



# Information Use Pattern of Selected Departments of Users in Periyar University, Salem, Tamilnadu, India

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**Abstract:** *Drastic technological development and effective networks, the habits of accessing information have drastically changed. Nowadays, Internet does our daily activities. Students are able to know the social networking sites (SNS) like Facebook, twitter, LinkedIn, YouTube, an also blogging sites such as blogger, Drupal, Live Journal and word press and so on. Therefore, this survey tries to focus the usage pattern and awareness on ICT and its resources available at Central Library. For the study, 130 respondents were participated and the results showed that 49 (37.69%) respondents were participated from Mathematics, LIS, Physics, and Commerce. The huge number of users was belonging to 21-25 age groups and 70 (53.85%) respondents were identified the female category among the departments of Chemistry, Education, Food Science, Bio-technology and others and 60 (46.15%) were male. 53.84 percent of users are interested to frequently use the 'Mozilla Firebox' and got ranked first and next rank got Google Chrome (30.76%). It was noted that 90.00% of users were using the digital library effectively for different academic purposes whereas only 10.00% of the remaining respondents are not using the digital library.*

**Keywords:** *Digital Library, Information seeking behaviour, user study, ISB, Periyar University, OPAC*

## INTRODUCTION

In the present scenario, Information is considered as multifaceted and multi-dimensional entity and it is an essential resource that contributes towards the development of a nation. Currently, Libraries, Information centers and research centers serve as a center for providing right information to the right people. Internet and networks have facilitated the library to change their method of services from traditional to internet based services. According to (Uttor Uttor, J., 1999) "information as data value in planning, decision making and evaluation of any programme. Further, information is data that have been subjected to some processing functions capable of answering user's query being recorded, summarized, or simply collected that would help decision making."

The 'information' and 'need' in 'information need' are an inseparable interconnection. Needs and interests call forth information (Wikipedia). According to Kuhlthau (Kuhlthau, C.C., 1993), "Information need is often understood in information science as evolving from a vague awareness of something missing and as culminating in locating information that contributes to understanding and meaning". According to ODLIS, information need is, "a gap in a person's knowledge which, when experienced at the conscious level as a question, gives rise to a search for an answer. If the need is urgent, the search may be pursued with diligence until the desire is fulfilled". Kakai et al. (Kakai, J.M, 2004) observed that, often students' information seeking behaviour involves active or purposeful information as a result of the need to complete course assignment, preparing for class discussions seminars, workshops, conferences, or write final year research papers.

### **Periyar University Profile**

By the government of Tamilnadu, Periyar University has been built on 17<sup>th</sup> September 1997. This university has accredited by NAAC and awarded a CGPA of 3.15 points. The university caters to affiliated colleges under the area comprising the districts of Salem, Namakkal, Dharmapuri and Krishnagiri. The University has 8 schools and 24 teaching and research programmes and 79 academic programmes are offered. Further, 86 colleges from four districts of Tamil Nadu are affiliated with the university, which includes 5 autonomous colleges, 65 colleges with PG departments and 45 colleges with research departments. More than 1, 35,000 students are studying in the affiliated colleges.

### **Profile of Periyar University Library**

This University Library was established in 1997. The collection of University Library contains 78, 580 volumes of text as well as rare books on various fields. The library subscribes 180 journals and magazines 13 newspapers for the benefit of library users, 3418 back volumes, 2661 theses and dissertations, 2455 CDs and DVDs and Audio Cassettes, 971 reports, ERIC and EBSCO Database respectively.

