

## **INFORMATION SEEKING BEHAVIOUR OF DENTISTS: A COMPARATIVE STUDY OF FACULTY MEMBERS AND POST GRADUATE STUDENTS OF DR. ZIAUDDIN AHMAD DENTAL COLLEGE, ALIGARH MUSLIM UNIVERSITY, ALIGARH, UTTAR PRADESH, INDIA**

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This study sought to examine and compare the Information seeking behaviour of faculty members and post graduate students of Dr. Ziauddin Ahmad Dental College, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh. The survey was conducted with the help of the structured questionnaire to collect the required data from the respondents. The findings of the study revealed that both the faculty members and post graduate students seek information through internet, mainly for updating their knowledge and prefer print version of the document. They are the daily user of online services whereas visit the library just as and when they needed. It has also been revealed that faculty members and P.G. students mostly consult indexing/abstracting journal to access their required document and are able to update themselves with the advance in their field at some extent. They are not fully satisfied with their library in terms of sources as well as staff behaviour, may be due to this reason they have mentioned unavailability of material as their major problem while seeking information and considered information seeking as a time consuming process.

**Keywords:** Information Seeking Behaviour, Information Sources, Online Services, Faculty Members, Postgraduate Students, Dentists

### **INTRODUCTION**

For socio-economic development, information is an indispensable resource and it is the information need that brings people into information seeking as it develops awareness of missing something and to find out that hidden meaning information seeking process is required (Kuhlthau, 1993). It is a conscious attempt to procure information in order to fulfill the need or bridging the gap in someone's knowledge (Case, 2002). The procedure of information seeking includes social, communicative and interactive behaviour which make it as a multifaceted process (Fourie, 2004). Information searching is not direct act rather it is a problem solving procedure that pass through problem recognition, problem articulation, source selection, query formulation, search execution, examination of

results, extraction of required information, and reflection (Marchionini, 1995). The information system in any subject field requires a user studies and the information providers such as library and information centre must be aware with their users' information need and information seeking behaviour so that they would be able to give upgraded services. The process of information seeking behaviour requires variety of sources and interaction with all kind of information system. It may vary from person to person due to their preferences, needs, environments, professions, etc. However, researches have been conducted on information seeking behaviour of different categories of individuals in numerous contexts but it is always been interesting to explore the information seeking behaviour of those persons who belongs to special profession as how their information needs and manner of searching is different from others. One such profession is dentistry which includes the treatment of the diseases related to teeth, mouth, jawbones & gums. The discipline of dental science has changed drastically all over the world. Even in India the teaching & training of dental health care are developing at fast pace and now dental surgeons, specialists are proficient in curing patient suffering from minor to serious oral diseases.

By taking into consideration the provision of quality dental care services the dentists need to be updated with different types of information useful in their professional carrier. The dental institutions and their respective libraries need to grasp the information need and information seeking behaviour of the users to provide better

services. Hence, in present study an attempt has been made to explore and compare the information seeking behaviour of faculty members and post graduate students of Dr. Ziauddin Ahmad Dental College, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh, Uttar Pradesh, India. The findings of this study will help understanding the different information retrieval methods of dental practitioners and to promote the optimum utilization of the information resources reside in the library.

### **REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE**

The literature review from 2007 to 2018, covering wide spectrum of articles on information needs, information seeking behaviour of various categories of information system users. Here, the major findings of some prominent studies are discussed on information seeking behaviour. Vandana et al. (2015) assessed the information seeking behaviour of faculty members of postgraduate dental institutions in South India and found Text books & Journal as their most preferred source while seeking their required information. Biswas et al. (2013) provided a picture of information seeking behaviour of the dentists in Indian metros and found that these dentists surf internet to acquire their required information as well as to keep themselves update. They preferred cited books as a source of information and their college library as a place of seeking information. Jeyshankar et al. (2009) studied the information seeking behaviour among dentists in Chennai, Tamil Nadu and investigated that majority of the respondents visit their respective institution's library almost daily.

