

INFORMATION NEEDS AND SEEKING BEHAVIOR OF USERS IN DR. ALIYU OBAJE LIBRARY, KOGI STATE UNIVERSITY, ANYIGBA.

By

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Abstract

This study examined the Information Needs and seeking behavior of Users in Dr. Aliyu Obaje Library, Kogi State University, Anyigba. A descriptive survey method was used for the study. The population of the study comprises of 30 staff and 50 users of Dr. Aliyu Obaje Library, Kogi State University, Anyigba. A simple random technique was used to select the sample size. A total number of 80 copies of questionnaires were administered and retrieved. Six (6) research questions were formulated to guide the study in line with the purpose of the study. Tables, mean score and frequency percentage were used in analyzing the data. Major findings of the study revealed that the vital information needs required by the users are the information on education, agricultures, economic, political and business. The purposes for which the users seek for information in the library are for general reading, assignment, examination, and research. The search strategies adopted by the users are use of subject catalogue, shelves, library staff internet, references, CD ROM etc. The major challenges faced by users in information seeking in the library are lack of recent information, lack of search skills, poor organization of information resources, and poor library orientation. Suggestions were put forward by the users on the strategies for enhancing the information needs and behavior which are acquisition of updated materials, adequate funding, proper search skills and trained library staff.

Introduction

The need for information has assumed similar importance as much as other needs of life. It is now an essential human need which has great effects on its users and clientele and it is said to be anything that creates, improves or changes knowledge or understanding of something. According to Ajiboye and Tella (2007), information is data that has been processed to be well understood to satisfy the user's query. They go further in their definition to say that 'information is data value in planning, decision making and evaluation of any programme. Going by this definition, information can be explained as the knowledge transferred from one person to another irrespective of the form, medium and means through which the information is transmitted or disseminated.

Haruna and Mabawonku (2001) noted that information needs are diverse and constantly changing. It exists in the mind of the users. Understanding the information needs of the library users is necessary for planning and providing high quality library services as well as to avoid misallocating resources. Information need generally refers to

the kind of information a particular library user is looking for at a specific point in time. Information need comes up when an individual identifies a problem or information gap and develop a desire to solve the problem or bridge the information gap.

Osicebe (2006) posited that Information needs vary in relation to the subject field of users, educational background, level of experience and functions performed .These variables according to him, affect a person's interest in the type of information he needs and how he seeks it. There must be a need that would prompt an individual to engage in search for information. Information need is an innate desire that prompt an individual leading to a search for information. Users especially in academic institutions have lots of information need which prompted their demand for information. When users of Dr Aliyu Obaje Library are searching for information to meet their needs, they use different sources of information. Akinola, Afolabi and Chinedu (2009), defines information sources as the materials or means through which information can be found to meet a particular need.

Information seeking behavior refers to the ways and manner people search information and how they utilized the information. Information behavior is basically the behavioral pattern of scholars, researchers and students in collecting information according to the need of their varying discipline. We understand information behavior better within social context and as integrated with cultural practices and values. Information behavior is the study of how people need, seek, give and use information in different contexts, including the workplace and everyday living Pettigrew Fidel and Bruce (2001). Ogba,(2013) defined information behavior as actions, sentiments, mood swings and psychological and after information seeking which determines the environment of research ,the information source, the information sourced and taken, the ability to conclude research and the mode of using the information sourced. Taking the right decisions depend on access to information on all the alternatives and their

implications. Case (2002) defines information behavior as a conscious effort to acquire information in response to a need or gap in your knowledge.

Information behavior is expressed in various forms, from reading printed material to research and experimentation (Bhatti, 2008). Information behavior remains a key research area; academic librarians around the world strive to understand the information needs of users and ways of satisfying these needs. For academic libraries to adequately address the information needs of its students, they need to know more about information that students use, the value and what influences their information search.

