INFORMATION-SEEKING BEHAVIOUR OF INTERNATIONAL ISLAMIC UNIVERSITY MALAYSIA LAW FACULTY MEMBERS

Shaheen Majid[1]
Gava Mugeraa Kassim [2]
[1]Division of Information Studies
School of Applied Science
Nanyang Technological University, Singapore.
[2] Department of Library and Information Science
International Islamic University Malaysia
e-mail: sheen337@yahoo.com

ABSTRACT

Adequate knowledge about the information needs and seeking behaviour of users is vital for developing library collections, services and facilities to meet their information needs effectively. The purpose of this study is to identify the information channels used by the International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM) law faculty members, information sources preferred by them, methods employed for getting the needed information and their library use pattern. A questionnaire was distributed to 80 IIUM law faculty members and 66 filled-in questionnaires were returned, giving an overall response rate of 82.5 percent. It was found that respondents used various sources for acquiring the needed information. Books were ranked as the most important source for teaching and research purposes, followed by law reports and statutes. Respondents preferred to first consult their personal collection before resorting to other information providing sources and agencies. The Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC) and CD-ROM were the most frequently used IT-based sources and facilities. E-mail was the most popular among the Internet-based services and applications. On the whole, respondents perceived IIUM library collections, services and facilities as adequate to meet their information needs effectively.

 Keywords: Information seeking behaviour; Information needs; Information channels.

INTRODUCTION

Information is considered as an important resource that contributes towards the development of a nation. It provides the core for the development of knowledge, the basis for innovations, the resources for informed citizenry, and as a result, becomes a key commodity for the progress of a society. Acknowledging the significance of information in national development, Wasserman (1991, p. 38) noted that "it is not an accident that the developed

nations are those in which information products and services have been brought into being and are widely exploited, first in conventional forms and later through computer intervention". Members of a society acquire the needed information from a variety of sources. However, several of these sources are expensive, complex or difficult for individuals to acquire and use. Therefore, the role of libraries becomes vital in meeting the information needs of individuals in the society. Libraries develop their collections, facilities and services to meet the information needs of their patrons. However, in order to accomplish this task effectively, libraries must have a thorough understanding of the information needs and information-seeking behaviour of their users.

Information seeking behaviour is a broad term, which involves a set of actions that an individual takes to express information needs, seek information, evaluate and select information, and finally use this information to satisfy his/her information needs. Various factors may determine the information seeking behaviour of an individual or a group of individuals. It is, therefore, desirable to understand the purpose for which information is required, the environment in which the user operates, users' skills in identifying the needed information, channels and sources preferred for acquiring information, and barriers to information.

Adequate knowledge of the information needs of users is imperative for libraries in re-orienting their collections, services and activities to synchronise them with the information seeking behaviour of their patrons. Bandara (1993, p. 19) noted that 'if the library is to provide any meaningful information service, the user [information seeking] habits should be taken into consideration". Since the 1940s, numerous studies have been conducted investigating different aspects of this topic. Earlier studies primarily focused on scientists and technologists to assist in building information resources and systems to effectively meet their information needs (Reneker, 1992). Hart (1993) felt that earlier studies focused on scientists and engineers because of more interest in these libraries at that time and greater availability of funds. Later on, the scope of information seeking studies expanded to include scholars and academics from other disciplines.

Many studies have been conducted to investigate the information-seeking behaviour of library users based on their subject interest, occupation, information environment, and geographical location. Information needs and seeking behaviour of academics have also been a popular area of research. Many earlier studies reported that scholars and academicians heavily used books and journals. Hart (1993) investigated the degree to which academicians and scholars in different disciplines vary in their dependence on

books and journals. A questionnaire was sent to 167 faculty members and 140 responded. It was found that 14% of the faculty members from science stream, 13% from social sciences and 21% from humanities relied more on books. On the other hand, 53% of the faculty members from science, 33% from social science, and 7% from humanities relied more on journals. Equal importance to books and journals was given by 33% academics from science, 54% from social sciences and 74% from humanities.

