

Undergraduate Students Library Use and Information Seeking Pattern in Bauchi State University Gadau, Nigeria

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Abstract

This study investigates information seeking pattern of undergraduate students at Bauchi State University Gadau (BASUG), Nigeria. The study examine purpose of student visits to library, time spent in library and the frequency of their visits to library use. The study adopts descriptive field survey approach by conveniently sampling 130 selected respondents among undergraduate students cutting across disciplines using self-administered structured questionnaire. The study findings reveals that the major purpose of library visit by BASUG undergraduate students is to utilized e-resources, the study also found that majority of the respondents do not spent quality time in the library. On the basis of the findings, the study recommends that there is need for better orientation on spending quality time on library services utilization and user-training should also be enhanced by library authority.

Keywords: Undergraduate, Information, library-visit, Seeking-pattern, Bauchi State

Introduction

Information seeking is a deliberate information searching behavior, so as to meet certain information needs. It actually involves a set of activities indulged by individuals to address information needs (Padma, Ramasamy, & Sakthi 2013). Different reasons determine how information were sought by users, it is therefore, vital to understand the motives, environment and channels for which information is sought, including sources and barriers to information (Padma *et al.*, 2013). In the process of information seeking, the users may interact with hard as well as soft information sources, such as a newspaper or computer or Web based (Prabhavathi, 2011; Manjunath & Babu 2018; Robson & Robinson 2013).

Information seeking as a concept refers to a recorded experience utilized in decision making; made easy by the adverse of information technology (Prabhavathi, 2011). It is view as a tool used in the pursuit of objective and attaining that thrives on variety, diverse, frequencies, volumes and quality of data (Ayotunde, Azubuike, Akinwonjo, & Obinna 2016). Looking for information is motivated by personal reasons, type of information in need, achieved through reading, field research and experimentation (Ayotunde *et al.*, 2016). According to Tahir, Muhammed, Khalid,

Shafique & Muhammad (2008) understanding of user information seeking attitude is fundamental to the provision of successful information utilization. It was also reported by Malliari, Korobili, & Zapounidou (2011) that search experience, ability and frequency of e-resources used played a significant role in improving information seeking behavior. Information-seeking behaviour as a major research area; librarians around the globe tend to understand the information needs of undergraduate students and means of meeting these needs (Okoh, & Ijiekhuamhen, 2014). Undergraduate students' information seeking behavior was among the great challenges to be studied. Most undergraduate students were confronted with the problem of locating right information sources to meet their academic needs (Okoh & Ijiekhuamhen, 2014; El-Maamiry, 2017).

Library use is significant to the academic life of students, by visiting libraries students get to update themselves latest trends in their area of study, On the basis of this; therefore, library plays an important role in facilitating information seeking and used by students. As such the problem of this study is put in question as why most students face problems using the resources and facilities in Namadi Sambo library in Bauchi State University Gadau and their information seeking pattern.

Information is power and it is the process facts that are useful to the user. According to Wilson (2016), information-seeking involves 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. Baro, Onyenania and Osaheni (2010) described information seeking as an individual's manner of gathering and sourcing information for personal use, knowledge updating and development. Similarly, Odongo and Bukenya (2004) asserted that information seeking needs is the way people go about searching for information. Indeed, students' information seeking needs involves purposeful information seeking as a result of the need to complete course assignments, prepare for class discussions, seminars, workshops, and write final-year research projects. Recently, Joana, Florence & Franklina (2018) opined that information seeking can be understood as the way and manner people search for and utilize information for personal use, knowledge updating and development.

However, the role of university libraries is not only limited to the preservation of published 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 (Manjunath and Babu 2018). Through libraries use, individual satisfy his information needs desire and close a gap in his knowledge which, when experienced at the conscious level as a question, gives rise to a search for an answer. If the need is urgent, the search may be pursued with diligence until the desire is fulfilled (Singh 2015).

To this end, understanding of information seeking needs of various undergraduate students is essentials; it helps in planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of information system in academic cycle. To understand the undergraduate student information seeking needs in Bauchi state university, this study focused on three objectives, thus; to know the purpose of information seeking of the undergraduate students in Bauchi State University Gadau; to find out the time spent by undergraduate students when seeking information in Namadi Sambo Library in Bauchi State University, Gadau and to assess the frequency of visits to

Namadi Sambo library by undergraduate students in Bauchi State University, Gadau.

Reasons for Information Needs by Undergraduate Students

Kakai, Ikoja-Odongo and Kigongo-Bukenya (2004) highlighted the following as some of the reasons behind undergraduates students information seeking. Course works and assignments, preparation for examinations and tests, general reading to enhance lecture notes, class group discussions, seminars or preparation for workshops, tutorial presentations.

In addition, Ajiboye and Tella (2006) also posited that the predominant information required by undergraduate students is academic information, information for personal development, health information, employment information and global information. In this regards, Joana, Florence and Franklina (2018) reported that information seeking need is measured as the way and manner people search for and utilize information for personal use, knowledge updating and development.