Purpose of the Study

The general purpose of this study is to examine the information needs and seeking behaviors of users of Dr. Aliyu Obaje Library, Kogi State University, Anyigba. Specifically, the study was designed to:

1. Examine the vital information needs of users in Dr. Aliyu Obaje Library, Kogi State University, Anyigba.
2. Find out the types of information sources that users need most in Dr. Aliyu Obaje Library, Kogi State University, Anyigba.
3. Identify the purposes for which information is sought by the users in Dr. Aliyu Obaje Library, Kogi State University, Anyigba.
4. Find out how the users search for information they need in Dr. Aliyu Obaje Library, Kogi State University, Anyigba.
5. Identify the challenges faced by users in searching for information in Dr. Aliyu Obaje Library, Kogi State University, Anyigba.
6. Examine the strategies for enhancing the information needs and behaviour of users in Dr. Aliyu Obaje Library, Kogi State University, Anyigba.

Methodology

The descriptive survey design was used for this research. The study made use of questionnaire to collect data. According to Covey (2002), a descriptive survey is an effective way to gather information about people's current behavior, attitudes, beliefs and feelings. Descriptive survey method aims at collecting data and describing in a systematic manner, characteristics, features or facts about a given population. The population of this study comprises of the thirty (30) staff and fifty (50) users of Dr. Aliyu Obaje Library, Kogi State University, Anyigba. Nwana (2001), stated that if a population is in few hundred, a 40% of the population could be determined as a sample size from a given population. The random sampling technique was used for this study where the entire staff and users will be given equal chance of being selected. The data were analyzed using simple descriptive statistics of table, frequencies and percentages.

Result and Discussion

Table 1: Users mean responses on the information needs in Dr. Aliyu Obaje Library, Kogi State University, Anyigba.

S/N	Information needs	SA	A	D	SD	X	Rank	DECISION
1	For educational need	47	3	0	0	3.94	1 st	A
2	For agricultural need	25	18	7	0	3.36	3 rd	A
3	For political need	23	17	10	0	3.26	4 th	A
4	For economic need	27	18	5	0	3.44	2 nd	A
5	For business need	20	19	11	0	3.18	5 th	A

Key: SA-Strongly Agree, A-Agree, D-Disagree, SD-Strongly Disagree.
 \bar{X} -Mean, R-Rank

Table One shows the mean responses on the information needs required by users of Dr. Aliyu Obaje Library, Kogi State University, Anyigba. The mean scores indicate that the information needs required by users are for educational need with a mean weigh of 3.94, for economic need with a mean weigh of 3.44, for agricultural need with a mean weigh of 3.36, for political with a mean weigh of 3.26 and for business with a mean weigh of 3.18. This means that all the above listed information needs required by users of

Dr. Aliyu Obaje Library, Kogi State University, Anyigba are rated positively and accepted.

Table 2: Users mean responses on the types of information sources in Dr. Aliyu Obaje Library, Kogi State University, Anyigba.

S/N	Types of information sources	SA	A	D	SD	X	Rank	DECISION
1	Books	50	0	0	0	4.0	1 st	SA
2	Newspapers	40	10	0	0	3.80	2 nd	SA
3	Journals	37	10	3	0	3.68	3 rd	SA
4	Internet	25	15	10	0	3.30	8 th	A
5	Encyclopedia	29	19	2	0	3.54	6 th	SA
6	Dictionary	35	11	4	0	3.62	4 th	SA
7	Research report	10	30	10	0	3.00	10 th	A
8	Yearbooks	27	21	2	0	3.50	7 th	SA
9	Gazetteer	22	20	8	0	3.28	9 th	A
10	Thesis	33	12	5	0	3.56	5 th	SA

Key: SA-Strongly Agree, A-Agree, D-Disagree, SD-Strongly Disagree.
X -Mean, R-Rank

Table 2 above shows the mean responses on the types of information sources that are mostly used by users of Dr. Aliyu Obaje Library, Kogi State University, Anyigba. The mean scores indicate that the types of information sources that are mostly used by users are books with a mean weigh of 4.0, newspaper with a mean weigh of 3.80, journals with a mean weigh of 3.68, thesis with a mean weigh of 3.56, encyclopedia with a mean weigh of 3.54, dictionary with a mean weigh of 3.62, yearbook with a mean weigh of 3.50, internet with a mean weigh of 3.30, gazetteer with a mean weigh of 3.28 and research report with a mean weigh of 3.00. This means that all the above listed types of information sources that are mostly used by users of Dr. Aliyu Obaje Library, Kogi State University, Anyigba are rated positively and accepted.

