

INFORMATION SEEKING BEHAVIOUR OF HOUSEWIVES

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Abstract : Information is one of the several basic resources needed and utilized by human being for their development and prosperity. It has become an essential element in life cycle of human beings, helping to address social imbalances. Without information, existence is inconceivable. 'Information behavior' is a broader term that encompassing the ways individuals articulate their information needs seek, evaluate, select and use information. Information behavior involves the purposeful seeking of information to fulfill specific goals.

The main aim of the study is to investigate the information seeking behavior of housewives in Payyannur Taluk, Kannur District, to identify the types of media preferred by housewives for seeking information. The study also aims to identify the types of media preferred by housewives for seeking information, determine the reading interests of housewives in different age groups, and analyses the usage of libraries in their reading habits. For this study, a self-designed questionnaire was distributed among 100 housewives in Payyannur Taluk, Kanpur District, and 100 filled questionnaires were analyzed. The findings reveal that the majority of housewives have a keen interest in reading, with newspapers being the preferred print media among most of them.

Keywords: national resource, behavior, patterns, housewives.

1.0 Introduction

Today, information is considered a vital national resource and an essential part of everyone's daily activities. It plays a crucial role in understanding the past, present, and future aspects of human civilization, making it a social necessity. Information serves as an aid in decision-making and is crucial for further investigation, research, and development. When obtained, it transforms into a foundation for subsequent research, resulting in the perpetuity of knowledge.

Information is boundless, ever-growing, dynamic, and multidimensional, serving as a major source for the qualitative development of our society. Next to matter and energy, information is a pervasive and fundamental component in the universe. It is formed through sense perception, data, memory, experience, or by observing and interacting with the outside world. Physically, it can be stored in graphic form, electrical signals, magnetic patterns, or as electrical pulses. Despite being a conceptual entity, information can be recorded, stored, and transmitted in the form of signals, signs, and symbols.

The Chambers Twentieth Century Dictionary (1972) defines information as 'intelligence' or 'given knowledge,' while according to the New Webster Dictionary of the English Language (1984), information is 'news' or 'intelligence communicated through words or writing,' 'facts' or 'data,' and 'knowledge derived from reading or instructions gathered in any way.' Information can be broadly defined as knowledge concerning a particular fact, subject, or event in any communicable form. It is fundamental to the communication process, including both intrapersonal and interpersonal communication, contributing to development, growth, and prosperity (Abraham and Ramesh Babu, 2009).

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2.0 Information Seeking Behavior

Behavior is multifaceted concept encompassing the attitudes and character traits of individuals, as well as environmental determinants. There are numerous approaches to understanding user behavior in relation to seeking,

gathering, using, and communicating information. To fulfill their information needs, users actively engage in the information-seeking process.

Chen and Hernon(1982) have defined information seeking as the various paths individuals pursue in an effort to address their information requirements. Igwe (2012) characterizes information-seeking behavior as the unique methods and strategies individuals employ to gather and source information for personal use, knowledge enhancement, and development. Aina(2004) posits that a user's information-seeking behavior is influenced by their level of education, access to libraries, and the amount of time they are willing to dedicate to information retrieval.

3.0 Objectives of the Study

The main aim of the study is to find out the information seeking behavior of housewives in Payyannur Taluk, Kannur district. The following are important objectives of the present study:

- To identify the reading interest of housewives of different age groups.
- To analyze the uses of libraries for reading habits of housewives.
- To identify the types of media preferred by housewives for seeking information.
- To assess the extent of use of electronic media for seeking information by the housewives.
- To understand the time spent on seeking information by housewives.
- To identify the sources of information used by the housewives.
- To study and analyze the different needs of housewives while seeking information.
- To identify the benefits gained by housewives through their information seeking behavior.
- To identify the barriers faced by housewives while seeking information

4.0. Methodology

Questionnaires are used to collect data. The questionnaire has been distributed among 100 housewives in Payyannur Taluk, kannur district .Out of 100 questionnaires 100 were received back

5.0 Significance of the study

We reside in an information-centric society. Housewives have multiple avenues to acquire information, including reading books, browsing the Internet, and reaching out to their families and friends.

