



Information Consumption Behaviour of School Students: a case study of Patrasayer block secondary and higher secondary schools at Bankura district in West Bengal

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Abstract

This paper focuses on the information consumption behaviour of school students in the Patrasayer block of the Bankura district in the state of West Bengal, India. The purpose of the study is to help the school students who use school libraries and other libraries by assessing how far they are satisfied using their school library and other libraries. For this study, 380 students were taken as a sample from nineteen secondary and higher secondary schools from the block. The methodology includes data collection and data analysis. A structured questionnaire has been provided to all 380 students of those nineteen schools. There, lots of parameters have been studied and critically analysed to assess the information use pattern of the school students. It is found that a lot of indicative results on different parameters set for the data analysis. The major finding is 1. 98.15% of students preferred the Bengali language; 45% of students visit the library once a week; 43.94% of students are getting their resources and articles for higher studies from the Internet. This type of information is available in the school library and other libraries, but 14.21% of students visit their library to access this information. A library has an important role for school students and the young generation. It is the school library that inculcates reading habits and motivates students to find out the appropriate ways to access information and knowledge to satisfy different needs in the future.

Keywords: Indian school, Information consumption behaviour, Information seeking behaviour, Information use pattern, Patrasayer block, Reading habits, School library

1. Introduction

At present, information is a vital component in every academic institution. A school library serves as the heart of academic and intellectual life within an educational institution. It is a hub of knowledge, offering a diverse collection of books, resources, and technologies to support students' learning and development. Beyond being a repository of information, a school library is a dynamic

space where students engage in independent research, collaborative projects, and exploration of diverse topics. It plays a pivotal role in promoting literacy, critical thinking, and digital skills while fostering a culture of curiosity and lifelong learning. With guidance from knowledgeable librarians, school libraries empower students to navigate the vast sea of information, evaluate sources critically, and become informed, engaged citizens in an increasingly complex world.



Keeping in view the vital role of school library, this study deals with students of secondary and high secondary schools of Patrayar block in the Bankura district.

2. Review of related literature

Sinha (2015) studied the use pattern of public library users of Barak Valley in South Assam. The results revealed that 47% of users are 16-25 years old. It was observed that the maximum number of users (40.29%) preferred to spend at least one hour in the public library. More than 82 percent of users were satisfied in terms of resources by the public libraries. Chakraborty, Tamang and Biswas (2023) also identified that the most preferred resources of study in public libraries in Mirik subdivision were books that were used for educational purposes. Kamba (2017) investigated the information use patterns of school teachers in rural areas of Nigeria. Its objectives were to identify the type of information sources and resources used for teacher's teaching and learning. He found that the most popular resource in his study is books. He recommended that more awareness be needed to increase the library usage. Mahajan (2011) highlighted the status of a public library in Chandigarh and pointed out its collection and services being provided. The study analysed the information user pattern and the satisfaction of the users in terms of its collection and services. It also provided some valuable suggestions. Vijayalaxmi (2001) conducted a study on university libraries that described different aspects such as - types of information required, purpose/s of using information, methods used for keeping up-to-date, awareness, use and usefulness of information sources, information searching undertaken and the methods used for searching, use, etc. of Gulbarga University, Gulbarga. They concluded that there was a need for information education for post-graduate

students in the university. Doraswamy (2013) conducted a study to provide information about the role of libraries in the information needs of students in his research paper. The main aim of his paper was to survey to evaluate the role of the library in the information needs of the students in engineering colleges. The results showed the students need ready information for their examinations, the core information for their knowledge purposes, and standard information for their research purposes. Selvaraj and Rathinasabapathy (2014) studied for information usage that a part of library professionals from the twentieth century. The purpose of the study was to identify the effective usage of information resources.

