

Information Seeking Behaviour of Library Users in Women's Educational Institutions: A Survey

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Abstract

Information seeking behaviour is the human activities with respect to searching various sources, channels including use of that information. The terms, information seeking behaviour, information searching behaviour and information using behaviour are synonymous terms. A survey was taken among Information seeking behaviour of women's educational institutions library users in Vellore district, Tamil Nadu.

Keywords: Information seeking behaviour, Women's Education, Library users, Resources.

Introduction

Information seeking behaviour studies is one of the important areas in user studies¹. The motives of users give rise to information needs and requirements. To reduce the thrust for information, users adopt numerous ways and means to access the various channels of information.

Defines the "Information behaviour" as "those activities a person may engage in which identifying his or her own needs for information, searching for such information in any way, and using or transferring that information".

Wilson (1999)² Information seeking behaviour studies is potentially useful in bridging the gap between the kind of information services needed and the kind of information existence and how information services should be used. Different facts of the subject and different types of user population used different study techniques. An attempt has been made in this paper to highlight the Information seeking behaviour of women's educational institutions library users in Vellore District, Tamil Nadu.

Women's Education

A woman's education plays a crucial role in the development of the country, women have grasped the high-flying place in the society as well as all over the world, and women education³ in India led a tremendous progress and improvement of women's condition throughout the world.

Our present government is doing a lot of good work to bring the woman at par with man and it has taken certain measures to provide education for all Indian women. There are special facilities for women's education. The women are offered equal jobs with equal pay. Several actions were taken to make women literate. Moreover, this progress passed through the years and influenced the modern Indian education system. There were some attempts to emancipate women from their misery, but the real attempts were made in the nineteenth century. This century produced a large number of religious and social reformers in India. After a while, female literacy had become a very important task in modern days. The women literacy rate had increased in modern days. As compared with male, female literacy has gone high. Presently, Indian constitution guarantees free primary education for both girls and boys up to the age of 14. The women make up almost half of the total population, Apart from this, women play a crucial role in improving quality life at home by educating their children and outside. Moreover, educated women can also help in the reduction of infant mortality rate and growth of population. This proves that how important is women's education. So our study is Arts and Science College affiliated to Tiruvalluvar University, Vellore, Tamil Nadu.

Review Literature

Kadli Jayadev and Kumbar B. D (2011)⁴ presents a user study done at Lala Lajpatrai College in Mahalakshmi, Mumbai, India and the Department of Studies in Library and Information Science at Karnatak University in Dharwad, India on the behaviour of people who are seeking information at libraries. It focuses on the differences in print media and electronic media, and discusses research findings which show that only a small percentage of the general public prefer to learn by reading. It also states that a survey was used by the authors to gather data and conduct research. **Raza M. Masoom and others (2010)**⁵ discusses a study which explores the awareness of researchers about the services offered by the Central Drug Research Institute (CDRI) in Lucknow, India, and determines the purpose and type of information sought by CDRI researchers. Results reveal that most researchers visit the library weekly, generally to collect reading material. Literature searches are done using the library's international network. Most researchers use the library's e-journals, and attend conferences often. **Padnzamma, S and**

Others (2010)⁶ examines the information seeking behaviour of undergraduate students in the Engineering college libraries. Major findings from the study include academic information was rated as the predominant information required by the students, while the Internet was rated the most crucial source of most of the academic information required. **Singh K. P and Satija M. P. (2008)**⁷ discusses the findings of various strategies and procedures adopted by the agricultural scientists in meeting their information requirement. The results show that agricultural scientists have expressed great dependence in meeting their information requirement on their institutional library/information centre. For accessing information agricultural scientists highly depend on the library collection, followed by the personal collection, a collection of their supervisor and colleagues in order of decreasing priority

Objectives

The study has been conducted with the following objectives:

- To analyse most sought sources of information from the students.
- To examine the motivating factors for information seeking behaviour by students.
- To identify the various channels of information, faculties make use of information seeking behaviour.
- To analyse the extent of use and dependence on various sources of information.

Limitation

- This study has been limited to the arts and science colleges in Vellore District, Tamilnadu.
- Further it has been restricted for women's college library users.

Methodology

The present study was carried out to evaluate the responsiveness of Information seeking behaviour of women's educational institutions library users in Vellore District, Tamil Nadu. Research method followed was a survey method; structured questionnaire tool was used to collect the data. The sample (Table1) consists of 144 students has been considered in this study drawn from 7 women colleges (Figure.1).