Sethi (1990) used a questionnaire to study the information-seeking behaviour of 256 social science faculty members in Indian universities. It was found that respondents preferred journals, books, government documents and reference sources for meeting their information needs. The study also revealed lesser use of indexing and abstracting sources, book reviews, conference proceedings, dissertations and theses, newspaper clippings and other non-book sources. However, Prasad (1998) noted that in addition to journal articles, non-traditional literature such as unpublished conference and symposia papers, research proposals, policy guidelines, and project reports were equally popular among the scholars.

Many studies have shown that in additional to formal information sources, academics also relied heavily on informal communication channels to meet their information needs. Sethi (1990) noted that academic staff considered seminar and conferences as the third important source of information after books and journals. Hart (1993) reported that scholars valued professional meetings for the purpose of gathering current information. Faculty members also considered interpersonal contacts, particularly off-campus contacts, as an important source for getting the needed information. Colleagues were preferred over other channels, as they were considered familiar, reliable, immediately accessible, inexpensive, and often provide a concise answer synthesising the available information (Dee and Blazek, 1993). In order to develop these informal contacts, libraries should facilitate informal meetings among scholars and compile up-to-date directories of local and international scholars in specialised disciplines (Verhoeven, Boerman and Jong, 1995).

Al-Shanbari and Meadows (1995) reported that 36 percent of the academicians in Saudi universities were spending four hours per week on reading, whereas, almost three-quarters of the respondents were spending the same amount of time on communicating with their colleagues. The study concluded that scholars in developing countries prefer informal channels for acquiring the needed information because of inadequate and irrelevant library collections, lack of information infrastructures, ineffective library services, lack of money to use fee-based information services, inadequately trained and less co-operative library staff.

Some studies investigating the information seeking behaviour of scholars and academics have examined the role of the library in relation to other information providers. Smith (1987) reported that about one-half of the respondents from Pennsylvania State University relied more on their personal collections and borrowing materials from other libraries. Guest (1987) noted that 85% of the respondents relied on their personal collection as a major source for information for teaching and research. The author also found that librarians were rated the lowest as a source for getting the needed information.

The success of a library in meeting the information needs of its user plays an important role in the number of their future library visits. Mwila (1993) used a questionnaire to study the use of University of Zambia library by its faculty for teaching and research purposes. It was found that humanities and social science faculty members used library more often compared to science faculty members. Hart (1993) reported that, on average, each faculty member made 7.3 visits per semester to the library. Majid, Anwar and Eisenschitz, (2000) found that nearly 42% of the respondents from University Putra Malaysia visited their library once or twice a week, 37% once or twice a month and 21% several times a year. Nkereuwem (1984) noted a very low frequency of library visits by petroleum scientists and engineers in Nigeria, where about 84 % of the respondents reported visiting their library just a few times a year. Only 9% of the scientists were visiting their libraries once or twice a week. Her study also showed a positive correlation between adequacy of library materials and frequency of library visits.

The information technology revolution is expected to bring significant changes in the information-seeking behaviour of users (Kuruppu, 1999; Pelzer, Wiese and Leysen, 1998; Zhang, 1998; Adedibu and Adio, 1997; Abels, Liebscher and Denman, 1996). Modern technology has resulted in new services, targeted at the specialised and unique information needs of users (Fidzani, 1998). The availability of electronic communication facilities such as e-mail, discussion groups, bulletin boards, electronic conferencing, and chit-chat groups, has opened new channels for communication (Krishnamurthi, 1998; Zhang, 1998; Wilkins and Leckie, 1997; Barry, 1996; Abdullah, 1995; Shade, 1995).

Bane and Melheim (1995) investigated the use of Internet by academics. A questionnaire was sent through the Internet to 231 randomly selected discussion groups. A total of 15,361 questionnaires were returned through e-mail. Results of the survey disclosed that personal e-mail was utilized extremely often, more than once a week by nearly 90% of the respondents. Discussion groups were accessed more than once a week by 75% of the

respondents. Electronic journals were accessed far less frequently more than once a week by 23% of the respondents. The survey also disclosed that many academics were still not fully aware of available Internet resources and their applications. Many studies in developing countries have also confirmed these findings (Al-Shanbari and Meadows, 1995; Reid, 1995). Abdullah (1995) noted that most of the libraries in Malaysia have yet to utilise the full potential of the Internet, although it has been available for the last several years.