Information seeking encompasses a range of activities, such as identifying information needs, patterns of use, different methods for finding and retrieving information, evaluating and applying that information within the user community. This study aims to offer comprehensive insights into information seeking. The current research is underway to gain a deeper understanding of the information requirements and information-seeking behaviors of housewives in Payyannur Taluk, Kannur.

6.0 Scope and limitation

The investigator endeavors to provide a concise overview of the information-seeking behavior exhibited by housewives in Payyannur Taluk. The study's primary objective is to ascertain the specific types of information that housewives in Payyannur Taluk require and to pinpoint the obstacles they encounter while seeking this information. This study's scope lies in offering a comprehensive outline of the information-seeking behavior of housewives in Payyannur Taluk.

7.0 Data Analysis and the Result

The analysis of the data done is given below under following headings

7.1 Age wise analysis of respondents

The investigator sought to examine the age-wise distribution of housewives in Payyannur Taluk. Data collection was carried out using a questionnaire, and the gathered information was subsequently tabulated.

Table 7.1 Age wise analysis of respondents

Age group	Number
18-30	25

30-40	25
40-50	25
50 & above	25
Total	100

It is evident that the investigator selected an equal number of respondents (25 housewives) from each of the four distinct age categories.

7.2 Reading Interest of Housewives

The investigator gathered data from housewives to determine their level of interest in reading.

Table 7.2 shows the reading interest of housewives.

Reading Interest	Age Categories									
	18-30		30-40		40-50		50 & above		Total	
	No.	Percent (%)	No.	Percent (%)	No.	Percent (%)	No.	Percent (%)	No.	Percent (%)
Yes	25	100	25	100	25	100	19	76	94	94
No	0	0	0	0	0	0	6	24	6	6
Total	25	100	25	100	25	100	25	100	100	100

It is evident that among the 100 housewives surveyed, 94 percent express interest in reading, while the remaining 6 percent do not. Upon analysis, it is observed that all housewives between the ages of 18 and 50 exhibit an interest in reading. Additionally, 19 housewives, equivalent to 7 percent, who are aged 50 and above, also share this interest, with the remaining 6 housewives, constituting 24 percent, reporting a lack of interest in reading. These findings indicate that the majority of housewives have a keen interest in reading.

7.3 Membership in Library

The investigator collected and analyzed data from the users to ascertain whether housewives in Payyannur Taluk hold memberships in any libraries. The specific details regarding housewives' membership status are presented in Table 7.3.

Table 7.3 Membership in Library

Membership in Library	Age Categories									
	18-30		30-40		40-50		50 & above		Total	
	No	Percent (%)	No.	Percent (%)	No.	Percent (%)	No.	Percent (%)	No.	Percent (%)
Yes	7	28	2	8	2	8	1	4	12	12
No	18	72	23	92	23	92	24	96	88	88

Total	25	100	25	100	25	100	25	100	100	100
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The table illustrates that 88 percent of housewives do not have memberships in any library. An age-wise analysis reveals that 28 percent of housewives in the 18-30 age category hold library memberships. Furthermore, it is evident that only 12 percent of the total respondents possess library memberships. These findings indicate that the majority of housewives do not have memberships in any library.

7.4 Frequency of Library Visit

The investigator collected and analyzed data from the users to know the frequency of library visit .The details are given in the table 7.4.

Table 7.4 Frequency of Library Visit

Frequency of Library Visit	No.	Percent (%)
Daily	0	0
Once in a week	0	0
Once in a month	5	42
Occasionally	7	58
Total	12	100

The details regarding the frequency of library visits by housewives can be found in Table 3.3. An analysis of the data in the table makes it evident that out of the 12 users, 7 (58 percent) of them visit the library occasionally, while the remaining 5 (42 percent) users visit the library once a month. There are no users who visit the library on a daily basis or once a week. These findings reveal that the majority of users visit the library occasionally.