Table 3: Users mean responses on the purpose for seeking information in Dr. Aliyu Obaje Library, Kogi State University, Anyigba.

S/N	Purpose of seeking information	SA	A	D	SD	\bar{X}	Rank	DECISION
1	For examination purpose	40	5	5	0	3.70	3 rd	SA
2	For research purpose	33	14	3	0	3.60	6 th	SA
3	For assignment usage	45	5	0	0	3.90	2 nd	SA
4	For leisure/recreation	37	11	2	0	3.70	3 rd	SA
5	For general reading	50	0	0	0	4.0	1 st	SA
6	For awareness	21	19	10	0	3.22	8 th	A
7	Desire for new idea	38	8	4	0	3.68	5 th	SA
8	For notes	21	22	7	0	3.28	7 th	A

Key: SA-Strongly Agree, A-Agree, D-Disagree, SD-Strongly Disagree.
 \bar{X} -Mean, R-Rank

Table 3 above shows the mean responses on the purposes for which users seek for information in Dr. Aliyu Obaje Library, Kogi State University, Anyigba. The mean scores indicate that the purposes for which users seek for information are for general reading with a mean weigh of 4.0, assignment usage with a mean weigh of 3.90, examination purpose and leisure/recreation with a mean weigh of 3.70 respectively, desire for new idea with a mean weigh of 3.68, research purpose with a mean weigh of 3.60, notes with a mean weigh of 3.28 and for awareness 3.22. This means that all the above listed purposes for which users seek for information in Dr. Aliyu Obaje Library, Kogi State University, Anyigba are rated positively and accepted.

Table 4: Users mean responses on the information search strategies adopted in Dr. Aliyu Obaje Library, Kogi State University, Anyigba.

S/N	Search strategies	SA	A	D	SD	X	Rank	DECISION
1	Index	23	20	7	0	3.32	7 th	A
2	Subject Bibliography	30	17	3	0	3.54	4 th	SA
3	Internet	20	20	10	0	3.20	9 th	A
4	E- journals	21	25	4	0	3.40	5 th	A

5	Shelves	50	0	0	0	4.0	1 st	SA
6	Subject catalogue	50	0	0	0	4.0	1 st	SA
7	References	25	20	5	0	3.40	5 th	A
8	CD-ROM	23	17	10	0	3.26	8 th	A
9	Library staff	45	5	0	0	3.90	3 rd	SA

Key: SA-Strongly Agree, A-Agree, D-Disagree, SD-Strongly Disagree.

\bar{X} -Mean, R-Rank

Table 4 above shows the mean responses on the information search strategies adopted by users in Dr. Aliyu Obaje Library, Kogi State University, Anyigba. The mean scores indicate that the information search strategies adopted by users are shelves and subject catalogue with a mean weigh of 4.0 respectively, library staff with a mean weigh of 3,90, subject bibliography with a mean weigh of 3.54, references and e-journals with a mean weigh of 3.40 respectively, and index with a mean weigh of 3.32. All the above listed information search strategies adopted in Dr. Aliyu Obaje Library, Kogi State University, Anyigba are rated positively and accepted.

Table 5: Users mean responses on the challenges faced in information seeking in meeting their information needs in Dr. Aliyu Obaje Library, Kogi State University, Anyigba.

S/N	Challenges	SA	A	D	SD	\bar{X}	Rank	DECISION
1	Poor organization of information materials	37	10	3	0	3.68	3 rd	A
2	Lack of well-trained library staff	29	18	3	0	3.52	5 th	A
3	Lack of searching skills	39	11	0	0	3.78	2 nd	A
4	Cost of accessing information	22	24	4	0	3.36	7 th	A
5	Lack of recent information materials	45	5	0	0	3.90	1 st	A
6	Unfriendly librarians/reference staff	28	15	7	0	3.42	6 th	A
7	Poor library orientation	30	17	3	0	3.54	4 th	A
8	Lack of subject knowledge amongst library staff	23	20	7	0	3.32	8 th	A
9	Poor infrastructure	19	21	10	0	3.18	9 th	A

Key: SA-Strongly Agree, A-Agree, D-Disagree, SD-Strongly Disagree.

