ACADEMIC DISCIPLINE DIFFERENCES AND HOW IT AFFECTS THE INFORMATION

SEEKING BEHAVIOUR OF INFORMATION USERS

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**Abstract**

*This paper is on the academic discipline differences and how it affects the information seeking behavior of information users. It gave the concept of an academic discipline or field of study as a branch of knowledge, taught and researched as part of higher education by the university faculties and learned societies to which they belong and the academic journals in which they publish research. Information-seeking behavior on the other hand is a more specific concept of information behavior. It*specifically focuses on searching, finding, and retrieving information*. The paper explained the biglan classification scheme. It also highlighted the problem statement such as lack of reading material on this subject on graduate students, especially in Africa. The paper went further to reviewed the researches and related studies on the subject matter and also gave recommendation and conclusions which all emanates from the research.*

**Key word**: **Academic Discipline, Information Seeking Behavior, Information Users, Biglan Scheme**

**Introduction**

Academic discipline can be seen as a form of specific and rigorous scientific training that will turn out practitioners discipline as "a branch of learning or scholarly instruction. It is a discipline or fields of study that provides the framework for a student's program of college or post baccalaureate study.

* The Biglan classification scheme is probably the most cited organizational system of academic disciplines in higher education. Different researchers take different bases of their organizations.
* Biglan’s scheme is cited more than five times as often, even accounting for its earlier publication. It has received widespread use in many analyses within higher education including teachers’ reflective practice. Jones,W.A. (2011)
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**Statement of the Problem**

A significant body of literature exists on the information seeking behavior and information needs of different user groups across disciplines. There is, however, a considerable lack of reading material on this subject on graduate students, especially in Africa. Developments in the educational system have brought about changes in the teaching methods which impact on students’ information seeking behavior. The increased project work in the learner-centered environment has resulted in students needing to be more knowledgeable with information access tools. This has in turn resulted in librarians being more concerned about the background of students and the kind of capabilities potential users and users of the library have. User education programs have been put in place in some academic libraries to help users make effective use of libraries.

**Researches and Findings**

Some findings on how disciplines affects information seeking behavior of information users includes; the natural science, here the researchers prefer articles and preprints (digital), value informal information sources (e.g. conferences, personal contacts), they don’t like libraries/librarians. Social science and humanities prefers important sources beside articles such as books (also printed). In terms of technological preferences today there are no more differences, but natural scientists adopt the information and communication technologies in their work. Other researchers analyzed the information-seeking behavior of people in the humanities, and generally, these authors found that humanities scholars did not use indexes and abstracts or consult librarians. Choo, C,. Detlor,B., & Turnbul, D. (2000)

Fanelli, D. (2010) analyzed the information-seeking behavior of physical scientists; she found out that these scientists preferred using journal articles, finding new information by attending conferences and through preprints.

**Implication, Recommendation and Conclusion**

The implication of the study therefore is that there is, however, a considerable lack of reading material on this subject on graduate students, especially in Africa. The paper recommended that the three dimensions were valid for assessing statistically significant differences between undergraduate majors in the different academic disciplines. In conclusion the information seeking behavior of social sciences majors also differed from social scientists in the study by Jo Kreber, C., & Castledon, H. (2009) in one activity undergraduates were likely to request assistance from reference librarians. This clearly reveals the fact that disciplinary differences affects the information seeking behavior to a very great extent. Therefore, the level of information seeking is greatly influenced by disciplines.

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