Everyday Life Information Seeking: A Quantitative Study of Urban Teens in Pakistan

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ABSTRACT

Considering the socioeconomic significance of the Indus Basin, the effect of climate the purpose of this paper is to elaborate the everyday information seeking practices of urban teens and the benefits they get from these practices; moreover, demographic details of participants are also elaborated. In Pakistan many studies have been carried out on information need and seeking behavior of diverse groups, but not a single study has been done so far on everyday information seeking of Pakistani urban teens. This research is a humble endeavor to understand their daily practices that may lead to design systems for fulfilling their everyday information needs. For this purpose, a quantitative study was conducted employing a sample of 1000 urban teen participants who responded to the survey. Cluster sampling was done and the Likert scale was used to assess the written questionnaires, which were analyzed on the statistical software SPSS-21. These teens were from public and private schools of Pakistan. This data was collected by using Google forms. The results indicated that an easy access to teen's preferred sources would play important role in their lives. It would be helpful for academicians to understand the teens' ELIS behavior and reasons of their preferred information sources. This study will also be helpful for policy makers and for librarians to introduce diverse information services in schools and curricula.

KEYWORDS

Everyday life information seeking, Everyday information practices, ELIS, Urban Teens, Pakistan.

Introduction

Everyday life information seeking (ELIS) is also known as everyday life information behavior. This term (ELIS) was coined by Savolainen (1995). Wilson (2000) mentioned information behavior as the totality of human behavior for both active and passive information seeking and use. Thus, information behavior would encompass face-to-face communication as well as the passive reception of information. Tuominen, Talja, Sanna, and, Savolainen (2005) highlighted that all practices belonging to humans have a social nature and they originate from interactions between the members of the community. In this way, the concept of practice shifts the focus from behavior to the members of various groups and communities who constitute their everyday activities' context. "These concepts are called (alternative) umbrella concepts referring to the ways in which people articulate their need of information or seek, use, share and manage information" (Savolainen, personal communication, June 08, 2018).

Research Questions:

1. How do Pakistani urban teen students seek their everyday information?
2. What are the demographics details of research participants such as the number of siblings, province, gender, and age?
3. How everyday information seeking practices are giving benefit to urban teens?

Literature Review:

Everyday life information seeking occurs on daily basis (Beheshti & Andrew, 2013). Savolainen (2010) described that the key word is everyday life, which refers to a set of attributes characterizing relatively stable and recurrent qualities of both work and free time activities. Todd, (2003) argued that adolescents are not "passive, robot-like processors of information; rather they are active creators of new knowledge" (p. 40). In this regard it is significant to understand that how do they construct, apprehend and modify the structure of knowledge Information sharing is another behavior and influenced by cultural factors and web/electronic environment. Wilson (1981) focused upon the information exchange and its role with the opinion that information sharing is multidimensional and this also varies from context to context. Savolainen (2022) "the understanding about the nature of everyday life as a context of information behavior has become more nuanced".

A number of studies have been conducted on the information behavior of teens, especially in the last two decades like, Howard & Jin (2004), Agosto & Hassel (2006-a), Agosto & Hassell (2006-b), Chung & Neuman (2007), Julien & Barker (2009), Meyers, Fisher, and Marcoux (2009), Sin & Kim (2013), Bowler (2013) and Hanif & Warraich (2019). Phelan (2009) mentioned that it was only the past decade that the studies on

teenagers have been done with real consistency. Further the author tried to explain "perhaps because of the technological resources that make it easier for teenagers to seek information and researchers to observe the process" (p.2). Hanif & Warraich (2023) mentioned that "For urban teens everyday information practice is developing relationship with others".

Methodology:

The survey method was used for this study. Survey methodology was considered the most appropriate method to collect the data from a huge and geographically dispersed population. The population of the study was urban teens who were enrolled in private and public schools in Pakistan. The cluster sampling method was used for data collection. Different clusters were made, and these clusters were based on all the provinces of Pakistan including Gilgit Baltistan and Islamabad Capital Territory.

The online link (Google Forms) was shared with all the students (1452) of selected schools. and 1045 responses were received. From these responses, 1000 useable responses were finalized which shows a 69% response rate. The first part pf questionnaire was based on demographic variables such as age, gender, number of siblings, and province. In the second part, the statements of the survey were given with a 5-point Likert scale having categories of responses such as 'strongly disagree', 'disagree', 'undecided', 'agree', and 'strongly agree'. To ensure content validity, the questionnaire was presented to three experts for content validity. The suggested changes were incorporated into the questionnaire.