3. Objectives of study

In general, the purpose of the study is to study the school students who use the school library and other libraries. The specific purposes are stated below:

- i. To identify how the students come to know about their relevant information
- ii. To identify the users' satisfaction with library services
- iii. To identify the frequency of users' library visits
- iv. To identify those libraries or other sources that are visited frequently by the students other than their school libraries
- v. To identify how the readers get advanced information and/or resources on their subjects that are not locally available
- vi. To identify the readers' suggestions about the betterment of library services



4. Statement of the problem

The studied literature has highlighted different functions of the school library and its vital role in inculcating reading habits at the tender age which will provide the platform for lifelong learning. However, the existing literature has not exhaustively focused on school libraries in comparison with the published literature on other academic libraries like college or university libraries. Therefore, this study has taken an attempt to highlight the situation of school libraries in the remote area of Bankura district in West Bengal.

5. Methodology

The methodology includes various steps and methods for this research study. In the following section, the methodologies are discussed in detail.

The Patrasayer block is divided into two circles: (a) Patrasayer circle and (b) Patrasayer West circle

There are 219 schools (Government and public) situated in these two circles. The details are given in table 1.

Table 1: Number of schools in Patrasayer circle and Patrasayer west circle

Sl. No.	Circle	Primary schools	Upper Primary schools	Secondary and Higher Secondary (H.S.)	S.S.K. and M.S.K. Schools	Public Schools	Total
1	Patrasayer circle	77	08	11	22	05	123
2	Patrasayer West circle	66	08	08	12	02	96
Total		143	16	19	34	07	219

5.1 Data collection

Data are an important key factor of any research. In this research, we have selected 19 schools and collected data from them. The steps of data collection have been discussed below:

Step 1: Selection of schools

In table 1, we found that there are six kinds of schools in both Patrasayer Circle and Patrasayer West Circle. Primarily, 19 secondary and Higher Secondary (H.S.) schools have been selected because it has been found that every H.S. school has its own library, and students from H.S. schools can understand the use and value of the library. Other kinds of schools, like primary schools, upper primary schools, and S.S.K. (Sishu Shiksha Kendra) and M.S.K. (Madhyamik Shiksha Kendra) schools, have no library. The

public schools in these circles have libraries, but students are too little and not much more interested in libraries. Only students from H.S. schools could understand the usability of the library. So, finally, the proposed research study has selected 19 secondary and H.S. schools of Patrasayer Circle and Patrasayer West Circle, followed by a stratified sampling method.

Step 2: Identification of population size

In 19 schools, the number of students (Class-V to Class-XII) is 18073 as per information collected from the schools. The total number of students of Class-IX to Class-XII from 19 schools is 8219. The students of Class-XI and Class-XII do not regularly attend the schools due to their final examinations. So, the students of Class- IX and Class X have been selected as populations



for the research work based on stratified sampling. The total number of students in Class-IX and Class-X is 5068. The number of female students is 3013 and male students is 2055. This 5068 is the size of the population.

Step 3: Selection of sample size

In step 2, we have found the population size of 5068 students of Class-IX and Class-X from 19 schools of Patrasayer block. Primarily, we have taken ten students from each class (Class-IX and Class-X) from 19 schools as samples of the research work. Then, the size of the sample will be 380 (10x2x19) for the research work. We have further divided the sample size into two groups - 190 female students and 190 male students- and the data have been collected using the random stratified sampling method. In all, three hundred eighty students' questionnaires have been received with a response rate of 100%.

Step 4: Questionnaire

Two questionnaires have been constructed for data collection through the

survey. The first questionnaire is for students, and another is for the librarian / library-in-charge. The questionnaires for the student section contain details of library usage, reading habits, and library services. The other questionnaire for librarian/library-in-charge contains the growth of collection development, book procurement procedure, and library budget and funds in school libraries, housekeeping activities and library staff.

Schramm's model of communication

We have utilised Schramm's model of communication for our methodology. This model is based on three basic components: a source, a destination, and a message. The process starts with an idea in the mind of the source. This idea is then encoded into a message using signs and sent to the destination. The destination needs to decode and interpret the signs to reconstruct the original idea (<https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Schramm>)