A review of literature showed that most of the studies on information-seeking behaviour of academics have been undertaken in developed countries, and thus, reflect the information-seeking environment there. However, conditions in developing countries are considerably different, and they make it relatively difficult to befittingly apply data from the developed countries. Although a few isolated studies on the information-seeking behaviour of academicians have been undertaken in developing countries, little headway has been made in understanding the complexity of information needs and the manner which academics in developing countries seek and use information. It was also noted that no study has been undertaken in Malaysia on the information-seeking behaviour of law faculty members. This study attempts to investigate the information-seeking behaviour of law faculty members at the International Islamic University Malaysia (IIUM). It is expected that the findings of this study will be useful for the IIUM library, in particular, and other universities in Malaysia, in general, to properly understand the information needs of law faculty members. This knowledge can be used to review the library's collection development and information access policies.

METHODOLOGY

The study used questionnaire-based survey method, as many similar studies conducted earlier, have also used this method for data collection. This method is also preferred as it was less time consuming and economical for a scattered population. The population of the study consisted of all full-time academic staff working in the Faculty of Laws, IIUM. Part-time and assistant lecturers were excluded from the population. Due to limited number of law faculty members, the entire population of 80 academic staff members, was included in the survey.

The survey instrument consisted of two sections. Section 1 collected data on personal information about the respondents such as gender, academic rank, highest qualification and teaching experience. Section 2 of the questionnaire, comprising 14 questions, collected data on the information seeking behaviour of the respondents. Questions in this section focused on the following areas: information sources used by the respondents, use of IIUM library, adequacy

of library collections, library use and computing skills of respondents, and the use of IT-based library sources and services. In order to ensure reliability and effectiveness of the instrument, the questionnaire was pilot tested on ten postgraduate students of the Faculty of Laws, IIUM. The pre-testing exercise was undertaken to identify any problems that potential respondents might face in understanding questions posed to them. Results of the pilot study showed that respondents were able to understand the questions and their responses were interpretable.

In order to save time and ensure better response rate, the questionnaires were personally distributed to the academic staff in their offices in April 1999. Respondents were requested to return the filled-in questionnaire to their departmental secretaries. Fifty-two (65%) filled-in questionnaires were returned within two weeks of distribution. A follow-up visit was made to non-respondents and a further 14 questionnaires were collected. A total of 66 filled-in questionnaires were received, showing an overall response rate of 82.5 percent.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

Respondents

Of the 66 respondents, 32 (48.5%) were lecturers, 20 (30.3%) assistant professors, 9 (13.6%) associate professors, and 5 (7.6%) professors. Thirty-four (51.5%) of the respondents were holding a Ph.D. degree and 32 (48.5%) had a master's degree. Twenty-six (39.4%) of the respondents obtained their highest qualifications from Malaysian universities, 29 (43.9%) from the United Kingdom and 11 (16.7%) from universities in other countries.

The largest number of respondents, 25 (37.9%), has been teaching for the last 5 years or less. Eighteen (27.3%) respondents have between 6 and 10 years of teaching experience and 16 (24.3%) had between 11 and 20 years. Seven (10.6%) respondents have 21 or more years of teaching experience. Thirty-seven (56.1%) of the respondents were male and 29 (43.9%) were female.

Library Use Skills of the Respondents

Respondents were asked to provide self-assessment on their level of library use skills. It was assumed that library use skills might have a bearing on the ways respondents use the library to acquire the needed information. Those respondents who have better library use skills were expected to utilise library resources and facilities more effectively compared to those with poor library use skills. Data analysis showed that 17 (25.8%) of the respondents assessed their library use skills as 'very good', 36 (19.7%) as 'good' and 13 (19.7%)

as fair (Table 1). None of the respondents perceived their library use skills as 'excellent' or 'poor'.

Table 1:Library Use Skills of Respondents (N =66)

Skill Level	Number	Percentage
Excellent	-	-
Very Good	17	25.8
Good	36	54.5
Fair	13	19.7
Poor	-	-

It was found that of the 34 respondents with a Ph.D. degree, 27 (85.5%) possessed 'good' or 'very good' library use skills whereas, 74.9% of the respondents with a master's degree had the same level of library use skills. Those respondents who obtained their highest qualifications from overseas universities possessed comparatively better library use skills than locally trained respondents. It was also found that 91.9% of the male respondents possessed 'good' or better library use skills, whereas, 65.5% of the female respondents possessed the same level of skills.

