



Information Seeking Behavior of Users in the Assam Kaziranga University library: a case study

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Abstract

The study carried out to find the information seeking behavior of the users of the library of Assam Kaziranga University. For the data collection a well-structured questionnaire has been designed and distributed among the students, research scholar, faculty and staff. From the analyzed data it is found that the majority of the users are satisfied with the library collection, the frequency of visits to the library, the purpose of information seeking and the problems that face while seeking information.

Keywords: Information technology, library, users, information seeking

Introduction

Today, information plays a very important role in human life and is considered as basic resource. It also affects our personal and professional life. Information is necessary for everyone to make decisions and required as other natural resources in their daily lives. As we knew that the information needs and to seek behavior is refers to the way user search and utilize the information for their knowledge. "Information seeking is a kind of communication behavior which would be influenced by many factors. Vickery (1987) have grouped them as external and internal factors, which affect the behavior of individuals." Information seeking is basic activity indulge in by all people and manifested through a particular behavior (Ellis, 1989). "The origin of human information seeking behavior is found in work on user studies in general. Modern modes of technology have changed the information environment and the pursuit of knowledge has been revolutionized, mainly through the vast expansion of data accessible via the internet."



As Wilson describes it, Information seeking is a term that describes the ways individuals seek, evaluate, select, and use information. In the course of seeking new information, the individual may interact with different people, analog tools, and computer-based information systems.

Assam Kaziranga university

The Assam Kaziranga University is one of the largest private universities in North-East India. It has been established under the Assam Private University Act No. XII of 2007, offering state-of-the-art education and research relevant to market needs. Founded in the year of 2012.

Review of literature

Few related studies have been observed before conducting this study.

Kumar, P. Raja Suresh and Naick, Doraswamy(2015) has conducted the study among the engineering faculty to examine the purpose of visiting the library and also to find the satisfying level of the services of the library. Bhattacharjee, Sudip, Sinha, Manoj Kumar and Bhattacharjee, Sucheta (2014) has conducted the study to know the status of information seeking behaviour of college library users of Cachar district, Assam which comprises of undergraduate students faculty members and research scholars. Prabha, Kumud (2013) carried out the study Libraries and information systems are designed and built with the main objective of meeting the information needs of a group of people who constitute their clientele. In the past, information systems and services were developed based more on literary guarantee rather than user guarantee. In fact, the key to the objectives, guidelines and content of any and all information activities are users.

Objectives

The specific objectives of the study are as follows:

- i. To identify the information seeking behavior of the faculty members, staff, research scholars, and the students of the Assam Kaziranga University library.
- ii. To know the frequency of library visits.
- iii. To examine the satisfaction level of users with the library collection of texts books, reference books and other materials.
- iv. To examine the purpose of information seeking by users.



- v. To study the different approaches and methods used by the students, research scholars and faculty members in retrieving information from print, and electronic information resources.
- vi. To know the problems faced by users while seeking information.

Scope

The present study only confine to the library users of the Assam Kaziranga University only. The study mainly covers the information seeking behavior of the users.

Methodology

In this study a survey method has been conducted based on questionnaire method. The questionnaires have been distributed among 80 students irrespective of their gender, age. They have been asked to fill up to the same. Among all of them 60 numbers of valid responses were received back. After collecting the data of this study, the data are analyzed and interpreted in the form of tables.

1. Data analysis and interpretation

The purpose of this study is to investigate the information seeking behavior of users in the Assam Kaziranga University library. The populations of this study are the students, the research scholars and the faculty members and the staff of the Assam Kaziranga University. The primary data was collected through questionnaire. All the data collected have been analyzed and presented in the form of tables, and figures. Appropriate statistical measures like frequency, percentage, mean, standard deviation and chi-square test have been applied in the presentation and analysis of data.



8.1 Gender wise Distribution

Here it reveals the gender wise distribution of the respondents.

Table-1

Gender wise distribution

| Gender | UG Students (N=15) | PG Students (N=12) | Research Scholar (N=14) | Faculty (N=11) | Staff (N=8) | Total (N=60) |
|--------|--------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|----------------|-------------|--------------|
| Male | 9(60%) | 8(66.67%) | 12(85.71%) | 7(63.64%) | 6(75%) | 42(70%) |
| Female | 6(40%) | 4(33.33%) | 2(14.29%) | 4(36.36%) | 2(25%) | 18(30%) |

In Table it shows that out of the 60 total respondents, 42(70%) respondents are 'Male' and the remaining 18(30%) respondents are 'Female'. Further it also depicts that out of 15 UG Students 9(60%) respondents are 'Male' and remaining 6(40%) respondents are 'Female'. 12 PG Students 8(66.67%) respondents are 'Male' and remaining 4(33.33%) respondents are 'Female'. Among the 14 research scholars, 12(85.71%) are 'Male' and remaining 2(14.29%) respondents are 'Female'. 11 faculty members, 7(63.64%) respondents are 'Male' and remaining 4(36.36%) respondents are 'Female'. Out of 8 staff members, 6(75%) respondents are 'Male' and remaining 2(25%) respondents are 'Female'.

