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Information Channel Preference in Seeking Cultural Heritage Information: A Study

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ABSTRACT

Information is accessed through a variety of routes, one of which is an information channel. The formal channel follows a structured path, whereas the informal channel takes a more unstructured path. This study primarily looks into the channel(s) used for seeking cultural heritage information among the Tangkhul tribe from Manipur state, India and also checked the significant change between studied variables and demographic variables. This study employed a stratified random sampling method to draw the sample. The study used a survey method and a structured questionnaire tool for data collection. The questionnaire comprises respondents' demographic profiles and 13 items on channels preferred for seeking cultural heritage information. Analysis present that the most prevalent strategy for accessing cultural heritage knowledge was determined to be "elderly people in the community" with a mean score of 3.85. Furthermore, factor analysis identifies two types of channels: informal and formal. And current residency (p-value=0.044) and family annual income (p-value=0.043) influence channel choice for accessing information, with those living in Manipur state preferring official channels and those earning INR 9,00,001 annually or more preferring informal channels.

Keywords: Information needs; Information channel; Channel preference; Cultural heritage information

1. INTRODUCTION

Information is important to the receiver in making necessary decision[1-2]. Published literature indicates the information seekers' choice of information is resolute by various elements such as information sources and information channels[3,4]. Cultural heritage information represents a chain of approaches and activities with which people investigate cultural heritage[5]. The action of pursuing cultural heritage information through various means and methods is referred to as cultural heritage information seeking. Tacit knowledge to explicit knowledge, print to electronic resources and electronic media are vital sources for seeking information. The study explores the relationship between demographic characteristics and studied variables. In recent years, a discussion on globalisation and rootlessness has been a great concern with the indigenous community[6]. The current research is motivated from preceding works on information seeking studies.[7-16.] Consequently, thorough research is necessary to study the information channel's preference for seeking cultural heritage information. No previous study is being conducted in the area of information channels used for seeking cultural heritage information[17] among the Tangkhul tribe. Accordingly, this research is a groundbreaking effort to examine the channel's preference for seeking cultural heritage information. Thus we propose the following objectives, research questions and research hypothesis. The research objectives are: 1) To study the channel(s) used for seeking cultural heritage information; and 2) To check the significant change between studied variables and demographic variables.

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1.1 Research Questions

RQ1. What is/are the channel(s) used for seeking cultural heritage information?

RQ2. Do demographic variables influence on the choice of channel(s) selection for seeking cultural heritage information?

1.2 Research Hypothesis

H1: There is a significant difference between demographic variables with informal and formal channels.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

Information is described as the knowledge attained from examination, study, or instruction[18]. Kundu (2017)[1] highlights the vitality of information to a human being, as information is vital to all people, regardless of their beliefs, culture and environment[2]. Mansour (2017)[14] stated that information aids in developing better populaces and prolific members of society, therefore individuals should be presented with unrestricted admission to information. Undeniably, well-informed persons raise the quality of society[2]. The term information need was first coined by Taylor (1962)[19]. Most of the time, information need is considered as an individual or group aspiration to discover and attain the information to satiate a mindful and

insensible requirement[2], closely interrelated to the conception of relevance. Thus, individuals ruminate something pertinent if it is interrelated to a job to be completed[10]. Published literature stated that there is no clear-cut measurement scale to measure information needs[20], there is an absence of theoretical fundamentals supporting empirical research[14], and use of delicate representations such as information seeking behavior and information use in quantifying information needs[9].

Rogers (1986)[4] described information channels as a channel through which the message is provided to a person seeking information, information channel includes newspapers, television, radio, etc., it is discrete or continuous[21]. The subject of information channels preference has been discussed among social scientists[7,5]. GrØnflaten (2009)[3] recognised significant relationships among information sources, information channels and information choice approaches. Furthermore, published literature designated that information seekers preference of information is determined by various components such as information sources and information channels[3,22]. Likewise, Arnott and Tan (2001)[23] suggested information sources and information channels play a critical role in transmitting the required information. Preceding research has failed to differentiate vital theoretical construct of information science i.e., information sources and information channels[22]. Likewise, Case (2002)[24] exposes the failure to differentiate between information sources and information channels. GrØnflaten (2009)[3] rational that confusion on the use of information channels by information seekers needs to be addressed by researchers.

