

# Information Retrieving Habits of Art Faculty Members at University of Allahabad, Allahabad, Utter Pradesh: A Survey

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## Abstract

*This study identifies the information retrieving habits of art faculty members in University of Allahabad, Allahabad, Utter Pradesh including preferred information sources, type of information sources and methods of information access. In this study, questionnaire method was used to collect the information from art faculties of Ambedkar University, Allahabad. The findings of this study show that most of the respondents i.e. 85% stated their method of retrieving information by consulting a knowledgeable person in the concern field. 75% of faculty members retrieve information for preparing lectures. It is revealed that 87 % of the art faculty members used text book. On the basis of survey it is find out that Internet has been almost universally adopted and google.com was mostly used as the search engine for retrieving information by respondents. It is observed that the majority, 81% of the faculty members faced common problem i.e. unavailability of information.*

**Keywords:** Art Faculty, Information Retrieving, University of Allahabad

## 1. INTRODUCTION

According to Vishwanathan, Information is the data of the human brain in the action. It may be abstract or concrete [1]. When an individual begins to think, a variety of images and sensations flash across his/her mind. This makes some information to accumulate in his/her mind and his/her memory retains some pieces of knowledge [2].

Information is the data that have been retrieved and processed. Information retrieving habits is a broad term, which involves a set of actions, that and individual takes to express information need, retrieve information, evaluate and select information, and at last uses of this information to satisfy his/her information needs [3]. There are various factors which may determine the information retrieving habits of an individual or a group of individuals.

There is a universal assumption that man was born innocent or ignorant and should actively retrieve the knowledge information retrieving is thus a natural and necessary mechanism of human existence [4].

Information retrieving habits is the purposive retrieving for information as consequence of a need to satisfy some goals. Information retrieving habits involves personal reasons for retrieving information the kind of information which are being sought [5].

### 1.1. University of Allahabad

The University of Allahabad enjoyed the central status at the time of its incorporation in 1887. The University community at large and its alumni had been demanding the restoration of the central status for more than four decades. The Government of India by a Gazette notification on June 23, 2005, declared the University of Allahabad to be an institution of national importance and consequently the University was granted central status. The Ministry of Human Resource Development notified that the central status shall become effective from July 14, 2005. The Government of India has also constituted the Academic Council and Executive Council of the University. The first Vice-Chancellor, the Registrar and the Finance Officer of the University are likely to be appointed very soon. The University is now poised to take rapid strides to reach new heights in the years to come.

Graduate and Post-graduate courses in the inter/multi-disciplinary mode are being specially designed to address new and emerging areas of Theoretical and Applied Sciences and the Social Sciences. Of these, B.Sc. programme in Applied Sciences and the Masters Programmes in Human Resource Development and Management, Bio-Technology, Cognitive Science, Bio-Informatics, Environmental Science, Food Technology and Nutritional Science are already operational, and Masters Programmes in Applied Behavioural Science and Nano Science and Technology are on the anvil. The University is moving towards the concept of five-year integrated graduate and Post-graduate programmes in almost all faculties. Several innovative Diploma and Certificate Courses (in the Self-financing mode) have already been launched in tune with new career/vocational opportunities. Professional Bachelors programmes in Fine Arts (BFA) and Music (BMus) have been developed to supplement the general graduate courses in Music and Painting and would eventually replace the latter, while professional/quasi-professional Bachelors programmes have already been instituted in Journalism and Mass Communication (BJMC) and Physical Education (BPE). Many departments are exploring cross-disciplinary methodologies and techniques in research problems specific to their respective disciplines, and some entities have instituted the M. Phil. degree while others are in the process of following suit. The vision and objectives animating the endeavours of the University in these respects are set out in the Vision of the University of Allahabad for the Next Ten Years. This Vision Plan is in accordance with the experience of the University in charting out its way through the constructive turbulence of the times and the understanding of potentialities and possibilities it has gained in this process. The Vision Plan is the cornerstone of recent initiatives and developmental programmes of the University.

## 2. REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The literature of information retrieving habits of users available is greatly broad ranging. An attempt has been made to cover number of works that go beyond discussions of the information retrieving habits itself and

its direct applications to closely related topics such as information retrieving.

