Information Needs and Information Seeking Behaviour of Faculty Members of University of Yangon: A Case Study

Khin San Oo*

Abstract

The present study has been undertaken to investigate the information channels used by arts faculty members in University of Yangon. The purpose of this study is to identify respondents' preferred methods of seeking information and the most important aspects of Information seeking behavior of the faculty members. The study adopted a description survey design and data was collected using a well-structured questionnaire administered to one hundred respondents selected from (10) faculties in the University of Yangon and (68) filled questionnaires were returned. It is revealed that the information seeking behavior of arts faculty members of University of Yangon is in favor of education, research and information literacy to enhance their information searching skills. Therefore, it analyses the information seeking behavior of the faculty members to meet the needs and the requirements of respondents. It is beneficial for faculty members, researchers and scholars to cater their information needs.

Key words: Information seeking behavior, Information Needs, Arts, information channels, University of Yangon.

1. Introduction

Information is a common word but its technical meanings are so important that our entire world depends on them. Information is as abundant as the world is vast, a variety of forms and accessed in different ways. Information plays a vital role in our society in everywhere, every time. Information makes a man able to accomplish his daily activities in an effective way and they want to develop their intelligent and keep abreast of time especially educated persons for the lifelong learning. Individuals are constantly interacting with information in one form or another in day to day activities.

Information need is often understood in information science as evolving from a vague awareness of something missing and as culmination in locating information that contributes to understanding and meaning information need is described as an anomalous state of knowledge or a gap in an individual's knowledge in sense making situation.[1] Information Seeking Behavilour is one of the important areas in information user studies. The motives and purpose of users give

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* Associate Professor, Department of Library and Information Studies, Yadanabon University

[1] Anil Kumar, Nasima Salmani, and Sukhleen Baweja, "Information Seeking Behaviour by the Research Scholars & Faculty Members: a Survey Study of Kuruksbetra University," *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science (IOSR-JHSS)* 19, no.6 (June 2014): 119-38, accessed February 2, 2022, www.iosrjournals.org.

information needs and requirements. To satisfy such needs and requirements, users adopt many ways and means of accessing and searching sources of information.[2]

1.1 Aim and Objectives of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to find out the information needs and information seeking behaviors of faculty members of University of Yangon. The objectives of the study are as follows:

1. To identify the aspects of information needs and information seeking behabiour of faculties in University of Yangon.
2. To analysis the kind of information used by faculty members for seeking information
3. To use of formal information resources
4. To explore the use of information technology
5. To identify what problems are faced/ encountered by faculty members in seeking information

1.2 Scope of the Study

This study analyzed information sources used by the arts faculty members of 10 departments. There departments cover Anthropology, Archaeology, English, Geography, History, Law, Library and Information Studies, Oriental Studies, Philosophy, and Psychology in University of Yangon. There are totally of 100 faculty members from University of Yangon consisting of 5 ranks such as   professor, Associate professor, lecturer, assistant lecturer and tutor.

1.3 Method of the Study

The study applied the descriptive survey research design. The questionnaires were distributed to 100 respondents for the purpose of collecting data analyzing, interpreting and using statistical techniques, descriptive tables, figures, counts and percentages being the statistical tool on which the analysis is mostly based.

1.4 Research Questions

Information is a very basic of human professional and personal everyday life. Every person needs information to work properly in their fields. Questions that provoked this study include:

1. What are the purposes of information seeking?
2. What are the types of formal information sources?
3. Which sources and channels are used for the current awareness?
4. What problems are faced by the faculty members while seeking information?
5. What is the most used search engines?

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[2] P. Balasubramanian, Dr. *Users and Uses of Library* (New Delhi: Deep & Deep, 2011), 30. (hereafter cited as Balasubramanian.)

1.5 Research Outcome

The research carried out to identify for information needs and information seeking behaviour. It is helpful for librarian and information specialist. The study provides research output of University of Yangon. The study indicates the purposes of information seeking, types of formal information sources, information channels used for the current awareness, problems faced while seeking information, and uses of search engines. The result of study is to find out how a user seeks his information. It helps the librarian authorities to organize their acquisition programmes effectively and to introduce appropriate services.

