

Information Needs and Information Seeking Behavior among Medical Students: A Case Study of Ladoke Akintola University Technology (LAUTECH), Ogbomoso, Oyo State, Nigeria

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ABSTRACT

The rapid increased of information in this present era has significant implication for the library usage and the education of university students. It also brings effectiveness of the library to the next level and envisioned as customization of information to meet users' needs. This research paper examines the information needs and their information seeking behavior of the students as users of College of Health Sciences Library, Ladoke Akintola University of Technology (LAUTECH) Ogbomoso, Nigeria. This research aim to accesses the students' seeking behavior by measuring user's information needs with (a) Frequency the users use College of Health Sciences Library (b) Purpose for seeking information from College of Health Sciences Library (c) Type of material seeking in College of Health Sciences Library (d) Information seeking approach in College of Health Sciences Library (e) Problem faced by users while seeking information from College of Health Sciences Library and solution. A survey method was used for collection of data. One hundred and fifty (150) copies of questionnaires were distributed. Response rate of 130 out of 150 representing 87% of the total questionnaires obtained for data analysis. The finding revealed that 42, 35, and 15% of the users visit the library daily, every day and once in a week. This indicates that the library environment is conducive for learning. Also, findings shows that 27.7, 23.1, 21.5, and 15.4% majority of students purpose of seeking information in the library is to preparing for examination, updating knowledge, writing assignment and project. It is also recommended that as a matter of urgency, some problems faced by the users of College of Health Science Library must be solved. Such problems are availability of internet services, problem of log in to internet, erratic supply of electricity, current and adequate supply of information materials, training and retraining of library staff for them to have time to attend to the users.

KEYWORDS: Information Needs, Professional Librarian, Para-Professional, University, Library, Students, Nigeria, College, Health Science.

INTRODUCTION

According to Wilson (2000), Information-seeking behavior includes “those activities a person may engage in when identifying their own needs for information, searching for such information in any way, and using or transferring that information. Kakai, et, al (2004). Have defined information-seeking behavior as an individual’s ways and manner of gathering and sourcing for information for personal use, Knowledge updating and development. Information-seeking behavior differs among user groups. Academic libraries must understand the information needs of faculty and students in order to address those needs.

Ladoke Akintola University of Technology (LAUTECH) College of Health Science library plays a major role in information transfer cycle. The role of the University Libraries is not only limited to preservation of reading materials but also to ensure that the information needs of the users are met by its own traditional as well as electronic resources and services. Information is an important and key resources and an essential input for all types of organizations. Libraries have limited resources with which they have to satisfy the information needs of users. Therefore, libraries have to build their collections and facilities to meet the requirements of the users. Good learning is based upon adequate information. Libraries are playing vital role in reshaping a future generation of students, research scholars and other users by providing required information to them. The primary agent of action and change is information. It reduces the enthalpy by increasing certainty and decreases the number of choices before us for better judgment. All users seek information to make sense of the world, getting across a barrier, solve a problem and to fill the gap in the knowledge. Information as to be integrated with knowledge to be used and applied appropriately. That is information needs knowledge and experience to solve problems. Information needs by research scholars is crucial for global development.

The development of any nation is not possible until and unless the information is made available at the door steps of those who need, preferable free of cost. People like teachers, economists, farmers, doctors, engineers, Librarians and research scholars etc. required information for their occupational and day to day activities. A student as the largest chunk of library users needs information in their daily life. Undergraduate, Post-graduate and Ph.D. level in the universities need information and other course materials for their all-round development which is obtained from the resources of the library. Academic libraries as Centre of information sources play vital role to develop lifelong learning skills among the university students. Students need to develop their skills in information management and in the use of information tools and databases that will lead them in searching the accurate information sources that related to their studies and courses.

Moreover, it will also contribute to the self-development of oneself. Thus library effectiveness can be potentially envisioned as customization of information to meet individual needs. Many studies stated that libraries needs to emphasis on the planning user-oriented program in order to provide more responsive and accountable service as cited in (Akuma & Igbal, 2012). There is a barrier to access information when users are unaware or lack of awareness of resources and services provided by the library. The users also need to have knowledge on using the library resources and services so that they are able to use information access tools efficiently.

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

Ajay (2016) carried out a study on information seeking behavior of faculty of YMCA University. Information has become the most important aspect of today's social development, as social development depends on the standard of living of that particular society. The vital factor that affects research is information. The amount and type of information received would directly have its impact on the social development. Maximum users used circulation service, reference service, computerized service and photocopying service. The present era is called the "Information era" Information has become the most important element for progress in society. To thrive in this modern era, one needs a variety of information, no matter how well versed one is in a field or profession. Psacharopoulos (1982) discusses the necessity of information in the present age. We can recognize the educational system and redefine scientific research only with the help of information.