7.5 Media used by housewives

Housewives prefer different kinds of media for seeking information .The details of types of media preferred by housewives are given below in the table 7.5

Table 7.5 Media used by housewives

Media used	Age Categories									
	18-30		30-40		40-50		50 & above		Total	
	No.	Percent (%)	No.	Percent (%)	No.	Percent (%)	No.	Percent (%)	No.	Percent (%)
Print only	0	0	0	0	3	12	3	12	6	6
Electronic	3	12	0	0	2	8	6	24	11	11
Both	22	88	25	100	20	80	16	64	83	83
Total	25	100	25	100	25	100	25	100	100	100

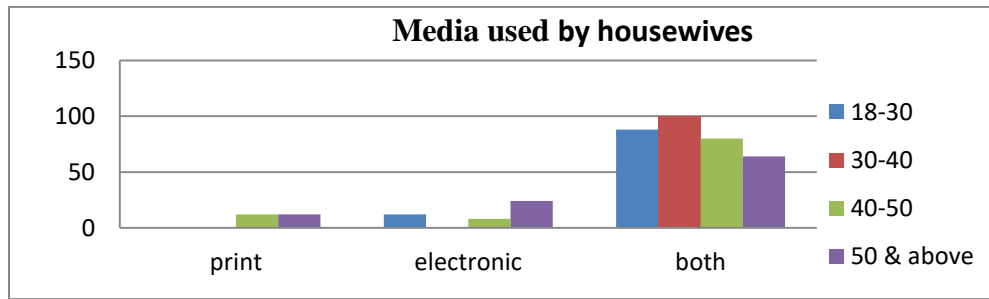


Fig. 7.5 Media used by housewives

7.6 Frequently used print media

The details of frequently used print Medias by the housewives are given in the table 7.6.

Table 7.6 Frequently used print media

Print media	No.	Percent (%)
News paper	77	77
Religious books	2	2
Magazine	10	10
Literature	0	0
Others	0	0
Not using	11	11
Total	100	100

Table 7.5 reveals that 6 percent of housewives use printed media only for seeking information. Eleven percent of housewives use electronic media only. Majority of housewives (83 percent) use both print electronic media for seeking information.

Clearly, among the total respondents, 77 housewives (77 percent) utilize newspapers as their primary source for seeking information. A mere 2 percent of housewives prefer religious books, and only 10 (10 percent) rely on magazines for information seeking. Additionally, the data reveals that there are no preferences for literature or any other forms of print media when it comes to seeking information.

7.7 Newspaper preferred by housewives

The below table provides information on types of newspaper preferred by the housewives under study.

Table 7.7 Newspaper preferred by housewives

Newspaper	No.	Percent (%)
Mathrubhumi	26	26
Madyamam	1	1
Deshabimani	54	54

Malayala manorama	8	8
Others	0	0
Not reading	11	11
Total	100	100

Upon analysis, it becomes evident that 26 percent of housewives favor Mathrubhumi as their choice for seeking information. Only one respondent uses Madyamam newspaper. The majority of respondents, constituting 54 percent, opt for Deshabimani for their information needs. Eight percent prefer Malayala Manorama. Notably, no one uses any other newspaper, and 11 percent of the respondents do not read any newspaper at all.