2.Literature Review

Review of related study helps the researcher to develop clarity and comprehension. The findings of the earlier studies would guide the researcher in setting the hypotheses and objectives and enable to evaluate the validity of the findings. Review of few selective and useful studies is given below:

Nirmal Singh and Mamta Rani explored the information seeking behaviour of faculty of Chitkara University. The faculty's purpose of seeking information, sources of information, preferred place of accessing information, use of search engines, etc. have been examined. The problems faced by faculty members in gathering information have also been discussed. The result found that around 98.82% faculty members use of the access information.[3]

Dr Rubina Bhatti studied information needs and information seeking behaviour of faculty members at the Islamia University of Bahawalpur. The study was to observe kind of information, use of sources and channels needed for teaching and research. It was found that most of the respondents 54% discussed with colleagues for seeking the information, 88% sought information for teaching purpose.[4]

Sk. Mamun Mostofa investigated information needs and seeking behavior of faculty members of Darul Ihsan University in Bangladesh. The study focused on how electronic information resources influenced the information seeking process. More than 39% of respondents contacted with expert person as their primary informal information channel. The rest 30.4% used

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[3] Nirmal Singh and Mamta Rani, "Information Seeking Behaviour of Faculty Chitkara University (Punjab): A Case Study, "*International Journal of Information Dissemination and Technology 3*, no. 2 (April-June 2013), accessed March 10, 2022, https://www.researchgate.net/profile/Mamta-Arora.

[4] Rubina Bhatti, "Information Needs and Information Seeking Behaviour of Faculty Members at the Islamia University of Bahawalpur," *Library Philosophy and Practice (e-journal)* (January 201): 341, accessed March 21, 2022, https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/libphilprac/314.

email and telephone to meet up-to-date information. The upshot of meeting the information needs can be mutually beneficial to both the faculty and to the students. [5]

3.Data Collection and Analysis

The data collected were carefully analyzed and processed. The analysis of collected data has been tabulated and in the present study results have been shown in the figures.

Information seeking behaviour by the faculty members are analyzed in this study. Questionnaires are distributed among (10) the Arts faculty of members of University of Yangon. This survey includes ten Arts Faculties of University of Yangon. Out of 100 questionnaires distributed, 68 are received back as complete and relevant for analysis. About 68% of the respondents comprised of female faculty 57 (90%) and remaining 6 (10%) comprised of male.

3. 1 Respondents' Position

The respondents were asked about their position what level they were placed at their faculty in the University of Yangon.
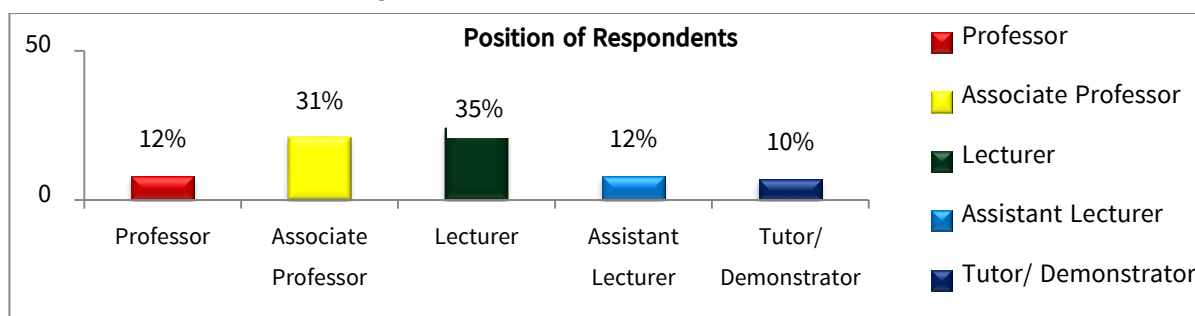

Figure 3.1 Positions of Respondents

Figure 3.1 shows the distribution of questionnaires to academic status of faculty members. Out of 68 respondents, and 24 (35%) were lecturers, which is followed by associate professors 21 (31%) and professors and assistant lecturers are the same 8 (12%), whereas 7 (10%) are tutors.

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[5] Sk. Mamun MostofaA, "Study of Information Needs and Seeking Behavior of Faculty Members of Darul Ihsan University in Bangladesh," *Library Philosophy and Practice (e-journal)* (October 2013): 983, accessed March 21, 2022, https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/libphilprac/983.

