Academic Information Seeking Behavior of the Faculty Members of Jagannath University, Dhaka

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Abstract

Information seeking behavior is an area that generates considerable interest among the researchers. In this post modern era, most of the information hunter depends on electronic resources across the globe; Bangladesh is not apart from that. This study is an endeavor to find out the academic information seeking behavior of the faculty members of Jagannath University. This study has been conducted on the faculty members of Jagannath University to explore their current academic information seeking behavior. The study, using questionnaire-based survey method, was conducted on 60 randomly selected faculty members of Jagannath University in Dhaka. The study reveals that faculty members dependant various information channel like library as well as internet, seminar & conference for their desired information. The majority of the faculty members depend on their seminar library. Most of the faculty members use internet daily for updating their knowledge and they belief that internet has upgraded their teaching patters. The findings of the study also explore the difficulties faced by the faculty members. Finally, some recommendation has been made as mentioned by the respondents.

Keywords: Academic, information, behavior, faculty.

Introduction:

Dissemination and sharing of current academic information have characterized one of the major aspects of scholarly communication of any academic institution including universities. Information and communication technology put an impact on every aspect of our everyday life. Information is considered as an important building block in the area of a country's overall development. It is widely recognized that Proper information contributes both the individual and the nation as a whole. It is a universal truth that

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humankind has the enthusiasm to know things and they vigorously seek information for their existence. So, the need for information is one of the cognitive needs of humankind. "Indeed information has been described as the fifth need of man ranking after air, water, food and shelter" (Kemp, 1976). But the information system all over the world has been undergoing changes. The changes are recognized as revolutionary in nature and feature. Rapid globalization and the tremendous development of information technology during the last two decades affect significantly the user's information seeking pattern as well as information service. Faculty members of any university are treated as specialists in his/her interested field and they have the freedom of choice to select the sources and media of information. In previous times, when the faculties feel the necessity of information, they mostly discussed with other fellow members or relied on others traditional media. But now a day's the internet and the web became the most popular sources of information among the intellectual arena across the globe. Faculty members of Jagannath University are not apart from that. Due to the development of information technology, faculty members use online resources side wise of traditional sources, like library. Before the use of technology, it was very much difficult and more time consuming to prepare their everyday lectures for taking classes as well as make themselves adequate knowledgeable for their personal studies and research. Now a day's many electronic resources are available in the country. So it is assumed that the emergence of new information environments, sources, and channels, especially the World Wide Web has affected information seeking behavior of any academician including the faculties of Jagannath University, the emerging leading institution of higher education in Bangladesh. After its inception in 2005, its faculty members are tried their best to keep them informative on the line of world standard and tried to produce the best and international standard graduate from this institutions. At present the there are about 23725 students, 6 faculties, 1 institute (e. g. center for English language) with 327 faculty members, (source: university dairy, published July 2012). Information need and seeking behavior has been the subject of many studies in the last thirty years around the globe. But there is a limited amount of studies have been done on this issue in Bangladesh. In Bangladesh, the first research of this kind was done in 1997 by Alam, titled "Information Need and Information seeking Behavior in Population Information Systems: An overview". In 2005, another pioneer work been done by Islam and Hoq on "Information Needs and Information Seeking Behavior of Teachers in the Faculty of Arts of the University of Dhaka. Since there have been no studies on this topic in Jagannath University, this study will explore the issues for the first time and the findings of this study can provide a starting point for further studies by other scholar to gain a deeper understanding of this subjects broadly. In this backdrop, the present

paper attempts to identify the information seeking behavior of the faculty members of Jagannath University.

Objectives of the Study

The broad objective of the study is to explore the nature of academic information seeking behavior of the faculty members of Jagannath university in the age of information explosion. Besides this, the entire research process is accordingly guided by these following specific objectives to identify information seeking behavior of faculty members.

- To find out the purpose of seek out information.
- To explore the sources used by the faculty members.
- To find out the various strategies followed by the faculties to meet their information needs.
- To identify the core obstructions faced by the faculties in meeting their information need.

Review of the Relevant Literature

Though, the concept of "Information seeking behavior" has been used in the research literature since the 1950's (Hayden,1999) , it took several decades to be a scholarly field of study among the academician. This section reviews literature concerned with information needs and information seeking behavior of various usurer group, especially of academician.