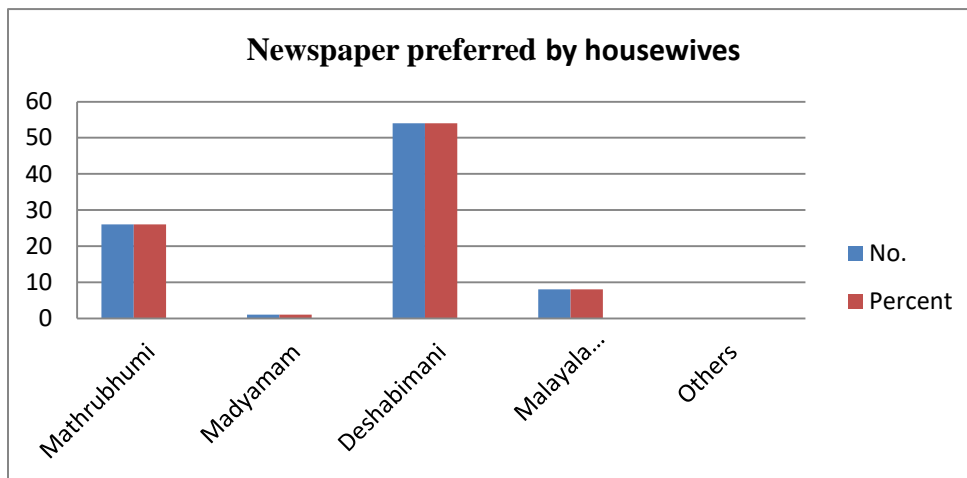


Fig. 7.7 Newspaper preferred by housewives

7.8 Magazine read by housewives for seeking information

The responses received from the housewives regarding the magazine read by them are presented in table 7.8.

Table 7.8 Magazine read by housewives for seeking information

Magazine	No.	Percent (%)
Vanitha	23	23
Grihalakhshmi	13	13
Arogya masika	31	31
Others	2	2
Not reading	31	31
Total	100	100

Fig. 7.7 Newspaper preferred by housewives

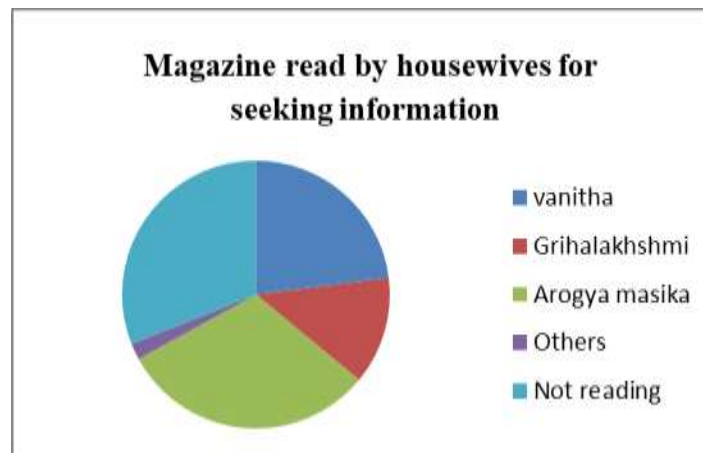
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Grihalakhshmi	13	13
Arogya masika	31	31
Others	2	2
Not reading	31	31
Total	100	100

Table 7.8 shows that out of total respondents 23 percent use vanitha magazine for seeking information. Thirteen respondents prefer grihalakhshmi. Most of the respondents (31 percent) use arogya masika for seeking information. Only 2 respondents use other magazines. 31 percent of respondents are not using any of the magazines.

**Fig. 7.8 Magazine read by housewives for seeking information****7.9 Types of Electronic Media Used**

The investigator collected and analyzed data from the respondents to know about the types of electronic used by them.

Table 7.9 Types of Electronic Media Used

Electronic media	No.	Percent (%)
Mobile phones	60	60
Television	76	76
Internet	21	21
Radio	2	2
Others	0	0

Table 7.9 shows that 60 percent use mobile phone as a main electronic media for seeking information. Majority of respondents (76 percent) prefer television as a main electronic media. 21 housewives use internet as an electronic media for seeking information. Few of respondents (2 percent) use radio for seeking information.