3. 2. Qualification of Respondents

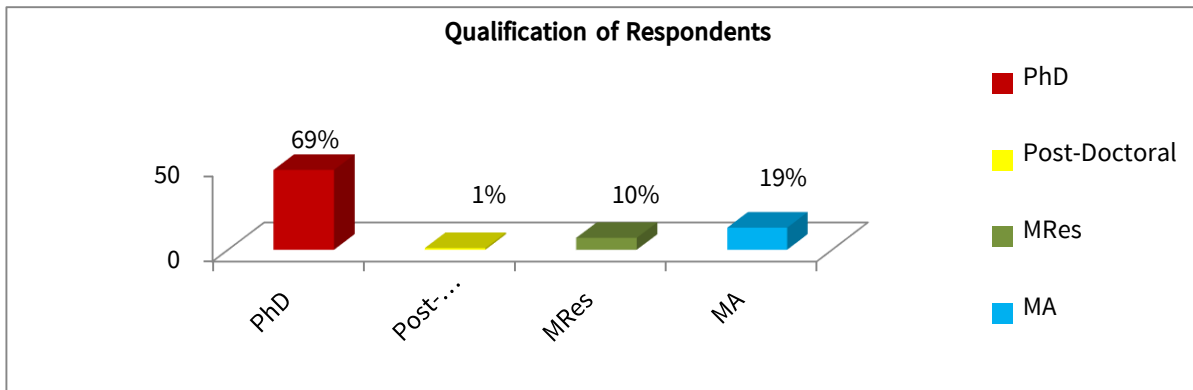Respondents were asked about their educational qualifications relate to their designation.

Figure 3. 2 Qualifications of Respondents

The results in figure 3.2 shows that of the 68 respondents, 47 (69 %) of the respondents were holding a PhD degree in concerned subjects and 13 (19 %) had MA degrees. 7 (10 %) were MRes in respective disciplines. And only Post-Doctoral of respondents was 1 (1%).

3.3 Professional Experience

Respondents were asked about their experience to know the professional experiences.
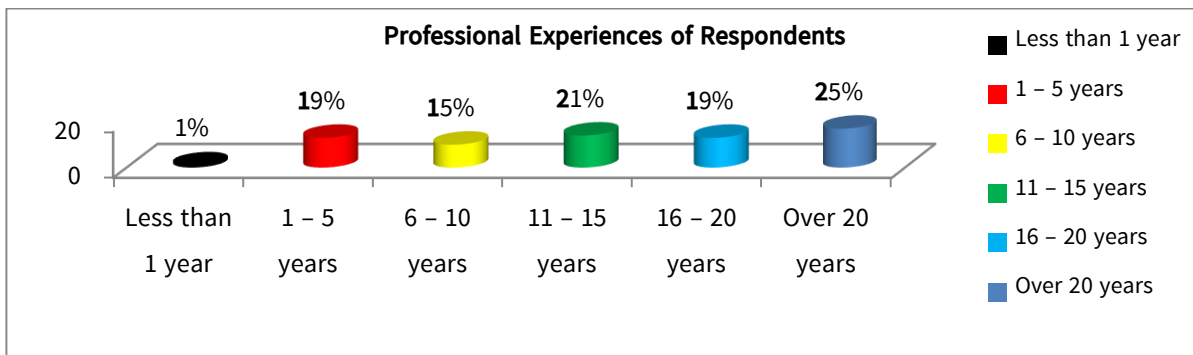
Figure 3.3 Professional Experiences of Respondents

As shown in the figure 3.3, respondents indicated the faculty members working at University of Yangon. Most of the respondents 17 (25%), have over 29 years of experience in teaching. 14 (21%) respondents had between 11-15 years of experience in teaching and 13 (19%) had 1-5 years and 16-20 years of experience.10 (15%) respondents had 6-10 years of teaching experience. Only one of faculty member is less than 1 year.