Computing Skills of Respondents

Respondents were also asked to provide self-assessment on their level of computer use skills. It was assumed that level of computing skills might have an impact on their use of IT-based library sources and facilities. Of the 65 respondents, one perceived his/her computing skills as 'excellent', 9 (13.8%) 'very good' and 30 (46.2%) as 'good' (Table 2). Twenty-five (38.5%) of the respondents considered their computing skills as 'fair' or 'poor'.

Table 2: Computing Skills of Respondents (N = 65)

Skill Level	Number	Percentage
Excellent	1	1.5
Very Good	9	13.8
Good	30	46.2
Fair	21	32.3
Poor	4	6.2

It was found that 63.6% of the respondents with a Ph.D. qualification and 59.3% with a mater's degree possessed good or better computing skills. Respondents obtaining their highest qualification from overseas academic institutions possessed comparatively better computing skills than those from

local universities. It was also found that 63.9% of the male respondents and 58.7% female respondents possessed good or better computing skills.

Over 92% of the respondents have access to a computer at their work place with 85% in their offices, 10% in the computer laboratory and 5% in the Law Resource Centre. Of the 66 respondents, 46 (69.7%) have a computer at home and out of them 21 (45.7%) were connected to the Internet.

Information Seeking Behaviour of Respondents

This section presents data on the information seeking behaviour of the respondents. It includes data on the office time spent by the respondents on different activities including reading and literature searching, library use pattern, perception of the importance of various information sources for teaching and research and the use of IT-based sources and facilities by the respondents.

Office Time Spent on Various Activities

Table 3 presents the amount of office time spent by respondents on various activities. Twenty-eight (43.1%) respondents spent 21% to 40% of their office time on teaching.

Table 3: Time Spent on Various Activities by Respondents

Time (%)	Teaching N = 65	Student Advisement N = 65	Research & Publi-cations N = 57	Adminis-tration N = 41	Reading & Lit. Searching N = 61	Other Activi-ties N = 13
1-20	4 (6.1%)	61 (93.8%)	44 (77.2%)	37 (90.3%)	50 (82.0%)	12 (91.4%)
21-40	28 (43.1%)	4 (6.2%)	13 (22.8%)	2 (4.8%)	9 (14.8%)	1 (7.7%)
41-60	30 (46.1%)	-	-	2 (4.9%)	2 (3.2%)	-
61+	3 (4.5%)	-	-	-	-	-
Mean Time	42.8%	13.5%	14.6%	7.9%	16.9%	2.8%

Another 30 (46.1%) respondents reported spending 41% to 60% of their time also on teaching. On average, respondents spent 43.1% of their office time on teaching. A majority of the respondents 61 (93.8%), spent up to 20% of their office time on student advisement. On average, respondents spent 13.8% of their time on advising student. Similarly, average office time spent on research and publication and administration was 14.9% and 8.2% respectively.

Fifty (82%) of the respondents spent up to 20% of their office time on literature searching and reading. Nine (14.8%) of the respondents spent 21 to 40 percent of their time for this purpose. On average, respondents spent 17.2% of their office time (approximately 8 hours per week) on this activity. It was also found that mean time spent on reading and literature searching was the highest among lecturers (21.3%) and the lowest among professors (11.0%). Similarly, the mean office time spent on reading and literature was 19.3% for female and 15.0% for male respondents.

Information Channels Used by Respondents

Respondents were asked to indicate information channels first consulted by them for getting the needed information. It was found that 72.9% of the respondents 'always' first consulted their personal collections. Of the 64 respondents, 27 (42.2%) reported 'always' and 24 (37.5%) 'frequently' visiting the IIUM library for meeting their information needs. The percentages of respondents 'always' and 'frequently' approaching their colleagues were 19.7% and 32.8% respectively. Data analysis suggested that faculty members preferred to first consult their personal collection for meeting their information needs followed by library and colleagues.