University Library and Students' Information seeking

Library is a pivot in the creation of access to knowledge which enhances the quality of human intellectual outputs through the processes of information gathering, storage and dissemination to a wide range of resources and guidance in the process of learning, particularly within the institutions of higher learning like a university where the students are expected to search for information from the multiple sources available. To enables the students to concentrate on constructing new knowledge, gaining personal understanding and transferable skills. This implies that, the role of university libraries is not only limited to the preservation of published materials but it is also to ensure that information needs of users are met (Manjunath and Babu 2018). Moreso, it is apparent that students effectiveness and consistency of using library would would improve their information seeking pattern and satisfy their information needs desire as well help them to close the existing gap from their varied knowledge which, when experienced at the conscious level as a question, gives rise to a search for an answer. If the need is urgent, the search may be pursued with diligence until it is fulfilled (Singh 2015).

To this end, understanding the information seeking pattern of undergraduate students is essential, because it will help in planning, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of information resources and services of a university library. This implies that, the role of university libraries is not only limited to the preservation of published materials but it is also to ensure that, information needs of users are met (Manjunath and Babu 2018).

Objective of the study

To understand the undergraduate students information seeking needs in Bauchi state university, this study focused on three objectives,

1. To determine the purpose of information seeking of the undergraduate students in Bauchi State University, Gadau
2. To assess the frequency of visits to library by undergraduate students in Bauchi State University, Gadau
3. To find out the time spent by undergraduate students when seeking information in Bauchi State University, Gadau

4. To determine the factors militating against the undergraduate students' library use and information seeking pattern in Bauchi State University, Gadau.

Methodology

Descriptive survey research design was used for the study with a structured questionnaire as the instrument for data collection from the respondents. 50 pre-tested questionnaires were distributed to the undergraduate students through convenience sampling technique. The questionnaire was given to each undergraduate student on arrival to the library until the required number is reached, after explanation of the intent, and consent to participate fully received. The researcher also distributed and retrieved 150 questionnaires as we select 50 students from each of the three faculty of the university. The collected data was analyzed using SPSS version 21 and interpreted in the form of frequency and percentage tables.

Results

Table 1: Distribution of respondents by Gender

Gender	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Male	94	63%
Female	56	37%
Total	130	100

(Source, SPSS Analysis)

Table number one shows that the respondents consisted of more males (63%) than females (37%) this goes to show that there are more

male undergraduate students studying in BASUG than their female counterparts.

Table II: Distribution of respondents according to activities

S/N	Item	Faculties					
		Humanities		Social Science		Pure Sciences	
		Freq	%	Freq	%		
	Course works	13	30	16	26	14	32
	Assignment	15	34	21	34	14	32
	Preparation for examinations	6	14	10	16	7	16
	Preparation for Test	10	23	15	24	9	20

(Source, SPSS Analysis)

It is found from the Table 1 that, more or less, the students covered in the study belong to the disciplines of Social Sciences (42%),

Humanities has (29.3%) and Pure Sciences discipline (29.3%).

Table 3: Distribution of respondents on purpose of library visit

Purpose of library visit	No of students	Percentage %
References	29	19.3%
Reading	49	33%
Utilized e-resources	55	37%
Connect to internet	17	11.3%
Total	150	100%

(Source, SPSS Analysis)

The data collected shows that 19.3% of the respondents visit the library for references purposes, 33% visits the library for reading purpose, 37% visit the library for the purpose of utilized e-resources, 11.3% of the respondents

visit the library to connect to internet. According to the data collected on this particular question it can be said that the major purpose of library visit by BASUG undergraduate students is to utilize e-resources.

Table 4: Time Spent in Library doing activities

Time spent in library	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
One to three hours	90	60.0%
Four to five hours	34	23.0%
Five to six hours	15	10.0%
More than six hours	11	7.3%
Total	150	100

(Source, SPSS Analysis)

Table 4 above showed that 60% of respondents used the library for one to three hours, while 23% of the students used the library for five to six hours. This two are the extreme percentage

in the table. Above the 10% corresponds with findings on purpose of library visit which showed 7% visit to get books issues resolved.

Table 5: Frequency of using library by respondents

Frequency of visit	Frequency (N)	Percentage (%)
Daily	36	24%
Twice a Week	32	21.3%
Weekly	34	23%
Monthly	22	14.6%
Occasionally	26	17.3%
Total	150	100

(Source, SPSS Analysis)

Table 5 showed that 24% of the respondents visit the library daily 21.3% of respondents visits the library twice a week 23% of respondents visit weekly, 14.6% visit monthly while 17.3% of the respondents visit the library occasionally. Based on the analyzed data it can be seen that the students have different frequency rate of visit to the library, with the higher percent (24%) of them visiting weekly which can be said to be satisfactory.

Discussion

The study did not propagate gender as an objective. But knowing the level of gender

involvement will add value to the outcome. Various studies on information seeking behavior have investigated gender influences. However, Stainerova and Susol (2007) conducted a study on user information-seeking needs from a gender perspective in Slovakia. Differences in orientation to information, collaboration style and use of information were discovered with the conclusion that gender as a variable can be productive for understanding information processing. As such further studies that investigate gender influence on information seeking pattern should be explored.