Information seeking behavior is considered as a human behavior to search for information in purposeful way to find the gap. This behavior sometimes is very undefinable Ali (2017). The study investigates use of electronic resources by students of Business Administration (CBA) and College of Information Technology (CIT). That is, it examined possible factors and problems in their searching habits, information seeking, use and retrieval in satisfying their needs. Therefore, the study focused on information needs and information seeking behavior of medical students and barriers to utilizing online resources to execute academic tasks. It is assumed that poor information skills are preventing them from searching information effectively.

Aina and Ajiferuke (2002), had made a case study on user information seeking on library web, how the users seek and gather information for their papers and dissertations and how the library web site is becoming more and more stuffed with resources and with instructions on how to use such resources.

Ebbiwolate, Poshiga, (2010), reports the key findings of the information seeking behavior and success of students in using the web. The students are now very comfortable in using web resources and they want more reduces through web enabled technology. The students' behavior and success were compared in his study. The study reveals that that the use of search engine and the level of research skills are directly proportional to the success.

Lopatovska & Sessions (2016), made two studies on information seeking behavior on the internet. Both investigated information seeking on the World Wide Web. It is tentatively argued that there is tendency for people to access information on internet. Psychological processes of Web browsing behaviors are also discussed. Prasad (2012), focused on the relationship between end user satisfaction and some of the variables such as perceived usefulness, ease of use, user expectations, user attitude towards information system (IS) in widely divergent settings and the user skills. All library service providers will needs strategies to cope up with this diversity. The level of end user satisfaction with information technology (IT) has widely been accepted as an indicator of IT success.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The following are the specific objectives of the study:

1. To the frequency of library visit of the users;
2. To know the purpose of seeking information in the College of Health Science library;
3. To identify the type of materials seeking in the College of Health Science library;
4. To know the information seeking approach in the College of Health Science library;
5. To know the problems faced by the uses in using the College of Health Science library sources and services.

RESEARCH QUESTION

1. How frequency the users use College of Science library.
2. Is there any purpose for seeking information from College of Health Science library.
3. Can you specify the type of materials you need from College of Health Science library.
4. Is there any information seeking approach in the College of Health Science library.
5. What are the problems users have while seeking for information from College of Health library.

METHODOLOGY

The descriptive survey research design was adopted using the questionnaire as tool for data collection. The data for this study were collected by administering questionnaire to 150 undergraduate students of College of health Science as users of faculty library. The selection was done from statistics of readers that frequently use College of Health Science Library between the hours of 8.00am-4.00pm from Monday-Friday before examination period. The population comprised of one hundred and fifty registered users of College of Health Science library. 150 questionnaires were distributed to the users after random sampling method. The researcher received 130 questionnaires back out of 150. After collecting data required for the study, the data was analyzed and interpreted in the form of tables

FINDINGS AND DISCUSSION

Out of 150 questionnaires administered, 130 were returned and analyzed. This representing a response rate of 87%. Also, it indicates that students know the importance of library service provided and its impact by College of Health Science library as regard their academic work.

Table 1: Distribution of respondents by gender

Items	Respondents	Percentage
Male	75	58
Female	55	42
Total	130	100

The table reveals that 58% were male respondents while 42% were female. It shows that the male were more represented than female.

Table 2: How frequency of library visit

Frequency	No of Respondents	%
Daily	55	42
Every day	46	35
Once in a week	20	15
Once in a month	5	4
Occasionally	4	4
Total	130	100

The above shows that 42% use the library daily, 35% use it every day, and 15% use it once in a week, while 4% use it once in a month, and 4% use it occasionally.

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Table3: Purpose of seeking information in the library

Purpose of Seeking information	No of Respondent	Percentage
For updating knowledge	30	23.1
For writing assignment	28	21.5
For writing project	20	15.4
For preparing examination	36	27.7
Preparing for competitive exams	10	7.7
For entertainment	6	4.6
Total	130	100

The table above shows that 23.1% of the respondent purpose of seeking information is to updating their knowledge, while 21.5% of the respondents purpose of seeking information is for writing their assignments. 15.4% of the respondent also seeking information for writing project, moreover, 27.7% shows that majority of the respondents purpose of seeking information is for preparing for their examination. 7.7% of the respondents purpose of seeking information is for competitive exams, while 4.6% of the respondents seeking information for entertainment.