Umesha and Chandrashekara (2013) studied the information seeking behaviour of dental practitioners in Karnataka and investigated that these practitioners highly depend upon the internet in acquiring their required information. There were found a mismatch between users' attitudes and the collection of the libraries in Karnataka. Mishra et al. (2015) studied the information need and seeking behaviour of the health science students of an Indian deemed university. It has been found that students consult the internet on daily basis to retrieve the information by using e-resources. E-journals and Text reference books are also cited by the students frequently. Singh and Satija (2008) examined the information seeking behaviour of agricultural scientists working in the Indian Council of Agriculture Research (ICAR) of Delhi, and Punjab Agricultural University, Ludhiana. It was revealed that agricultural scientists are highly depending upon their institutional library/information centre in order to satisfy their information needs.

Khan and Bhatti (2012) examined the information need and seeking behaviour of law faculty members in university of Peshawar as well as its affiliated law colleges and explored their preferences regarding various information sources, library usage pattern, channels, methods, satisfaction, problems encountered by them in information seeking process. The result showed the dissatisfaction of law faculty member with the provision of libraries in terms of sources, services and IT based facilities. Mahajan and Kumar (2017) investigated the information seeking behaviour of the journalist in north India.

Findings showed that most of the journalists visit the library for consulting reference book and satisfied with the library staff behaviour. They mostly use the newspaper library once a week and demand for its digitization. Kadir et al. (2018) evaluated the student's information needs and their information seeking behaviour in Private University Library by measuring user's information needs with information sources used, types of information, user awareness and user education provided by the SEGi University Library. The findings recommended that library needs to conduct training programs for better awareness regarding the usage of its resources and services. Buadi and Dzandza (2015) investigated the information seeking behaviour of traditional leaders in the Shai Osudoku District of Ghana and found that traditional leaders search information on the issues prevailing in their community as well as for their personal use. It has also been revealed that due to their low educational level traditional leaders face difficulties in practicing information technologies therefore they usually use informal sources in seeking information.

The review of literature on information needs, information seeking behaviour of various categories of users of information systems including students, medical practitioners, dental practitioners, law professional, agricultural scientists, journalists, and leader reveals a considerable part of the studies is based on the results of the questionnaire survey and interview method. Nevertheless, both interview and questionnaire survey studies are based on self-reported data. They are open to bias for the

researcher may prompt respondents to say a particular response. However, investigator found that no study has been carried out so far on comparison of faculty members and post graduate students of dental science field particularly of Aligarh dental college thus the present study is an attempt to fill this gap.

### AIMS AND OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The aim of the study is to assess and compare the information seeking behaviour of faculty members and post graduate students of Dr. Ziauddin Ahmad Dental College, A.M.U. Aligarh. The main objectives of the study are to :

1. find out the frequency of users' library visit;
2. identify the purpose of seeking information;
3. determine the use of information sources available in the library;
4. identify the different modes and methods adopted to access the documents;
5. trace out the use of online services and sources;
6. study the problem faced while seeking and using information; and
7. find out the users' level of satisfaction.

### METHODOLOGY

This study used a survey method due to the nature of information required. Dr. Ziauddin Ahmad Dental College is situated in Aligarh district of Uttar Pradesh. It is a constituent college of the Faculty of Medicine, Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh. After receiving a letter of intent from the Ministry of Health & Family Welfare, for the establishment it was started in the year 1996 (Dr. Ziauddin Ahmad Dental College, 2019). Apart from catering the dental needs of the population this college is liable to impart dental education to its students and provides basic facilities require for their overall developments. There are total 32 faculty members and 24 P.G. students in the Dr. Ziauddin Ahmad Dental College. The entire respondent i.e., 56 has been selected by the investigators. In order to collect data from the targeted population the structured questionnaire was designed and personally distributed by the investigators. The questionnaire was framed to take the users opinion on their pattern of seeking information. It consisted of total 20 close ended questions which were arranged in a definite order and style. The questions covered in the questionnaire were divided into the following headings: Personal details of the users; Frequency of visiting the library; Purpose of information seeking; Modes

**Table 1: Response rate of users**

| Type of uses    | Total population | Questionnaires distributed | Questionnaires received and analyzed |
|-----------------|------------------|----------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| Faculty Members | 32               | 32                         | 30 (93.75%)                          |
| P.G. Students   | 24               | 24                         | 20 (83.33%)                          |
| Total           | 56               | 56                         | 50 (89.26%)                          |

