**Research Paper**                                     **Library Science**

# User Perceptions of Library Information Resources in Faculty and Research Scholars in Karpagam University: a Survey

| N. Krishnaswamy | Ph.D Research Scholar & Chief Librarian, Central Library, Karpagam University, Coimbatore 21, (Tamilnadu) |
|---|---|
| Dr. S. Jayaraman | Visiting Faculty (Research Guide), Karpagam University, Coimbatore-21, (Tamilnadu) |

**ABSTRACT**   *A study of data collected from 120 faculty and research scholars by administering questionnaires on their perception regarding the information based services at Karpagam University, indicates that guidance in the use of library resources and services is necessary to help users meet their information requirements. Finally the books and journals are the most popular sources of information for the research work.*

**KEYWORDS: Library instructions, User perception, Library sources and services, Academic libraries.**

## Introduction

In a recent survey of research on information needs and use, Dervin and Nilan found that most studies remain constrained by the system's definition of needs with the menu of responses coming from the system's world and not the user's (Dervin & Nilan, 1986). How- ever, research related to human interaction in information systems reveals evidence of a shift in emphasis from concentration on document or text representations and associated search techniques to the study of users in information seeking situations (Belkin & Vickery, 1985; Borgman, 1984). The new approach centers on the user's problem in the process of sense-making, stressing the effectiveness of information retrieval must consider the integration of results into the user's own life as well as the user's evaluation of the usefulness of the information for the resolution of the problem (James, 1983; Hall, 1981; Ingwersen, 1982). The personal meaning that the user seeks from the information becomes as critical a consideration for system design and mediation as the content represented in texts In order to address the user's problem and to promote communication between the system and the user, an image or model of the user is needed as well as an image or model of the texts represented in the system (Belkin, 1984). Belkin cautions, however, that it is far easier to build a model of the knowledge resource than to build a model of the cognitive and affective aspects of the user and the user's situation. He suggests that the state of the user's problem and the position of the user in the problem treatment process, e.g., formulating problem, problem well specified, etc. be included in this model.

Karpagam Charity Trust was founded in the year 1989 with the aim of providing excellent educational facilities by imparting practical training knowledge and skills to the youth of the area and also catering to the needs of the society in general through charitable deeds. Karpagam University's (Karpagam Academy of Higher Education) genesis goes back to September 1995 when it was initiated as Karpagam Arts & Science College. The college was promoted by the Karpagam Charity Trust, incepted by the renowned Karpagam Industries. Today, more than 15 years later, those humble beginnings have paved the way for us to emerge as a University of repute, a status granted by the MHRD and UGC (Under section 3 of UGC Act, 1956) in 2008.The Karpagam Arts and and Science College (Autonomous) was evolved into karpagam Academy of Higher Education in the year 2008 for the purpose of conferment of Deemed to be University status by Ministry of Human Resource Development vide its order no.F.9.24/2004.U.3 (A) dated 25.08.08. Subsequently programmes in Arts & Science (Order No. F-9-24/2004-U.3 (A) dated 25th August 2008), Engineering (Order No. F6-93/204 (CPP-1) September, 2009. Architecture (Order No.CA/5/Academic-TN19 June 22, 2009, Distance Education Order No. DEC/Recog./2009 dated 09.09.2009 were sanctioned by respective councils.

