A Study on Information Seeking Behaviour of Users of Agricultural College and Research Institute, Thoothukudi

T. Sundararajan
Research Scholar
Dept. of Library and Information Science
Manonmaniam Sundaranar University
Tirunelveli -627012

P. Balasubramanian
Deputy librarian
Manonmaniam Sundaranar University
Tirunelveli - 627012
bala_phd2010@ yahoo.com

Abstract

The essential components in a library and information system are documents, users and librarians. One of the main goals of any information system is to provide pin-pointed, exhaustive and expeditious information service to users. The present study deals with, "A study on information seeking Behaviour of users a Agricultural college and Research Institute Tuticorin" In order to achieve the objectives of the study, various pieces of recorded information are gathered in information centre and qualified personnels are recruited to established purposive contact between the users and information embodied in variety of documents.130th primary and secondary information have been collected and analysed. Statistical tools such as averages, percentages, diagrams and chi-square tests have been applied. After analysis, findings have been arrived and suggestions have been made on the basis of the finding of the study.

Keywords

Information; User studies; Catalogues; Sources of Information; Internet

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INTRODUCTION

Information is a dynamic and unending resource that exerts its influence on all the people in all disciplines and in all walks of life. One of the main goals of any information system is to provide pin-pointed, exhaustive and expeditious information service to users. Traditionally, Library and information services have centred on sources and technology. Only a very few academic libraries have developed sophisticated systems for collecting, organizing and retrieving texts and have applied advanced technology to provide access to vast sources of information.

USER STUDIES

Of the several methods of evaluating the library user surveys have gained. Significance as a well established measurement technique. They are a systematic in-depth attempt to obtain an objective view of a facility and match it against certain standards of efficiency, service or rate of improvement. The Students and faculty of a university are users of the library, towards whom all services are directed. Their attitudes reflect the extent to which the efforts of the librarians are successful in developing the resource and services of the university library to meet their needs . The purposes of user study are :

1. To examine patterns of library use and identity gaps in use:
2. To make book selection systematic
3. To evaluate the resources: and
4. To introduce/render documentation and information services.

USER BEHAVIOUR

The fundamental premise is that the librarian's major taste of finding information is accomplished with human being i.euser's as individuals. Hence the study of user- librarian interaction should be around human behaviour. In order to understand the behaviour of the user, the librarian must know the nature of user's needs. One must analyse and identify those aspects of "Users" which have relation in some way to the information flow.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The major objective of a library or information centre is to satisfy the information needs of users. In the current awareness mode the user requires current

information in their field for specialization or interest whereas in the ad-hoc type it is needed to satisfy a specific purpose. The following are the specific objectives selected for the present study.

1. To find out the frequency of visit to library by the respondents
2. To find out the extent of time spend by the students searching for information
3. To understand the purpose of visit to the library by respondents
4. To analyses and understand the different documentary sources Sought by the users and to identify such documentary sources for their study.
5. To find out the extent to which the library fulfils the requirement Users.
6. To analyses and understand the satisfaction level of users regarding various facilities available in the library.
7. To assess the usage of internet facilities by users.

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METHODOLOGY

This study is limited only to the undergraduate students of the Agricultural college, Vallanadu, Tuticorin Survey method has been following in the present study. For the collection of primary data, a structured, close-ended questionnaire was followed. The questionnaire comprehensively includes all the aspects regarding library, with an ultimate objective to reflect the user's opinion on the library.A sample of 120 undergraduate students of Agriculture have been selected as respondents for the students. For the collection of primary data a structured, close-ended questionnaire was used. In addition, informal talk with knowledgeable persons and interview techniques with library Professionals were made. The required secondary data were collected from the previous theses and dissertations unpublished and also the records of Agriculture college at Vallanadu.

ANALYSIS OF THE DATA

The data collected have been tabulated under various heads taking into consideration the different objectives of the study. Different statistical tools such as averages, percentages tables and diagrams are used to interpret the outcomes of the study. Hypotheses set are also tested to accept or reject the null hypotheses.

Table 1: Distribution of respondents

S.No.	Year of Study	No.of Respondents	%
1	I Year	30	25
2	II Year	30	25
3	III year	30	25
4	IV year	30	25
	TOTAL	120	100

To give equal representation to all the students, stratified random sampling method was followed in the selection of the respondents. The students are stratified on the basis of their year of study and from each class 30 students have been selected at random to constitute the respondents.