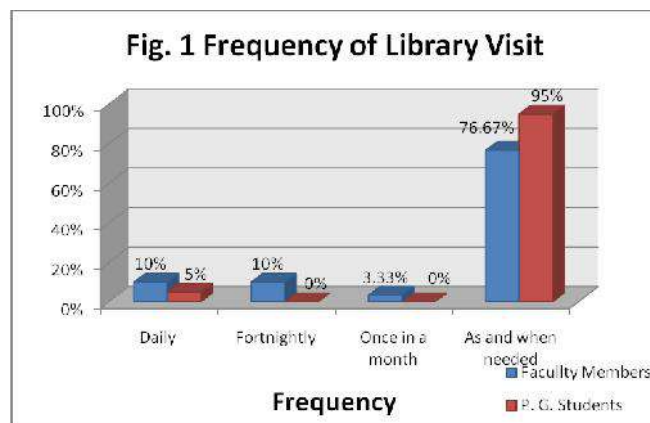
and methods adopted in seeking information; Use of online sources and service; Problems in seeking information; Level of satisfaction; Opinion regarding information seeking.

It is evident from the Table 1 that almost all the faculty members and P.G. students were equally interested in filling the questionnaires. For the analysis of data all the questionnaires have been selected by the investigator i.e., 50 out of 56 questionnaires, as they were filled adequately. The collected data through questionnaire are organized, tabulated and analysed with the help of tables, graphs and statistical methods.

## DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

### Frequency of Library Visit

The frequency of library visit is shown in Figure 1 and from the analysis it is observed that



### Information Resources for Seeking Information

In order to assess the varieties of the information resources consulted by the respondents for seeking information, the resources have been divided into two broad categories, i.e., Primary sources and Secondary sources, as shown in Table 2. The analysis of the table reveals that in terms of primary sources most

**Table 2: Information Resources for Seeking Information**

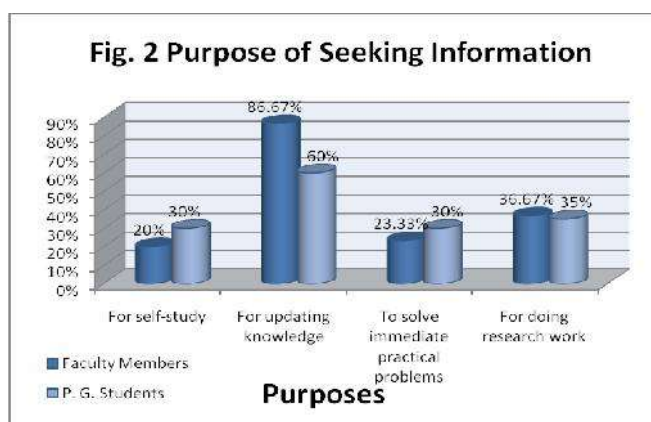
| Sl. No. | Resources                                  | Responses       |                | Total    |
|---------|--|-----------------|----------------|----------|
|         |  | Faculty Members | P. G. Students |          |
|         | Primary Sources                            |                 |                |          |
| 1       | Consult expertise                          | 9 (30%)         | 6 (30%)        | 15 (30%) |
| 2       | Discussion with colleagues                 | 16 (53.33%)     | 7 (35%)        | 23 (46%) |
| 3       | Discussion with reference staff of library | 1 (3.33%)       | 1 (5%)         | 2 (4%)   |
| 4       | Review articles                            | 19 (63.33%)     | 10 (50%)       | 29 (58%) |
| 5       | Books                                      | 24 (80%)        | 10 (50%)       | 34 (68%) |
| 6       | Periodicals                                | 18 (60%)        | 6 (30%)        |          |
| 7       | Thesis/Research reports                    | 7 (23.33%)      | 6 (30%)        | 13 (26%) |
| 8       | E-journals                                 | 18 (60%)        | 13 (65%)       | 31 (62%) |
| 9       | Seminar/Conference                         | 7 (23.33%)      | 5 (25%)        | 12 (24%) |
| 10      | Information center                         | 1 (3.33%)       | 1 (5%)         | 2 (4%)   |
|         | Secondary Sources                          |                 |                |          |
| 1       | Indexing/Abstracting journals              | 16 (53.33%)     | 8 (40%)        | 24 (48%) |
| 2       | Library catalogue                          | 2 (6.67%)       | -              | 2 (4%)   |
| 3       | Through internet                           | 24 (80%)        | 11 (55%)       | 35 (70%) |
| 4       | Reference materials                        | 18 (60%)        | 7 (35%)        | 25 (50%) |
| 5       | CD-ROM databases                           | 3 (10%)         | -              | 3 (6%)   |

