INTERDISCIPLINARY COLLECTION DEVELOPMENT VIS-À-VIS INFORMATION NEEDS AND SEEKING BEHAVIOUR OF PERFORMING ARTS STUDENTS AND FACULTY

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Abstract :

The present study examines the information-seeking behaviour of students and faculty members in the field of performing arts, with particular emphasis on their academic, practical, and research-related information requirements. Performing arts education involves diverse information resources relating to music, dance, theatre, performance techniques, literature, culture, multimedia, and research. Therefore, understanding differences in the information needs of students and faculty is important for developing relevant and interdisciplinary library collections and information services. The study included 200 respondents, comprising 120 students and 80 faculty members, and compared their information needs using descriptive statistics and the Independent Samples t-test. The findings reveal that faculty members have considerably greater information needs concerning academic aspects as well as research related information needs whereas there is no significant difference in the practical aspects related requirements of students and the faculty. The study concludes that libraries should develop user-oriented and interdisciplinary collections by considering the distinct academic, practical, and research requirements of both students and faculty members of Performing Arts.

Keywords : Information-Seeking Behaviour; Performing Arts; Students and Faculty; Interdisciplinary Collection Development.

Introduction :

The twenty-first century academic environment has witnessed increasing use of e-resources, multimedia platforms, digital repositories and personal networks alongside printed resources. This change is particularly important in performing arts education, where music, dance and theatre users require diverse resources such as notation, recordings, scripts, performance videos, cultural histories, costume, stagecraft and research literature. Various academic institutes in Maharashtra are offering specialized programmes in Performing Arts creating distinctive information requirements. Therefore, libraries must focus on relevancy,

accessibility, interdisciplinarity and usability of their collections with collection development guided by systematic study of users' information-seeking behaviour.

Interdisciplinary Collection Development :

Interdisciplinary collection development refers to the systematic selection, acquisition, evaluation, preservation and management of information resources across related subject areas according to users' needs. In performing arts libraries, this involves connecting music, dance and theatre with disciplines such as history, literature, sociology, philosophy, folklore, education, media, visual arts, technology, costume, health and event management. Since performing arts combine creative, cultural, technical and academic elements, libraries should provide not only books and journals but also musical scores, photographs, recordings, films, performance videos, posters, programmes, manuscripts and digital resources.

Information-Seeking Behaviour of Performing Arts Library Users :

Information-seeking behaviour refers to the process through which users recognise an information need, identify sources, search, evaluate and use information for academic, professional or creative purposes. Studies of music, theatre, film and other creative disciplines show that performing arts users depend on a combination of library collections, electronic databases, recordings, online archives, websites, teachers, performers, librarians, peers, professional networks, social media, video platforms and local cultural resources.

Information Needs of Performing Arts Students and Faculty in Maharashtra :

Maharashtra has a rich performing arts tradition covering Hindustani classical music, Marathi theatre, folk traditions, classical dance and contemporary performance supported by universities, colleges, cultural organisations, theatres, archives and special libraries. Institutions imparting education in performing arts have underlined the importance of specialised information infrastructure for performing arts education. Information needs of people engaged in performing arts education vary according to particular form of performing art.

1. Music : Music students and faculty need theoretical literature, biographies, criticism, , notation, recordings, journals and archival resources for study, research and performance.

2. Dance : Students and faculty of dance require information on traditions, dance technique, choreography, aesthetics, costume, stagecraft and cultural history, with audio-visual resources being especially important for understanding movement and performance.

3. Theatre : Theatre people need playscripts, theatre history, acting, direction, stage design, costume, sound and performance criticism, along with photographs, posters, programmes and performance recordings.

Interdisciplinary and Cultural Resources :

Performing arts students frequently require information beyond their core discipline

because theatre, dance and music are closely related to history, sociology, anthropology, folklore, literature, linguistic and cultural studies. For example, theatre students may require historical and sociological materials, dance students may need anthropology and folklore resources, and music students may depend on literature and regional cultural studies, demonstrating the importance of interdisciplinary collection development in performing arts libraries.