## Review of Literature

The provision of reference services has been, and still is, at the heart of all libraries in every sector be it academic, public or special. Until the internet changed forever the way we access information, it was the exclusive preserve of the "Reference librarian" to provide information directly to the client (Weddell, 2008). A close examination of a reference service provides library administration and involved librarians with a clear understanding of how well the service is meeting its intended goals, objectives, and outcomes, how well the service is helping users fulfill their information needs, and whether the expended resources are producing the desired results (Pomerantz, Luo & McClure, 2006). Evaluation of reference services from different point of view serves different purposes. For example Saxton & Richardson (2002), has pointed out that most reference evaluation studies employ either "the query-oriented approach primarily concerned with testing the accuracy of answers to reference" or "the obtrusive user-oriented approach primarily concerned with testing levels of user satisfaction with the service". Grossa & Saxton (2002) reported a secondary analysis of a user survey administered in 13 public libraries and examined user ratings of reference services by transaction type. Transaction type is defined dichotomously as self-generated (users transacting questions they have determined for themselves) or imposed (agent users in the library seeking information on behalf of someone else). Users with self-generated questions rated library services lower than did users with imposed questions. Both groups rated the library experience lower than their reference desk experience, and imposed queries were responsible for proportionately higher "first time" use of the reference desk. No significant difference existed between groups for ratings of finding useful information in the library, finding everything wanted in the library visit, frequency of library use, or levels of attained formal education. There were significant differences found for ratings of the reference librarian's service behaviors, user satisfaction with reference service, and frequency of reference desk use.

## Objectives of the study
- To find out the types of information resources by the library users.
- To identify the adequacy of reading materials in the library
- To know the facilities extended by the library

## Methodology

This study used questionnaire based survey method. The questionnaires were personally distributed to the faculties and research scholars of KU at their library in the month of January 2013. KU falls under the Faculty of Arts & science Humanities, Faculty of Engineering, Faculty of Architecture, which comprises thirty departments and about 386 faculties and 492 research scholars. From such a number, a random sample of 200 faculty and scholars was selected. The survey was conducted among the faculties and research scholars of the university to study their perception level of information resources based services in the library. The questionnaires were distributed to the faculties and scholars who were present in their library and departments. Hundred and twenty questionnaires were returned by the users with overall respondents 120%. The collected data were analysed, interpretation and tabulated by statistical methods.

## Data Analysis and Interpretation

General information like name, gender and educational qualification were asked, out of 120 respondents 82 (68.3%) were male and 38 (31.7%) were female.

**Table.1 Frequency of visit to the library**

| Sl.No | Frequency | No. of Respondents | % |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Almost Daily | 51 | 42.5 |
| 2. | Twice a week | 28 | 23.3 |
| 3. | Once in a week | 19 | 15.8 |
| 4. | Fortnightly | 14 | 11.7 |
| 5. | Once a month | 8 | 6.7 |

The frequency of users visit to the library has been classified into five time gaps as shown in Table 1. That a majority of users 42.5% visiting the library almost daily to meet their information needs followed by twice a week 23.3% of user visit the library. But few of them 15.8% from visit the library once in a week. Only negligible percentage 6.7 of respondents visits the library once a month.

**Table - 2 Purpose of using the library**

| Sl.No | Purpose | No. of Respondents | % |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | To read Newspaper and magazine | 61 | 50.8 |
| 2. | To  study/Research/Training | 53 | 44.2 |
| 3. | To locate information regarding books & Journals | 45 | 37.5 |
| 4. | To borrow books | 39 | 32.5 |
| 5. | To know latest arrivals | 29 | 24.2 |
| 6. | To prepare teaching | 22 | 18.3 |
| 7. | To write Text-Books/Articles etc. | 19 | 15.8 |
| 8. | To generate new information out of curiosity & inquisitiveness | 15 | 12.5 |
| 9. | To spend time leisurely | 8 | 6.7 |

Table 2 indicates majority of the respondents 50.8% users to read newspapers and magazine, followed by 44.2% of the visitors to study/research/training, 37.5% to locate information regarding books &journals, 32.5% borrowing books from the library, 24.2% to use latest arrivals, 18.3% to prepare teaching, and 15.8% write a text-books articles etc. where as 12.5% and 6.7% of the respondents from generate new information out of curiosity & inquisitiveness and spend time leisurely.