The study targeted undergraduate students. No specific departments of the university was targeted for the study, or classified under major disciplines, however, the respondents emerged as representatives of Humanities, Social Sciences and Pure Sciences. Discipline-wise distribution of respondents is shown in Table 2. The less number of the respondents indicate that the respondents studying courses under humanities sought information differently from other students. Further study investigating the reason why undergraduate humanity students sought information differently will add to the body of information seeking behavior knowledge.

Understanding the purpose of visiting the library by the BASUG undergraduate students can help the library management provide appropriate services based on user's needs. Table 3 reveals the analysis of the collected data. This study indicates that only 11% of students visit the library to use online resources, which is a very low percent of the studied population. Considering the fact that the library has a considerable collection of online resources. The reasons for this can be a cause of further research on low uses of E-resources in the university library by undergraduate students. However, it must be said that necessary efforts must be made to increase use of E-resources by undergraduate students.

According to Prabhavathi (2011) understanding the purpose of visiting library by student is important for knowledge enhancement in support of education pursuit. The author further posit that purpose of visiting the library is in preparation for exams, and research project work, this affirm the importance of knowledge and information search (Prabhavathi, 2011). In a study conducted by Manjunath & Babu (2018) shows that twenty three percent visit to prepare for examination, their finding in conformity of this study findings. Ahmat, & Wan Kamarudin (2012) claims that students occasionally sought information for personal and educational purposes.

The outcome of a study by Okonoko et al. (2015) reveals that in Nigeria, students visit library to seek information for academic research, keep current with recent happenings, business purposes, employment opportunities, sports/entertainment news and/or personal health information among others (Okonoko et al. 2015; Ahmat, & Wan Kamarudin, 2012;

Sheppard 1993). Information needs can be social, economic, political, cultural or educational (Okonoko et al. 2015). However, information need is determined mostly by the information seeking pattern of the person in need of the information under question.

Due to the fact that 61.5% of the respondents that said they used the library for one to three hours, it is safe to assume that based on the analyzed data majority of the respondents don't stay long in the library. Manjunath & Babu (2018) found that 31.5% of their respondents spend one to two hours in the library followed by two to three hours at 28.5%. Their findings were less than the time spent by this study respondents. Lal (2014) and Akpojotor (2016) revealed that a considerable number of respondents in their study spent an average of 2-5 hours in library. Therefore, time spent in the library is a lot less, and, as such, access to databases of online-refereed journals and Web should be made available to the students, this will encourage the spending of quality time to seek information. Not spending quality time in library has a negative effect on information seeking pattern, it often hasten the termination of a search, irrespective of the information retrieved, which may be low in quality or reliability. Therefore, the findings suggest a further research on the hours spent by undergraduate students to determine its effects on their information seeking pattern.

Attempt was made to understand the frequency of using the library by the undergraduate students as revealed in table. BASUG library contained various resources, thus journals, thesis, textbooks, e-resources and access to some databases. The students' response on the frequency of visit to the library, was on five options as shown in table 5. It is clear that all the respondents of the study used the library. Table 5 shows the frequency of visits to the library by the respondents. According to Prabhavathi, (2011) over half of the respondents in his study used the library daily and around 20% visit the library on alternate days, while negligible portion of them do not use the library at all, 55% of respondents visit the library everyday (Lal, 2014), 40% of the users' visits on weekly basis (Munohsamy, 2016). While Padma et al (2013) reports twenty percent of their study participant used e-resources daily and 38% used it once at least a week. Therefore, frequency of library used depend upon the

information services offered by the library. Although large number of respondents used the library frequently, but there exist few respondents who rarely used the library services, therefore, emphasis on educating them on library services and use should be intensified to attract more library users which should provide the best possible library services in line with student respective information needs.

Conclusion

Information occupied a vital position in everyday life. Information seeking encompasses finding, evaluating, managing and utilization. Based on the highlighted findings, it is evident that undergraduate students seek information mainly when conducting academic project research, knowledge updating, current affairs awareness, when preparing for examinations among others. The identified gaps on the time spent by the undergraduate students indicate a need for intensify training on the value of spending quality time when seeking for information. The study also reveals that some of the undergraduate students visit library to sort out books related issues; this call for awareness creation on the benefit of library in learning processes.

Furthermore, information services offered in the university should be strengthened focusing on the need of the undergraduate students to an optimal extent. Because, successful information seeking approach depends upon availability and accessibility of library collection including contemporary ICT facilities and good skills by the library user. There are few studies undertaken on the information seeking patterns of the undergraduate students in context of state university in Bauchi state. This study will therefore add to literature on the topic and in addressing the common issues of undergraduate students in relation to library use. The study will benefit both undergraduate students and librarians as well, but these results cannot be generalized beyond the present setting, and it will therefore benefit from further study on a larger sample on both undergraduate and graduate students involving several disciplines and universities.

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