Review of Literature :

Clark & Johnstone (2018) found that undergraduate music students use library resources, online tools, instructors, and subject-specific materials for research. However, they face difficulties in search strategies and evaluating scholarly sources, indicating a need for stronger information literacy training.

Clark (2018) observed that music students face problems while searching library catalogues for scores, recordings, and other specialized materials. Limited knowledge of catalogue terminology and advanced search techniques often leads to incomplete or irrelevant results.

Rousi et.al (2019) in their research concluded that music students' information needs change at different stages of their academic and musical tasks. They use textual, audio, visual, and other formats depending on the situation, showing that music information seeking is a dynamic process.

Weber et.al (2019) reported that systematic and purposeful information-seeking strategies are associated with better academic performance. It also showed that search behaviour differs across disciplines, so information literacy programmes should be designed according to subject-specific needs.

Chiu et.al (2020) highlighted that performing arts students have a strong need for mobile and multimedia learning resources. Convenient access to recordings, digital materials, and other multimedia content supports their practical and performance-oriented learning.

Asher et.al (2020) observed that students often begin their searches with familiar and convenient online tools rather than academic sources. Many students face difficulties in evaluating information and selecting reliable sources, showing the importance of practical information literacy training.

Spezi (2020) emphasised that scholarly information seeking is a multidimensional process influenced by discipline, technology, research needs, and academic context. Scholars use both formal and informal information channels, so libraries should provide flexible and user-centred services.

Clark et al. (2025) concluded that music students continue to value both print and digital library resources after the pandemic. Printed scores and books remain important, while online

platforms are widely used for convenience.

Research Gap :

Previous studies on information-seeking behaviour have mainly focused on students or specific aspects such as digital resources, information literacy, and library use. Limited research has directly compared students and faculty in performing arts, especially regarding their information needs, preferred sources, search practices, use of specialized resources, difficulties, and satisfaction. Therefore, the present study aims to fill this gap by comparatively examining the information needs and seeking behaviour of students and faculty in performing arts.

Objectives of the Study :

1. To Study information needs of the Performing Arts Students and Faculty
2. To Study Information seeking behaviour of students and faculty of Performing Arts

Research Methodology :

1. Research Design :

The present study follows a descriptive and comparative research design. It aims to examine the information-seeking behaviour of students and faculty members in the field of performing arts and to compare their information needs with respect to academic, practical, and research aspects.

2. Area of the Study :

The study is concerned with the information-seeking behaviour of students and faculty members associated with performing arts education in Maharashtra. Performing arts in the present study cover information requirements relating to areas such as music, dance, theatre, performance, culture, literature, and research.

3. Population of the Study :

The population of the study consists of students and faculty members in the field of performing arts. These two categories of respondents were considered in order to identify and compare differences in their information-seeking requirements.

4. Sample Size :

A total of 200 respondents were considered for the study. The sample consisted of:

- Students – 120 respondents
- Faculty Members – 80 respondents

The same respondent groups were used for analysing academic, practical, and research-related information needs.

5. Sampling Technique :

The present study used the Simple Random Sampling Method for selecting respondents. Under this method, every member of the population had an equal and independent chance of being selected for the study. This sampling technique helped to reduce selection bias and ensured fair representation of both students and faculty members.

6. Major Dimensions of the Study :

The information needs and seeking behaviour of respondents was studied under the following three major dimensions:

1. **Academic Aspects :** including cine/film music, dance techniques, dramaturgy, history and development, languages, literature, music composition, musical instruments, musicology, plays and folklore.
2. **Practical Aspects :** including acting and expressions, artists and their performances, choreography, costume and make-up, health and fitness, notation, performance elements, rhythm, set designing, writing techniques, and voice and speech modulation.
3. **Research Aspects :** including aesthetics, culture and traditions, interdisciplinary study, mythology, philosophy and religion, raagas, and research methodology.

