

## A Study of Information Seeking Behavior of Users in Rajasthani Art and Culture

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### **Abstract**

*Preservation and conservation of art and cultural heritage create awareness in people mind for their heritage. This paper gives a brief introduction about the users of select universities, Institutes and Museum Libraries, their area of specialization in Rajasthani art and culture, it also aims to add to understanding of the information behavior of the faculty members and scholars of the select institutes libraries and about the benefits and purpose of searching information. Various type of sources and information finding aids users' access to search their required information although they face some problems and hindrance while searching them. The study also introduce the heritage collection in Rajasthan, the literature about the arts and culture of Rajasthan is available in different forms, different types of information resources used by users who come to library to search information on arts and culture of Rajasthan. The main purpose of this study is to examine the role of libraries to promote art and culture of Rajasthan as per the opinion of the users of select nine museum universities and institutions of Rajasthan.*

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**Keywords:** Information Seeking Behavior, Art and Culture, Rajasthan, User Satisfaction.

### **1. Introduction**

'Art' is the medium of express the aesthetic ideas or purposes by the use of skill by the imagination to create an object and experience that can share with others, a kind of narration of experiences with the help of different media whether it's a painting from the Renaissance or a modern sculpture item. Culture represents a set of shared attitudes, values, goals and practices. Culture and creativity manifest themselves in almost all economic, social and other activities. When people come together as learners under the aegis of a library or a museum, they get an opportunity to understand that cultural institutions (departments and centre of universities, libraries, museums, centre of art and culture, archives) are grounded on the idea that a culture requires places, forums, workshops (where artists work) for cognitive change where ideas and imaginations get shapes.

### **2. Information Needs of Artists, Art Scholars and Art Historian**

The literature describe the information needs of users searching information in Art and Culture as well as differentiate the information seeking behaviour of art faculty, art historians,

art students and practicing visual artists. The literature noted how they are accessing information resources, especially in academic libraries. The role of information in the creative process as well as different artistic communities and varying information resources availability in the libraries is also evaluated.

Information behavior is an embedded assumption of the user oriented paradigm which focuses upon what people think, do and feel when they seek and use information. (Wilson 1981) In the recent article, Lo and Chu (2015) discussed the information seeking behavior and library usage of students at the Hong Kong Design Institute. The results revealed that the popularity of traditional printed materials is still high. The users found the library more suitable as not only the sources of accessing inspirational materials even also a useful place for social networking.

Budd (1989) have noted that researcher in humanities take more time in information seeking endeavour and prefer to make their own efforts to find their information themselves without taking help from library professionals. Visual artist's priorities are print media and most preferred format in the humanities is monographs as easy in retrospective conversion. In fine arts reference sources like encyclopedia, Janson's History of Art, Arnason's History of Modern Art finds to be useful.

Research scholars initiate their research with standard books and handbooks, periodical articles are very valuable although indexing and abstracting sources are not widely used in visual arts. However, bibliographies, indexes, abstracts and other bibliographic tools are used by art researchers to look for relevant articles (Lonnqvist, 1990).

Art historians, ceramicists, members of digital arts and design programs, painters, photographers, printmakers, art therapists, art educator and sculptor use print media and internet as traditional print media is regarded a highly preferred source of inspiration with art journals, periodicals and auction catalogues (Larkin, 2010). Art historians are dependent on their personal libraries, occasionally they use computerized databases and their bibliographies, general reference materials, indexes, image slides, digital images, photographs and photographic reproductions (Stam, 1984). Online sources are only preferred to reach on original print sources (Beaudoin, 2005). Younger artists may widely use the different information resources in comparison to their senior peers as well as electronic resources are more popular among the younger artists (Hemmig 2009) whereas emerging artists generally use same type of information sources as more established artists. Along with social networks they use traditional information sources and libraries (Mason and Lyn, 2010). Two basic reasons of artists behind using books are, to obtaining technical information and to find inspiration while artists are not bounded themselves only to the arts for searching information (Downey, 1993).