Table 1: Sample Size

S.No	Institution Code	Name of the Institutions	Questionnaires		
			Distributed	Received	Percentage
1.	ASMWC	Arcot Sri Mahalakhmi Women's College	30	27	90
2.	AAGACW	Aringar Anna Government Arts College for Women	32	24	75
3.	AUCW	Auxillium College for Women, Gandhi Nagar	24	20	83
4.	DKMCW	D.K.M. College for Women	30	27	90
5.	IASCW	Islamia Arts and Science College for Women	18	12	66
6.	MMESWC	M.M.E.S Women's College	22	17	77
7.	MKJCW	Marudhar Kesari Jain College for Women	24	17	71
Total			180	144	80

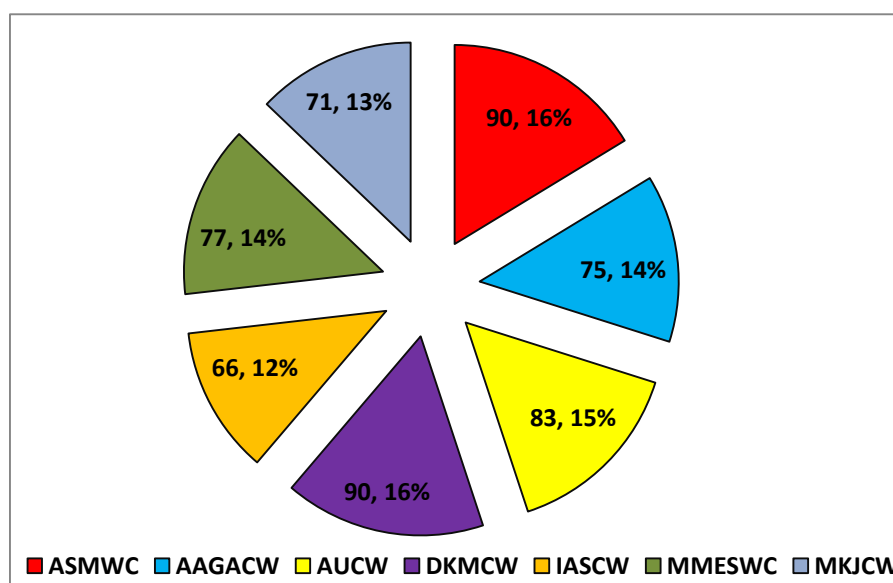


Figure 1: User response rate

Data Analysis and Interpretations

The received questionnaires were carefully edited tabulated and analysed. To make the data analysis statistically sound, necessary statistical techniques (diagrams) are used.

Table 2: Institutions Vs Frequency of Visiting the Libraries

Visit the Library	ASM	AAGA	AU	DKM	IAS	MMES	MKJ	Total
Daily	7 (4.86)	4 (2.78)	5 (3.47)	2 (1.39)	4 (2.78)	3 (2.08)	6 (4.17)	31 (21.53)

Once a Week	16 (11.11)	12 (8.33)	9 (6.25)	19 (13.19)	7 (4.86)	10 (6.94)	9 (6.25)	82 (56.94)
Once a Fortnight	1 (0.69)	2 (1.39)	0	1 (0.69)	0	1 (0.69)	0	5 (3.47)
More than once a Month	3 (2.08)	5 (3.47)	5 (3.47)	5 (3.47)	1 (.69)	3 (2.08)	2 (1.39)	24 (16.67)
Once a Semester	0	1 (0.69)	1 (0.69)	0	0	0	0	2 (1.39)
Total	27 (18.75)	24 (16.67)	20 (13.89)	27 (18.75)	12 (8.33)	17 (11.81)	17 (11.81)	144 (100.00)

(Figures in Parentheses indicate percentage)

It is evident from the Table 2 that, most of the students (56.94%) visited the library once a week followed by 21.53% visits daily, 16.67% visits more than once a week.

