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Information seeking behavior of the forestry scientists of the Pakistan Forest Institute, Peshawar. Unpublished M.Phil. thesis, University of the Punjab, Lahore, 2011.
[Abstract]

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The role of forestry scientists is very crucial as they preserve the natural forest resources indispensable for the survival of humans and animals. Scientists can perform well and improve their services if their information needs are met. If they are equipped with new tools and techniques they will be able to adjust to the changes occurring at international level and will play an effective role in the training of novice foresters. The present literature available on the forestry scientists' information seeking behavior (ISB) is insufficient. Therefore, it is necessary to investigate this area. This study will be an addition to the existing literature.

The objective of this study was to investigate the ISB of the forestry scientists working at the Pakistan Forest Institute (PFI), Peshawar. Survey method, using a questionnaire, was used to collect data from the faculty and non-faculty members with forestry qualifications. These data were supplemented by qualitative interviews of 12 selected respondents. The initial instrument prepared by the researcher with the help of his supervisor was reviewed by a panel of five ex-forestry scientists for content validation, pilot-tested on a group of 10 ex-forestry scientists who were not part of the sample, and revised. It was distributed among 69 forestry scientists. The study is based on the responses of 64 (92.75%) participants. Relevant statistics have been used for data analysis using SPSS.

Sixty-one respondents were male and only three were female. They used a variety of formal and informal information sources. The results showed that the main motivation for seeking information by this group was their interest in personal development, conducting research, and keeping up to date. The top three frequently used information sources were books, journals, and newspapers and magazines. Interpersonal communication with colleagues, academic staff at PFI, and attending professional conferences were ranked as the three top communication channels. The majority of respondents reported lack of electronic information resources, up to date material, and difficulty in accessing international information as the main barriers in their information seeking. In-service training courses on information searching would be useful to improve their ISB. Enhanced library facilities will motivate them to use latest information sources. The results of this study can be used to provide improved information sources and services for forestry scientists and remove barriers to facilitate the use of forestry information.