Hemmig (2008) found slight difference in artist, those who are associated with academic institutions and those who are not. Although the affiliated artists use the information sources more frequently adding social networks. Frank (1999) examined that student artists need materials to increase their subject knowledge, information resources to resolve their problems and finally and most importantly, resources to 'inspire' the users, Cown (2004) found that natural environment and artist's own work of art is the main source of inspiration for them. Although Walter (1991) found that very few bibliographic databases are related to visual arts like Wilson line, Art abstracts, art index, RILA, Avery index to Architecture periodicals and some more specific for visual arts. Hence these online arts related databases have some

difficulties as; limited subject coverage, poor retrospective indexing of documents, lack of regular updating and of coordination between services. Mason and Robinson (2011) recorded that illustrators and fashion/textile designers were most likely to cite current trends and practitioners in their field as source of inspiration, and were also influenced by other periods in fashion and older styles of illustration. Performance and installation artists appeared to be more engaged in current art writing and research as source of inspiration.

### **3. Role of University, Museum and Cultural Centre Libraries**

Museums are heart of culture and civilization. The primary function of museums, cultural centers comprises of collection, documentation, preservation, display and interpretation of material evidence and related information for the benefit of coming generations. In a very precise way, university, museum and culture centre libraries acquire, books, journals and periodicals related to the field of history, art and culture of the world for specialized research and reference. It covers many disciplines likewise, anthropology, archeology, conservation, decorative arts, history, literature, museum studies, painting, philosophy and religion. University libraries serve academicians, research scholars and students who are registered in different course works offered by the university.

### **4. Need of the Study**

It is observed that the information behavior and practices in art scholars have been studied less in comparison to other academic disciplines. So that in the vast spectrum of Rajasthani art and culture the need of evaluating and nurturing art and artists was prominently felt. This phenomenon finds out the information seeking behavior of users of select institution libraries, which have apparently become the popular cultural destination and is giving a point of reference to the users of emerging art and cultural centers.

### **5. Objectives**

The purpose of the study is to find the answers to the following questions:

- To know about the purpose of seeking information in Rajasthani arts and culture by the users of select libraries.
- To know about the sources to seek information resources in Rajasthani arts and culture.
- To highlight the problems and difficulties users faced while searching information resources in Rajasthani arts and culture.
- User satisfaction from different type of information resources in Rajasthani arts and culture.

### **6. Research Methodology, Scope and Limitations**

The study used survey method with the help of questionnaire followed by interview of the library users to bring out the clarity to the study. Services offered by the select libraries have been analyzed by tabulated method on the basis of the data collected from the users during the survey. In this study the term “Sources of information” is used for contents of the collections of a library which includes books, reference books, tourism related sources, photo books, journals, pamphlets, atlas and maps. Art and culture create the cultural heritage of the nation. The users of nine major universities, institutes and museum libraries of Rajasthan are selected for the study as these libraries are actively working and dealing with information resources in Arts and culture of Rajasthan. The names are as follows:

1. Albert Hall Museum, Jaipur (established in 1957)
2. Banasthali Vidyapeeth, Tonk (established in 1935)
3. Indian Institute of Craft and Design, Jaipur (established in 1995)
4. Jawahar Kala Kendra, Jaipur (established in 1993)
5. Maharaja Sawai Mansingh Museum II<sup>nd</sup>, Jaipur (established in 1952)
6. Mohan Lal Sukhadia, University, Udiapur (established in 1962)
7. Rajasthan School of Art, Jaipur (established in 1957)
8. Rajasthan Sangeet Sansthan, Jaipur (established in 1850)
9. University of Rajasthan (established in 1947)

## 7. Data Analysis

On the basis of filled 146 questionnaire received during the given period July to December 2018, the data are tabulated and analysed in the tables as follows:

**Table 1: Institution-Wise Distribution and Receipt of Questionnaires**

Name of the Institutes (Abbreviations)	Questionnaire Distributed	Questionnaire Received
Albert Hall Museum (AHM), Jaipur	24	16 (66.66%)
Banasthali Vidyapeeth(BV), Niwai Tonk	50	24 (48.0%)
Indian Institute of Craft and Design (IICD), Jaipur	30	12 (40.0%)
Jawahar Kala Kendra (JKK), Jaipur	30	16 (53.33%)
Maharaja Sawai Mansingh Museum (MSMSM), Jaipur	10	03 (30.0%)
Mohan Lal Sukhadia, University (MLSU), Udaipur	50	27 (54.0%)
Rajasthan School of Art (RSA), Jaipur	10	06 (60.0%)
Rajasthan Sangeet Sansthan (RSS), Jaipur	10	09 (90.0%)
University of Rajasthan (UR), Jaipur	60	33 (55.0%)
Total	274 (100%)	146 (53.28%)

The questionnaires were distributed according to the strength and availability of users in select libraries. The above table 1 indicates that the maximum responses were received from RSS institute because the institute offers bachelor courses in performing art where the strength of students and faculty members are limited. This is the reason that less number of questionnaires has been distributed and highly response collected. On the other side MSMSM library does not allowed public to use the library that's why the total number of respondents is less in comparison to other institutes.

Education is one of the most important characteristics that might affect the person's attitudes and the way of looking and understanding any particular social phenomena therefore it becomes imperative to know the educational background of the respondents.

**Table 2: Qualification- Wise Distribution of Institutions Library Users**

Qualifications	Number	Percentage
Bachelor	23	15.75
Post-Graduate	84	57.54
NET	08	05.48
Ph.D.	31	21.23
Total	146	100.0

The above table 2 shows that about 57.54% of the respondents are post graduate and 21.23% users are Ph.D. research scholars or Ph.D. holders whereas only 05.48% are NET qualified. By and large the respondents are progressive in education but they are still far away from the higher education which is so important today to create knowledge based society.

**Table 3: Area of Specialization in Rajasthani Arts**

Area of Specialization (Rajasthani Art)	Number	Percentage
Archeology	07	04.79
Arms and Armour	07	04.79
Dance	16	10.96
Music	23	15.75
Musical Instruments	14	09.59
Paintings	18	12.33
Product Design	03	02.05
Rajasthani Studies	16	10.96
Textile	06	04.11
Theater	06	04.11
Visual Arts	30	20.55
Total	146	99.99

Table 3 shows the responses received from users according to their area of specialization in Arts. The respondents' manifests that the largest number of users 20.55% belong to Visual Arts followed by Music 15.75%, Paintings 12.35%, Dance 10.96%, Musical Instruments 9.59%, both Archeology and Arms & Armours 4.79%, both Textile and Theature 4.11%, whereas the lowest 2.05% users of Product Design. The selected institutes and universities offer different courses in visual art so that the respondents are more in comparison to other specialization.

**Table 4: Area of specialization in Rajasthani Culture**

Area of Specialization (Rajasthani Culture)	Number	Percentage
Costume	26	17.81
Cuisine	12	8.22
Fair	33	22.60
Festival	24	16.44
Raj. Language	23	15.75
Others	28	19.18
Total	146	100.0

The above table 4 presents users' area of specialization in different aspects of Rajasthani culture. The respondents manifests that the largest number of users 22.6% belongs to the category Fair. Other not listed specializations with 19.18% is second in the list followed by 17.81% costume, 16.44% Festivals, 15.75% have specialization in Rajasthani language whereas users who has specialization in Cuisine were at the bottom (8.22%). It is observed during study that respondents are not doing any particular course in these aspects of culture except Rajasthani language.

**Table 5: Use of Different Information Resources Available in Library**

Types of Documents	Number	Percentage
Atlas	93	63.70
Map/chart/diagrams	80	54.79
Microfilms	80	54.79
Paintings	90	61.64
Pamphlets	79	54.11
Periodicals	94	64.38
Photo books	101	69.18
Rare Book	66	45.21
Reference books	130	89.04
Text books	146	100.0
Tourism related sources	79	54.11
Websites	110	75.34

*Note: Respondents are allowed for giving multiple responses.*

The above table 5 represents the multiple responses regarding the use of different information resources available in the libraries in Rajasthani arts and culture in order to fulfill the requirements of their users. All the 100% respondents replied that they have used textbooks followed by 89.04% reference books, 75.34% websites and 69.18% photo books respectively. Map/ chart/ diagrams, microfilms are less used because of the unavailability.