### **Literature Review**

Sinha (Sinha, MK. ,2015) studied the use pattern of Public Library Users of Barak Valley in South Assam. The results revealed that 47.0 percent of users belong to 16-25 years. It was observed that the maximum number of users (40.29%) was preferred to spend at least one hour in public library. More than 82 percent of users were satisfied in terms of resources by the public libraries. Nikam and Rashmi (Nikam, K. et al., 2015) carried out to know the availability and usage of Electronic Resources by the Academia of Speech and Hearing Discipline at the All India Institute of Speech and Hearing (AIISH), Mysore. It was found that the huge number of users under 21-25 years of age and noted Web Crawler were the frequently used Meta search engine during the study period. Velmurugan and Umamaheshwari (Velmurugan, C. et al., 2014) studied on knowledge management among library professionals in Sivagangai district. The study observed that 67.53% of user community were males and remaining were female. 66.23% of users knew what is knowledge management and 63.64 % of user community were interested in applying the notion of knowledge management. Hajam (Hajam, M A., 2015) reported the results of the users' observation about electronic resources. The results showed that the information about preferred format and sources of reading articles, characteristics that affect the choice of e-format over print or print over e-format.

Tyagi (Tyagi, S. 2014) has made an attempt to know the survey of use pattern at Pharmacopoeial Libraries in India. The objective of this study was to examine the various reasons by the scientists at pharmacopoeial libraries in India. The results showed that 78% of users perceived the ability to use computer for electronic information resources. Prakash; Shamrao and Rajkumar (Prakash, B. et al.,2014) conducted a survey on Library collection and other facilities of the Central University of Karnataka. It was found that 40% of research scholars visit the library for professional purpose. 43% of faculty visit library for academic purpose while very least percentage that is total of 2% users visit for recreation purpose. It was noted that 36% of the users visited the library 'almost daily', while 5% visited once a month and only one percent visited occasionally. Velmurugan and Umamaheshwari (Velmurugan, C. et al., 2015) investigated to identify the reading habits of users from one of the leading school in Chennai. The study covered only three classes from 8<sup>th</sup> to 10<sup>th</sup> to know the level of heading habits among them. The results indicated that 80.00% of respondents were students and 20.00% of respondents were teachers. 50.77% were male and the remaining was female. 75.38% of students were reading books whereas 41.54% of users were reading newspapers. Rhodes and Marks (Rhodes, B.B. et al., 2011) examined user study with face book during 2011. The results showed Facebook could be an effective tool for locating and contacting sample members and this kind of work could increase overall response rate to locate sample members towards demographic characteristics.

## Objectives

The study was an attempt to observe the utilisation of the library facilities by the common user community of Periyar University Central Library (PUCL), Salem. The study was conducted to achieve the following objectives.

1. To know various reasons and frequency of use of University Central Library, Salem.
2. To observe different kinds of library resources and services by the students and faculty members of PUCL.
3. To analysis the frequency and duration of library visit.
4. To investigate the awareness on the usage pattern of Internet by user society.
5. To explore the techniques adopted for browsing.
6. To find out the first choice of electronic resources.
7. To suggest different measures to be taken to improve and satisfy the academic and research society of PUCL.

## Material and Methods

Keeping in view of the objectives of the study, the required data was collected using well-structured questionnaire from the respondents. The target group is the selected university departments - Chemistry, Education, Food Science and Bio-technology and also other departments including Mathematics, Library and Information Science, Physics, and Commerce. In this context, a total of 150 well-designed questionnaires were distributed among the users and dully filled 130 questionnaires were returned at the rate of 86.66%. After that, the data was collected and computed with statistical tools along with mind mapping software used to present the results with better manner. After the analysis, some recommendations were provided to improve and provide the better amenities by the library during the period of study.

## Data Analysis and Discussion

Analysis of data is an essential step in the research process and it is the most important aspects leading to relevant results and provides better conclusion based on the findings.

### 1. Questionnaire Distribution

For data collection, out of 150 well-designed questionnaires, only 130 were filled and retuned at the rate of 86.66%. Further, the analysis was done using the data retrieved from the user community of Periyar University (Table 1).