Data Collection:

The data collection process was done online, permission was obtained from the school principals and a link to the questionnaire was sent to the respective classes. All the schools cooperated in this regard and they ensured that students will fill out the questionnaire.

Data Analysis:

Since the first research question was to know urban teen's everyday information seeking practices. So for this purpose two main categories were made in questionnaire. The first was to know their preferences for human sources and the second category was non-human sources. Data were analyzed on the statistical software SPSS-21 and the following results were revealed.

Information Seeking: Percentage of Respondents' Preference for Human

Information Sources: To know the preferred human information sources, a total of five options (parents, friends, relatives, teachers, and librarians) were given to the

participants. The participants were also given the option to choose more than one option if they felt that more options were helpful for their everyday information practices.
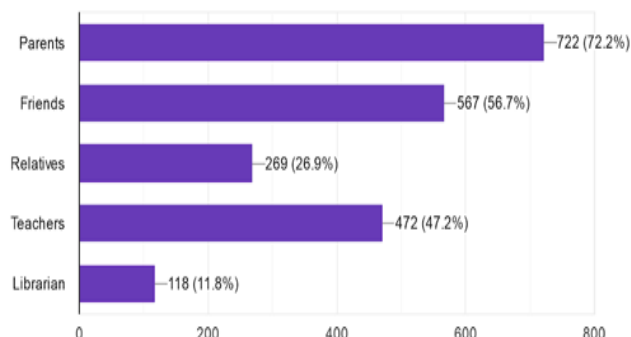
Figure 1 Percentage of Respondents' Preference for human information Sources

The results illustrated in Figure 1 revealed some interesting findings. As we are living in a digital era and normally it is considered that the young generation is more into digital devices and digital sources than the human information sources and that parents would not be a preferred source. On the contrary, the results of the study showed that parents are the most preferred source for getting everyday information. The percentage for this source was 72%. Friends were found to be the second most preferred source of information and the score for this source was 56.7%. The percentage for teachers was 47% and 26.9% was found for relatives. The lowest percentage, However, was found for the librarians, while librarians should be the most preferable source. But it is observed that a very smaller number of students prefer the librarians to find their everyday information.

Since the teenagers are mostly engaged with their class fellows and sibling so a separate analysis was made to know the specific details of these groups. Figure no.2 is showing the results of this analysis.
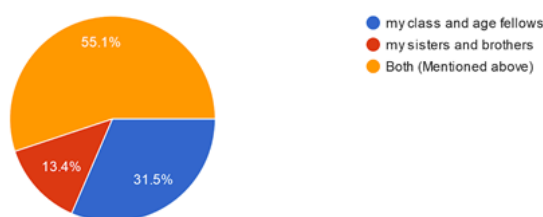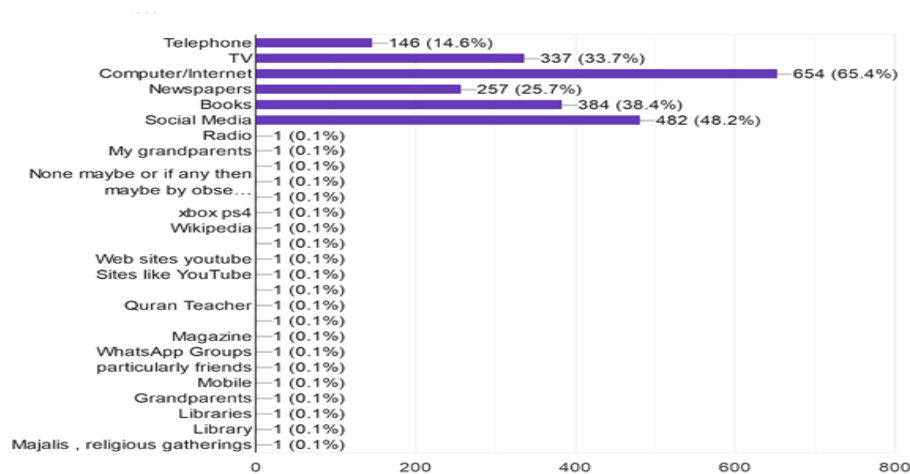

Figure 2 Percentage of Respondents' Human Information Seeking Sources

The result shows that more than half of the sample responded (55.1%) consulted

siblings, as well as age fellows and class fellows, are consulted for get everyday information. Less number of participants (13.4%)responded that sisters and brothers are preferred sources and 31.5% chose the option of class and age fellows as information seeking sources.