(Multiple choices were permitted so the total percentage exceeds 100%).

of the faculty members consult books while P.G. students consult E-journals. As far as the secondary sources are concerned most of the faculty members and P.G. students seek information through internet. It has also been evident that none of the P.G. students consult CD-ROM databases and Library catalogue.

### Purpose of Seeking Information

From the analysis of the Figure 2, it is found that majority of the faculty members (86.67%) and P.G. students (60%) seek information for updating their knowledge whereas least number of faculty members (20%) seeks information for self-study, similarly, least number of P.G. students seeking information for self-study and to solve the immediate practical problems i.e., 30% respectively. Thus, it is clear from the analysis that most of the faculty members and P.G. students seek information for updating knowledge.



(Multiple choices were permitted so the total percentage exceeds 100%).

### Preference in Format of the Document (Print v/s Electronic)

The respondents were asked to indicate whether they prefer print or electronic format of the document and it has been observed from the

analysis that maximum number of the faculty members (80%) and P.G. students (75%) prefer documents in print format while the least number of the faculty members (3.33%) and P.G. students (10%) prefer audio visual materials. Thus, it is clear from the analysis that majority of the faculty members and P.G. students prefer document in print format.

### Use of Electronic/Online Services and Sources

In order to assess the use of electronic/online services and sources by faculty members and P.G. students, assessment have been classified into four different categories including frequency, purpose, access point and type of electronic sources as shown in the Table 3.

#### Frequency

The result revealed that maximum number of the faculty members (76.67%) use online services daily while its least number use at least once a week and once a fortnightly i.e., 6.67% respectively. Similarly, majority of the P.G. students (65%) use online services daily whereas its least number (5%) use at least once a fortnightly.

#### Purposes

The maximum number of the faculty members (90%) and P.G. students (65%) uses online services for updating their knowledge whereas the least number of the faculty members (6.67%) and P.G. students (10%) uses the online services for entertainment.

### Types of E-Resources

The maximum number of the faculty members (93.33%) and the P.G. students (85%) prefers E-journals to seek the information. In terms of using different online databases, the PubMed was found as the most preferable choice of the respondents.

### Access Point

The maximum number of the P.G. students (65%) avail the facility of online services from

Jawaharlal Nehru Medical College library. On the other hand the facility of online services is avail by the least number of the faculty members (23.33%) from Jawaharlal Nehru Medical College library. On the contrary maximum number of the faculty members (50%) while the least number of the P.G. students (25%) avail the facility from other sources. Additionally, both the faculty members and P.G. students don't avail the facility of online services from university library. Thus, from the above analysis it has been clear that most