**Table 1: Number of Respondents**

S. No	Questionnaire distributed	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Respondents	130	86.66
2	Not Respondents	20	13.33
Total		150	100

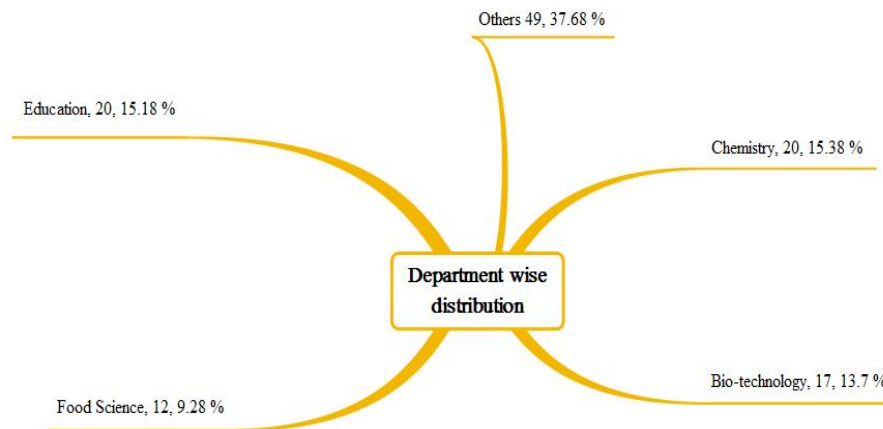
### 2. Department wise distribution

Table 2 represents that major proportion of 49 (37.69%) respondents were participated from Mathematics, Library and Information Science, Physics, and Commerce, followed by Chemistry and Education (each 20, 15.38%) and the least number of 12 (9.28%) respondents were participated from Food Science department. The results revealed that the most of users were from other departments and it shows they are much interested to involve in this study.

**Table 2: Department wise distribution**

S. No	Department	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Chemistry	20	15.38
2	Education	20	15.38
3	Food science	12	9.28
4	Bio-technology	17	13.07
5	Others	49	37.69
Total		130	100

Map.1: Department wise distribution



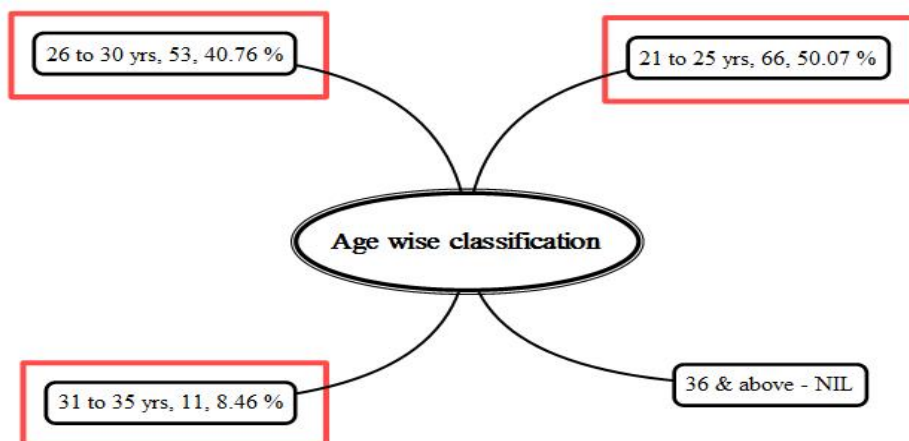
### 3. Kinds of Age group

Table 3 represents the age wise distribution of respondents and observed that majority of 66 (50.70%) respondents were in the age of 21-25, and followed by 53 (40.76%) respondents were under the age group of 26-30 years; whereas the least amount of 11 respondents were under the age group of 31-35 (8.46%). The result indicates that the huge number of users belonged to the first category i.e. 21-25 age groups.

**Table 3: Kinds of Age group**

S. No	Age group	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	21to 25yrs	66	50.70
2	26 to30 yrs	53	40.76
3	31to35 yrs	11	8.46
4	36 & above	0	0
Total		130	100

Map.2: Age wise distribution



**4. Gender wise classification**

Table 4 depicts that 70 (53.85%) of respondents was identified the female category among the departments of Chemistry, Education, Food Science, Bio-technology and others. The remaining of 60 (46.15%) were male. Based on the analysis, it was noted that most of the users were female and it seems that the female candidates were extremely attractive to involve in such type of research and filled the questionnaire with eager.