Data Analysis :

The data analysis section presents the systematic analysis and interpretation of the information collected from students and faculty members in the field of performing arts. The analysis mainly focuses on comparing the information-seeking behaviour of students and faculty with respect to academic, practical, and research aspects. Appropriate statistical techniques such as descriptive statistics and the Independent Samples t-test are used to examine differences between the two respondent groups and to test the formulated hypotheses.

Objective 1 To Study Information needs of the Performing Arts Students and Faculty.

Need for Academic Aspects:

Sr. No.	Information Need	Students		Faculty	
		Yes	No	Yes	No
1	Cine/Film Music	88	32	46	34
2	Dance Techniques	32	88	20	60
3	Dramaturgy	55	65	35	45
4	History and Development	60	60	64	16

5	Language – Indian and Foreign	54	66	72	8
6	Literature – Indian and Foreign	59	61	79	1
7	Music Composition	63	57	77	3
8	Music Instruments – Technical Information	58	62	77	3
9	Musicology	69	51	78	2
10	Plays and Folklore (Scripts)	37	83	38	42

The table presents the information need of students and faculty towards academic aspects of performing arts. Among students, the highest information need was observed for Cine/Film Music (88), followed by Musicology (69) and Music Composition (63), while the lowest interest was recorded for Dance Techniques (32) and Plays and Folklore (Scripts) (37). Among faculty members, the highest information need was for Literature–Indian and Foreign (79), followed by Musicology (78) and Music Composition and Music Instruments–Technical Information (77 each). Faculty also showed considerable interest in Language–Indian and Foreign (72) and History and Development (64).

Interpretation :

The Independent Samples t-test shows a statistically significant difference between students and faculty regarding the need for academic aspects ($t = -8.007$, $p = 0.000 < 0.05$). Faculty members reported a substantially higher mean score of 73.25 compared to students, whose mean score was 47.92, indicating that faculty have a greater need for academic information. Further, students showed higher variability in their responses (SD = 24.662) than faculty members (SD = 16.972), suggesting that faculty responses were comparatively more consistent regarding their academic information needs.

Need for Practical Aspects:

Sr. No.	Information Need	Students		Faculty	
		Yes	No	Yes	No
1	Acting, Expressions	71	49	37	43
2	Artists and their Performance	109	11	79	1
3	Choreography	97	23	78	2
4	Costume, Make-up, Ornaments	100	20	76	4
5	Health and Fitness	94	26	76	4
6	Notation/Sheet Music/Scores	97	23	38	42
7	Performing Aspects/Elements	98	22	50	30

8	Rhythm	100	20	59	21
9	Set Designing, Drapery	28	92	40	40
10	Techniques of Writing	26	94	39	41
11	Voice and Speech Modulation	46	74	48	32

The table presents the information need of students and faculty towards performing aspects. Among students, the highest information need was for Artists and their Performance (109), followed by Costume, Make-up and Ornaments (100), Rhythm (100), and Performing Aspects/Elements (98). Students showed comparatively lower interest in Techniques of Writing (26) and Set Designing and Drapery (28). Among faculty members, the highest information need was for Artists and their Performance (79), followed by Choreography (78), Costume, Make-up and Ornaments (76), and Health and Fitness (76).

Interpretation :

The Independent Samples t-test shows that there is no statistically significant difference between students and faculty regarding the need for practical aspects ($t = -1.408$, $p = 0.161 > 0.05$). Although faculty members recorded a slightly higher mean score of 70.46 compared to students with a mean score of 65.61, the difference is not statistically significant. Students also showed greater variation in their responses (SD = 26.621) than faculty members (SD = 18.943), indicating that faculty responses were comparatively more consistent regarding their practical information needs.