Park, Boatwright, and Avery (2019)[25] investigated information channel preferences and discovered that people rely on a variety of information channels in both routine and crisis situations[26]. The people's information channel preferences are influenced by their perceived threat, knowledge, and awareness, and the fallouts direct that people use a variety of information channels to follow instructions[27]. Fodness and Murray (1999)[28] examined the effect on the source, channels and choice of information, and then classified into situational characteristics and demographic characteristics. Likewise, GrØnflaten (2009)[3] studied the impact of information search i.e. information source and information channels on information choice and discovered that both situational characteristics and demographic characteristics affect the connection between sources, channels and choice of information. Further, Bennett (2000)[7] found that there is an association between an independent and dependent variable in choosing a channel for seeking information. Likewise, GrØnflaten (2009)[3] introduced demographic characteristics such as gender, age, marital, education, subject background, etc. influence the choice in selecting information channels. Personal characteristics act as a moderator in selecting information channels for seeking information[29], effective selection of information channels influences on the information source selection[30]. Thus, the incorporation of demographic characteristics is appropriate for this study. Therefore, the present study examined to explain the relationship between demographic characteristics and studied variables.

3. METHODOLOGY

The study uses a survey method and questionnaire tool for data collection, as they were found to be the utmost suitable for the present study. The designed questionnaire was self-administered to all the young graduates studying in and outside of Manipur state. The questionnaire comprised of two segments; the first segment contained questions concerning personal data. The second segment contained a question of 13 statements on a five-point Likert scale, extending from never (1) to always (5), which is intended to quantify the respondents' reasons for selecting the information channels. A 5-points Likert scale is used because it adequately served the purpose of this study. Connelly (2008)[31] suggested a sample size of 10 per cent of the parent study to examine the reliability and validity of the collected data. Subsequently, a pilot study was conducted to check its internal and external validity and consistency. Based on Cochran's (1963)[32] formula, 384 students are required for the study sample. Therefore, a total of 400 were chosen for

Table 1. Respondents' demographic profile

Variable	Classification	Frequency	%
Gender	Male	196	49.00
	Female	204	51.00
Age in years	18-20	70	17.50
	21-23	105	26.25
	24-26	114	28.50
	27-29	71	17.75
	30 & above	40	10.00
Education qualification	Graduate	198	49.50
	Postgraduate	202	50.50
Subject background	Arts	138	34.50
	Science	108	27.00
	Technical	90	22.50
	Management/ Commerce	64	16.00
Region of stay (Tangkhul)	North	129	32.25
	East	92	23.00
	South	89	22.25
	West	90	22.50
Current place of residence	In Manipur state	209	52.25
	Outside Manipur state	191	47.75
Family's annual income (INR)	Less than 1,00,000	74	18.50
	1,00,001 – 3,00,000	98	24.50
	3,00,001 – 5,00,000	89	22.25
	5,00,001 – 7,00,000	96	24.00
	7,00,001 – 9,00,000	20	5.00
	9,00,001 and above	23	5.75

analysis. The sample of this study was drawn from Tangkhul youth studying inside and outside the Manipur state. The sample is made up of students who have completed at least a bachelor's degree and some are pursuing their higher studies. A stratified random sampling technique was used to determine the respondents. As presented in Table 1, 51 per cent were female, 28.5 per cent in the age of 24-26 years, 50.5 per cent had a postgraduate qualification, 34.5 per cent were from arts subject background, 32 per cent were from the northern part of Tangkhul region, 52.3 per cent were staying inside Manipur state and 24.5 per cent had a family's annual income between INR 1,00,001 – 3,00,000.

3.1 Reliability Test

To examine the internal consistency of the data set, a reliability test was conducted. The analysis presents a Cronbach's Alpha value for informal channel (0.810) and formal channel (0.817) which is greater than 0.7 and indicates internal consistency[33] of the scale.