**Table 4: Gender wise classification**

S. No	Gender	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Male	60	46.15
2	Female	70	53.85
Total		130	100

**5. Library visit**

Table 5 represents respondent’s opinion on visiting the Central Library. It was found among 130 user community, 54 (41.54%) respondents were using the library every day and followed by 44 (33.85%) of the respondents using once week and the least amount of 13 (10.0%) respondents were found to use it irregularly.

**Table 5: Frequency of library visit**

S. No	Frequency	No of Respondents	Percentage
1	Every day	54	41.54
2	Once in a week	44	33.85
3	Once in a month	19	14.61
4	Occasionally	13	10
Total		130	100

**6. Frequency to E-Resources**

As electronic resources or online information or internet based sources are essential in the electronic environment. Table 6 shows that the massive number of 63 users were using the electronic materials every day whereas the least amount of (6) respondents were not using electronic resources which are available in the library.

**Table 6: Frequency to E-Resources**

S. No	Frequency	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Daily	63	48.46
2	Weekly to days	34	26.15
3	Once in a week	27	20.76
4	Never	6	4.61
Total		130	100

### 7. Knowledge of E- Resources

Table 7 represents the awareness of online information resources and found 83.08% of respondents being aware of the online information resources and the remaining 16.02% of respondents are still not aware about them.

**Table 7: Knowledge of E- Resources**

S. No	Opinion	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Yes	108	83.08
2	No	22	16.02
Total		130	100

### 8. Forms of Information

Table 8 indicates the various form wise information which are needed by the user community of Periyar University. It represents that 59.23% of respondents preferred to go for printed form of information whereas the other forms of information such as verbal, written, soft copy of information are very least important ones for them.

**Table 8: Forms of Information**

S. No	Forms of information	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Printed information	77	59.23
2	Verbal information	34	26.16
3	Written information	11	8.46
4	Soft copy of information	8	6.15
Total		130	100

### 9. Frequently used browser

Researcher asked the users what type of web browsers they frequently access for research and other purposes. The most essential web browsers such as Mozilla Firebox, Google Chrome, Internet Explorer, and many more used by them in the internet environment. Table 9 represents the frequently used web browsers used by the respondents. It is noted and identified that most of the users prefer to frequently use the 'Mozilla Firebox' (53.84%) and got ranked first and followed by Google Chrome (30.76%). It was examined that huge number of respondent preferred to browse the Mozilla Firebox.

**Table 9: Frequently used browser**

S. No	Browsing methods	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Mozilla Firebox	70	53.84
2	Google Chrome	40	30.76
3	Internet Explorer	18	13.84
4	Other	2	1.53
Total		130	100

### 10. Types of E-Resources

As there is huge amount of online resources available in the internet world, users are asked to identify and prefer what types of online sources are mostly used by them. Table 10 indicates the various kinds of online resources and the usage. Electronic journals or online based scholarly publications are mainly accessed (43.07%), followed by E-Book (29.23%), online database (12%) and the least number (20%) is attributed to CD-Rom.

**Table 10: Types of E-Resources**

S. No	Type of e-Resources	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	E-book	38	29.23
2	E-journal	56	43.07
3	Online database	12	9.23
4	CD-Rom	20	15.38
Total		130	100

### 11. Preferable Search Items

Required data was searched using Online Public Access Catalogue which is available at University Library of Periyar University. Users were asked to identify what type of Boolean search terms such as 'AND, OR, NOT' are preferred to select and identify the required information that they need. Table 11 represents the preferred search terms and the frequency of respondents. It was analysed that 36.15% of users preferred using 'subject' search item, followed by keywords (20.76%) and other items such as title (17.69%), author (13.84%), publisher (9.23%) and others (2.30%).