Table 3: Institutions Vs Sources of reading materials

Source of Reading Materials	ASM	AAGA	AU	DKM	IAS	MMES	MKJ	Total
Teachers	20 (13.89)	21 (14.58)	12 (8.33)	22 (15.28)	9 (6.25)	10 (6.94)	12 (8.33)	106 (73.61)
Seniors	4 (2.78)	3 (2.08)	1 (.69)	4 (2.78)	2 (1.39)	3 (2.08)	2 (1.39)	19 (13.19)
Classmates	5 (3.47)	4 (2.78)	5 (3.47)	9 (6.25)	4 (2.78)	3 (2.08)	3 (2.08)	33 (22.92)
Departmental Library	7 (4.86)	5 (3.47)	4 (2.78)	8 (5.56)	7 (4.86)	6 (4.17)	7 (4.86)	44 (30.56)
College Library	27 (18.75)	15 (10.42)	16 (11.11)	25 (17.36)	12 (8.33)	14 (9.72)	15 (10.42)	124 (86.11)
Any other Library in the City	2 (1.39)	5 (3.47)	2 (1.39)	5 (3.47)	0	1 (0.69)	1 (.69)	16 (11.11)

(Figures in Parentheses indicate percentage)

Table 3 presents data on sources of reading materials by various library users. It could be noted from the above table that majority of respondents (86.11%) obtain educational resources from college library followed by 73.61% collect materials from their teachers.

Table 4: Institutions Vs Purpose of using the library

Purpose	ASM	AAGA	AU	DKM	IAS	MMES	MKJ	Total
For Preparing Examination	14 (9.72)	10 (6.94)	6 (4.17)	13 (9.03)	4 (2.78)	6 (4.17)	9 (6.25)	62 (43.06)
For Updating Knowledge	14 (9.72)	14 (9.72)	13 (9.03)	19 (13.19)	7 (4.86)	9 (6.25)	9 (6.25)	85 (59.03)
For Writing Assignments	15 (10.42)	17 (11.81)	7 (4.86)	14 (9.72)	6 (4.17)	11 (7.64)	8 (5.56)	78 (54.17)
For Writing Papers	7 (4.86)	6 (4.17)	6 (4.17)	2 (1.39)	3 (2.08)	6 (4.17)	3 (2.08)	33 (22.92)
For Entertainment	5 (3.47)	2 (1.39)	5 (3.47)	6 (4.17)	0 (.00)	3 (2.08)	2 (1.39)	23 (15.97)
Any Other	14 (9.72)	10 (6.94)	5 (3.47)	14 (9.72)	4 (2.78)	8 (5.56)	5 (3.47)	60 (41.67)

(Figures in Parentheses indicate percentage)

When the information need arises, the purpose of use of libraries is increasing. Table 4 reveals that predominant library users 59.03% use the library for updating knowledge followed by 54.17% use library for writing assignments.

Table 5: Institutions Vs Types of materials

Types of Materials	ASM	AAGA	AU	DKM	IAS	MMES	MKJ	Total
Textbooks	25 (17.36)	18 (12.50)	13 (9.03)	22 (15.28)	11 (7.64)	14 (9.72)	13 (9.03)	116 (80.56)
Periodicals	2 (1.39)	2 (1.39)	0	3 (2.08)	5 (3.47)	2 (1.39)	3 (2.08)	17 (11.81)
Newspapers	14 (9.72)	12 (8.33)	6 (4.17)	10 (6.94)	3 (2.08)	6 (4.17)	4 (2.78)	55 (38.19)
Reference Books	12 (8.33)	6 (4.17)	6 (4.17)	15 (10.42)	6 (4.17)	8 (5.56)	7 (4.86)	60 (41.67)
General Books	9 (6.25)	14 (9.72)	6 (4.17)	15 (10.42)	7 (4.86)	7 (4.86)	9 (6.25)	67 (46.53)
Competitive Exam Books	8 (5.56)	3 (2.08)	5 (3.47)	9 (6.25)	3 (2.08)	3 (2.08)	1 (0.69)	32 (22.22)

(Figures in Parentheses indicate percentage)

Table 5 shows that most of the students visit for reading textbooks (80.56%) and 46.53% study general books.