4. DATA ANALYSIS

Microsoft Excel 2010 and IBM SPSS version 26 was used for analysis. Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) was used to moderate data to a smaller set of summary variables and to discover the underlying theoretical construction of the phenomena. Exploratory factor analysis was carried out using the principal component analysis after defining the relevance of factor analysis by means of Bartlett's test of sphericity (significant at 0.05 level) and Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) statistic (>0.6) to check the fitness of the data set. Factor with an eigenvalue larger than 1, loading of 0.4 and beyond were alternated through the varimax rotation with Kaiser Normalisation. An Independent Samples t-Test and ANOVA was conducted to examine the means of two groups and examine the differences among group means, Duncan technique was chosen for post hoc analysis and the mentioned test was conducted keeping the value of significant difference at 0.05 percentage level.

Table 2. Channel preference

Channel	Mean	Rank
Elderly people in the community	3.85	1
Family members	3.69	2
Friends	3.24	3
Teachers	3.23	4
Personal experience	3.16	5
Religious people	3.12	6
Village chief	3.12	7
Meetings, seminars, workshops, etc.	3.09	8
Libraries	2.80	9
Community information centers	2.75	10
Electronic media	2.67	11
Non-governmental organizations (NGOs)	2.30	12
Private agencies	2.27	13

Source: Primary data

4.1 Channels Preference for Seeking Cultural Heritage Information

Communication can be accomplished over different channels. Diverse channels are used to accomplish different tasks, as using an unsuitable channel can result in negative outcomes[26]. Multidimensional messages necessitate richer channels of communication to expedite interaction to guarantee clearness. The averages are calculated from 400 respondents from each statement to examine the order of preference from the most to the least significant. It was found that most of the respondents choose "elderly people in the community" (mean=3.85) as a means for seeking cultural heritage information and rank as first (Table 2).

4.2 Factor Analysis

The factor analysis technique eliminates maximum common change from all variables and put them into a common score[34]. A principal component factor examination with a Varimax rotation was carried out to highpoint various channels used for seeking cultural heritage information. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) degree of sampling adequacy is 0.886 which is greater than 0.6, indicating data appropriateness to progress for further analysis[35]. The p-value (p=0.000) is less than 0.05, which explains a relationship between the variables and the KMO (0.886), explaining the suitability of the data to proceed for further analysis. The factor with an eigenvalue larger than 1 was preferred. Factor investigation yields dual factors i.e., informal channel and formal channel (Table 3). From the two factors, the informal channel is the vital factor with an eigenvalue of 5.318 and a variance value of 44.905.

5. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

5.1 Channels Preferred for Seeking Cultural Heritage Information v/s Demographic Data

Personal characteristics such as age, gender, education, nationality, etc. may influence on the selection of a channel for seeking information[36,27,3,29]. Similarly, Park, Boatwright, and Avery (2019)[25] discovered that the informal mode of the channel is preferred by the respondents when selecting a channel for seeking information. Effective selection of information channels influence on information sources selection[30]. The results (Table 4) of the study show no difference in using informal channel (t=0.185, p=0.853) between males (mean=3.2857, SD=0.80747) and females (mean=3.2710, SD=0.77968), no difference in using informal channel (t=-1.165, SD=0.245) between undergraduates (mean=3.2316, SD=0.82967) and postgraduates (mean=3.3239, SD=0.75348), and no difference in using informal channel (t=-0.704, p=0.482) among youth studying inside Manipur state (mean=3.2515, SD=0.75502) and outside Manipur state (mean=3.3074, SD=0.83252).

Table 4 shows no difference in using formal channels (t=0.849, p=0.396) between male (mean=2.7577, SD=0.89829) and female students (mean=2.6871, SD=0.75990). Likewise, there is no difference in using formal channel (t=-0.588, p=0.557) between undergraduates (mean=2.6970, SD=0.86247) and postgraduates (mean=2.7459, SD=0.79891). And the current place of residence presents a significant difference in using formal channels (t=2.018, p=0.044) between youth

Table 3. Factor analysis

Factors	Loading	Eigenvalue	Variance	Reliability
Informal channels				
Family members	0.794			
Friends	0.721			
Elderly people in the community	0.715	5.318	44.905	0.810
Religious people	0.663			
Teachers	0.634			
Personal experience	0.523			
Electronic media	0.412			
Formal channels				
Community information centers	0.775			
Non-governmental organizations (NGOs)	0.750			
Private agencies	0.673	1.311	16.083	0.817
Libraries	0.654			
Meetings, seminars, workshops, etc.	0.641			
Village chief	0.492			