**Table 11: Preferable Search Items**

S. No	Search Items	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Author	18	13.84
2	Title	23	17.69
3	Subject	47	36.15
4	Key words	27	20.76
5	Publisher	12	9.23
6	Other	3	2.30
Total		130	100

### 12. Importance of E- resources

Table 12 shows that the various factors such as 'Essential', 'Somewhat important', 'Not important' and 'Not at all important' are identified. Majority of users (86.15%) indicate that electronic resources are essential and only 1.54% of users consider them as 'not at all important'.

**Table 12: Importance of E- resources**

S. No	Importance of E- resources	No of Respondents	Percentage
1	Essential	112	86.15
2	Somewhat important	11	8.47
3	Not important	5	3.84
4	Not at all important	2	1.54
Total		130	100

### 13. Types of File Format

Table 13 indicates the various types of file format which are used to download for academic oriented issues by the user society. It was observed that 57.69% of respondents preferred to download PDF file formats, followed by 28.46% of users preferring MS word format and other least preference was HTML (10.0%), and other files include only 3.84% for their download purpose.

**Table 13: Types of File Format**

S. No	Format types	No of Respondents	Percentage
1	PDF file	75	57.69
2	Ms word document	37	28.46
3	HTML file	13	10
4	Other files	5	3.84
Total		130	100

### 14. Purpose of using E-Resources

Table 14 examined the loads of reasons of visiting the Central Library by the respondents. It is analysed among 130 respondents, 67 (51.53%) respondents used the library for research work, followed by 40 (30.77%) users for subject learning and to write articles and conference papers for publication and 15.38% of respondents to update their current information to improve knowledge and only 2.30% of respondents are using it for their entertainment.

**Table 14: Purpose of using E-Resources**

S. No	Purpose	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	For Research work	67	51.53
2	For Subject Learning	40	30.77
3	To update current information	20	15.38
4	For entertainment	3	2.30
Total		130	100

### 15. Access to Internet

Table 15 depicts the different kinds of sources to access the internet by the respondents. To access the internet, 44.63% of user society preferred their department which is free and easy to use, followed by 41.53% of respondents preferring Central Library and only 5.38% of user society are using Internet cafés. It was seen that majority of users are using the internet in their department during the study.

**Table 15: Access to Internet**

S. No	Sources of information	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Central Library	54	41.53
2	Department	58	44.63
3	Internet café	7	5.38
4	Home	11	8.46
Total		130	100



### 16. Use of OPAC

Table 16 portrays the major proportion of 77 (59.23%) of respondents using the Online Catalogue effectively to find out print materials such as books, journals, reference collections, dictionaries and encyclopaedias and others which are available for their research; whereas, the remaining 53 (40.77%) users were not aware concerning using the OPAC.

**Table 16: Use of OPAC**

Sl. No	Use of OPAC	No of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Yes	77	59.23
2	No	53	40.77
Total		130	100

### 17. Utilization of Digital Library

Table 17 shows the analysis of utilisation of digital library among the scholars and identified that the huge number of 90.00% of respondents used the digital library effectively for different academic purposes whereas only 10.00% of the remaining respondents did not use properly.

**Table 17: Utilization of Digital Library**

Sl. No	Use of Digital Library	No of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Yes	117	90.00
2	No	13	10.00
Total		130	100

### 18. Reason of using Digital Library

Table 18 shows the frequency of reasons accessing Digital Library (DL) among the users and pointed out 49.23% of respondents used the digital library to collect online information resources, followed by 22.31% of respondents using to read online newspaper to enhance their general knowledge. Further, it is also noted that 9.23 percent of users for health oriented information and 4.62% of users used for sports related information and update their sports knowledge and only 3.07% of users for other purposes.