**Table 6: Purpose of Seeking Information**

Purpose	Number	Percentage
For research and reference	95	65.07
For teaching and enrichment	68	46.58
Getting information for creative works	49	33.56
To know the latest arrivals in the library	59	40.41
To read journal articles pertaining to their subject	63	43.15
To read newspapers/ magazines	61	41.78
Workshop and seminar presentations	41	28.08
Writing a book or article	65	44.52
To collect materials in their subject	65	44.52
Guiding Research Scholar	22	15.07

*Note: Respondents are allowed for giving multiple responses.*

It is clear from the above table 6 that maximum number of respondents 65.07% visited library in order to fulfill their research and reference queries/needs and minimum number of users 15.07% use library to guide their Research Scholars. That is very obvious because majority of the users are students, research scholars or academicians so that they search information for research and study.

**Table 7: Benefits of Information Resources on Rajasthani Arts and Culture**

Benefits	Number	Percentage
Helpful to do research on the history of Rajasthan	102	69.86
Present knowledge about the rich social and cultural heritage of Rajasthan	126	86.30
Provide rich content for the study on the different aspects of Arts	112	76.71

Provide rich content for the study on the different aspects of the culture	106	72.60
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*Note: Respondents are allowed for giving multiple responses.*

Above table 7 discuss about the benefits of information resources on Rajasthani arts and culture. 86.3% users expressed their views that present knowledge about the rich social and cultural heritage of Rajasthan followed by 76.71% provides rich content for the study on different aspects of Arts, 72.6% provide rich content for the study on the different aspects of the culture and 69.86% found it helpful to do research on the history of Rajasthan.

**Table 8: Sources Used by the Respondents for Seeking Information**

Methods	Number	Percentage
Abstracting journals	89	60.96
Attending conference/seminar/ workshops	116	79.45
Book reviews	102	69.86
CAS of libraries	86	58.90
Citations (references used)	84	57.53
Consultation with experts in the field	112	76.71
Conversation with colleagues	95	65.07
Conversations with library staff	81	55.48
Electronic databases	78	53.42
Indexing journals	75	51.37
Internet discussion forums or newsgroups	96	65.75
Internet search engines	98	67.12
Library catalogues	99	67.81
Media: TV, Radio and newspapers	99	67.81
Publisher catalogues	86	58.90
Review articles	96	65.75
Visiting bookstores	81	55.48

*Note: Respondents are allowed for giving multiple responses.*

In order to fulfill their information needs, table 8 reveals that majority of respondents 79.45% through attending conference/seminar/ workshops followed by consultation with experts in the field 76.71%, book reviews 69.86%, both Library Catalogue and Media: TV, Radio and newspapers 67.81%, Internet search engines 67.12% and least 51.37% respondents through Indexing journals.

**Table 9: Different type of information searching aids**

Information Finding Aids	Number	Percentage
Bibliography	88	60.27
Dialogue/Query with Staff	44	30.14
E-Database	21	14.38
Guide	63	43.15
Indexes	32	21.92
Inventory	29	19.86
Library Catalogue/OPAC	81	55.48
List	47	32.19
Publisher Catalogues	94	64.38

*Note: Respondents are allowed for giving multiple responses*

Various types of information searching aids are available in the libraries the users were asked about their priority during information search. The result shows that 64.38% respondents use Publisher Catalogues that is the highest followed by Bibliography 60.27% and Library Catalogue/OPAC 55.48%. E-database with 14.38% is the lowest used aid by the users.

It is observed that in the age of assistive technology various facilities available in the institution/library, even though the libraries of Rajasthan are still behind, they does not have electronic resources and databases in their libraries.

**Table 10: Difficulties in Search of Information Resources**

Reason	Number	Percentage
Books are kept under lock	46	31.51
Misplacement	51	34.93
Less number of copies	101	69.18
Lack of proper arrangement	56	38.36
Poor physical condition	54	36.99
No response	12	8.22

*Note: Respondents are allowed for giving multiple responses.*

Table 10 reveals that 69.18% majority of the users faced less number of copies followed by 38.36% Lack of proper arrangement and Poor physical condition of the required information resources by 36.99% respondents whereas 8.22% respondents haven't replied.