Challener [6] investigated artists and art historians teaching in five liberal arts colleges and three universities. Results found that they need information for teaching. The participants almost all subscribe to art journals, and many read newspapers. They visit libraries frequently, usually more than one library, and unlike previous reports, the majority are willing to ask the librarian for help. A large percentage of both art historians and artists are using computers for teaching. All 27 participants use slides extensively in the classroom, supplemented in most cases by textbooks.

Shokeen and Kushik [7] studied about information retrieving habits of social scientists working in the universities located in Haryana. They reported most of the social scientists visit the library daily. The first preferred method of searching the required information by the social scientists followed by searching through indexing and abstracting periodicals, and citations in articles respectively. The social scientists use current journals followed by books.

Suriya, Sangeetha and Nambi [8] carried out a research work on "Information retrieving habits of faculty members from Government Arts Colleges in Cuddalore District." The purpose of their study was to investigate, how faculty members seek information from the library. It mentions that most of the respondents (38.12%) visited the library several times a week to meet their information needs. Regarding the type of search made by the respondents the majority of the respondents (56.87%) made their search by subject.

## 3. OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

This study has the following specific objectives:

1. To evaluate the information retrieving habits of art faculty members to retrieve the information;
2. To determine the kind of information are used by faculties;
3. To study the purpose of information retrieving by faculties;
4. To reveal the preference of language of reading materials;
5. To find out the problems faced by art faculties in University of Allahabad, Allahabad while retrieving and using information.

#### 4. SCOPE OF THE STUDY

The scope of the study confines to the analysis of the information requirements of art faculty members in different departments under the faculty of art in University of Allahabad, Allahabad. Information retrieving habits is defined as “those activities a person may engage in when identifying his or her own words for information search for such information is any and using for transferring the information”. The concepts of information retrieval and information retrieving habits are objects of investigation of information science. Within the scientific discipline a variety of studies has been undertaken analyzing the interaction of an individual with information sources in case of a specific information need, task and context. There are total 16 departments under the faculty of art at University of Allahabad, Allahabad, out of which questionnaires were distributed to the respondents of faculty of Political Science, Hindi, Education, Physical Education, Urdu, Sanskrit, Arabic & Persian, Philosophy, Psychology, Medill & Modern History, Music & Performing Arts, Journalism and Mass communication, etc.

#### 5. METHODOLOGY

This survey includes all faculty members of Arts distributed to 83 respondents by hand. Faculty of Arts falls under the various departments such as Political Science, Hindi, Education, Physical Education, Urdu, Sanskrit, Arabic & Persian, Philosophy, Psychology, Medill & Modern History, Music & Performing Arts, Journalism and Mass communication, etc. at University of Allahabad, Allahabad, UP which comprises different departments and about 54 faculty members was selected. The questionnaires were distributed to the members who were present or free in their departmental office. 54 filled-in questionnaires were returned by the respondents with the overall response rate being 65%.

#### 6. DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

A total of 83 structured questionnaires were distributed among art faculty members at University of Allahabad, Allahabad. A Total of 54 questionnaires were received. All received sample questionnaires were analyzed statistically. The open-ended questions were analyzed using content analysis. The number of respondents (faculty members of Arts) who responded the dully filled questionnaires were 54 i.e. 65% (Table 1).

**Table 1 Responses from Art Faculty Members**

Name of the Department	Details Regarding the No. of Respondents		
	Distributed Questionnaires	Received Questionnaires	%
Dept. of Political Science	17	13	76
Dept. of Hindi	13	8	61
Dept. of Education	15	11	73
Dept. of Physical Education	7	5	71
Dept. of Urdu	2	1	50
Dept. of Sanskrit	2	1	50
Dept. of Journalism & Mass Communication	2	1	50
Dept. of Philosophy	2	-	-
Dept. of Psychology	2	1	50
Dept. of Medill & Modern History	2	1	50
Dept. of Music & Performing Arts	4	2	50
Dept. of Arabic & Persian	2	-	-
Dept. of Ancient History	3	1	33
Dept. of Geography	3	1	33
Total	83	54	65

### 6.1. Classified Data on Respondents

The analysis of data in Table 1 shows that out of 54 respondents, maximum numbers of respondents i.e. 19 representing 76% of total respondents are from the Dept. of Political Science. It is followed by other departments.

### 6.2. Method of Information Retrieving

The question was asked about the method used by respondents for retrieving information. Table 2 depicts that 85% of respondents consulted knowledgeable person in the field, 61% Internet surfing, 57% discussed with colleagues and 53% of faculties use Review articles to retrieve information.

