

Comparative study of undergraduate information seeking behavior of English language and business management students in Adama Science and Technology University, Ethiopia

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Abstract: *The purpose of the study was to examine the information seeking behaviour of Business management and English language students Adama science and Technology University, Adama city of East Shoa zone of Oromiya region. To attain this objective, descriptive survey method were involved. The subjects of the study were from both Departments. Library observations, questionnaires and interviews were used to gather the necessary data. Data were analysed using both quantitative and qualitative methods. The results of the study showed that there is no statistically significance differences in resources used in information seeking with the exceptions of Journal Articles, Television and Discussion with colleagues. The result also clearly showed that students from both departments have positive preference toward the resources Internet, library book collections and handout. As far as the purpose of seeking information concerned the students of both Departments mainly seek information for updating knowledge, doing assignment and doing home works without any significance differences between. Among the factors that affect the information seeking behaviour were mode of teaching was the most serious problem that affects their information seeking behaviour without any significant differences between them. Moreover, lack of skill or knowledge in seeking information was also one their major hindrance that frequently affects their information seeking behaviour. In the meantime, lack of time were often affects their information seeking behaviour of Business management students. It is evident from the research findings that both Departments mostly use books, internet, and discussion with their colleagues, lecture note and handouts.*

Keywords: information and Information seeking behaviour

Introduction

Background of the study

Information plays pivotal role in the day to day existence of human life. It is very important in decision making, problem solving and in every aspect of an economy. Without information economy could not survive in todays world. For that reason, information is both the engine and the result of economic growth. Information became a key strategic issue for effective and sustainable development of any type of organization in the modern society (Tadesse and Bayou, 2000). Information seeking needs skills and time commitment to access the available resources. Regarding this, Aina, in Nkomo, Ocholla and Jacobs, (2011) suggested that information seeking

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behaviour depends on user education, access to a library, and the length of time devoted to seeking information by the user.

Statement of the problems

Information is essential resources required by the students to be successful in their education or in everyday activities. But there are various factors that affecting the information seeking behavior of students among these, lack of awareness in selecting available materials and resources in the library, the varieties of information resource found in the library might not meet effectively the enormous information needs.

Research questions

- What are the main resources used by the students in seeking information?
- To what extent do both department students were satisfied by the results obtained from their preferred resources?
- What is/ are the main problems that affect the information seeking behaviour.
- What is/are the purposes of seeking information by students?

Objective of the study

- To identify the resources used by the students during information seeking.
- To investigate the extent of information satisfaction levels of the students from their preferred resources.
- To classify the purpose for information seeking behaviour by students.
- To find out the major problem that affecting the information seeking behavior of the students.

Scope of the study

The scope of this study was to investigate and compare information seeking behavior of Business management and English language students in Adama Science and Technology University.

Significance of the study

Help to establish ways of improving the information seeking behavior of the students, motivate librarian and concerned bodies in the university library to provide complete sources to meet the enormous needs of the students, provide empirical evidence to University administration and it help as a source of reference to those who aspire to make further investigation in the area of related dimensions.

Research Design and Methodology

Descriptions of the Study Area

Adama Science and Technology University, formerly known as Nazareth Technical College; Nazareth College of Technical Teachers Education; and Adama University, is a university with branches in Adama town, Asella, and Debre Zeyit , Oromia Region, Ethiopia. The university has also a branch campus in Addis Ababa (Winget campus). Adama Science and Technology University is found in the city of Adama in Oromia region. It is located at 8°32'N 39°16'E 8.54°N 39.27°E at an elevation of 1712 meters, 99 km southeast of Addis Ababa. The university was established in 1993 as Nazareth Technical College, and was later renamed as Nazareth College

Comparative study of undergraduate information seeking behavior of English language of Technical Teacher Education, specializing in training technical teachers until 2003. Starting from 2011, the university is moving towards a new phase of transformation that is befitting to the country context.

Study Design

The method used to study the problem was descriptive survey method involving both quantitative and qualitative techniques. Sharma (2000) described that a descriptive survey is appropriate for the study of attitudes, opinions, preferences and practices of the subjects under investigation.

Population of the study

There are totally 889 Business Management and English language undergraduate students. Among these 539 are from Business Management Department and 350 are from English Language Department including from first year to third year students. The sample is 178 undergraduate students from both Departments (89 from English language and 89 from Business management) and 10 librarians.

Sampling techniques and Sample size

Because of the fact that, it is expensive and time consuming to include the whole population (889) in this study, proportional sampling technique was used to get a sample of 178 students from both Departments. The proportion was 89 students from English language Departments and 89 students from Business management Departments. Then, lottery methods of random sampling techniques was employed to choose an equal proportion of the students from each section to get the stated sample size of student from both Departments. According to Sandelowski (2000) investigated that the absolute size of a sample is much more important than its size relative to the population. Therefore the researcher acquired 20% sample size.

Data collection tools

In order to collect the required data for the study, the following three types of data collection tools were used: observations, questionnaires and interviews.