\bar{X} -Mean, R-Rank

Table 5 above shows the mean responses on the challenges faced by users in information seeking in Dr. Aliyu Obaje Library, Kogi State University, Anyigba. The mean scores indicate that the challenges faced by users in information seeking are lack of

recent materials with a mean weigh of 3. 90, lack of searching skills with a mean weigh of 3.78, poor organization of information organization with a mean weigh of 3.68, poor library orientation with a mean weigh of 3.54, and lack of well-trained library staff with a mean weigh of 3.52. Overall, all the above listed challenges faced by users in information seeking in Dr. Aliyu Obaje Library, Kogi State University, Anyigba are rated positively and accepted.

Table 6: Library staff mean responses on the strategies for enhancing the information needs and behavior of users in Dr. Aliyu Obaje Library, Kogi State University, Anyigba.

S/N	Strategies for enhanced information needs	SA	A	D	SD	X	Rank	DECISION
1	Proper organization of information	3	20	7	0	2.86	6 th	A
2	Trained staff and personnel	5	20	5	0	3.00	5 th	A
3	Proper search skills	3	20	7	0	2.86	6 th	A
4	Adequate funding	19	11	0	0	3.63	2 nd	A
5	Acquisition of updated materials	30	0	0	0	4.0	1 st	A
6	Friendly library/reference staff	15	12	3	0	3.40	3 rd	A
7	Standard library orientation	10	17	3	0	3.23	4 th	A
8	High standard infrastructure	1	19	10	0	2.70	8 th	A

Key: SA-Strongly Agree, A-Agree, D-Disagree, SD-Strongly Disagree.

X-Mean, R-Rank

Table 6 above shows the mean responses on the strategies for enhancing the information needs and behavior of users in Dr. Aliyu Obaje Library, Kogi State University, Anyigba. The mean scores indicate that the strategies for enhancing the information needs and behavior of users are acquisition of updated materials with a mean weigh of 4.0, adequate funding with a mean weigh of 3.63, friendly librarian/reference staff with a mean weigh of 3.40, standard library orientation with a mean weigh of 3.23, and trained staff and personnel with a mean weigh of 3.00. Overall, all the above listed strategies for enhancing the information needs and behavior of users in Dr. Aliyu Obaje Library, Kogi State University, Anyigba are rated positively and accepted.

Conclusion

This study on the information needs and seeking behaviour of users in Dr. Aliyu Obaje Library, Kogi State University, Anyigba has specific objectives which are to examine the vital information needs required by users, find out the types of information sources that users need most, identify the purposes for which information is sought by the users, find out how the users search for information they need, identify the problems encountered by users in searching for information and examine the strategies for enhancing the information needs and behaviour of users in Dr. Aliyu Obaje Library, Kogi State University, Anyigba.

The major findings are that vital information needs required by the users are the information on education, agricultures, economic, political and business, the types of information resources such as books, newspapers, dictionaries, encyclopedia, thesis etc. are mostly used by the users of Dr. Aliyu Obaje Library, Kogi State University, Anyigba, the purpose why the users seek for information in Dr. Aliyu Obaje Library, Kogi State University, Anyigba are for general reading purpose, assignment purpose, examination purpose, research purpose, note purpose etc and the search strategies adopted by users in Dr. Aliyu Obaje Library, Kogi State University, Anyigba are subject catalogue, shelves, library staff internet, references, CD ROM etc. The major challenges faced by users in information seeking in Dr. Aliyu Obaje Library, Kogi State University, Anyigba are lack of recent information, lack of search skills, poor organization of information resources, poor library orientation, etc.

Also, the study revealed that information resources such as books, newspapers, dictionaries, encyclopedia and thesis are mostly used by the users. The search strategies adopted by users in the library include subject catalogue, shelves, internet, references and CD ROM. The major challenges faced by users in information seeking are lack of recent information, lack of search skills, poor organization of information resources and poor

library orientation. On the strategies for enhancing the information needs and behaviour of users in the library, the study recommended acquisition of updated materials, improved funding, proper search skills and training of library staff.

Recommendations

Based on the major findings, the following recommendations were made:

1. Provision of current information materials in the library.
2. Improved funding of the library, by looking for alternative sources of funding.
3. The librarian/library staff should be friendly with the users.
4. Standard library orientation should be given to the users.
5. Proper search skills should be adopted.
6. The library should be provided with high standard infrastructure.

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