Information Seeking: Percentage of Respondents' Preference for Non-Human Information Sources: To know the respondents' Non- human information-seeking sources, a total of six commonly known options were given such as telephone, TV, Computer/Internet, Newspapers, books, and social media. The second option was also given in the form of "any other sources" so that they could mention any other information sources, if they are using.

Figure 3. Percentage of Respondents' non-human information sources (Including Other Information Seeking Sources)

The highest percentage 65.4% was found for computer/internet usage, which shows that the majority of teens' most preferred source is the computer and the internet. Social media with a percentage of 48.2% was at the second highest level. While 38.4% of the teens from the sample also consulted books to find their everyday information. Out of 1000 participants, only 14.6% of teens were found to get information via telephone, while 33.7% of the teens were habitual to watching TV and that was the source of getting everyday information. Only 25.7% of the respondents were keeping themselves up to date regarding everyday information by reading newspapers. Some more options were also mentioned by the participants such as grandparents, Quran teachers, magazines, WhatsApp groups, and Majalis (religious gatherings).

The second research question was to know the demographic details or urban teens and the analysis revealed the following results.

Percentage of Respondents' Age Group by Gender: Table.1 explains the gender-wise distribution of the participants according to their age. It is interesting to see that number of male participants in the first age group (13-14) is higher than females. while in the second group (15-16) it is the opposite. Male participants are 18.5% and female participants are 15.1%.

Table 1

Respondents' age group by gender (N=1000)

Age Group (In Years)	Gender		Total
	Male	Female	
13-14	173	105	278
	17.3%	10.5%	27.8%
15-16	189	151	340
	18.9%	15.1%	34.0%
17-19	159	223	382
	15.9%	22.3%	38.2%
Total	521	479	1000
	52.1%	47.9%	100.0%

The third and last age group years (17-19) again shows that male participants are more than females. Results indicate that number of male participants was higher than the number of female participants, while in Pakistan female population is higher than males. So it is also interesting to know that a good number of females are studying at the secondary level in schools.

Percentage of Respondents Number of Siblings

Figure 4 depicts the percentage of respondents' number of the sibling. A large majority of the urban teens had two siblings. The percentage for a group having two siblings was 41%. while 38.5% of teens were having more than two and less than five siblings. A substantial minority, only 20.5 % of students were having more than 4 siblings.
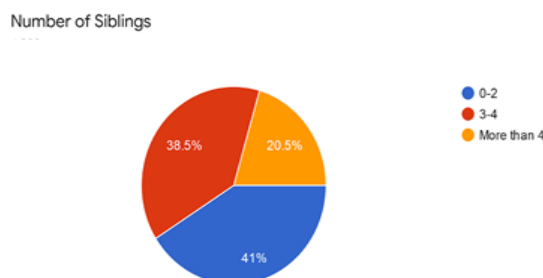
Number of Siblings

Figure.4 Percentage of Respondents' Number of Siblings

This sample of 1000 students belongs to families that are educating their children. This sample shows that these families are having less number of children. This is an interesting finding given the fact that data is obtained from a highly populous country such as Pakistan.

Percentage of Respondents Province:

Figure. 5 illustrates the percentage of respondents belonging to each province of Pakistan. All provinces of Pakistan were taken as an important part of the sample for this study along with special areas such as Gilgit Baltistan and Islamabad, the federal capital.
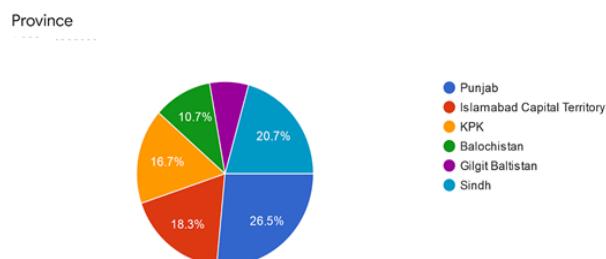
Province

Figure.5 Percentage of respondents Province

The highest response 26.5% was received from Punjab which is the biggest province of Pakistan in terms of population. Sindh province remained in the second number with 20.7% responses while Islamabad Capital territory was in third place with a percentage of 18.3% responses. From Khyber Pakhtoonkhwa (KPK) a total of 16.7% responses were received while 10.7% responses were received from Baluchistan and the lowest response was 7.1% from Gilgit Baltistan.