Methods of data analysis

The collected quantitative data was processed using SPSS software version 20.0; in that, descriptive statistics was used to put the result in the form of tables. Qualitative data was collected and the result of the finding of qualitative data was displayed in the form of narrations, explanations, concepts, and opinions.

Results and Discussion

Demographic characteristics of respondents

Demographic characteristics of student respondents showed 81(45.5%) were males and the remaining 97(54.5%) were females

Table 1: Resources used by the students when they seek information

Resources in seeking information	Department Respondents	Number(N)	Mean(M)	Std.	t-value	p-value
Internet	B	89	3.91	1.212	1.640	0.103
	E	89	3.64	0.968		
Library books	B	89	4.37	1.219	0.292	0.771
	E	89	4.43	1.347		
Discussion with Colleague	B	89	2.29	1.392	1.493*	0.002
	E	89	1.73	0.951		
Handout	B	89	3.72	1.314	0.956	
	E	89	3.51	1.645		0.340
Electronic resources	B	89	2.50	0.965	1.224	
	E	89	2.48	0.994		0.223
CD-ROM	B	89	2.35	0.885	0.828	
	E	89	2.24	0.935		0.409
Journal Articles	B	89	1.73	0.951	3.145*	
	E	89	2.29	1.392		0.002
Social networking sites	B	89	1.79	0.947	0.091	
	E	89	1.96	0.107		0.277
Seminar papers	B	89	1.49	0.788	0.262	
	E	89	1.52	0.934		0.794
Television	B	89	1.38	0.716	3.906*	0.000
	E	89	2.08	1.533		

The study shows that ($M > 3.5$) both departments regularly prefer internet, library book collections and handout as their major sources of getting information for academic tasks. Moreover, the mean values of English language students ($M \geq 2.5$) for one items of preference questions also shows that students have positive attitudes towards Electronic resources. Moreover, mean ($M < 2.5$) shows that both departments have no positive attitude towards the resources like discussion with colleagues, Social networking sites, CD-ROM databases, journal articles, seminar and television. The t-test result substantiate both departments have preference differences with respect to Journal Articles, Televisions and Discussion with colleagues.

The study clearly shows that ($M > 3.5$), both departments have helpful attitude towards the purpose of seeking information. They mainly sought information for updating knowledge, doing homework and assignments. But they do not believe that it is an effective tool for examination and to write term paper. Furthermore, the t-test result shows the groups have significant differences with respect to do assignments and write term or research papers.

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Table 2: Purpose for seeking information

Purpose of Information seeking	Department	Numbers	Mean(M)	Std. Deviation	t-value	p-value
To do home work	B	89	4.29	1.061	1.735	0.085
	E	89	3.97	1.385		
Update knowledge	B	89	4.30	0.897	1.008	0.315
	E	89	4.16	1.032		
To do assignments	B	89	4.64	0.772	2.458*	0.015
	E	89	4.30	1.038		
To write term paper or research paper	B	89	2.67	1.295	2.348*	0.020
	E	89	2.22	1.259		
To prepare for examination	B	89	2.66	1.123	0.361	0.718
	E	89	2.72	1.255		

Table 3: Factors affecting student's information seeking behavior

Factor affecting student's information seeking behavior	Department	Number	Mean	Std. Deviation	t-value	p-value
Lack of reading materials	B	89	2.09	1.007	1.451	0.149
	E	89	1.89	0.845		
Lack awareness of available resources	B	89	4.30	0.897	1.008	0.315
	E	89	4.16	1.032		
Slow internet connection	B	89	2.09	1.051	2.256*	0.025
	E	89	1.76	0.866		
Information resources far located from the library	B	89	2.71	1.625	0.731	0.466
	E	89	2.65	1.216		
Mode of teaching	E	89	4.64	0.772	2.458*	0.015
	B	89	4.30	1.30		
Lack of time	B	89	4.30	1.038	2.458*	0.015
	E	89	2.19	0.655		
Lack of computers	B	89	2.82	1.163	0.315	0.753
	E	89	2.76	1.216		
Lack of skill or knowledge in information seeking	B	89	4.29	1.06	1.73	0.085
	E	89	3.97	1.38		

Even though the t-test results for some of factors consistently show the existence of preference difference between the English language and Business management respondents with respect to Slow Internet connection, Mode of teaching and Lack of time. Data confirm that mode of teaching is the most serious problem that affects the information seeking behavior of both departments. The second problem that affects the information seeking behavior of business students was lack of time. Moreover, both departments commonly consider lack of knowledge or skill in information seeking as a significant problem which affects its track. The other impeding factors which are commonly considered by both groups were lack of computer and location sometimes affects the information seeking of in the university ground.