3.4 Visiting Library

Respondents were asked how often they visited the library. Information center are indispensable agency to support in the various activities.
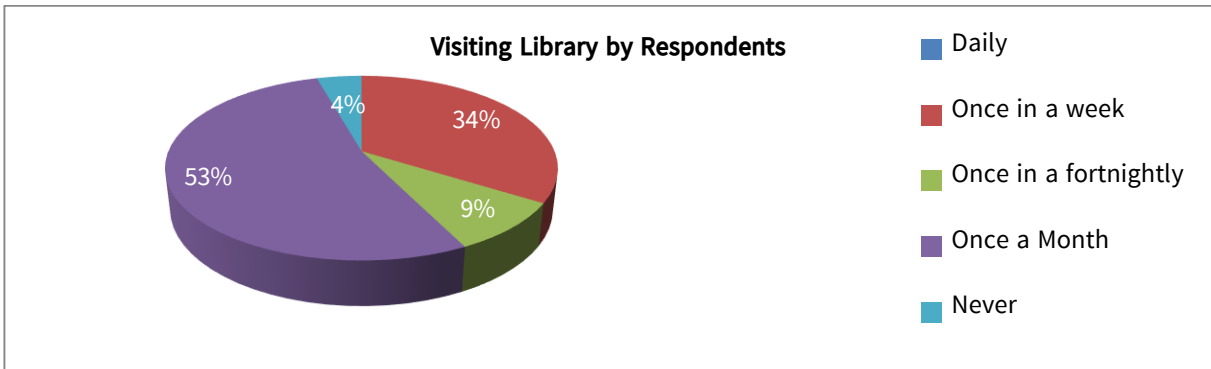

Figure 3.4 Frequency Visiting Library by Faculty Members

The frequency of library visits are shown in the figure 3.4 which indicates the majority of the respondents 36 (53%) visited the library once a month, which is followed by 23 (34%) respondents who visited the library once a week, whereas 6 (9%) visited the library once in a fortnight and 3 (4%) were never.

3.5 Purpose of Information Needs

The analysis shows that among the purposes, the main purpose of users was to use the information for research work shown the following figure. It is shown in the following figure.
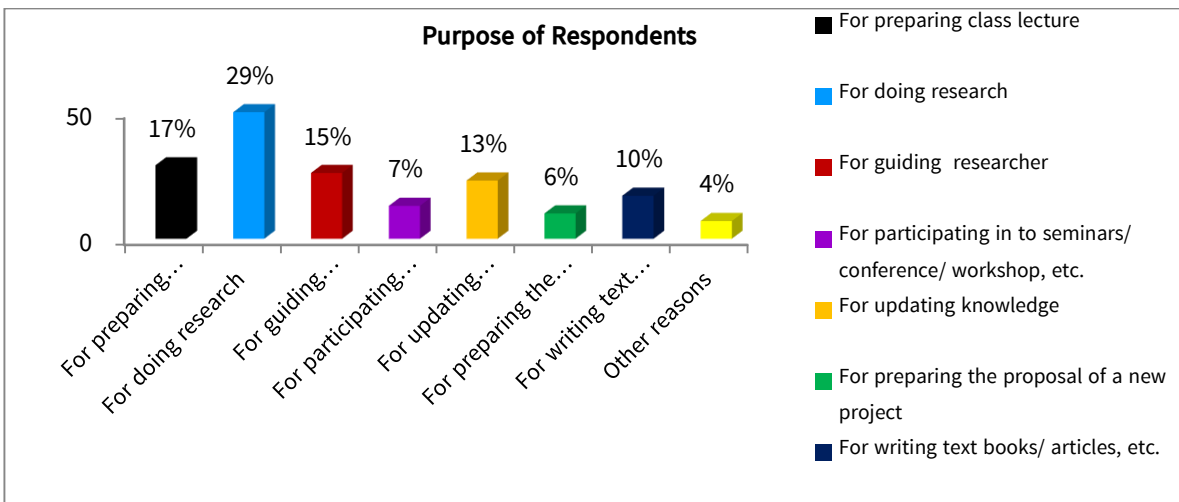

Figure 3.5 Respondents' Purposes of Information Needs

As can be seen in figure 3.5, respondents indicated the purpose of seeking information. A very high proportion of the respondents 50 (29%) seek information for doing research. 29 (17%) of the faculty members sought information for preparing class lecture, 26 (15%), for guiding researcher, 23 (13%), are for updating knowledge, 17 (10%) for writing text books/ articles, etc. 13 (7%) are for participating in seminars/ conference/ workshop, etc., 10 (6%) are for preparing the proposal of a new project, and 7 (4%) are for other reasons.