Analysis for Open Ended Question

Our third research question was, how everyday information seeking practices are giving benefit to urban teens. For this purpose, one open-ended option was also given to the participants to know how much benefit they get from these information seeking practices to fulfill their daily information needs and if they consult any other sources not mentioned in the questionnaire. A total of 188 responses were received from 1000 participants. From all these responses nil, none, no and those points which were already discussed in the questionnaire were removed for data analysis and a few more points came up which created a few themes. Following themes were explored from these responses.

Table 2

Content Analysis of Open-Ended Questions N=188

Themes	f
Religious faith and ethics	11
Relationship building with neighboring and same cultured countries	8
News channels as a learning hub	14
Inner satisfaction/ self-confidence	11
Academic suspicion and wastage of time	10
Grandparents as a basic source	13
ELIS and area of interest	9
Keeping a record of information	18
Creation of new concepts and vocabulary	10
Websites related to age and interest	12

The details of these themes are mention in below analysis.

1. Religious Faith and Ethics:
   The first explored theme was everyday information seeking practice helps develop

ethics and improve religious knowledge. When someone is sharing religious knowledge he/she is also sharing in a good manner. On the contrary, people are also responding in the same manner which is ultimately becoming a good practice.

2. Relationship Building with Neighbor and same Cultured Countries:

It was found that for a few teens everyday information plays a vital role in developing relationships with others, even with our neighboring countries.

3. News Channels as a Learning Hub

New channels were found to play a major role in developing knowledge. it was also mentioned that everyday information keeps us updated about the happenings in the world. It was also considered a helpful way of doing daily routine work.

4. Inner Satisfaction/ Self-Confidence:

One respondent mentioned that "Everyday information practices make us confident". Some others also endorsed that they help in developing our self-confidence and a sense of socialization.

5. Academic Suspicion and wastage of Time:

Few students mentioned that everyday information seeking practice wastes their precious time and becomes a basic reason for academic suspicion.

6. Grandparents as Basic Source

Grandparents were found as a major source of learning by many respondents

7. ELIS and Area of Interest

Everyday information was found to be related to the area of interest, students try to search only that information which is of their interest.

8. Keeping Record of Information

Managing information was mentioned as an part of information seeking practice by a few students.

9. Creation of New Concepts and Vocabulary.

Many students shared their experience that this practice increased their general knowledge, and keeps them up to date with everyday affairs. Following three statements obtained strong responses from participants.

- . "*Everyday information seeking increases our vocabulary*"
- . "*Information Practices help us in understanding the concepts easily*"
- "*In my point of view, sharing helps you to understand the concepts clearly. I like to share my opinions/information with others, which helps me to know bundles of ideas and thoughts of others about current affairs/issues*".

10. Websites Related to Age and Interest

One theme was explored that there should be separate websites, according to the

age level of students.

Findings:

Parents are a reliable source. Results depicted that for everyday information seeking practices urban teens not only prefer online sources but also prefer their parents as the reliable sources for information. This shows the preference of Pakistani urban teens for searching the sources of information.

Librarians are the least preferred source. Ironically, librarians were the least preferred source of information for Pakistani urban teens. librarians don't have an active role in the information practices of urban teens. While they can play a vital role by designing innovative, and user-centered services in their libraries to facilitate these urban tees.

Family and friends are preferred sources. urban teenagers mostly relied on friends and family for information seeking. This finding was further probed and it was discovered that teenagers preferred both class fellows as well as their siblings as second information seeking sources in the context of resources other than parents.

Internet and social media are commonly used sources. The findings also revealed that from non-human information sources, teenagers rely the most on the internet and the computer. The next most preferred source for teenagers was social media. The use of social media is yet again linked to the usage of the internet. Purposeful information seeking was more likely to occur online.

Demographics details: The demographic analysis of participants show that how teens are actively seeking their everyday information. Whatever circumstances they have and wherever do they live.

Improves general knowledge. Everyday information seeking practice keeps us up to date about everyday life and current issues. It also improves our general knowledge.

Relationships building. The teens believed that everyday information seeking helped develop relationships with others. This relationship building is very helpful for their academic activities as well.

Contributions/Practical Implication:

Easy and useful access to teen's expected and preferred sources would play important role in their lives. It would be helpful for academicians to understand the teens' ELIS behavior and reasons of preferred information sources This study will also be helpful for policy makers and for librarians to introduce diverse information services in schools and curricula. The findings of this study may lead to further empirical investigation.

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