**Table 2 Method of Information Retrieving by Art Faculties**

Method	Faculty Members	
	No. of Respondents	%
Consult a knowledgeable person in the field	46	85
Internet Surfing	33	61
Discussion with colleagues	31	57
Review articles	29	53
Library Catalogue	20	37
Abstracting journals	16	29
Seminar/ conferences	14	25
Indexing journals	14	25
Workshops	13	24

### 6.3. Purpose of Retrieving Habits

Table 3 exposes about the purpose of retrieving information by the respondents. Following table shows that 75% of faculty members sought information for preparing class lectures, 72% for keeping up-date knowledge, and 37% for guiding researchers.

**Table 3 Purpose for Information Retrieving of Art Faculties**

Purpose	Faculty Members	
	No. of Respondents	%
For preparing class lectures	41	75
For updating knowledge	39	72
For guiding researchers	20	37
Reference Collection	20	37
For writing and presenting paper	18	33
Social purpose	11	20

### 6.4. Type of Information

In Table 4, respondents were asked to indicate the type of information source which they used to retrieve information. On the basis of responses, text books are more popular source of information to retrieve information among 87% of faculty members of art.

**Table 4 Type of Information Source Used by Art Faculties**

Type of information sources/ Reading materials	Faculty Members	
	No. of Respondents	%
Textbooks	47	87
Periodicals	34	63
Newspapers	28	52
Exhibition	16	30
Government Publication	17	31
Reference books	35	65
Pamphlets	24	44
General books	26	48
Patents	29	54
Thesis/Research reports	39	72

### 6.5 Problems with Retrieving Information

The faculty members were asked to mention their problems faced while retrieving information. Table 5 shows that the majority of the respondents 81% of faculty members faced the major problems i.e. unavailability of materials. 72% of faculty members have other problems of shortage of journals in library.

**Table 5 Problems Faced by Art Faculties**

Problems	Faculty	
	No. of Respondents	%
Material is not available	44	81
Shortage of Journals	39	72
Incomplete information	29	54
Outdate material	27	50
Information scattered is too many sources	21	39
Library staff are unwilling for services	7	13
Lack of time	7	13
Do not know how to use the catalogue	--	--

### 6.6. Use of Internet

The art faculties at the University of Allahabad were asked about the use of the Internet. It is observed that the use of internet among all the respondents is very common. It is surveyed that 77% of art faculties use the internet daily for educational purpose in office. They also mentioned that they use e-mail frequently for communication.

### 6.7. Use of Internet Search Engines

The use of search engines is explored in Table 6. The following table depicts that 76% of art faculties use popular search engines especially Google, followed by yahoo 63% and so on.

**Table 6 Use of Search Engines by Art Faculties**

Search Engine	Research Scholars	
	No. of Respondents	%
Google.com	41	76
Yahoo.com	34	63
Opera.com	19	35
MSN.com	21	39
Rediff.com	21	39
AltaVista.com	13	24
Khoj.com	4	7
Any other	-	

## 6. CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

The study sought to examine the information retrieving habits of faculty members of art at University of Allahabad, Allahabad, by taking samples from all various departments under the faculty of Arts to get an overview of the information retrieving habits of faculties. The choice of collection should meet the need and requirements of the end users consequently, librarians must be aware of how the faculties retrieve information. The first three preferences given by faculties to retrieving information are text books, reference books and theses & research report. On the basis of the observation the majority of faculties i.e. 75% sought information for preparing class lectures, 72% for keeping up-date knowledge, and 37% for guiding research scholars.

In regard to information retrieving habits of University of Allahabad, Allahabad, UP, is recommended that library staff or reference librarians could use their time in a better way by focusing on assisting the users. Reference librarians should help users to improve their skills in information retrieving activities and to find the different types of information need. University library provide adequate ICT facilities for reference librarians, such as Internet, laser printers, scanners, fax machine, telephone, etc to offer various services in the library. Librarian should also assist users in e-learning, learning the use of websites available through the various networks. University's central library should have air-conditioned, properly

illuminated and ventilated that make libraries worth sitting and should free from dust. Reading room should be separate for faculties and other type of users, and it should be adjoining the stack area and have at least one attendant to take out the books and other reading materials from stack room.

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