3.6 Preferred Languages

The language can communicate directly with reading materials to obtain their information needs shown in the following figure.
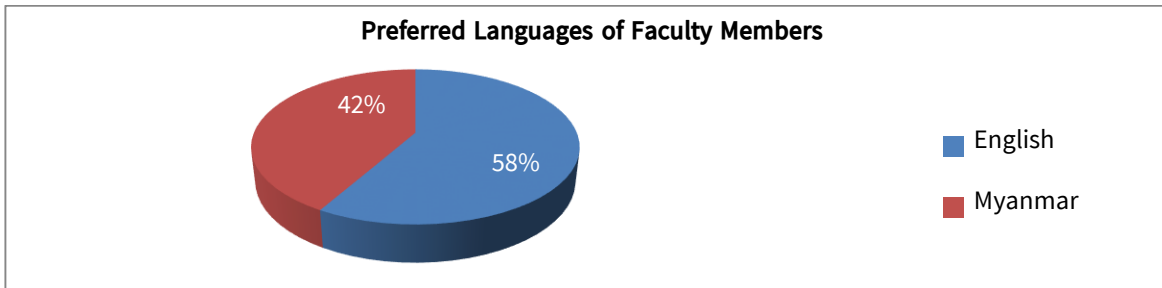

Figure 3.6 Preferred Languages of Faculty Members

It can be seen that 53 (58%) of the faculty members used English language and 38 (42%) utilized Myanmar language.

3.7 Types of Formal Information Sources

Faculty members were asked to indicate the types of formation sources which they used to seek information shown in figure 3.7.
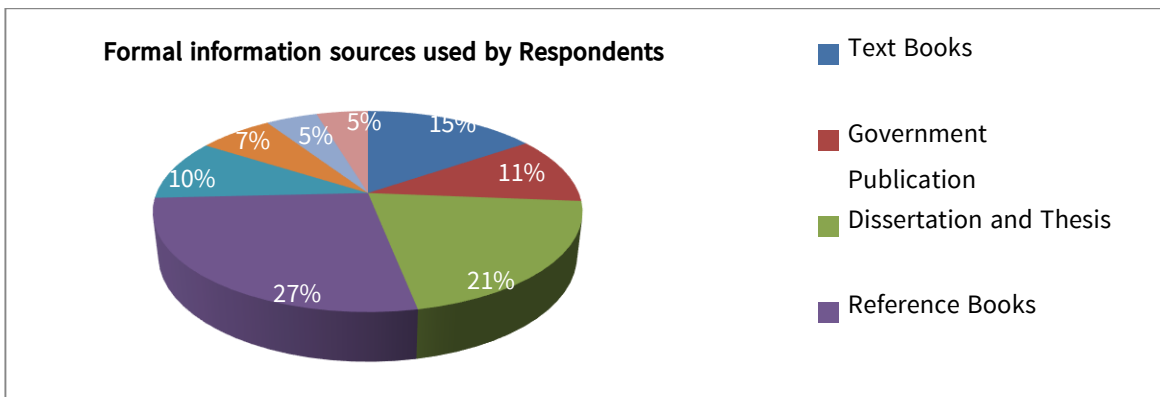

Figure 3.7 Types of Formal Information Sources Used by Respondents

As depicts in figure 3.7 that for seeking information, majority of the faculty members 53 (27%) seek information from reference books for meeting their needs. 40 (21%) used dissertations and theses, 30 (15%) studied text books. 21 (11%) studied government publications, 19 (10%) read newspaper, 13 (7%) browsed periodicals.

3.8 Current Awareness Literature

The uses of current awareness information by faculty members from anywhere are shown in the following figure.
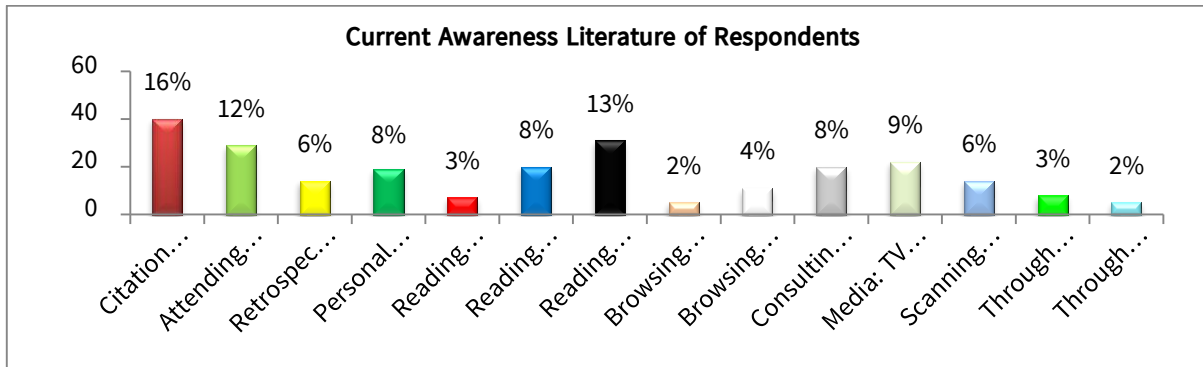