**Table 11: Problems Faced While Seeking Information**

Problems	Number	Percentage
Information is scattered in too many sources	102	69.86
Information sources are very expensive	91	62.33
Lack of information resources	88	60.27
Lack of knowledge in using the library	64	43.84
Lack of support from library staff	53	36.30
Lack of training in electronic resources/products	79	54.11
Language barrier (most of the material is in English/Hindi Language)	58	39.73
Latest information sources are not available.	56	38.36
Non availability of electronic resources (e-journals and databases)	80	54.80

*Note: Respondents are allowed for giving multiple responses.*

It is clear from the above table 11 that highest 69.86% respondents have faced the problem due to Information is scattered in too many sources followed by 62.33% Information sources are very expensive, 60.27% lack of information resources, 54.8% non-availability of electronic resources and 54.11% lack of training to use electronic resources. Very few 36.3% of the users stated that lack of support from library staff while searching information resources.

Table 12 represents the data about user's satisfaction level about Information sources on Rajasthani Art. All library has Books, Reference Books, Tourism related source, Photo Book, Pamphlets, Atlas and Maps in different types of information resources in Rajasthani Art. The responses of users have been shown in the table as well as the researcher ranked them according to the response provided by the respondents.



**Table 12 Level of Satisfaction from the Information Resources in Rajasthani Art**

Aspects of Art	Books	Reference Books	Photo Books	Tourism Related Source	Pamphlets	Map	Atlas
Archeology	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
Arms & Armour	79	51	-	-	-	-	-
Garments & Textiles	77	30	-	-	-	-	-
Miniature Paintings	99	46	5	-	2	-	-
Performing arts	111	70	28	20	22	16	22
Visual Art	88	36	9	-	-	3	-
<b>Total</b>	<b>454</b>	<b>233</b>	<b>42</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>24</b>	<b>19</b>	<b>22</b>
<b>Rank</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>5</b>

It is observed that books (Rank 1) are the most popular information resources and majority of the users from different institutions are satisfied from the available books in the institutes followed by reference books (Rank 2) and photo books (Rank 3). It is also found the Pamphlets (Rank 4) atlas (Rank 5) and tourism related source (Rank 6) available in majority of the libraries. Map (Rank 7) are least available information sources and available in very minimum quantity in different libraries.

Performing art, miniature painting, visual art, arms and armers etc. are the selective aspects of arts on which books, reference books are available and most of the users present their perception that they are satisfied with the information resources.

Table 13 represents the data about Information sources on Rajasthani culture and user's satisfaction level. All library has Books, Reference Books, Tourism related source, Photo Book, Pamphlets, Atlas and Maps in different types of information resources in Rajasthani Art. The responses of users have been shown in the table as well as the researcher ranked them according to the response provided by the respondents.

**Table 13: Level of Satisfaction from the Information Resources in Rajasthani Culture**

Aspects of Culture	Books	Ref. Books	Photo Books	Tourism Related Source	Pamphlets	Map	Atlas
Cuisine	13	94	58	24	24	-	18
Customs	125	96	52	27	27	-	36
Fairs	138	109	57	45	37	-	23
Festivals	133	91	53	43	39	-	33
<b>Total</b>	<b>409</b>	<b>390</b>	<b>220</b>	<b>139</b>	<b>127</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>110</b>
<b>Rank</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>-</b>	<b>6</b>

If we analyze the table as per users responses that all the libraries have rich collection of Books (Rank 1), followed by reference books (Rank 2), photo books (Rank 3), tourism related sources (Rank 4), pamphlets (Rank 5) and atlas (Rank 6) etc.

It is observed that art and culture are two aspects of a coin, they are bonded with each other. The information resources which contain the information of Rajasthani art have also touched few aspects of culture. So that the users found very much satisfied with the resources in Rajasthani culture.