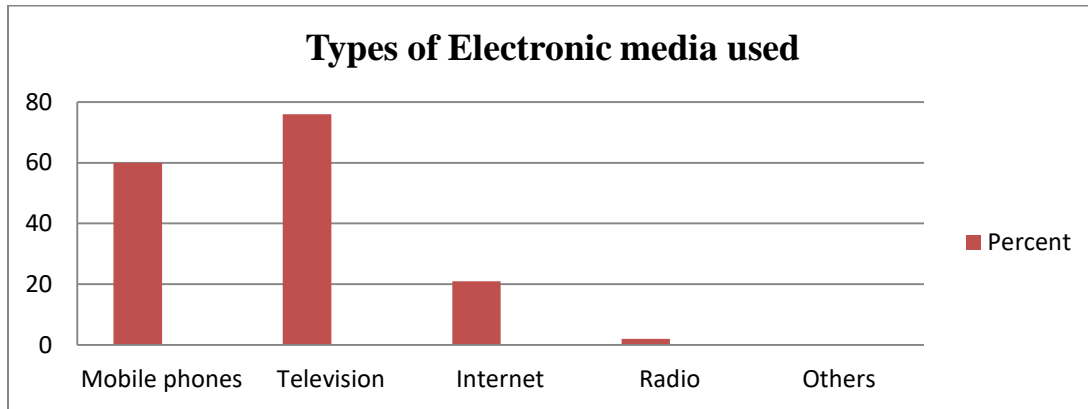


Fig. 7.9 Types of electronic media used

7.10 Time Spend on Information Seeking

The responses received from the housewives regarding the time spend on information seeking is represented in table 7.10.

Table 7.10 Time Spend on Information Seeking

Time spend	Age Categories									
	18-30		30-40		40-50		50 & above		Total	
	No.	Percent (%)	No.	Percent (%)	No.	Percent (%)	No.	Percent (%)	No.	Percent (%)
Less than 1 hour	6	24	14	56	12	48	12	48	44	44
1-2 hour	11	44	11	44	13	52	10	40	45	45
More than 3 hour	8	32	0	0	0	0	3	12	11	11
Total	25	100	25	100	25	100	25	100	100	100

The table 7.10 shows that total 44 housewives are seek information less than 1 hour. 45 percent of respondents spend 1-2 hours for information seeking. It also revealed that only 11 percent spend more than 3 hour for seeking information.

7.11 Major Sources of information preferred by housewives

The responses received from the housewives regarding the major information resources are given in the table7.11.

Table 7.11 Source of information preferred by housewives

Source	of	Age Categories
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information	18-30		30-40		40-50		50 & above		Total	
	No	Percent (%)	No.	Percent (%)	No.	Percent (%)	No.	Percent (%)	No.	Percent (%)
Friends & family	7	28	8	32	18	72	11	44	44	44
Peer groups	6	24	3	12	5	20	1	4	15	15
Media	20	80	18	72	13	52	17	68	68	68
Library	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Others	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

Out of total respondent, 44 percent prefer friends and family members are the major source of information. 15 percent responded that same age groups are major source. Majority of the housewives (68 percent) prefer media (TV/radio/mobile phone/magazine/ newspaper) as a main source of information. None of the respondents prefer library or any other sources as a major source for seeking information.

Age wise analysis reveals that out of 25 respondents in the age between 18- 30, 20 of them prefer media as a main source of information. But the housewives in the age group 40- 50 prefer friends and family (72 percent) is the major source. A very few respondents (4 percent), in the age group 50 & above choose same age group as a source of information. Over all analysis shows that Medias are the major source of information preferred by the housewives for seeking information.

7.12 Information needs of housewives

The investigator collected and analyzed data from the housewives to know about the information needs of respondents. Information needs of housewives are represented in table 7.12.

Table 7.12 Information needs of housewives

Information Needs	Age Categories									
	18-30		30-40		40-50		50 & above		Total	
	No.	Percent (%)	No.	Percent (%)	No.	Percent (%)	No.	Percent (%)	No.	Percent (%)
To update knowledge	18	72	17	68	16	64	11	44	62	62
House keeping	2	8	9	36	13	52	6	24	30	30
Childcare & family	11	44	8	32	5	20	1	4	25	25
Financial matters	1	4	6	24	6	24	4	16	17	17
Health care	6	24	10	40	11	44	9	36	36	36

Politics	1	4	3	12	9	36	2	8	15	15
New products & services	1	4	5	20	6	24	1	4	13	13
Agriculture	0	0	1	4	3	12	3	12	7	7
For entertainment	7	28	9	36	5	20	11	44	32	32
Others	1	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	1

Table 7.11 reveals that 62 percent of the respondents require information for the purpose of updating their knowledge. A total of 30 housewives seek information pertaining to housekeeping and household maintenance. About 25 percent of housewives indicated that they need information regarding childcare and family relationships. Seventeen percent of respondents express a need for information concerning financial matters and assistance, while approximately 36 housewives seek information related to healthcare.