Table 6: Institutions Vs Information searching tools used

Information Searching Tools Used	ASM	AAGA	AU	DKM	IAS	MMES	MKJ	Total
Search engines	10 (6.94)	5 (3.47)	9 (6.25)	16 (11.11)	11 (7.64)	8 (5.56)	2 (1.39)	61 (42.36)
Reference books	23 (15.97)	19 (13.19)	10 (6.94)	16 (11.11)	6 (4.17)	6 (4.17)	15 (10.42)	95 (65.97)
Periodicals	0	2 (1.39)	2 (1.39)	6 (4.17)	3 (2.08)	5 (3.47)	1 (0.69)	19 (13.19)

(Figures in Parentheses indicate percentage)

To search the information in the library some tools are used. Table 6 illustrates that the majority of the respondents (65.97%) use reference books followed by 42.36% obtain information from search engine (Figure 2).

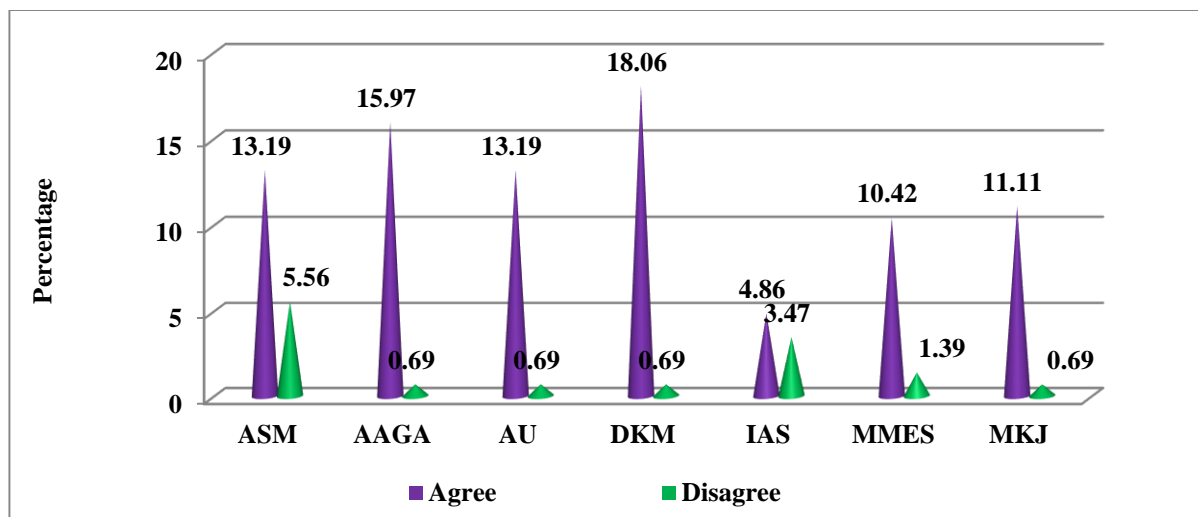


Figure 2: Institution Vs Information searching tools used

Table 7 Institutions Vs Source of library

Sources		Institutions							Total
		ASMWC	AAGACW	AUCW	DKMCW	IASCW	MMESWC	MKJCW	
Books	Adequate	23 (15.97)	19 (13.19)	18 (12.50)	22 (15.28)	7 (4.86)	13 (9.03)	16 (11.11)	118 (81.94)
	Inadequate	3 (2.08)	4 (2.78)	2 (1.39)	2 (1.39)	4 (2.78)	3 (2.08)	1 (0.69)	19 (13.19)
	No Idea	1 (0.69)	1 (0.69)	0	3 (2.08)	1 (0.69)	1 (0.69)	0	7 (4.86)
Reference Books	Adequate	15 (10.42)	3 (2.08)	10 (6.94)	14 (9.72)	4 (2.78)	3 (2.08)	8 (5.56)	57 (39.58)
	Inadequate	11 (7.64)	16 (11.11)	9 (6.25)	9 (6.25)	5 (3.47)	10 (6.94)	8 (5.56)	68 (47.22)
	No Idea	1 (0.69)	5 (3.47)	1 (0.69)	4 (2.78)	3 (2.08)	4 (2.78)	1 (0.69)	19 (13.19)
Journals / Periodicals	Adequate	10 (6.94)	1 (0.69)	4 (2.78)	4 (2.78)	5 (3.47)	4 (2.78)	6 (4.17)	34 (23.61)
	Inadequate	12 (8.33)	7 (4.86)	8 (5.56)	13 9.03%	5 (3.47)	6 (4.17)	7 (4.86)	58 (40.28)
	No Idea	5 (3.47)	16 (11.11)	8 (5.56)	10 (6.94)	2 (1.39)	7 (4.86)	4 (2.78)	52 (36.11)
Contd...									