**Table 3: Use of Electronic/Online Services and Sources**

| Sl. No. | Frequency                          | Responses       |                | Total    |
|---------|------------------------------------|-----------------|----------------|----------|
|         |                                    | Faculty Members | P. G. Students |          |
| 1       | Daily                              | 23 (76.67%)     | 13 (65%)       | 36 (72%) |
| 2       | At least once a week               | 2 (6.67%)       | 3 (15%)        | 5 (10%)  |
| 3       | At least once a fortnightly        | 2 (6.67%)       | 1 (5%)         | 3 (6%)   |
| 4       | At least once a month              | -               | -              | -        |
| 5       | Rarely                             | 3 (10%)         | 3 (15%)        | 6 (12%)  |
|         | <b>Purposes</b>                    |                 |                |          |
| 1       | Academic purpose                   | 6 (20%)         | 6 (30%)        | 12 (24%) |
| 2       | Updating knowledge                 | 27 (90%)        | 13 (65%)       | 40 (80%) |
| 3       | General awareness                  | 10 (33.33%)     | 8 (40%)        | 18 (36%) |
| 4       | Entertainment                      | 2 (6.67%)       | 2 (10%)        | 4 (8%)   |
|         | <b>Types of electronic sources</b> |                 |                |          |
| 1       | E-journals                         | 28 (93.33%)     | 17 (85%)       | 45 (90%) |
| 2       | E-books                            | 13 (43.33%)     | 12 (60%)       | 25 (50%) |
| 3       | Online databases                   | 13 (43.33%)     | 6 (30%)        | 19 (38%) |
|         | Pubmed                             | 27 (90%)        | 20 (100%)      | 47 (94%) |
|         | Medline                            | 24 (80%)        | 12 (60%)       | 36 (72%) |
|         | Science direct                     | 16 (53.33%)     | 9 (45%)        | 25 (50%) |
|         | J-gate                             | 10 (33.33%)     | 2 (10%)        | 12 (24%) |
|         | Ermed                              | 3 (10%)         | 1 (5%)         | 4 (8%)   |
|         | Open J-gate                        | 5 (16.67%)      | 2 (10%)        | 7 (14%)  |
|         | J-gate plus                        | -               | 3 (15%)        | 3 (6%)   |
| 4       | Search engines                     | 16 (53.33%)     | 13 (65%)       | 29 (58%) |
| 5       | Blogs                              | 2 (6.67%)       | 2 (10%)        | 4 (8%)   |
| 6       | Online forums                      | 3 (10%)         | 2 (10%)        | 5 (10%)  |
|         | <b>Access point</b>                |                 |                |          |
| 1       | University library                 | -               | -              | -        |
| 2       | JNMC library                       | 7 (23.33%)      | 13 (65%)       | 20 (40%) |
| 3       | Seminar library                    | 8 (26.67%)      | 12 (60%)       | 20 (40%) |
| 4       | Other                              | 15 (50%)        | 5 (25%)        | 20 (40%) |

(Multiple choices were permitted so the total percentage exceeds 100%).

of the faculty members and P.G. students use online services daily for updating knowledge and prefer E-journals to seek the information. Most of the P.G. students avail the facility of online services from JNMC library while most of the faculty members avail from other sources but they both don't prefer university library for accessing the online services.

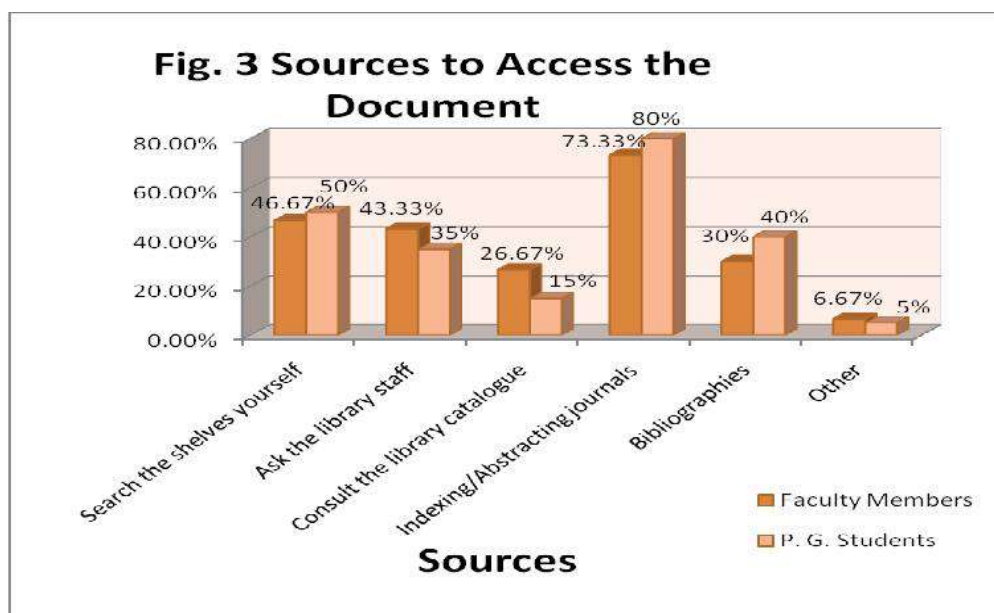
### Method of Searching Document

To know the method for searching the document with in the library, the searching methods have been classified into four categories i.e., by author, by subject, by title and others. The analysis shows that maximum number of the faculty members (83.33%) search the document by title whereas it's least number search the document by author and subject i.e., 36.67% respectively. Similarly, majority of the P.G. students (80%) search the document by title whereas it's least number (25%) search the