Need for Research Aspects:

Sr. No.	Information Need	Students		Faculty	
		Yes	No	Yes	No
1	Aesthetics	39	81	65	15
2	Culture, Customs, Traditions	49	71	59	21
3	Interdisciplinary Study	22	98	56	24
4	Mythology	5	115	43	37
5	Philosophy and Religion	29	91	45	35
6	Raagas	77	43	49	31
7	Research Methodology	48	72	4	76

The table presents the information need of students and faculty towards research aspects. Among students, the highest information need was for Raagas (77), followed by Culture, Customs and Traditions (49) and Research Methodology (48), while the lowest interest was observed in Mythology (5) and Interdisciplinary Study (22). Among faculty members, the highest information need was for Aesthetics (65), followed by Culture, Customs and Traditions (59) and Interdisciplinary Study (56), whereas Research Methodology (4) recorded the lowest response.

Interpretation :

The Independent Samples t-test shows that there is a statistically significant difference between students and faculty regarding the need for research aspects ($t = -7.698$, $p = 0.000 < 0.05$). Faculty members recorded a considerably higher mean score of 57.32 compared to students, who recorded a mean score of 32.02, indicating that faculty have a greater need for research-related information. The standard deviation values are almost similar for faculty (SD = 22.557) and students (SD = 22.908), showing a comparable level of variation in their responses.

Objective 2 To Study Information seeking behaviour of the students and faculty members of Performing Arts.

Ranks		
Information Source	**Mean Rank of Students**	**Mena rank of Faculty**
16.1 Textbooks	5.79	5.38
16.2 Reference books	4.97	5.8
16.3 Rare books and manuscripts	3.98	4.06
16.4Theses and dissertations	4.02	3.66
16.5 Ebooks and ejournals	4.23	4.44
16.6 Online databases	4.34	4.41
16.7Audio visual materials	4.23	4.34
16.8 Photographs	4.44	3.9

Interpretation :

Textbooks ranked first among the library information sources, with the highest mean rank of 5.79 for student users. The reference books occupied second position among the information sources used by the students. The rare books with mean rank 3.98 were least preferred. In contrast to the student users, reference books ranked first with mean rank of 5.8 in case of faculty members followed by test books with mean rank of 5.38. E-books, E-journals and online databases were also frequently used by the faculty.

Conclusion :

The study concludes that students and faculty members in performing arts demonstrate different patterns of information-seeking behaviour depending on the nature of their academic, practical, and research requirements and use of information sources. Faculty members showed substantially higher information needs in academic aspects (Mean = 73.25) than students (Mean = 47.92), and the difference was statistically significant. In practical aspects, both groups demonstrated relatively high information needs, with faculty recording a slightly higher mean of 70.46 compared with 65.61 for students, although the difference was not statistically significant. Faculty members also demonstrated considerably greater research

information needs, with a mean score of 57.32, compared with 32.02 among students, and this difference was statistically significant. The faculty used reference books (Mean rank 5.8) and E-resources more than the students who preferred text books (Mean rank 5.79) as the main source of information. These findings indicate that performing arts libraries should adopt a balanced and interdisciplinary collection-development approach that provides academic literature, performance-oriented resources, multimedia materials, cultural information, and research resources while considering the distinct needs of both students and faculty members.

Recommendations :

Based on the findings of the study following measures are recommended for academic libraries that support performing arts education in Maharashtra:

- Annual survey of information needs of students and faculty covering requirements of academic, research and practical aspects.
- Written collection development policy for acquisition of interdisciplinary information sources to support teaching-learning in all forms of Performing Arts and strengthening interdisciplinary research.
- Procurement of Audio-visual material comprising of films, videos and recordings.
- Preservation of rare photographs, manuscripts and recordings using digital technology.
- Maintaining Digital repositories and documentation of local performances.
- Specialized collection focusing on folk art and traditions in Maharashtra.
- Faculty-Librarian liaison for collection development.
- Resource sharing among local libraries.
- Periodic evaluation of the collection use.

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