Figure 3.8 Use of Current Awareness Literature by Faculty Members

It observes from the analysis of figure 3.8 that most of the faculty members 40 (16%) frequently used of citation at the end of journal articles and book chapter. 31 (13%) respondents are reading latest books. 29 (12%) of respondents attended to professional conferences, seminars, and workshops. 22 (9%) used media like TV and radio. Each of personal communication, reading newspapers and consulting experts in subject field was 19 (8%) of respondents. 14 (6%) studied retrospective searching of indexing/ abstracting tools and scanning current issued of printed and electronic journals, 11 (4%) browsed publishers' catalogues, 8 (3%) communicated through email alerts and reading newsletters, 5 (2%) browsed shelves in bookshop and studied through current awareness services of libraries like CAS, SDI & content page service.

3.9 Problems with Seeking Information

The respondents were asked to mention the problems faced by faculty members while seeking information.
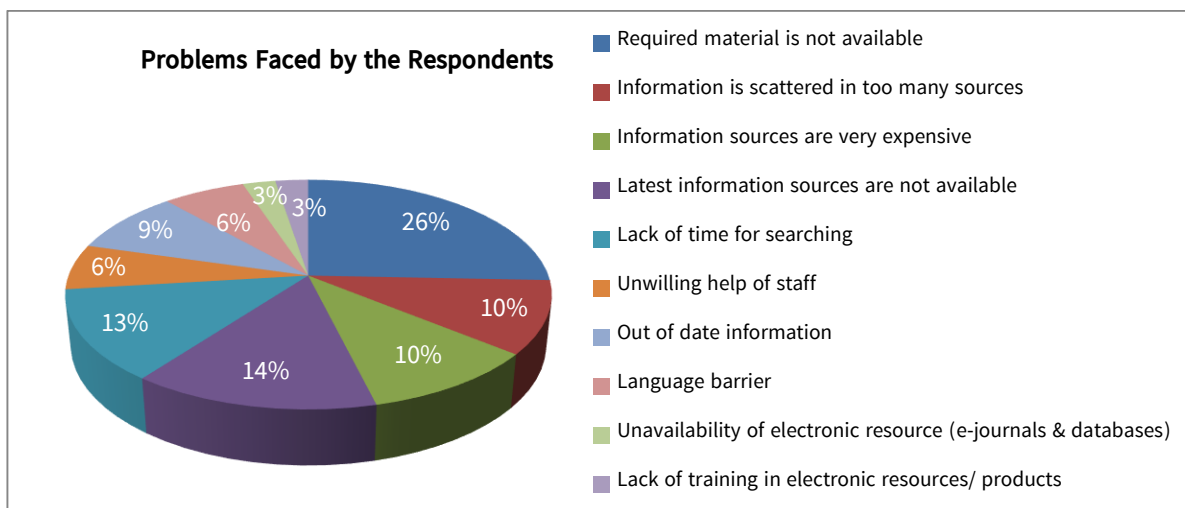

Figure 3.9 Problems Faced by the Respondents

In Figure 3.9, most of the respondents 20 (26%) faced major challenge that is not available required materials, followed by 11 (14%) are not available latest information sources; lack of time is the problem for 10 (13%) respondents, 8 (10%) of the respondents opined that both scattered information and very expensive sources of information are their problems, 7 (9%) of the respondents encountered that some of information are out of date, the problem for 5 (6%) of the respondents are similar to unwilling help of staff and language barrier, the problem for 2 (3%) are unavailability of electronic resources (e-journals & databases).