document by author. The analysis further reveals that both the faculty members and P. G. students don't use any other method in searching the document. Thus, it is evident from the above analysis that most of the faculty members and P.G. students search the document by title.

### Sources to Access the Documents

The investigators asked the respondents to make clear which source they use to locate the documents and it is observed from the analysis of Figure 3 that majority of the faculty members (73.33%) and P.G. students (80%) use indexing/abstracting journals to get access to the documents whereas the least number of the faculty members (6.67%) and P.G. students (5%) use other tools. The analysis clearly indicates that majority of the faculty members and P.G. students use indexing/abstracting journals to get access to the documents.



(Multiple choices were permitted so the total percentage exceeds 100%).

### Problems While Seeking Information

The respondents were asked to reveal the various problems they face while seeking information and result of Table 4 shows that maximum number of the faculty members (70%) face problem due to the unavailability of material while its least number i.e., 3.33% face problem due to the unwillingness of library staff for giving

service and 3.33% have some other problems. Similarly, maximum number of the P.G. students (75%) face problem due to the unavailability of material whereas its least number have not the skills of using catalogue and library i.e., 5% respectively. It is evident from the above analysis that most of the faculty members and P.G. students face problem while seeking information due to the unavailability of material.

**Table 4: Problems While Seeking Information**

| Sl. No. | Problems                                  | Responses       |                | Total    |
|---------|---|-----------------|----------------|----------|
|         |   | Faculty Members | P. G. Students |          |
| 1       | Material is not available                 | 21 (70%)        | 15 (75%)       | 36 (72%) |
| 2       | Library staffs are unwilling for service  | 1 (3.33%)       | -              | 1 (2%)   |
| 3       | Incomplete information materials          | 15 (50%)        | 8 (40%)        | 23 (46%) |
| 4       | Information sources are so far located    | 3 (10%)         | 3 (15%)        | 6 (12%)  |
| 5       | Lack of time                              | 7 (23.33%)      | 2 (10%)        | 9 (18%)  |
| 6       | Do not know how to use the catalogue      | -               | 1 (5%)         | 1 (2%)   |
| 7       | Lack of library usage skills              | 3 (10%)         | 1 (5%)         | 4 (8%)   |
| 8       | Language barrier                          | -               | -              | -        |
| 9       | Information scattered in too many sources | 9 (30%)         | 3 (15%)        | 12 (24%) |
| 10      | Some of information material are old      | 3 (10%)         | 2 (10%)        | 5 (10%)  |
| 11      | Other                                     | 1 (3.33%)       | 2 (10%)        | 3 (6%)   |

*(Multiple choices were permitted so the total percentage exceeds 100)*

### Satisfaction Level with Staff and Collection of the Library

The Table 5 shows the satisfaction level of the respondent with staff and overall collection available in the library and it has been observed that maximum number of the faculty members (40%) is neutral while majority of the P.G. students (55%) are less satisfied with the overall collection available in the library. Both faculty members (46.67%) and P.G. students (40%) rated normal/average behaviour of library staff.

### Extent of Updating with the Advance in Field

The respondents were asked about their extent of updating with the advance in field and it has been observed from the analysis that maximum number of the faculty members (53.33%) and P.G. students (55%) are able to update themselves to some extent whereas least number of faculty members (6.67%) and P.G. students (10%) mentioned that they are able to update themselves to a very great extent. The analysis reveals that majority of faculty members