Source: Primary data

studying inside Manipur state (mean=2.8014, SD=0.77214) and outside Manipur state (mean=2.6344, SD=0.88339). The results suggest that gender does not have an impact on channels preference. Therefore, this study disagrees with Fodness & Murray (1999)[36] findings. GrØnflaten (2009)[3] findings recommended that higher educational qualifications reflected better insight for selecting a channel. However, the current study conferred that education qualification does not influence on the choice of selecting a channel for seeking cultural heritage information. The current place of residence does not show any impact on seeking cultural heritage information with informal channels and formal channels. Preceding literature suggested that place of residence has an impact on informal channels used for seeking information. However, this study's findings do not match with the results of earlier research work done in this area[28,27,3,29]. Nevertheless, the current place of residence presents a significant difference with formal channels for seeking cultural heritage information from youth staying in Manipur state.

López and Sicilia (2011)[27] found that demographic characteristics influenced on the selection of a channel for seeking information. Therefore, One-way ANOVA test was conducted to inspect the mean-variance between channels used for seeking cultural heritage information. Table 5 shows there is no difference on informal channels (F=0.455, p=0.768), and formal channels (F=0.209, p=0.934) with age groups. The result reveals that the age of the respondents does not have an impact on channels used for seeking cultural heritage information. Thus, this study results differ from López and Sicilia (2011)[27] findings. Subject background doesn't show difference in using informal channels (F=0.595, p=0.619), and formal channels (F=1.901, p=0.129). The outcome from the analysis disagrees with Park, Boatwright & Avery's (2019)[25] findings on informal channels preferred over formal channels for seeking cultural heritage

Table 4. The result of *t*-test on the informal channel and formal channel

Informal channel					
Variable	**Indicator**	**Mean**	**S. D**	**t-*value***	**p-*value***
Gender	Male	3.2857	0.80747	0.185	0.853
	Female	3.2710	0.77968		
Education qualification	Undergraduate	3.2316	0.82967	-1.165	0.245
	Postgraduate	3.3239	0.75348		
Current place of residence	In Manipur state	3.2515	0.75502	-0.704	0.482
	Outside Manipur state	3.3074	0.83252		
Formal channel					
Variable	**Indicator**	**Mean**	**S. D**	**t-*value***	**p-*value***
Gender	Male	2.7577	0.89829	0.849	0.396
	Female	2.6871	0.75990		
Education qualification	Graduate	2.6970	0.86247	-0.588	0.557
	Postgraduate	2.7459	0.79891		
Current place of residence	In Manipur state	2.8014	0.77214	2.018	0.044
	Outside Manipur state	2.6344	0.88339		

Table 5. The result of One-way ANOVA on informal channel and formal channel

Informal channel					
Variable	**Indicator**	**Mean**	**S. D**	**F-*value***	**p-*value***
Age	18-20	3.2694	0.73632	0.455	0.768
	21-23	3.2735	0.80596		
	24-26	3.2143	0.83780		
	27-29	3.3682	0.78196		
	30 & above	3.3286	0.75676		
Subject background	Arts	3.2195	0.79664	0.595	0.619
	Science	3.3267	0.80292		
	Technical	3.3365	0.79071		
	Management/Commerce	3.2411	0.77534		
Region of Stay	North	3.3134	0.75404	0.321	0.811
	East	3.3106	0.84013		
	South	3.2504	0.75847		
	West	3.2222	0.83687		
Family's annual income (INR)	Less than 1,00,000	3.1641	0.77697	2.318	0.043
	1,00,001 – 3,00,000	3.2770	0.82304		
	3,00,001 – 5,00,000	3.2408	0.77579		
	5,00,001 – 7,00,000	3.2679	0.77950		
	7,00,001 – 9,00,000	3.3357	0.75347		
	9,00,001 and above	3.7888	0.74339		
Formal channel					
Variable	**Indicator**	**Mean**	**S. D**	**F-*value***	**p-*value***
Age	18-20	2.7714	0.71850	0.209	0.934
	21-23	2.7381	0.85387		
	24-26	2.7310	0.87112		
	27-29	2.6737	0.93284		
	30 & above	2.6500	0.64803		
Subject background	Arts	.80567	0.06858	1.901	0.129
	Science	.77555	0.07463		
	Technical	.86977	0.09168		
	Management/Commerce	.89574	0.11197		
Region of Stay	North	2.7377	0.79352	0.813	0.487
	East	2.8098	0.92700		
	South	2.7097	0.76108		
	West	2.6204	0.84543		
Family's annual income (INR)	Less than 1,00,000	2.7027	0.76762	0.404	0.846
	1,00,001 – 3,00,000	2.7364	0.75941		
	3,00,001 – 5,00,000	2.6573	0.87990		
	5,00,001 – 7,00,000	2.7135	0.84698		
	7,00,001 – 9,00,000	2.8583	0.93857		
	9,00,001 and above	2.8841	0.99295		