**Table - 3 Frequency of using various services/facilities of the library**

| Sl.No | Frequency | No. of Respondents | % |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Books lending | 25 | 20.8 |
| 2. | Reference service | 20 | 16.7 |
| 3. | Reprographic | 12 | 10 |
| 4. | Bibliography | 12 | 10 |
| 5. | News paper, clipping | 11 | 9.2 |
| 6. | Inter library loan | 10 | 8.3 |
| 7. | Display new arrivals | 10 | 8.3 |
| 8. | Indexing service | 6 | 5 |
| 9. | Translation service | 5 | 4.2 |
| 10. | Seminar/Conference Proceedings | 5 | 4.2 |
| 11. | Current awareness service | 4 | 3.3 |

Table 3 represents the use of library sources and services. It was found that majority of the users books lending form the library, followed by the use of reference service. It was found that same position of reprographic and bibliographic source in the library, the new implement of respondents current awareness service is very low.

**Table - 4 Purpose of using networking sites**

| Sl.No | purpose | No. of Respondents | % |
|---|---|---|---|
| 1. | Friendly communication | 44 | 36.6 |
| 2. | Academic communication | 23 | 19.2 |
| 3. | To discuss new ideas | 17 | 14.2 |
| 4. | To publish writings | 12 | 10 |
| 5. | To discuss issues and events | 17 | 14.2 |
| 6. | Promote themselves or their work | 7 | 5.8 |

Networking sites have a wide variety of uses and faculty and scholars use these sites for various purposes like friendly communication, publishing, messaging, group discussion, etc. The users were asked to indicate the purpose of using networking sites Table 4. It shows that a majority 36.6% of the faculty and scholars used networking sites for friendly communication. A good number 19.2% of the faculty and scholars used these sites for academic communication and for discussing new ideas and issues and events 14.2% each. A few scholars 10% used networking sites to publish their writings and promote themselves their work 5.8%.

**Conclusion**

The outcome of this study the usage of the KU library, its resources and services needs to be increased. Research scholars oriented information resources such as text books, reference materials, journals, internet facility, database etc. should be facilitated in the library. Factors that make scholars and faculties to want library materials include limited library collection, restrictions in the use of some materials, inadequate numbers of books to be borrowed, high costs of books, and unaffordable cost of photocopying of materials. This is clearly indicated by informants understanding of life long learning, that places emphasis not on the amount of information but rather the ability to interpret and use the information obtained. However, their lack of faith in the library or the librarians' ability to help them when in problematic situations need to be addressed in order to  acquire the necessary quantity and quality information needed for their academic writing. The University should identify the main cause for this problem and make sure that researchers have access to all theses. Branch libraries or resource centers may be utilized to overcome space limitation at the main library.

**REFERENCES**

1. Belkin, N. J. (1984). Cognitive models and information transfer. Social Science Information Studies, 4: 111-130. | 2. Belkin, N. J., & Vickery, A. (1985). Interaction in information systems. Library and Information Research Report, 35, the British Library. | 3. Borgman, C.L. (1984). Psychological Research in Human Computer Interaction. In M. E. Williams (Ed.), AnnuaZReview of Information Science and Technology (ARIST), 19: 33-64. | 4. Dervin, B., & Nilan, M. (1986). Information needs and uses. In M. E. Williams (Ed.), Annual Review of Information Science and Technology (ARIST), 21: 3-33. | 5. Hall, H. J. (1981). Patterns in the use of information: The right to be different. Journal of the American Society for Information Sciences, 32: 103-112. | 6. Ingwersen, P. (1982). Search procedures in the library analyzed from the cognitive point of view. Journal of Documentation, 38:165-191. | 7. James, R. (1983). Libraries in the mind: How can we see user's perceptions of libraries. Journal of Librarianship, IS, 19-28. | 8. Grossa, L. and Saxton, M. L., (2002). Integrating the imposed query into the evaluation of reference service: A dichotomous analysis of user ratings. Library & Information Science Research, Vol.24: 251–263. | 9. Pomerantz, J., Luo, L. and McClure, C.R., (2006). Peer review of chat reference transcripts: Approaches and strategies.Library & Information Science Research, 28(1) 24-48. | 10. Weddell, S. (2008). Transforming reference into a proactive knowledge advisory service: A case study. Reference Services Review, 36(2): 147-155. |