3.10 Use of Search Engines

In this survey, the use of respondents' rate of search engine from various kind of website is shown in the following figure.
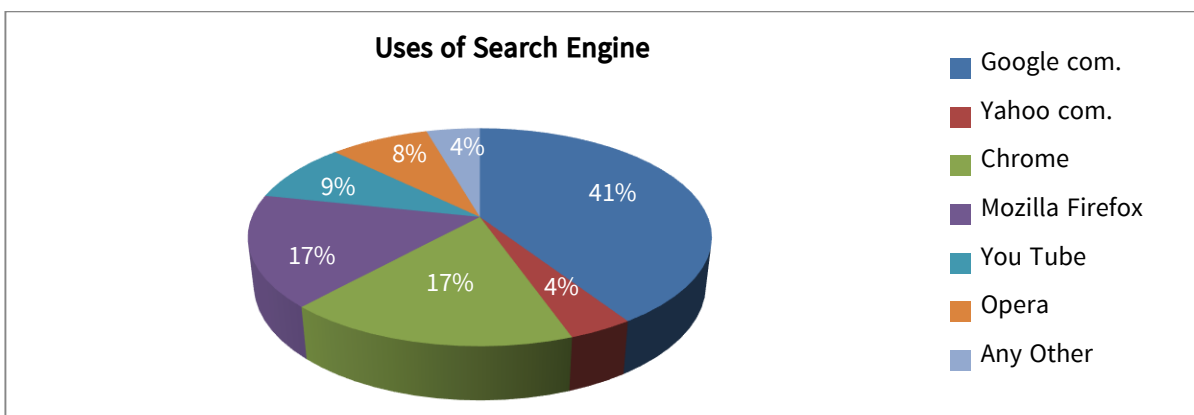

Figure 3.10 Uses of Search Engines by Faculty Members

It is apparent that figure 3.10 Google is the most widely used search engines for 64 (41%) respondents to access information. In addition 27 (17%) of respondents used chrome, 26 (17%) accessed Mozilla Firefox, followed by You Tube 14 (9%), Opera 13 (8%), and any other 7 (4%) for seeking information.

3.11 Purpose of the Using Internet

The faculty members state their purpose on using the internet according to the various needs shown in the following figure.
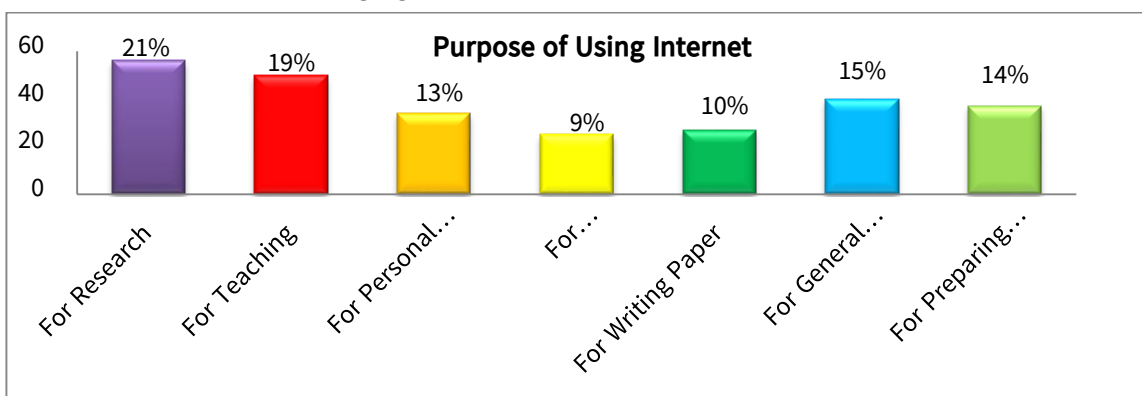

Figure 3.11 Purpose of Use of Internet by Faculty Members

It is apparent from figure 3.11 that the majority of the respondents 56 (21%) accessed internet to search the required information for the research, 50 (19%) used for teaching, 40 (15 %) used for general knowledge, 37 (14%) accessed the internet to prepare class lectures, 34 (13 %) accessed for personal interest, 27 (10%) applied for writing papers, and 25(9%) used the internet for entertainment.