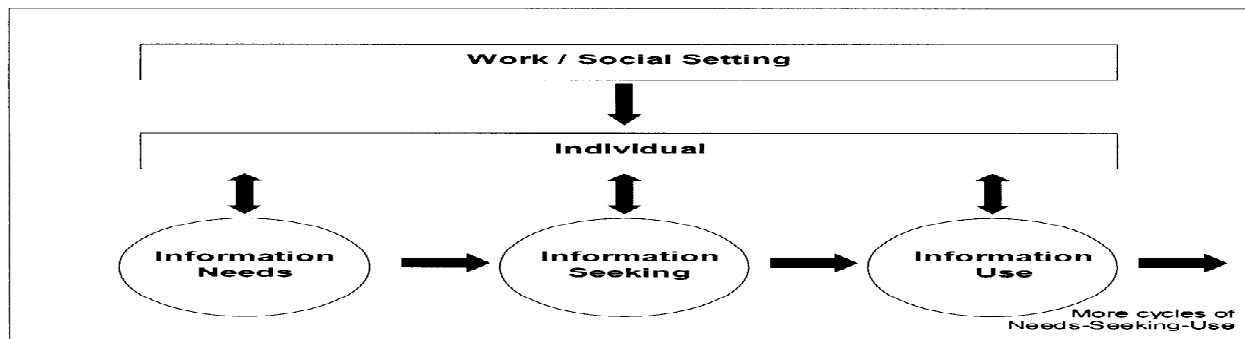
Table 4: Student's information satisfaction levels from preferred resources

S. No.	Resources Used	Department	Number (N)	Always		Often		Sometimes		Rarely		Never	
				N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%	N	%
1	Internet	B	89	57	64.1	32	35.9	-	-	-	-	-	-
		E	89	41	46	48	54	-	-	-	-	-	-
2	Library books	B	89	60	67.4	22	24.4	-	-	-	-	7	7.9
		E	89	44	49.4	32	36	-	-	-	-	13	14.6
3	Electronic resources	B	89	3	3.4	11	12.4	15	16.4	-	-	60	67.4
		E	89	-	-	-	-	-	-	52	58.5	37	41.5
4	Discussion with colleague	B	89	11	12.4	20	22.5	58	65.2	-	-	-	-
		E	89	27	30.3	20	22.5	42	47.2	-	-	-	-
5	lecture notes or handout	B	89	58	65.2	15	17.1	-	-	16	18	-	-
		E	89	57	65.2	24	27	7	7.9	-	-	-	-
6	CD-ROM	B	89	-	-	-	-	-	-	52	58.5	37	41.5
		E	89	-	-	-	-	-	-	61	68.6	28	32.4
7	E-Journal articles	B	89	-	-	-	-	-	-	78	87.6	11	12.4
		E	89	-	-	-	-	-	-	75	84.3	14	15.7
8	Social networking sites	B	89	3	3.4	11	12.4	15	16.4	-	-	60	67.4
		E	89	2	2.2	20	22.5	21	23.6	-	-	46	51.7
9	Television	B	89	-	-	-	-	6	6.2	16	18	67	75.3
		E	89	-	-	-	-	-	-	6	6.7	83	93.3

The analysis result clearly shows that a significant portion of students from both departments did not believe they have great satisfaction levels from the journal articles, CD-ROM, social networking sites and Televisions. However, the majority of respondents rated from both Departments were frequently satisfied with internet, library books services.

Model of Information seeking behavior

According to Brian Deltor (2003) formulated a general model of information use on how individuals need, seek and use information, which emphasizes key points from various information behavior theories.

**Figure1: General Model of Information Seeking**

Conclusions

From the above analysis, resources used in seeking information, it is evident that students from both departments seek information mainly from Internet, library books, handouts without any significant preference differences. However, the students from both departments differ in their information seeking behavior with respect to journal articles, discussion with colleagues and televisions. Majority of the respondents from both departments did not preferred different parts of journal articles, CD-ROM, seminar papers, electronic resources and television directly useful for their information needs. The majority (90%) of the respondents rated from both departments

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were frequently satisfied with the resources such as Internet, library books. The main purposes of information sought by the students of the two groups were to do assignment, homework and update knowledge but they differ with respects to doing Assignments as well as writing term / Research papers. The serious problem that affects the information seeking behavior of Business management students were lack of time and Modes of teaching. Both departments differ with respect to slow internet connection, modes of teaching, lack of time and skill in selecting resources.

Recommendations

The major resources, to seek information, frequently preferred by both group were Internet, library books and handouts. Therefore, there is a need to create awareness or formal trainings among the students in the uses of information resources like Journal Articles and Electronic resources for both Departments to ensure that they have the required knowledge and skills that would enable them to make maximum use of the available university resources. The university library or concerned bodies should provide formal trainings to the students and they should provide latest and updated educational materials/resources that are the least preferences by the students. The data confirm that Modes of teaching, slow Internet connection, lack of time and skill in seeking information were the main factors affected the information seeking behavior. Therefore, to avoid the University administration should provide better Internet connection, printing services at reasonable cost and instructors should informs their students latest and updated web address. This would serve as alternative to printing, Web searching resources which gain more time in seeking information. The university instructors should make more efforts to reach out their student's information seeking behavior to improve their Modes of teaching.

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