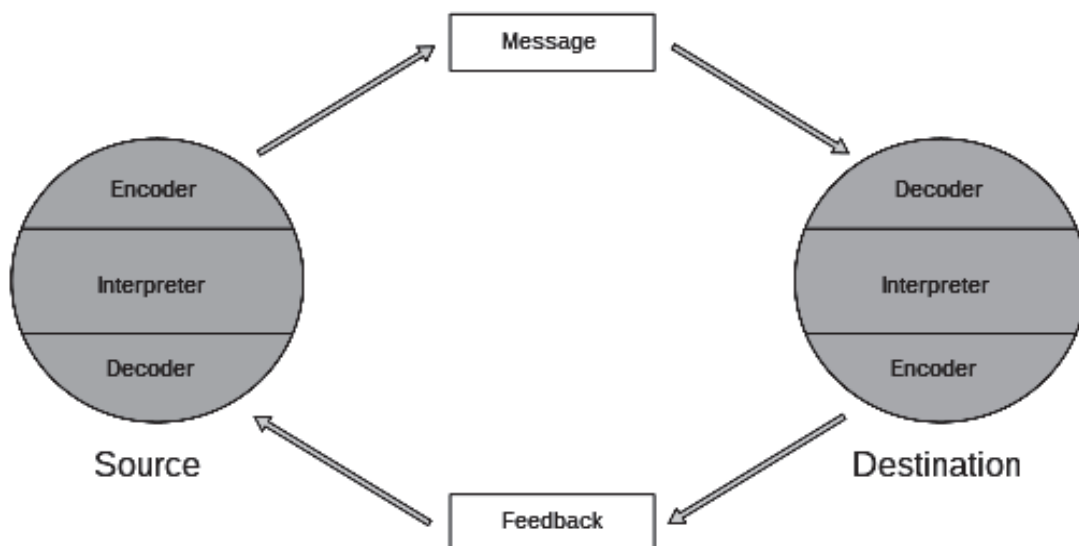


Figure 1: Schramm's model of communication includes a feedback loop and the processes of encoding, decoding, and interpretation.



6 Analysis and interpretation of data

6.1 Language is known by the users

Table 2: Language known by the users

Students	Number of students	Bengali	English	Any other language
Boys (male students)	190	185	5	0
Girls (female students)	190	188	2	0
Total	380	373	7	0
Percentage	100%	98.15%	1.85%	0%

It is observed in table 2 (language known by the users) that out of 380 students, users prefer the Bengali language is 373 (98.15%) and English language is 7 (1.84%).

6.2 Frequency of library visit

The frequency of library visits by school students indicates their use of the library. It

Table 3: Frequency of library visit

Frequency of library visit	School library	Public library	Other library / place
Once in a week	171 (45%)	20(5.26%)	17(4.47%)
Once in a fortnight	120(31.57%)	6(1.5%)	3(0.78%)
Once in a month	49(12.89)	0(0%)	0(0%)
Any other frequency	40(10.52)	0(0%)	0(0%)

It is observed in table 3 (frequency of library visit) that out of 380 students, the number of students that visit a library in a week is 171 (45%); on the other hand, the number of students that visit public libraries is 20 (5.26%) and the users that use other

denotes the following two things:

1. To what extent are the users willing to keep abreast of their subject?
2. To some extent, it also indicates the status of a particular type of library in satisfying the users' requirements.

libraries are 17 (4.47%). The number of students that visit the library once in two weeks is 120 (31.5%). On the other hand, the number of students that visit public as well as other libraries is 6 (1.5%) and 3 (0.78).

6.3 Users' comments about the book collections

Table 4: Users' comments about the book collection

	Students	Percentage
Adequate	148	38.94%
Partially adequate	122	32.10%
Partially inadequate	90	23.68%
Totally inadequate	20	5.26%



It is observed in table 4 (users comment about the book collection) that the number of adequate students is 148 (38.94%), and the number of partially adequate students is 122 (32.10%). The number of partially inadequate students is 90 (23.68%). The number of totally inadequate students is 20 (5.26%).

6.4 Source of getting copies of articles that are not available in the school library

It is seen that the school library fails to render information service when the demand of the users does not match the collection due to the non-availability of information sources. Thus, the users have to depend on the collection of other libraries. For this reason, they depend on various sources.