**Table 5: Satisfaction Level with Staff and Collection of the Library**

| Sl. No. | Satisfaction regarding Collection of the Library | Responses       |                | Total    |
|---------|--|-----------------|----------------|----------|
|         |  | Faculty Members | P. G. Students |          |
| 1       | Very much satisfied                              | -               | 1 (5%)         | 1 (2%)   |
| 2       | Satisfied  | 8 (26.67%)      | 2 (10%)        | 10 (20%) |
| 3       | Neutral  | 12 (40%)        | 3 (15%)        | 15 (30%) |
| 4       | Less satisfied                                   | 7 (23.33%)      | 11 (55%)       | 18 (36%) |
| 5       | Dissatisfied                                     | 3 (10%)         | 3 (15%)        | 6 (12%)  |
|         | <b>Satisfaction regarding Library Staff</b>      |                 |                |          |
| 1       | Very helpful                                     | 5 (16.67%)      | 5 (25%)        | 10 (20%) |
| 2       | Helpful  | 10 (33.33%)     | 4 (20%)        | 14 (28%) |
| 3       | Normal/Average                                   | 14 (46.67%)     | 8 (40%)        | 22 (44%) |
| 4       | Unhelpful  | 1 (3.33%)       | 3 (15%)        | 4 (8%)   |

and P.G. students mentioned that they are able to keep themselves update with the advances in their field to some extent.

### **Information Seeking is a Time Consuming**

The respondents were asked to indicate that whether they believe information seeking is a time-consuming process or not and it has been clear from the analysis that maximum number of the faculty members (63.33%) and P. G. students (75%) believe that information seeking is a time-consuming process while the least number of faculty members (36.67%) and P.G. students (25%) believe that information seeking is not a time-consuming process. Thus, it is found from the analysis that both the faculty members and P. G. students believe that information seeking is a time-consuming process.

## **DISCUSSIONS**

From the analysis of the above table and figures some of the important aspects of information seeking behaviour of dentists have

been explored. It is observed from the analysis that most of the respondent (faculty members and P.G. students) visit library as and when they needed. On the contrary Jeyshankar et al., 2009; Mishra et al., 2015 found that majority of their respondents visit their respective institution's library almost daily. The analysis also clearly indicates that majority of the faculty members and P.G. students use indexing/abstracting journals to get access to the documents. In a contrast Mishra et al., 2015 revealed that their respondents meet their information by browsing library shelves. In addition, it is also evident from the above analysis that most of the faculty members and P.G. students face problem while seeking information due to the unavailability of material. However, Mishra et al., 2015 found that lack of time is a great barrier in seeking information. So, it can be said that frequency of visiting the library and sources to access the document may completely depend upon the choice of the users which may vary from one person to another. Apart from this the barriers

that users face while seeking information are also different from one another as these problems completely depend upon their demand as well as situation. Furthermore, it has been noted that both the faculty members and post graduate students seek information through internet mainly, for updating their knowledge. Similarly, Biswas et al., 2013; Umesha and Chandrashekara, 2013; Hanna, et al., 2017 received high response towards regular usage of internet by dental practitioners.

Thus, it is evident that for everyday information requirement like any other professionals the dentists also highly depend upon internet because of its convenient and time saving nature. It has also been revealed that respondents prefer print version of the document this finding is completely in line with the findings of previous study Botello-Harbaum, et al., 2013 which discovered that even in this modern technology world the dental practitioners rely on traditional printed version documents may be due to its authenticity. Additionally, most of the respondents are the daily users of online services, whereas the study of Selvi and Ozerkan, 2002 found that the dental practitioners don't use such online services frequently as they have very low interest in the usage of electronic or computer information services which indicates that it's not necessary that all the dental practitioners prefers online services there are some who still depend upon the traditional methods of seeking information.

### CONCLUSION

The information seeking behaviour has become the most important part of modern society. Hence, this study sought to examine the

Information seeking behaviour of faculty members and post graduate students of a dental college. It has revealed from that both the faculty members and post graduate students seek information through internet, mainly for updating their knowledge and prefer print version of the document. Additionally, they are the daily user of online services whereas visit the library just as and when they needed. It has also been revealed that faculty members and P.G. students mostly consult indexing/abstracting journal to access their required document and are able to update themselves with the advance in their field at some extent. Subsequently, it has been found that the respondents are not fully satisfied with their library in terms of sources as well as staff behaviour, may be due to this reason they have mentioned unavailability of material as their major problem while seeking information and considered information seeking as a time-consuming process.

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