.307; **df:** 1, **P=<0.05;** **Table Value:** 3.84

Above **Table 1** shows information regarding the genderwise distribution of tribal students of Vidarbha region. It is observed from the collected data, that majority of the tribal students i.e. 85.7% are male however, 14.3% respondents are females.

Medium of the Study

Table 2: Medium of the Study of the Respondents

Medium of the Study	Respondents	Percentage
Marathi	478	79.7
Hindi	42	7.0
English	80	13.3
Total	600	100.0

Chi-square 583.24; **df:** 2, **P=<0.05;** **Table Value:** 5.99

Above **Table 2** shows information regarding the medium of study of the tribal students of Vidarbha region. It is observed from the collected data, that 79.7% tribal students have completed their education in Marathi medium. In addition to it 13.3% respondents have studied in English medium whereas 7% respondents have taken education in Hindi medium of study. Thus,

on the basis of the study results, it is evident that majority of the tribal students of Vidarbha region have completed education in Marathi medium.

Purpose of information seeking

Table 3: Purpose of information seeking of the tribal student

	Responde nts	Percent age
Research work	566.0	94.3
General awareness	320.0	53.3
State of Art Investigations	264.0	44.0
Preparing answers to questions	486.0	81.0
Reading and thinking purpose	240.0	40.0
Preparing class notes	328.0	54.7
Setting experiments	168.0	28.0
Preparing /supplementing lectures	349.0	58.2
Discussions	120.0	20.0

Above **Table 3** shows information regarding the purpose of information seeking of the tribal students of Vidarbha region. It is observed from the collected data, that 94.3% tribal students seek information for research work however 81% and 58.2% tribal students seek information for finding out answers of their questions and for preparing/supplementing lectures respectively. In addition to it 54.7% and 53.3% tribal students seek information for preparing class notes and for general awareness respectively. Furthermore 44% and 40% tribal students seek information in order to investigate and for reading and thinking

purpose respectively. Thus, on the basis of the study results, it is evident that majority of the tribal students of Vidarbha region seek information for research work.

Total time spent on information gathering outside college

Table 4: Total time spent on information gathering outside college

	Respondents	Percentage
1 to 2 hours	336	56.0
2 to 5hours	171	28.5
5 to7 hours	46	7.7
8 hours	29	4.8
more than 8 hours	18	3.0
Total	600	100.0

Chi-square 611.817; **df:** 4, **P=<0.05;** **Table Value:** 9.49

Above **Table 4** shows information pertaining to the total time spent outside the college for information gathering by the tribal students of Vidarbha region. It is observed from the collected data, that 40.8% tribal students abreast the current development by means of internet/e-mail alerts however 17.3% and 14.5% tribal students does this by scanning current issues or print/online journals and scanning recent issues of abstracting tools respectively. In addition to it 10.7% and 8% tribal students does the collection development through list server, e-archieve, database as ADS etc and through library services respectively. Furthermore 5% and 3.7% tribal students does

collection development by attending conferences and by means of personal communication respectively. Thus, on the basis of the study results, it is evident that majority of the tribal students of Vidarbha region abreast current development by means of internet/e-mail alerts.

Use of various techniques to collect/acquire information needed

Table 5: Use of various techniques to collect/acquire information needed

	Responde nts	Percent age
Computers	330	55.0
Telecommunication & its facilities	120	20.0
Photocopying	368	61.3
Microfilm / Microfiche, etc.		0.0
Internet /Intranet, etc.	128	21.3
Multimedia	224	37.3
Digitization	110	18.3

Above **Table 5** shows information regarding the various techniques used by tribal students of Vidarbha region for collecting/acquiring information needed. It is observed from the collected data, that 61.3% tribal students collect information by photocopying the data however 55% and 37.3% tribal students use computers and multimedia to collect information. In addition to it 21.3%, 20% and 18% students use internet/intranet, etc, telecommunication & its facilities and digitization to collect/acquire information. Thus, on the basis of the study

results, it is evident that majority of the tribal students of Vidarbha region use photocopying method to collect/ acquire information.

Conclusion

Information Seeking is a process in which humans engage in order to advance and potentially alter their state of knowledge. It is also an important cognitive function related to learning and problem solving, sometimes thought of as a “higher cognitive process”. Information Seeking Behaviour is as an area of active interest among Librarians, Information Scientists, Communication Scientists, Sociologists and Psychologists. Information Seeking Behaviour results from the recognition of some need, perceived by the user, who as a consequence makes demands upon formal systems such as libraries, information centres, online services or some other person in order to satisfy the perceived need. Information Seeking Behaviour refers to any activity of an individual that is undertaken to identify a message that satisfies a perceived need. They also access information with the help of Internet and E-Sources. Librarian should provide initial orientation workshops and ongoing seminars for students to train them in using resources so that utilization of resources and services is maximized.

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