Sources		Institutions						Total	
		ASMWC	AAGACW	AUCW	DKMCW	IASCW	MMESWC		MKJCW
Newspapers	Adequate	24 (16.67)	21 (14.58)	19 (13.19)	21 (14.58)	10 (6.94)	9 (6.25)	12 (8.33)	116 (80.56)
	Inadequate	3 (2.08)	1 (0.69)	0	4 (2.78)	2 (1.39)	5 (3.47)	4 (2.78)	19 (13.19)
	No Idea	0	2 (1.39)	1 (.69)	2 (1.39)	0	3 (2.08)	1 (0.69)	9 (6.25)
General Magazines	Adequate	12 (8.33)	6 (4.17)	13 (9.03)	15 (10.42)	6 (4.17)	5 (3.47)	3 (2.08)	60 (41.67)
	Inadequate	9 (6.25)	14 (9.72)	6 (4.17)	8 (5.56)	5 (3.47)	9 (6.25)	9 (6.25)	60 (41.67)
	No Idea	6 (4.17)	4 (2.78)	1 (0.69)	4 (2.78)	1 (0.69)	3 (2.08)	5 (3.47)	24 (16.67)
Competitive Exams Magazines	Adequate	5 (3.47)	6 (4.17)	6 (4.17)	15 (10.42)	2 (1.39)	2 (1.39)	6 (4.17)	42 (29.17)
	Inadequate	16 (11.11)	16 (11.11)	12 (8.33)	9 (6.25)	8 (5.56)	9 (6.25)	9 (6.25)	79 (54.86)
	No Idea	6 (4.17)	2 (1.39)	2 (1.39)	3 (2.08)	2 (1.39)	6 (4.17)	2 (1.39)	23 (15.97)

Table 7 reveals opinion on the adequacy of the library sources. Majority of the students (81.94%) responded that books are adequate while 80.56% suggested newspapers. 54.86% have opined on inadequate information sources for competitive exam.

Table 8 Institutions Vs Facilities

Institutions	Adequate Accommodation			Total	Comfortable Library Furniture			Total	Good Ventilation and Lighting			Total
	1	2	3		1	2	3		1	2	3	
ASM	20 (13.89)	3 (2.08)	4 (2.78)	27 (18.75)	24 (16.67)	2 (1.39)	1 (.69)	27 (18.75)	24 (16.67)	3 (2.08)	0	27 (18.75)
AAGA	18 (12.50)	6 (4.17)	0	24 (16.67)	18 (12.50)	6 (4.17)	0	24 (16.67)	18 (12.50)	6 (4.17)	0	24 (16.67)
AU	15 (10.42)	5 (3.47)	0	20 (13.89)	14 (9.72)	6 (4.17)	0	20 (13.89)	14 (9.72)	5 (3.47)	1 (0.69)	20 (13.89)
DKM	23 (15.97)	3 (2.08)	1 (0.69)	27 (18.75)	17 (11.81)	8 (5.56)	2 (1.39)	27 (18.75)	17 (11.81)	8 (5.56)	2 (1.39)	27 (18.75)
IAS	10 (6.94)	1 (.69)	1 (0.69)	12 (8.33)	9 (6.25)	3 (2.08)	0	12 (8.33)	8 (5.56)	1 (0.69)	3 (2.08)	12 (8.33)
MMES	10 (6.94)	4 (2.78)	3 (2.08)	17 (11.81)	11 (7.64)	5 (3.47)	1 (.69)	17 (11.81)	12 (8.33)	5 (3.47)	0	17 (11.81)
MKJ	12 (8.33)	4 (2.78)	1 (0.69)	17 (11.81)	14 (9.72)	2 (1.39)	1 (.69)	17 (11.81)	14 (9.72)	3 (2.08)	0	17 (11.81)
Total	108 (75.00)	26 (18.06)	10 (6.94)	144 (100.00)	107 (74.31)	32 (22.22)	5 (3.47)	144 (100.00)	107 (74.31)	31 (21.53)	6 (4.17)	144 (100.00)

(1-Satisfied, 2- Dissatisfied, 3- Neither satisfied Nor Dissatisfied)

(Figures in Parentheses indicate percentage)

Table 8 presents respondents opinion on library facilities 75.00 % have expressed positive response towards suitable accommodation and 74.31% are satisfied with library furniture, good ventilation and lighting.