8.2 Frequency of visit the Library:

The Assam Kaziranga University students, research scholars, faculty members and staff would like to visit their library. The Table 2. shows the frequency of visit to their libraries among the respondents

Table-2

Frequency of visit the Library

| Frequency | UG Students (N=15) | PG Students (N=12) | Research Scholar (N=14) | Faculty (N=11) | Staff (N=8) | Total (N=60) |
|---------------------------|--------------------|--------------------|-------------------------|----------------|-------------|--------------|
| Daily | 7 | 5 | 6 | 5 | 1 | 24(40%) |
| Two or three times a week | 4 | 4 | 3 | 3 | 1 | 15(25%) |



| | | | | | | |
|---------------|---|---|---|---|---|------------|
| Once in week | 2 | 2 | 2 | 1 | 3 | 10(16.67%) |
| Once in month | 1 | 0 | 1 | 1 | 2 | 5(8.33%) |
| Occasionally | 0 | 1 | 2 | 0 | 1 | 4(6.67%) |

It is clear from the table that the respondents of the study in the habit of using the library. Among them about 24(40%) of respondents visit the library daily, followed by two or three times a week by 15(25%). And 10(16.67%) were visiting the library once in a week. 5(8.33%) were visiting the library once in a month and 4(6.67%) users are visiting the library occasionally and rarely respectively.

8.3 Satisfaction With The Library Collection:

The respondents are asked to give their satisfaction rating regarding the library collection. Here the rating given in table.

Table-3
Satisfaction with the Library Collection

| Type of Material | Very Good | Good | Fair | Poor | Total |
|------------------|------------|------------|------------|-----------|----------|
| Text Books | 17(28.33%) | 27(45%) | 9(15%) | 7(11.67%) | 60(100%) |
| Reference books | 11(18.33%) | 25(41.67%) | 18(30%) | 6(10%) | 60(100%) |
| Journals | 14(23.33%) | 19(31.67%) | 23(38.33%) | 4(6.67%) | 60(100%) |
| Magazines | 10(16.67%) | 21(35%) | 24(40%) | 5(8.33%) | 60(100%) |
| Newspapers | 22(32.67%) | 23(38.33%) | 11(18.33%) | 4(6.67%) | 60(100%) |
| Thesis | 9(15%) | 20(33.33%) | 29(48.33%) | 2(3.33%) | 60(100%) |

It is clear from the table that the respondents give highly rated in the Text Books 27(45%), Reference books 25(41.67%) and Newspapers 23(38.33%) as a “good.” Other hand respondents give low rated in the thesis 2(3.33%) as a “poor.”



8.4. Assistance getting users from library staff

The information that getting the users from library staff has been summarized in Table-4.

Table-4

Assistance getting users from the library staff

| Services | Students (N=27) | Research Scholar (N=14) | Faculty (N=11) | Staff (N=8) | Total (N=60) |
|------------------------|--------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| Location of Documents | 21(77.77%) | 11(78.57%) | 10(90.90%) | 4(50%) | 46(76.66%) |
| Use of reference Books | 14(51.85%) | 6(42.85%) | 5(45.45%) | 3(37.5%) | 28(30%) |
| Bibliographies | 3(11.11%) | 2(14.28%) | 3(27.27%) | 0(0%) | 8(13.33%) |
| Newspaper clipping | 7(25.92%) | 7(14.28%) | 2(18.18%) | 5(62.5%) | 21(35%) |
| Circulation | 25(92.59%) | 10(71.42%) | 8(72.72%) | 8(100%) | 51(61.66%) |
| OPAC | 24(88.88%) | 9(64.28%) | 7(63.63%) | 7(87.5%) | 47(51.66%) |

From the table above it is clear that out of 60 respondents, 47(51.66%) respondents are satisfied with the OPAC in comparison to 8(13.33%) respondents are less satisfied in Bibliographies.

8.5. Purpose of information seeking by users

The purpose of seeking information by the respondents has been summarized in Table-5.