Table 2: Frequency of visit to library by the respondents

S.No.	Frequency of visit	I year	II year	III year	IV year	Total
1	Daily	20(16.67%)	18(15%)	19(15.83%)	18(15%)	75(62.5%)
2	Three times a week	03(2.5%)	04(3.33%)	03(2.5%)	03(2.5%)	13(10.83%)
3	Twice a week	03(2.5%)	03(2.5%)	02(1.67%)	04(3.33%)	12(10%)
4	Once a week	04(3.33%)	05(4.17%)	06(5%)	05(4.17%)	20(16.67%)
	Total	30(25%)	30(25%)	30(25%)	30(25%)	120(100%)

Table 2 shows that about 62.5% of the respondent visit library daily. About 10.83% visit three times a week, about 10% visit library twice a week and 16.67% visit only once a week. Majority of the respondents feel that library visit must be made compulsory and should be scheduled in their regular time-table. The calculation of chi-square value 5.87 is non-significant at 1% level , so the hypothesis,"students differ in their frequency of library visit on the basis of year of study." is accepted.

Table 3: Time spent in the library by respondents per visit

S.No.	Qty.of time spent	I Year %	II year %	III year %	IV year %	Total %
1	30 mts	14(11.67%)	15(12.5%)	12(10%)	14(11.67%)	55(45.84%)
2	One hour	8 (6.67%)	8 (6.67%)	10(8.33%)	10(8.33%)	36(30%)
3	Two hours	4 (3.33%)	4 (3.33%)	5(4.17%)	3 (2.5%)	16(13.33%)
4	Three hours	4 (3.33%)	3 (2.5%)	3 (2.5%)	3(2.5%	13(10.83%)
	Total	30(25%)	30(25%)	30(25%)	30(25%)	120(100%)

Hypothesis set and tested

"Students differ in their quantum of time spend in the library on the basis of the year of study"

Calculated chi-square value = 12.8%
Degree of freedom = 7%
Level of significance = 1%

Table 3 shows that 45 percent of the respondents spent about 30 minutes in the library during their visit to library. About 30% spent on hour during their visit and 10.83% spent more than three hours. It is found, on enquiry, that final year students and other students who are either preparing for a dissertation or for writing an article spent more hours in the library.

It is observed from table 4 that 29.17% of the students visit the library to borrow books, 56.67% of them visit library to read books and only 14.17% visit library to read subject books other than text books. Hence it is inferred that majority of the students visit library to read general books and only 14.17% of them visit to library to read subject books other than text books. The calculated chi-square value is 17.72, Degree of freedom =4 at 1% level of significance. Hence the calculated chi-square value is non-significant. So the hypothesis, year of study of respondents is not associated with students purpose of visit to the library" is accepted.

Table 4: Purpose of visit to the library

S.No.	Purpose of visit	I Year	II Year	III year	IV year	Total
1	To borrow books	10 8.33%	08 6.67%	08 6.67%	09 7.5%	35 29.17%
2	To read books	16 13.33%	17 14.17%	18 15%	17 14.17%	68 56.67%
3	To read subject book other than text book	04 3.33%	05 4.17%	04 3.33%	04 3.33%	17 14.16%
	Total	30 25%	30 25%	30 25%	30 25%	120 100%

Table 5: Type of documents preferred by Respondents

S.No.	Type of documents	I Year	II Year	III year	IV year	Total
1	Books	16 13.33%	17 14.17%	15 12.5%	18 15%	66 55%
2	Periodicals	05 4.17%	06 5%	08 6.67%	04 3.33%	23 19.17%
3	Reference Books	05 4.17%	04 3.33%	04 3.33%	05 4.17%	18 15%
4	Theses/Projects	02 1.67%	02 1.67%	02 1.67%	01 0.83%	07 5.83%
5	Conference Proceedings	02 1.67%	01 0.83%	01 0.83%	02 1.67%	06 5%
	Total	30	30	30	30	120

Table 5 shows that among the 120 respondents, about 55% preferred books, 19.17% preferred periodicals, 15% preferred reference sources, 7% preferred theses and project reports and 6% preferred conference proceedings. So it is clear that most of the students used books for their examination purposes. About 19.17% preferred to read periodicals. The calculated chi-square values is 16.93, the degree of freedom is 6 at the level of significance is 1%. Hence, the hypothesis, "Students differ in their preference for documents" is accepted.

Table 6 shows that irrespective of the year of study of the students, About 37% of them expressed as "excellent" about the working of the library,21.67% accepted as adequate 19.17% expressed as fair,11.67% stated it as inadequate and 10.83% expressed it as poor. Hence it is evident that the library fulfills a majority of the requirements. It is inferred that the library fulfils the requirements of respondents.