Libraries maintain reference collections for their users provide concise and systematic information gather in one convenient location. Most popular reference sources are informed by the select users are; Bibliography of modern India Art, Dhundhani Lok Bhasha Kosh, Dictionary of Indian art and artists including technical art term, Dictionary of Indian art and artists including technical art term, Dingal kosh, Encyclopedia of the arts, Encyclopedia of Indian culture, Gazetteer of India, Indian Union: history and Culture, Kala Kosh, Maru Sanskriti Kosh, Rajasthan State Gazetteer: History and Culture, Rajasthani Hindi Shabd Kosh, Rajasthani Kahawat Kosh, Rajasthani Sabd Kosh, Rajastshan Itihas Sanskriti Encyclopedia, The Art of India and Bibliography of Modern Indian Art, etc.

Table 14 presents data regarding opinion of users on Reference collection that whether they are excellent, satisfactory, fair or very poor.

**Table 14: Opinion about Reference Collection**

Opinion	Number	Percentage
Excellent	58	39.73
Satisfactory	56	38.36
Fair	27	18.49
Very Poor	05	3.42
Total	146	100.0

As per above data 39.73% of users said that the libraries have excellent collection of references sources followed by satisfactory 38.36% and fair 18.49% although few of them 3.42% got poor. It shows that majority of users are fully satisfied with the reference collection available in the libraries under the study.

A journal is a scholarly publication containing articles written by researchers, professors and other scholars. Journals focus on a specific discipline or field of study. Below given table 15 contain the data about the availability of journals/ periodicals.

**Table 15: Availability of Journals/ Periodicals**

Opinion	Number	Percentage
Excellent	56	38.35
Satisfactory	48	32.88
Fair	30	20.55
Poor	12	08.22
Total	146	100.0

Table 15 reveals the data about opinion regarding Journals/ Periodicals that are available in the libraries. It is clear that 38.35% of users responded that the libraries have excellent collection of Journals that is the highest followed by 32.88% of that the Journals collection are satisfactory, 20.55% says that the available collection of Journals are Fair whereas 8.22% of users marked as poor.

## 8. Major Findings

The finding of this study indicate that almost all the respondents agree to the benefits of information resources on Rajasthani arts and culture that they are helpful to give knowledge

about different aspects of arts and cultural heritage of Rajasthan. On the basis of analysis following major findings were noted:

- Text books with 100% and reference books with 89.04% were highly used resources in the libraries of Rajasthani arts and culture.
- Research and reference need with 65.07% was recorded as major purpose of seeking information.
- Majority 86.3% respondents accepted that present knowledge about the rich social and cultural heritage of Rajasthan is the major benefits of the use of information resources.
- Attending conference/seminar/ workshops (79.45%) and consultation with experts in the field (76.71%) were the major used information resources.
- Publisher Catalogues (64.38%) and Bibliography (60.27%) were found major searching aids for information search.
- Majority 69.18% reported less number of copies of books is a big problem in terms of locating information.
- Information is scattered in too many sources with 69.86% was a major problem faced by the responding while seeking information.
- Majority of the respondents accepted the Periodicals and Reference collection were excellent in the libraries under the study in comparison to the other reading materials.

## 9. Conclusion

Libraries and museums provide a plethora of resources and services for their users and communities. They preserve rich and diverse culture and history and transmit it from one generation to the next. 'Music' is the most preferred area of art and 'fair' in culture. They seek information for research and reference and for teaching and enrichment.

The users are found to be enthusiastic users of books, reference books, websites and photo books, except these information resources users are found to be satisfied with magazines and journals, references sources available in Rajasthani arts and culture. Not only using information resources available in the libraries, users are interested to seek different type of sources to search information except traditional print information resources, as attending conference/seminar/workshops. They consult with the experts related to their fields. Majority of the users search their required information with the help of internet, it shows that internet is integral to their source of information access but majority go with consultation and discussion on subject. Libraries provide different information finding aids to search information. Although the users face some problems also still they are satisfied with the library collection. Generally the users are satisfied with books and reference books in Rajasthani arts and culture available in select libraries.

An overall result shows that the users of Rajasthan are quite similar to artists as a whole; they are also seen to be proactive users of traditional books, magazines and journals, reference sources as well as also prefer socialization among their colleagues as many of the information needs are better satisfied with the help of this.

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