Table 9 Institutions Vs Adequate for Library Collection

Adequate for Library Collection	ASM	AAGA	AU	DKM	IAS	MMES	MKJ	Total
Agree	19 (13.19)	23 (15.97)	19 (13.19)	26 (18.06)	7 (4.86)	15 (10.42)	16 (11.11)	125 (86.81)
Disagree	8 (5.56)	1 (0.69)	1 (0.69)	1 (0.69)	5 (3.47)	2 (1.39)	1 (0.69)	19 (13.19)
Total	27 (18.75)	24 (16.67)	20 (13.89)	27 (18.75)	12 (8.33)	17 (11.81)	17 (11.81)	144 (100.00)

(Figures in Parentheses indicate percentage)

Table 9 represents that majority 86.81% of the respondents agreed that the library collection are adequate and only 13.19% disagree.

Table 10 Constraints Vs Institutions

Constraints	ASM	AAGA	AU	DKM	IAS	MMES	MKJ	Total
Material is not Available	22 (15.28)	8 (5.56)	4 (2.78)	12 (8.33)	5 (3.47)	4 (2.78)	8 (5.56)	63 (43.75)
Library Staff are unwilling for Service	0	9 (6.25)	3 (2.08)	4 (2.78)	2 (1.39)	1 (0.69)	3 (2.08)	22 (15.28)
Incomplete Information Material	6 (4.17)	13 (9.03)	6 (4.17)	6 (4.17)	4 (2.78)	4 (2.78)	5 (3.47)	44 (30.56)
Lack of Time	8 (5.56)	5 (3.47)	3 (2.08)	7 (4.86)	3 (2.08)	6 (4.17)	3 (2.08)	35 (24.31)
Do not know how to use the Catalogue	5 (3.47)	1 (0.69)	6 (4.17)	1 (0.69)	1 (0.69)	1 (0.69)	1 (0.69)	16 (11.11)
Lack of Knowledge in using the Library	8 (5.56)	14 (9.72)	5 (3.47)	7 (4.86)	3 (2.08)	9 (6.25)	1 (0.69)	47 (32.64)
Information Scattered in too many sources	18 (12.50)	11 (7.64)	9 (6.25)	19 (13.19)	9 (6.25)	11 (7.64)	5 (3.47)	82 (56.94)
Information is too Vast	3 (2.08)	5 (3.47)	1 (0.69)	10 (6.94)	0	2 (1.39)	3 (2.08)	24 (16.67)
Some of Information Materials are old	21 (14.58)	7 (4.86)	8 (5.56)	15 (10.42)	5 (3.47)	13 (9.03)	7 (4.86)	76 (52.78)

(Figures in Parentheses indicate percentage)

Table 10 shows that information scattered in too many sources seem to be major constraint faced by 56.94% respondents while 52.78% users feel information materials are not updated

Findings

- All the Students of the college in the Vellore District are College Library members and can visit the library free of cost. Most of the respondents (56.94%) visited the library once a week followed by 21.53% visit every day.
- It could be noted from table 3 that the majority of respondents (86.11%) obtains educational resources from the college library followed by 73.61% collect materials from their teachers.
- The majority of the respondents uses the library for updating knowledge (59.03%), while 54.17% use library for writing assignments.
- At the library most of the respondents read textbooks 80.56% and 41.67% read reference books.
- With regard to an opinion on the adequacy of the library sources of the respondents' it is found that the majority of the respondents (81.94%) have opined that books are adequate and 80.56% suggested that newspapers are sufficiently provided in the library.
- Focusing on library facilities in various academic institutions 75.00% express the positive response towards adequacy of the accommodation and 74.31% respond optimistically for sufficiency of comfortable library furniture, good ventilation and lighting.
- 86.81% of the respondents agreed that the library collections are satisfactory.
- Information scattered in too many sources seem to be a major constraint faced by 56.94% respondents while 52.78% users' sense that information materials are not updated.

Conclusions

The successful operation of any library depends to a large extent on the choice of library collections. The choice of the collection is supposed to meet the need and requirements of the patrons. As a result, librarians should be aware of how the library users seek information, the problems they faced while seeking information or information scattered in too many sources, materials unavailable, and lack of time, etc.

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