Table 4: Type of materials seeking in the library

Type of Seeking Information Materials	No of Respondents	Percentage
Textbooks	28	21.5
Periodicals	22	16.9
Reference books	15	11.5
General books	13	10.0
Newspapers	18	13.9
Competitive exam books	34	26.2
Total	130	100

The above indicates that 21.5% of the respondents have textbooks as a type of seeking materials in the library followed by periodicals of 16.9%. 11.5% of the respondents also have reference books as a type of seeking materials in the library. Also, 10.0% of the respondents have general books as their own type of seeking materials in the library. 13.9% of the respondents have newspaper as a type of seeking materials in the library, while the majority of the respondents 26.2% have the competitive exam books as the type of seeking materials in the library.

Table 5: Information seeking approach in the library

Information Seeking Approach	No of Respondents	Percentage
Information seeking in library	15	11.5
Google	35	26.9
What Sap	32	24.6
Web Search	20	15.4
Online Database	12	9.2
E-Journals/ E-Books	16	12.4
Total	130	100

The above shows that 11.5% of the respondents seeking information from College of Health Science Library through information materials, while the highest of 26.9% of the respondents use google approach in seeking information in College library. 24.6% of the next to the highest of the respondents use WhatsApp approach in seeking

information in College library. 15.4% of the respondents use Web Search approach in seeking information from College of Health Science library. 9.2% of the respondents use Online Database approach in seeking information from College of Health Science library, while 12.4% of the respondents use E-Journals/ E-Books approach in seeking information from College of Health Science library.

Table 6: Problems faced while seeking information in College of Health Science library

Problems	No of Respondents	Percentage
Availability of internet service	33	25.4
Problem of log in to internet	22	16.9
Erratic Supply of Electricity	35	26.9
Lack of Knowledge in using the library	13	10.0
Some of information materials are old	10	7.7
Lack of time on the part of staff	17	13.1
Total	130	100

The table above indicates that 25.4% of the respondents seeking information from College of Health Science Library are of the opinion that availability of internet services are inadequate, while 16.9% of the respondents have problem in login to internet. The highest number of the respondents 26.9% complained about the erratic supply of electricity in the College of Health Science Library and university as a whole. 10.0% of the respondents seeking information from College of Health Science indicate lack of knowledge in using Library, while the lowest number of respondents point out to some of old information materials in College of Health Science Library. Respondents of 13.1% emphasis on little time take on the part of library staff to attend to them.

CONCLUSION

The major role of the academic/ professional Librarian remain the same, hence, the methods and tools for information storage and retrieval continue to grow and change dramatically. This study aimed to explore the possible relationship between student's information needs and their information seeking behavior. When students seek or receive information, the important factors in their assessment of it and whether to use it are its utility and credibility of the source from which it comes. The researcher's case study has strongly joint with the discovery of relationships between information needs and seeking behavior and value on the information needs outcome. My findings indicate that all of the variable posted (Frequency of library visit, Purpose of seeking for information, Types of materials seeking for, Information seeking approach, Problems faced while seeking for information) have positive bivariate linear relationship. For possible and the best information needs in College of Health Science library, the librarians will have to change and adapt to new demands and technology in providing better resources and services to the students. The library should always be focused on the empowerment of the users. Academic library should think of new techniques which will move students towards library services.

It is obvious that information needs must meet the library users' desired in order to provide better library resources and services. By knowing the weaknesses and strengths, regards to the dimension of library resources and services, the library can easily allocate library resources and related information in order to provide better library services, resources, and facilities to the library users. Meanwhile, efforts should be continued to understand the users' needs in order to meet their expectations and demands.

RECOMMENDATION

According to the research finding, large number of students such as 42, 35, and 15 percent create habit of visiting library daily, every day and once in a week for reading purpose. This shows that the university management is improved the condition of the library to suit the users. But more reading facilities must be provided. The university management should also provide the amenities to meet up the purpose of the users in seeking information from the College of Health Science library beyond the reading for examination and the rest. The university management must as matter of fact provide current and adequate type of material to update the knowledge of the users such as textbooks, periodical, reference materials and many others. Information seeking approach through the use of sophisticated search engine must be adequately available in the College of Health Science Library to ease the problems of users in searching for information needed. All problems faced while seeking information from College of Health Science Library by users are as a matter of urgency must be quickly addressed by the management of the university. Such problems are availability of internet services, problem of log into internet by users, erratic supply of electricity, lack of knowledge in using library, current and up-to-date information materials and regular training of staff for them to be able to attend and addressed users properly.

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