Fifteen housewives (15 percent) expressed the need for information about politics, and 13 percent are interested in acquiring information about new products and services. A small proportion of housewives (7 percent) seek information about agriculture. Notably, the table also illustrates that 32 percent of respondents require information for entertainment purposes.

7.13 Benefits of information seeking behavior

The details of benefits of information seeking behavior on the housewives are given in the table 7.13.

Table 7.13 Benefits of information seeking behavior

Benefits of ISB	Age Categories									
	18-30		30-40		40-50		50 & above		Total	
	No.	Percent (%)	No.	Percent (%)	No.	Percent (%)	No.	Percent (%)	No.	Percent (%)
Financial	3	12	0	0	4	16	0	0	7	7
Social	5	20	0	0	2	8	3	12	10	10
Mental	8	32	6	24	9	36	9	36	32	32
All of the above	8	32	9	36	10	40	9	36	36	36

It is revealed that information seeking behavior benefits financially 7 percent of housewives only. Ten percent responded that information seeking behavior benefits them socially. And also 32 percent responded that information seeking behavior benefits them mentally. 36 housewives revealed that information seeking behavior benefits the respondents financially, socially and mentally.

7.14 Barriers of information seeking

There are number of barriers faced by housewives for seeking information. The details of barriers of information seeking are given in table 7.14.

Table 7.14 Barriers of information seeking

Barriers of information seeking	Age Categories									
	18-30		30-40		40-50		50 & above		Total	
	No.	Percent (%)	No.	Percent (%)	No.	Percent (%)	No.	Percent (%)	No.	Percent (%)
Lack of time	15	60	12	48	18	72	6	24	51	51
Language barrier	0	0	0	0	2	8	8	32	10	10
Illiteracy	0	0	0	0	0	0	8	32	8	8
No library resources	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
Other	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	8	2	2
No barriers	10	40	13	52	5	20	1	4	29	29
Total	25	100	25	100	25	100	25	100	100	100

The table makes it clear that the major barrier to information-seeking among housewives (51 percent) is a lack of time. Ten percent of housewives face a language barrier, while eight housewives encounter illiteracy as an obstacle to information-seeking. Out of 100 respondents, the absence of library resources is not a barrier to seeking information. It is revealed that 29 percent of housewives do not encounter any barriers when seeking information.

An age-wise analysis of this table reveals that a lack of time is the primary barrier faced by housewives in the age category of 18-50. However, language barrier (32 percent) and illiteracy (32 percent) are the two main problems encountered by housewives in the age group of 50 and above.

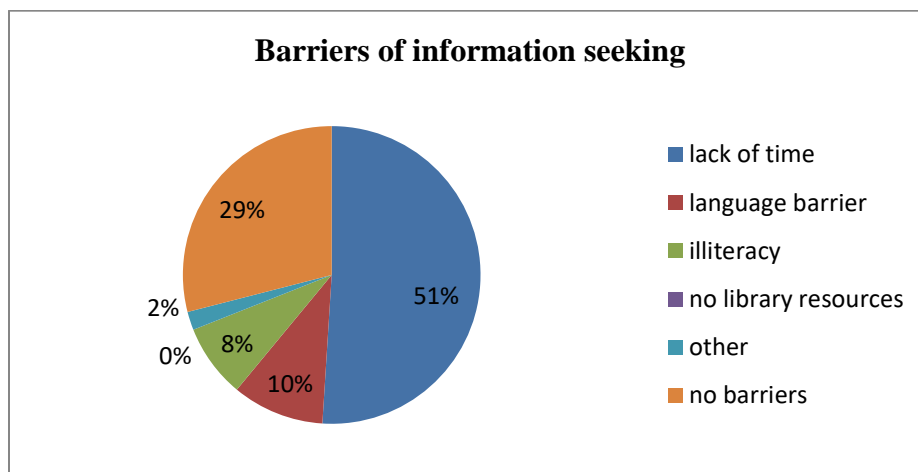


Fig. 7.14 Barriers of Information Seeking**Conclusion**

In this research article it is found that time is the major barrier for housewives for information seeking. Some housewives have illiteracy problem too. Most of the housewives have the opinion that information seeking behaviour in them have helped them financially, mentally and socially.

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