Table-5

Purpose of information seeking by users

| Purpose | Students (N=27) | Research Scholar (N=14) | Faculty (N=11) | Staff (N=8) | Total (N=60) |
|---------|--------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| Reading | 21(77.78%) | 11(78.57%) | 10(90.91%) | 8 (100%) | 50(55.33%) |



| | | | | | |
|-------------------|------------|------------|-----------|----------|------------|
| Preparing Notes | 14(51.85%) | 6(42.86%) | 5(45.45%) | 3(37.5%) | 28(30%) |
| General Awareness | 3(11.11%) | 2(14.29%) | 3(27.27%) | 0 (0%) | 8(13.33%) |
| Discussion | 7(25.93%) | 7(50%) | 2(18.18%) | 5(62.5%) | 21(24.33%) |
| Research Work | 25(92.59%) | 10(71.43%) | 8(72.72%) | 4(50%) | 47(78.33%) |

The table 5, reveals that the highest 50(55.33%) respondents response their purpose of information seeking is Reading, 47(78.33%) respondents response their purpose of information seeking is Research Work. 28(30%) and 21(24.33%) respondents response their purpose of information seeking is Preparing Notes and Discussion. 8(13.33%) is the less score in seek information for the purpose of General Awareness.

8.6 Preference of formats by users

The preference of use of information resources by the respondents has been summarized in Table-6.

Table-6
Preference of formats by users

| Formats | Students (N=27) | Research Scholar (N=14) | Faculty (N=11) | Staff (N=8) | Total (N=60) |
|---------|--------------------|-------------------------------|-------------------|----------------|-----------------|
| Printed | 7(25.93%) | 6(42.86%) | 2(18.18%) | 2(25%) | 17(19.66%) |
| Digital | 5(18.52%) | 2(14.29%) | 3(27.27%) | 2(25%) | 12(13.33%) |
| Both | 15(55.56%) | 6(42.86%) | 7(63.63%) | 4(50%) | 32(34.66%) |

From the above mentioned table it clearly shown that Users prefer information in both print and electronic forms; however, Students and Research Scholars desire more exposure to print sources, whereas, Faculty prefer digital sources and Staff prefer both printed and digital format.



8.7 Problems faced while seeking information

The users face many problems in while seeking information. The problem such as inconvenient timings lacks of reading material, lack of access to all information's are major problems. Feedback of the users in this respect shown in table 7.

Table-7
Problems faced while seeking information

| Problems | No of Respondents | Percentage |
|--|-------------------|------------|
| Library Timing | 3 | 5% |
| Incomplete Information Material | 15 | 25% |
| Unaware of updated information Technology | 5 | 8.33% |
| Lack of Cooperation of library Staff | 3 | 5% |
| Lack of Knowledge about Library services | 11 | 18.33% |
| Resource are not available in sufficient Numbers | 3 | 5% |
| Lack of Time for searching documents | 20 | 33.33% |

From the table above reveals that the majority of respondents give the first priority to lack of time for searching documents, i.e. 20(33.33%). 15(25%) respondent's response information materials are incomplete. The third priority was Lack of Knowledge about Library services 11(18.33%). 5(8.33%) respondent's response Unaware of updating information Technology and the 3(5%) respondent's response lack of Library Timing, Lack of Cooperation of library Staff and Resource are not available in sufficient Numbers in the library.

9. Findings and Conclusion:

- i. It was found that 24(40%) respondents are visit the library, 'Daily' for their required information needs.
- ii. The users give highly rated in the library collection (Text Books 27(45%), Reference books 25(41.67%) and Newspapers 23(38.33%) is considered as good on other hand it gives low rated in the thesis 2(3.33%) as a "poor."



- iii. It has found that out of 60 respondents, 47(51.66%) respondents are satisfied with the OPAC in comparison to 8(13.33%) respondents are less satisfied in Bibliographies.
- iv. The users visited the library for different purpose. It has found that 50(55.33%) is the highest response for the purpose of information seeking is reading than the seek information for the purpose of General Awareness i.e (13.33%).
- v. It has found 15(55.56%) Students and 6(42.86%) Research Scholars desire more exposure to print sources whereas 7(63.63%) 4(50%) Faculty prefer digital sources and Staff prefer both printed and digital format.
- vi. It has found that the majority of respondents give the first priority to lack of time for searching documents, i.e. 20(33.33%).

10. Conclusion

From the study, it is evident that the majority of users visit library daily. Most of them also visit the library to keep them updated on the subject of interest. Information seeking and gathering could be a challenging task for library users, as the library has limited resources. Text book, reference book, and online resource are the main sources of information resources in the library. The text books or reference books are old collections and most of such material does not meet with their expectation.



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