information. Region of stay also shows no difference between informal channels (F=0.321, p=0.811), and formal channels (F=0.813, p=0.487) in seeking cultural heritage information. Thus, López and Sicilia (2011)[27] findings are not supported by this study. The analysis with family's annual incomes shows a significant difference in using informal channels (F=2.318, p=0.043), whereas no difference on formal channels (F=0.404, p=0.846). The higher income of the respondents influenced on the choice for selecting a channel. These findings are in line with Fodness and Murray (1999)[36]; López and Sicilia (2011)[27] and GrØnflaten (2009)[3] which presented that the income level of the family influences on the strategic choice of a channel used for seeking information.

To define the dissimilarities in "informal channels" with their family's annual income (INR), a post hoc test has been executed. Table 6 explains the perception of the family's income relating to the "informal channel" in which two homogeneous subsets are formed. The result indicates that family's income with (INR) 9,00,001 and above (mean score=3.7888) perceived higher use of the informal channels for seeking cultural heritage information than family's income less than (INR) 1,00,000 (mean score=3.1641).

Table 6. Informal channels

Family's annual income (INR)	N	Subset for alpha = 0.05	
		1	2
Less than 1,00,000	74	3.1641	
3,00,001 – 5,00,000	89	3.2408	
5,00,001 – 7,00,000	96	3.2679	
1,00,001 – 3,00,000	98	3.2770	
7,00,001 – 9,00,000	20	3.3357	
9,00,001 and above	23		3.7888
Sig.		.376	1.000

6. CONCLUSION

Information is considered as vital, essential and necessary for the development and leading of our day-to-day life[13]. As a result, the current study sheds light on the impact of demographic parameters in the Tangkhul tribe's youth choosing a channel for acquiring cultural heritage information. A person seeks information only when he/she feels the need to fill their information gap[24]. Buckland (2013)[6] stated that modern trends and globalisation have changed the attitude and behavior of the younger generation, therefore there is a need to examine how youth seek cultural heritage information using a different channel. Personal characteristics act as a mediating effect in selecting information channels for seeking information[29], effective selection of information channel influence on information source selection[30]. According to the study's findings, teenagers selected "elderly persons in the community" (mean=3.85) as the primary source of knowledge and rated first. The hypothesis was tested using the t-test and ANOVA test and found that the current place of residence presents a difference in using formal channels (p-value=0.044) and the family's annual income (INR) presents a difference in using an informal channel (p-value=0.043). Subsequently, a post hoc analysis presents that youth staying inside Manipur state preferred formal channels and higher-income ranging between INR 9,00,001 and above have higher influence and preferred informal channel. Whereas, gender, age in years, education level, subject background, and stay region were found to have no influence on channel selection. The limitations of this study are two folds. Firstly, this study is concentrated on well-educated youths of the Tangkhul tribe only from Manipur state, India and all the youth from Manipur state are not considered for this study. Secondly, this study studied the mean significant difference and only considered the personal characteristics of the respondents. Future research could be focused on the role of mediator(s) in seeking cultural heritage information by the tribal youth from Manipur state and also look into the association between their independent and dependent variables.

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