Kakai, Odongo and Bukenya (2004) investigated the information needs and seeking behavior of undergraduate students of Department of Biochemistry in the Faculty of Science and the Department of History in the Faculty of Arts of Makerere University. They tested Ellis' six generic information–seeking activities to establish how undergraduate students seek information. Using chi–square statistic, it was established that undergraduate students use the search strategies, as Ellis model, when seeking information: Starting (using lecturers), browsing (on the shelves), chaining (using references at the end of books), monitoring (using the card catalogue, library notice board display lists, and colleagues), and extracting (using the card catalogue). The undergraduate students were also found to rely mainly on textbooks, with very little use of other information resources like journals (both print and electronic) and CD–ROMs. Information needs and seeking behavior of the teacher of the teachers training colleges of University of Gujarat State was examined by Patel (2005). The findings of his study showed that, most of the respondents read books, news paper and magazines regularly to satisfy their information needs. The study also revealed that most of the respondents used library for the purpose of study and entertainment. Kumar (2009) explored the information needs and use patterns of faculty

members and researcher of Chaudhary Charan Singh University. The result of the study revealed that most of the respondents visited library to borrow books, followed by study purposes. Khan and Shafique (2011), have shown that the college teachers and administrators mostly seek information for lecture preparation, improvement of their personal competencies and current awareness. They prefer English language for reading material, while print is the preferred format. Google is mostly used search engine by them. Most of them have not received any formal training or orientation for using the online information resources. Institutional libraries are fulfilling their information needs to some extent. They stressed that college libraries should be equipped with computers, CDs, Internet, and latest research journals. Workshops and seminars should be arranged for them. Mustaffa, Ahmad and Baqi (2012) have explored the corroboration between internet activity, technology acceptance and information seeking behavior of faculty members from two different countries. The findings of their analysis using Structural Equation Modeling (SEM) indicate a positive relationship between the three variables under study in the two countries. Results of their analysis explored that many respondents feel Internet can be an important information resource. The results of the study also suggest that both technical and cultural readiness is necessary to successfully implement internet information resources, and that design strategies can accommodate cultural issues. Another study conducted by Khan and Bhatti (2012) revealed that majority of the law faculty member were not satisfied with the provision of libraries in their colleges. They showed dissatisfaction regarding the sources, resources, services and facilities provided by the law colleges' libraries. They preferred information in printed form and English language for preparing lecturers and other academic purposes. The study also found them dissatisfied regarding IT facilities i.e. computers and internet in their libraries. To meet their instant academic and research needs most of them had developed personal collections at homes and offices. A significant number of law faculty members appreciated the cooperative attitude of the library staff. The study suggested the provision of IT based sources and facilities and the assessment of teaching communities' information needs for planning better users' oriented services and developing effective library collection.

In Bangladesh a pioneer work in this field was conducted by Islam and Hoq titled "Information Needs and Information Seeking Behavior of Teachers in the Faculty of Arts of the University of Dhaka" in 2005. Findings of this research revealed that the teachers under the faculty of Arts need information mainly for the purpose of undertaking research in their respective fields. As regards information channel, the data revealed that majority of the respondents 87.23% have their own collection of reading materials, like books, periodicals and photocopies and relevant materials. It

is also found that the extent of use of using various information channels was not satisfactory. Alam (1997), in his study on "Information need and information seeking behavior in population information system: An overview" exposed that established information systems and services are not fully utilized. The problem of underutilization of information system usually can be traced to a mismatch between the services provided and the needs of information user.

Methodology of the Study

This study is designed to look into academic information seeking behavior of the faculty members of Jagannath University. The respondents of this study were faculty members of Jagannath University. Data were collected directly from primary sources. A sample of 60 respondents has been selected from four categories (Professor 10, Associate Professor 10, Assistant Professor 20, and Lecturer 20) based on systematic random sampling . At first a list was made containing the total numbers of faculty members by their academic designation. Then sample was selected by using lottery method. Due to the nature of the study, a semi-structured questionnaire was given to them to fill in. Some secondary data were also collected from different journals, books, research publications, web site and other documents. On the basis of the purpose of the present study, necessary statistical tools have been used in analyzing the data.

Findings of the Study

A total of 60 faculty members were selected as respondents of the study. In this very small scale study a general picture of the faculty member's academic information seeking behavior has been manifested.