Table 6: Extend the library fulfils requirements of users

S.No.	Level of satisfaction	I Year	II year	III year	IV year	Total
1	Excellent	10 8.33%	12 10%	12 10%	10 8.33%	44 36.66%
2	Adequate	6 5%	6 5%	6 5%	8 6.67%	26 21.67%
3	Fair	6 5%	6 5%	6 5%	5 4.17%	23 19.17%
4	Inadequate	4 3.33%	3 2.5%	3 2.5%	4 3.33%	14 11.67%
5	Poor	4 3.33%	3 2.5%	3 2.5%	3 2.5%	13 10.83%
	Total	30	30	30	30	120

Table 7: Level of satisfaction on various services

S.No.	Library Service	Highly satisfied	Satisfied	dissatisfied	Highly dissatisfied	No opinion	Total
1	Circulation	40 33.33%	45 37.5%	12 10%	5 4.17%	18 15%	120
2	Ref.service	40 33.33%	50 41.67%	07 5.83%	8 6.67%	15 12.5%	120
3	Library use Guidance	40 33.33%	45 37.5%	15 12.5%	11 9.16%	9 7.5%	120
4	Loan Periods	35 29.17%	35 29.17%	15 12.5%	10 8.33%	25 20.83%	120
5	Reservation facilities	40 33.33%	40 33.33%	20 16.67%	5 4.17%	15 12.5%	120
6	Reprographic service	45 37.50%	35 29.17%	15 12.5%	5 4.17%	20 16.67%	120
7	Inter Library Loan	20 16.67%	15 12.5%	25 20.83%	15 12.5%	45 37.5%	120
8	Current awareness service	50 41.67%	20 16.67%	10 8.33%	15 12.5%	25 20.83%	120
9	Induction courses	20 16.67%	20 16.67%	20 16.67%	20 16.67%	40 33.33%	120
	Total	330 305.56	305 282.41	139 128.70	94 187.04	212 196.30	1080 1000

Table 7 Shows the level of satisfaction of the students regarding the difference services rendered by library. The calculated value of the chi-square is 27.52 which is significant at 1% level, so the stated hypotheses, students differ in their level of satisfaction about the overall library service" is accepted. About 33.33 per cent are highly satisfied with regard to circulation service, reference service, library use guidance, and reservation facilities. About 41.67% highly satisfied with regard to current awareness service and 37.5 per cent are highly satisfied with regard to reprographic service. Hence, it is inferred that majority of the respondents are satisfied with library services.

Table 8: Usage of internet facilities

S.No.	Internet facilities	I Year %	II year %	III year %	IV year %	Total %
1	WWW	8 6.67%	7 5.83%	8 6.67%	8 6.67%	31 (25.84%)
2	FTP	4 3.33%	4 3.33%	4 3.33%	5 4.17%	17 (14.16%)
3	E-Mail	15 12.5%	14 11.67%	13 10.83%	14 11.67%	56 (46.67%)
4	Fax	2 1.67%	2 1.67%	2 1.67%	1 0.83%	07 (5.84%)
5	Telnet	1 0.83%	2 1.67%	2 1.67%	1 0.83%	06 (5.00%)
6	On line service	0	1 0.83%	1 0.83%	1 0.83%	03 (2.49%)
	Total	30 (25%)	30 (25%)	30 (25%)	30 (25%)	120 (100%)

It is evident from table 8 that 25.73 per cent of the students are using www service and 14.8 per cent using FTP service, 46.67 per cent using E.Mail, 5.83 per cent using Fax service, 5 per cent are using Telnet and 2.5 per cent are using on line services. It is inferred from the table that majority of 56 (46.67%) students use E- Mail Services.

FINDING OF THE STUDY

The following are the major findings revealed by the analysis of the data.

- The study revealed that the majority of 62.5% of students visit Library daily
- It is inferred from the study that majority of the students visit library to read books
- The result also shows that majority of the students are satisfied with the borrowing facilities.
- The result identified that most of the students agreed that they have excellent and adequate facilities in the library
- The study shows that majority of the students prefer subject-wise approach in the library
- The study reveals that the majority of the students are satisfied with overall library collection
- The study identified that the book collection,periodical collection Reference collection, stock coverage newspaper, stock current, Maps are the satisfied collection in the library.
- The result also proved that majority of the students are satisfied with overall library service.
- Majority of the students expressed that library staff are more helpful in approaching library materials.
- E-Mail and www are the frequently used service of the students.

SUGGESTIONS

The following are a few suggestions given:

- It is suggested to increase the availability of international journals and foreign periodicals.
- Most of the students have demanded for Video display on recent developments, hence it is recommended
- Inter Library loan facilities should be improved
- The colleges should introduce User education programme to all students.
- Separate library hours should be allotted in time tables for students at least one specific day for each class.
- Most of the users have criticized the reprographic service provided by the library, one obvious reason is inadequacy of Photo copying service.
- Since only 46 per cent of the students use e-mail service, students in general should be encouraged to use e-mail service.

CONCLUSION

Information Technology plays an important role in the development of education. With the emergence of IT the concept of information providing centres such as libraries, internet centres, and computer centres, has been transformed at lot, in its functioning and changed the user's expectations. Users have

become more information conscious than ever before demanding timely access to the information. Many studies have proved that academic development leads to overall economic development of the nation and hence due attention has to be paid for the on line information services and their utilization. The more the utilization of on line information services, the more will be the development of Indian economy.

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