3.12 Types of Electronic Resources

The ICTs have greatly influenced the information seeking behaviour of users. Electronic resources have provided wider access to information in Universities for teaching, learning, and research.
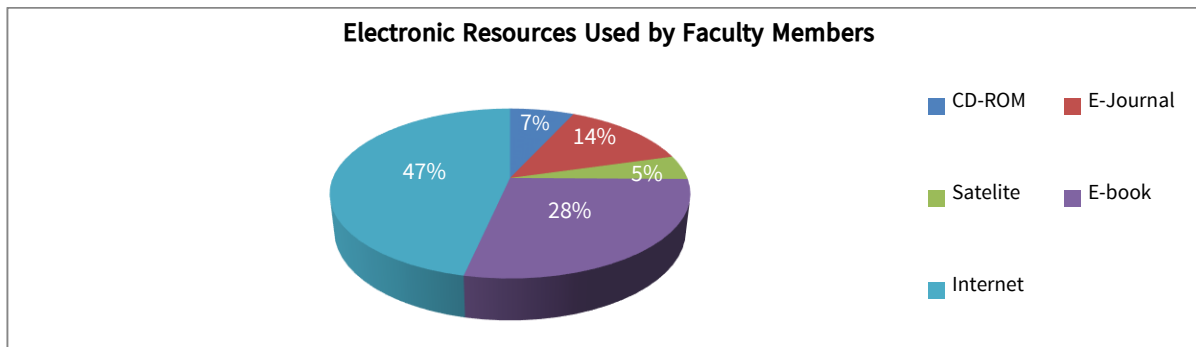

Figure 3.12 Types of Electronic Resources Used by Faculty Members

Figure 3.12 makes it clear that the majority of respondents 61 (47%) utilized the Internet to access information for various purposes. 37 (28%) of respondents used e-book. 18 (14%) of respondents used e-journal, 9 (7%) of respondents used CD-ROM, and 6 (5%) of respondents used Satellite.

4. Findings and Discussion

In the form of the paragraph it was found that most of 36 (53%) faculty members visited the library at least once a month. Majority of the respondents 53 (58%) pointed out English as their perfected language. Most of the respondents need the information more than one purpose. Majority of 50 (25%) are for doing research. The majority of the respondents 53 (27%) prefers reference books. The Google search engine is mostly used because it is fast in access, regularly updated and links are provided to web sites in the world. That almost all respondents use search engines, especially Google 64 (41%) as their first preference. Faculty Members accessed Internet 61 (47%) to a very large extent. This implies those faculties members of University of Yangon make use of electronic information resources to a very large extent in their academic work with own laptops or notebook or mobile phone.

So, some gave suggestions that they want to receive any formal training or orientation for using online information resources because the impact of Information and Communication

Technology (ICT) on information needs and seeking behavior plays a vital role of academic communication services. Computers and apparatuses should be fixed and used in library and departmental libraries. Faculty members should be encouraged to be skilful in ICT skill. In academic field, some faculty members are weak in ICT skill, but they have much knowledge because of professional experiences and studies. They can teach their subject fields well even though they don't know how to play computer.

Now Information is widely available online, academic members use the Internet daily. All arts faculty members of University of Yangon keep in mind that ICT has completely affected and changed their information seeking and gathering habits. The arts faculty members of University of Yangon the Internet used internet for required information from various kinds of websites. Based on the suggestion of the respondents, now the researcher wants university to provide adequate the Internet facilities and improve the electricity supply. Faculty members should have for request library visit and study time. As a result, University Libraries and departmental library should be enhanced with their communication and interpersonal skill to provide better services. There are various kinds of formal information sources which provided by the faculty members for easily accessible whatever they want at the right time. Therefore, librarians and departmental librarians should collect reference sources more than before.

5. Conclusion

The study investigated the information needs and Information seeking behavior of the Arts faculty members of University of Yangon. The study designs a modern library oriented educational system based on the need and demand of users. This is a part of research study. It was found that respondents used a variety of information sources for their required sources. The selected sources should meet the needs and requirements of the Arts faculty members.

This research shows that there is a place for developing a specialized service that provides information on arts faculty members and services. The findings of this research will definitely give an insight to the university administrators / university library staff about various aspects of the information seeking behavior of the arts faculty members of university of Yangon. This may help them to devise suitable plans in the direction of renovating the library to meet the demands of the present day of digital age whereas the study makes corrective decisions in time to assist the faculty members. Consequently, the main role of the librarian is to be familiar with the information requirements of the users.

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