Table-1: Distribution of the respondents by their designation (N=60)

Designation of the respondent	No. of respondents	Percent
Professor	10	16.66
Associate Professor	10	16.66
Assistant Professor	20	33.33
Lecturer	20	33.33
Total	60	100

Source: Field work-2012

Out of 327 faculty members 60 respondents were selected randomly by their designation. The above table has been constructed to indicate the nature of respondents according their number and designation. About 17% were professors and the same numbers were associate professor, 33.33% were assistant professors and the same numbers were lectures.

Table- 2: Percentage distribution of the Respondent on the basis of their Purposes of seeking information (multiple answers were found in a single category).

Purpose of information search	No. of respondents	Percent
Preparing class lecture	39	65
Updating knowledge	44	73.3
Doing research work	36	60
Writing & presenting paper	27	45
Doing Ph. D	12	20
Entertainment	12	20

Source: Field work-2012

It becomes clear from the above table that majority of the respondents about74% sought information for "Updating knowledge" followed by "Preparing Lecturers" 65% and "Doing Research" 60% respectively.

Table-3: Percentage distribution of the Respondent on the basis of their sources of information (multiple answers were found in a single category).

Sources of information	No. of respondents	Percent
Discussed with colleagues	25	41.7
Text Book	41	68.3
Indexing &Abstracting journals	22	36.7
Conference	23	38.3
Newspaper	23	38.3
Articles &research report	22	36.7
Reference book	48	80.0
Others	12	20.0

Source: Field work-2012

From the above table it is clearly evident that, the highest numbers of the respondents (80%) depend on reference book. Text books as well as discussion with colleagues and newspapers are also important information sources used by the academician of Jagannath University. Indexing &Abstracting journals, articles& research report, conference etc. contribute a lot as a source of information.

Table-4: Percentages distribution of the Respondent on the basis of their preferred library (multiple answers were found in a single category)

Preferred library	Frequency	Percent
Personal library	29	48.3
Departmental seminar library	33	55.0
University central library	16	26.7
public library	10	16.7
Others	11	18.3

Source: Field work-2012

The above table depicts that the highest number of the respondents (55%) prefer departmental seminar library and the lowest numbers of the respondents, about 17% prefer public library. 48.3% of the respondents prefer personal library and an insignificant numbers of the respondents about 27% prefer University central library as source of required information.

Table-5: Percentages distribution of the Respondents on the basis of their Relationship between frequency of library use and designation

| Frequency of library use | Designation | | | | | | | | Total | |
| | Professor | | Associate professor | | Assistant professor | | Lecturers | | | |
	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%	F	%
Daily	1	10	2	20	5	25	2	10	10	16.67
Weekly three time	3	30	5	50	6	30	7	35	21	35
Once in a week	2	20	3	30	7	35	9	45	20	35
Once in a month	2	20	0	0	1	5	1	5	4	6.67
Rarely	2	20	0	0	1	5	1	5	4	6.67
Total	n=10	100	n=10	100	n=20	100	n=20	100	N=60	100

Source: Field work-2012

According to the above the cross table, It is clearly evident that associate and assistant level teachers are the most library visiting group.

Table-6: Percentages distribution of the Respondent on the basis of their frequency of Internet Usage (n=60).

Frequency of Usage	Frequency	Percent
Daily	47	78.32
At least once a week	10	16.67
At least once a fort-night	1	1.67
Rarely	1	1.67
No comments	1	1.67
Total	60	100.0