**Table 18: Purpose of using Digital Library**

Sl. No	Frequency	No of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1	To browse information for research	64	49.23
2	To read e- newspaper	15	11.54
3	For education	29	22.31
4	Related to health information	12	9.23
5	Related to sports information	6	4.62
6	Others	4	3.07
Total		130	100

### 19. Problems while using the Digital Library

Table 19 represents the various problems facing by the respondents while accessing online information resources. The problems such as lack of connectivity, slow speed, insufficient training, problems in downloading articles, lack of time and understanding regarding Digital Library online resources. It is identified among 130 user community, 42 (32.31%) respondents face with power connectivity while downloading research papers, followed by 36 (27.69%) respondents feeling insufficient training for library professionals and 25.38% of respondents indicating lack of speed in internet connection and 0.77% of respondent was not aware about online information which are available in the library.

**Table 19: Problems facing while using the Digital Library**

Sl. No	Problems	No of Respondents	Percentage (%)
1	Lack of connectivity	42	32.31
2	No speed	33	25.38
3	Insufficient training	36	27.69
4	Problems in downloading papers	11	8.47
5	Lack of time	7	5.38
6	Lack of awareness about Digital Library	1	0.77
Total		130	100

### 20. Level of Satisfaction

Researcher asked the respondents to indicate about the satisfaction level of providing library facility. Table 20 indicates the users' satisfaction level in terms of electronic information. It was explored that 60 (46.15%) respondents were fully satisfied, followed by 26.92 percent of users being partially satisfied and the least satisfaction found by few respondents. It shows the positive answer and good sign related to the level of satisfaction with resources and services.

**Table 20: Level of User Satisfaction**

S. No	User Satisfaction	No of Respondents	Percentage
1	Fully satisfied	60	46.15
2	Partially satisfied	35	26.92
3	Least satisfied	15	11.53
4	No comments	20	15.38
Total		130	100

### Findings of the study

The major findings are viewed based on the results and they are:

- ✎ Most of the user community (37.69%) participated from Mathematics, Library and Information Science, Physics, and Commerce departments.
- ✎ The huge number of respondents belonged to first category i.e. 21-25 age groups.
- ✎ It was found that 53.85% of respondents were identified from the female category among the departments of Chemistry, Education, Food Science, Bio-technology and others.

- ✎ It was analysed that 41.54% of respondents visit the library every day and the least amount of 13 (10.0%) respondents do it irregularly.
- ✎ It was noted that 'Mozilla Firebox' (53.84%) was preferred widely and got ranked first, followed by Google Chrome (30.76%).
- ✎ 36.15% of respondents preferred using 'subject' search item, followed by keywords (20.76%) of searches.
- ✎ 57.69% of respondents preferred to download PDF file formats, followed by 28.46% of users preferring MS word document file format.
- ✎ 44.63% of respondents preferred their department to get online information freely and easily, followed by 41.53% of respondents using Central Library and only 5.38% of user society are using Internet cafés.
- ✎ 59.23% of users use the Online Catalogue effectively to know about reading books, journals, reference collections, dictionaries and encyclopaedias.
- ✎ 90.00% of respondents use digital library effectively for different academic purposes whereas only 10.00% of the remaining respondents are not using the digital library.
- ✎ The greater part of 46.15% respondents were fully satisfied and the least satisfaction found by the only small number of 15 respondents.

### Suggestions

To facilitate better growth and provide better services for the benefit of user society, researcher got opinion and recommendations regarding the online information and services which are provided in the University Library. The following suggestions were noted and may be implemented with certain considerations for the users.

1. First, it was recommended that number of trained Library professionals should be increased to guide the students in their research works.
2. Second, it was noted that most of the users suggested that low speed of internet connectivity and huge number of students recommended making high speed network for communication with intranet.
3. Thirdly, it was identified that lack of subject wise journals and may start to subscribe more new Journals for all departments.
4. Finally, training programs for students at all levels is to be provided to know how to use the Digital Library and how to get online resources and also more user awareness program on utilization of online resources may be conducted at regular intervals.

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