Table 5: Sources for getting advanced information/resources on their subjects that are not available in school libraries

	Students	Percentage
Through Internet	167	43.94%
Directly from another library	54	14.21%
Through Organisational sources	16	4.21%
Any other sources	143	37.63%

It is observed in table 5 (source of getting copies of articles that are not available in the school library) that the number of students who collected it through the Internet is 167 (43.94%) students. The number of students who collected it directly from another library

is 54 (14.21%). The number of students who collected it through the National Scientific Documentation Center is 16 (4.21%). The number of students who collected it from any other sources is 143 (37.63%).

6.5 Users' comments on present library services

Table 6: Users' comments on present library services

	Students	Percentage
Most satisfactory	20	5.26%
Satisfactory	249	65.52%
Inadequate	91	23.94%
Totally inadequate	20	5.26%

It is observed in table 6 (users comment on present library service) that out of 380 students, the number of most satisfied students is 20, which means 5.26%. The number of satisfactory students is 249, which is 65.52%. The number of inadequate students is 91, which is 23.94%. The number of totally inadequate students is 20, which is 5.26%.

6.6 Use of public libraries by school students

There are three public libraries situated in the Patrasayer Block. Public libraries are used by different types of people. This study has pointed out that school students also use public libraries frequently. The study was conducted with 380 students as a sample. It is



found that 171 (45%) students are using school libraries, 20 (5.26%) of them are using these three public libraries a week, and 6 (1.5%) students are using those public libraries once a fortnight. School students who use public libraries can be treated as advanced library users in society. They can understand the value of public libraries and also gain extra knowledge that may be used in their education.

7. Major findings

It has been found from table 2 that 373 (98.15%) students out of 380 have preferred the Bengali language. The number of students who use the English language is only 7 (1.84%). No data has been found for students to use other languages.

It has been observed in the frequency of library visits that 174 (45%) students visit the library once a week. On the other hand, the number of students that visit public and other libraries is 20 (5.26%) and 17 (4.47%). Among the users, 120 students (31.57%) visit the library twice a week. On the other hand, the number of people that visit public as well as other libraries is 6 (15%) and 3 (3.78%). The number of students who visit the library at any other frequency is 49 (12.89%) and 40 (10.52%) users. This means there is a gap in the frequency of library visits among the users (collected from table 3).

From the users' comments about the book collection, the number of adequate users is the highest, at 148 (38.94%). The partially adequate number is 122 users (32.10%). Partially inadequate is 90 (23.68%). The total inadequate score is 20 (5.26%) (collected from table 4).

The number of users who collect copies of articles from the Internet after not getting them from the Internet is the highest at 167 (43.94%). The number of users who receive it from teachers and friends is 143 (37.63%).

The number of users that collect from another library is 54 (14.21%). The number of users that receive it through the National Institute Documentation Center is 16 (4.21%) (collected from table 5)

It is observed in users' comments on the present library service that among 380 users, the number of satisfactory users is the highest at 249 (65.52%). The number of inadequate users is 91 (23.94%). Most satisfactory and inadequate are 20 (5.26%) and 20 (5.26%). (Collected from table 6).

8. Suggestions

In this context, a few suggestions for the improvement of the school library have been given below:

- The government should quickly engage librarians and library staff so that the users don't have any problem in using the library.
- The library should be open from the start to the end of the school.
- The procurement of books should be processed as per syllabus and requisition from the students.
- Every activity of the school should be connected with the school library (like books, exhibitions, drawings, etc.).
- In every school, particularly the library, the timetable for every class should be arranged.
- The library should run with the help of modern technology.
- The school libraries should provide photocopy facilities for the users.

From the above discussion, we can further suggest that school libraries should be visited by the inspector of schools as well as the district inspector of schools frequently and



they will be aware of the problems and issues of the school libraries (via librarian) and will forward these to the state government authority.

9. Conclusion

From the above study, it is evident that the students from the schools use public and other libraries very little. It has also been observed that the use of English is very poor, and other languages, like Hindi, are not used by the students. In those school libraries, the teachers seek advanced resources only. It is also found that the maximum number of students visit their school library once a week. The collection in those school libraries was adequate, as the students commented. It has been observed that all those school libraries are closed-access systems. If they have an open access system, usability will be increased. As per users' feedback, the skill of professional staff should be increased for better library services. As per data analysis, it is seen that the number of satisfactory school libraries is good, but the number of inadequate is also not lagging.

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