Source: Field work-2012

The present era is information communication and technology based era. In this era we dependent on information communication and technology especially internet based information. In this study, it is found that the almost all the faculty members of Jagannath University are in touch with internet based sources. The above table shows that, a major portion of respondents, which are 78.32% use internet, is almost daily.
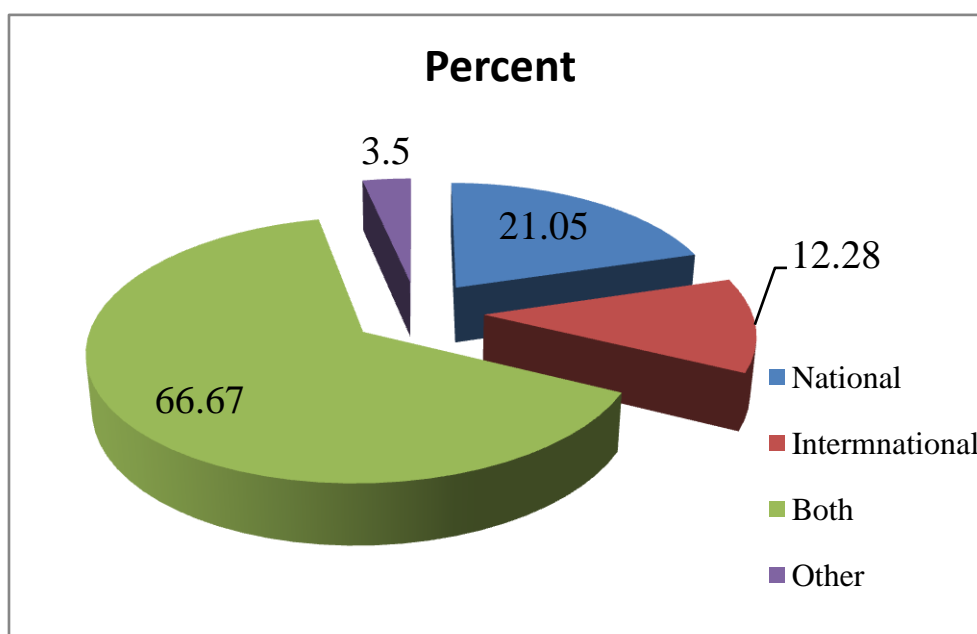
Table-7: Percentages distribution of the Respondent on the basis of purposes of using internet (multiple answers were found in a single category).

Purpose of using internet	No. of respondents	Percent
For preparing class lectures	34	56.7
For updating knowledge	52	86.7
To see newspapers	24	40.0
To know health information	6	10.0
To know sports	12	20.0
Others	12	20.0

Source: Field work-2012

As shown in table 7, respondents indicate the purpose of using internet. The highest number of the faculty members (about 87%) use internet for dating knowledge, followed by preparing class lectures(about 57%) and the lowest numbers of the faculty members (10%) use internet to know health information.

Chart-1: Percentages distribution of the Respondent on the basis of the types of seminar & conference they attend (multiple answers were found in a single category).

Source: Field work-2012

The above chart manifested that, majority of the respondents, about 67% attend the both (national & international), 21% attend only national and 12.28% respondents attend only international seminar to gain academic knowledge.

Table-8: Percentages distribution of the Respondent by the opportunities acquired from seminar and conference (multiple answers were found in a single category).

Types of opportunity provide by seminar & conference	Frequency	Percent
Opportunity to cross check ideas with other intellectuals	3	5.17
Help to generate knowledge through discussion	3	5.17
Interaction and Discussion with scholars	11	18.97
Provide a huge Qualitative & Quantitative information	2	3.44
Get update information	16	27.59
Exchange view with others	6	10.34
Provide current information and analysis	5	8.62
New network development	1	1.72
Get a complete picture of an issue	1	1.72
Other	8	13.79
No comments	12	20.68

Source: Field work-2012

Seminar and conference provide various opportunities to the faculty members which help to increasing their academic knowledge. The highest numbers of the respondents (27.59 percent) reported that they get update information from seminar and conference, and a significant number of respondent reported that seminar and conference provide an opportunity to make an interaction and Discussion with other scholars. The lowest numbers of the respondents (1.72 percent) mention that seminar and conference provide a complete picture of an issue.

Table-9: Percentages distribution of the Respondent on the basis of difficulties faced while seeking academic information (open view)

Difficulties	No. of respondents	Percent
Information is not available	15	25
Time constraints	10	16.67
Lack of library facility	11	18.33
Inadequate Latest Information Material	19	31.67
Lack of good environment	5	8.33
Information is scattered in too many sources	5	8.33
Unavailability of up-to-date data	6	10
Lack of internet facility	9	15
Slow speed of internet	6	10
Others	13	21.67

Source: Field work-2012

To collect academic information faculty members are depend on books, journals and other sources of information. But they have to faces multiple difficulties. From the above table it is evident that the faculty members have to faces the difficulties, like, inadequate information material, lack of good environment and scattered information, unavailability of internet facility, inadequate manpower, funding crisis and limited online resources.

Table-10: Percentages distribution of the Respondent on the basis of their suggestions to provide maximum support to increase academic knowledge of the faculty members (open view)

Recommendation				No. of Respondents	Percent
Free access facility on online scholarly articles and journals				10	16.67
Increase internet facility				11	18.33
Increase library facility	Central library	16 16	26.67% 26.67%	27	45
	Departmental library	11	18.33%		
Arranging seminar, workshop and conference				11	18.33
Access relevant books, journals, research report				9	15
Increasing networking system				2	3.33
Increase the allocation of budget and economic support				5	8.33
Other				13	21.67

Source: Field work-2012

Majority of the faculty members (45%) pointed out that university central library and departmental seminar library should be enriched with available books, journals, articles and research report. 18.3% faculty members emphasis on arranging both (national & international) seminar, workshop and conference & increase internet facility (i.e. available internet connection, give computer to every person). About 17% faculty members reported that institution should have free access to online scholarly articles and journals. 13% faculty members opinioned "others" to increase academic information of faculty members (i.e. to ensure the access of e-book and e-journals, update library man, collect recent information, provide with proper sitting arrangements and reading materials, extra opportunity for higher education and training).

Discussion

This study investigated the information seeking behavior of the faculty members of Jagannath University .The result of this study is in accord with both the national and international empirical studies. The existing literature revealed that faculty members seek information to update their academic

knowledge, undertaking research work, writing articles or books, prepare class lecture etc. The findings of this study also reveal the same thing. The study reveals that most of the faculty members of Jagannath University seek information to upgrade their knowledge and prepare class lecture. It was found that the respondents use a variety of academic information sources for academic and research purposes. Textbooks, reference books, discussion with colleague are considered most fundamental sources. Although most of the respondents use their departmental seminar library whereas, all most all faculty members maintained personal library. Sometimes faculty members attend seminar and conference to meet their information need.

The incorporation of technology into teaching and research is one of the most important challenges for education today. It is time to move beyond the walls of our classrooms to join forces with other institutions and societies to revitalize education… Integration of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) into teaching and learning process is a growing field which has variety of definitions according to different points of view. (Bhasin, 2012). The present age is the age of modern information communication and technology. There has been tremendous development of information technology in the last two decades that affects significantly the information seeker as well as faculty members. As a result the highest numbers of faculty members use internet in order to get required information and internet has upgraded their teaching patterns.

The study revealed that faculty members faced various problems like, materials are not available, incomplete information materials, and sometimes information materials are too old. To provide sufficient resources and services to its faculty members, university authorities can analyze the findings of the study. The findings will be useful in providing better library and information services to the faculty members of Jagannath University and surely helps to introduce new library and information services for its faculty members. The outcome of meeting the information needs of the faculty members can be mutually beneficial to both the institutions and to the faculty members as well as to the students.

Recommendations

On the basis of respondents' opinions, following recommendations are made for ensuring better library and information services to the faculty members of Jagannath University:

- University central library should be updated with better facilities and collection.
- University should provide proper sitting arrangement.
- University libraries should be provided with proper networking system.

- University libraries should be equipped with computers, CDs, Internet, and latest research journals.
- Institution should have free access on online scholarly articles and journal.
- Workshops and seminars should be arranged for the faculties.
- University authority should also increase budgetary allocation to ensure better facilities and up-to-date collections.

Conclusion

Nowadays of globalized and technological developed world Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) is an important tool to be updated and be accustom with the real world. Information and communication is not only for the practitioner, it is obviously also very inevitable tool for the academician.

Over the past three decades, governments and education systems around the world have regarded the use of information and communications technologies (ICTs) as an important issue for improving the effectiveness of teaching and learning (Plump, Anderson, Law, & Qualex, 2009). As more and more technologies, such as net books, interactive whiteboards, smart phones and digital video recorders, have become more available and affordable, coupled with the rapid expansion of computer networking capability in educational system, there have been continued research efforts in investigating how teachers can use ICT to facilitate student learning (Lebanon, Robinson, & McDonough, 2009; Newhouse, Trinidad, & Clarkson, 2002). Motivated by the prospect of greater economic, social, educational and technological gains, both developing and developed countries, are bringing about education reform, with a clear focus on ICT integration in education (Jhurree, 2005).

Jhurree (2005) argues that education reform is occurring throughout the world and one of its tenets is the introduction and integration of ICTs in the education system. The successful integration of ICTs into the classroom warrants careful planning and depends largely on how well policy makers understand and appreciate the dynamics of such integration. Integration of ICTs in education has been a contentious issue (Jhurree, 2005). This study has provided some recommendations intended for educational administrators and policy makers to produce realistic, achievable and effective implementation plans at Jagannath University. The present government has declared a road map "Vision 2021" for a Digital Bangladesh. Consequently, our government should establish a list of priorities based on the needs, specificities and capabilities, and then apply appropriate guidelines to execute and evaluate their plans.

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