Table 4: Use of Information Channels by Respondents

Channel	N	Always	Frequently	Occasionally	Never
Personal Collection	59	43 (72.9%)	13 (22.0%)	3 (5.1%)	-
IIUM Library	64	27 (42.2%)	24 (37.5%)	13 (20.3%)	-
Colleagues	61	12 (19.7%)	20 (32.8%)	28 (45.9%)	1 (1.6%)
Book Stores	62	3 (4.8%)	20 (32.3%)	37 (59.7%)	2 (3.2%)

Library Visits

Respondents were asked how often they visited the library. Of the 65 participants who responded to this question, 38 (58.5%) visited the library at least one or twice a week (Table 5). Another 19 (29.2%) respondents visited the library at least once or twice a month. It was also found that 66.7% of the male and 48.3% of the female respondents visited the library at least one or twice a week.

Table 5: Frequency of Library Visits

Visit Frequency	Number	Percentage
Almost Daily	4	6.2
Once or twice a week	34	52.3
Once or twice a month	19	29.2
Several times a year	8	12.3
Never	-	-

A cross-tabulation between the number of library visits and library use skills of respondents was made to find out if any trend existed between these two variables. It was found that 81.3% of the respondents with 'very good' and 55.5% with 'good' library use skills visited their library once or twice a week. On the contrary, only 38.5% of the respondents with 'fair' library use skills made the same number of library visits. It appears that user with better library use skills are likely to visit library more frequently compared to those with low library use skills.

Use of Other Libraries

Respondents were asked to name the libraries they have visited recently besides using the IIUM library. Thirty-seven respondents reported using the University of Malaya library and 10 the National Library of Malaysia. Other libraries used by four respondents each were the National University of Singapore and National Achives of Malaysia. Some respondents reported using libraries of Ministry of Lands, National Bank of Malaysia, and certain law firms.

Methods of Getting Information from the Library

Respondents were asked to indicate methods employed by them for getting information from the IIUM library. All respondents, with varied frequencies, personally visited their library for getting the needed information (Table 6).

Table 6: Methods used for Getting Information from the Library *(Multiple Responses)*

Method	Always	Frequently	Occasionally
Going Library Personally (N = 66)	51	7	8
Calling the Library (N = 36)	-	11	25
Sending Students (N = 19)	1	3	15
Sending Support Staff (N = 9)	1	4	4

Thirty-six respondents reported calling the library for this purpose. Nineteen faculty members asked their students and 9 sent support staff to get information from the library. It appeared that in addition to visiting the library, faculty members also used certain other methods for getting information from the library.

Importance of Information Sources to Teaching

Respondents were asked how important are different information sources for their teaching. A five-point Likert scale was used for recording the responses. Books were ranked as the most important source for teaching (mean score=

4.58), followed by law reports and statutes, both with a mean score of 4.50 (Table 7). Research and review articles were at the 4th and 5th place with mean scores of 4.21 and 3.84, respectively. Encyclopaedias, theses and indexing and abstracting sources were considered less important for the teaching purposes. In response to an open-ended option for this question, three respondents mentioned the Internet, two newspaper reports and one respondents considered Law Commission Papers as important sources for teaching.

Table 7: Importance of Information Sources for Teaching

Ranking	Information Source	N	Mean Score	Standard Deviation
1	Books	65	4.58	.66
2	Law Reports	64	4.50	.85
3	Statues	64	4.50	.80
4	Research Articles	66	4.21	.79
5	Review Articles	62	3.84	1.01
6	Legal Digests	64	3.59	.99
7	Conference Abstracts & Proceedings	64	3.23	1.03
8	Abstracting and Indexing Sources	55	3.23	1.10
9	Theses and Dissertations	61	3.18	.87
10	Encyclopaedias	54	2.81	1.12

Scale: 1= Not important   2= Somewhat important   3=   Important
              4= Very important   5= Extremely important

Importance of Information Sources to Research and Publication

Books were ranked as the most important source for the research and publication work (mean score = 4.62), closely followed by law reports (mean score = 4.58) and statutes (mean score 4.53). Research and review articles were ranked 4th and 5th with score scores of 4.38 and 4.14 respectively (Table 8). Encyclopaedias, indexing and abstracting sources and theses were considered less important for the purpose of research and publication. Four respondents in response to an open-ended option for this question reported that the Law Commission homepage, the Internet and decided cases were important for their research and publication work.

A comparison showed that respondents assigned almost the same importance to various information sources for teaching and research, with slight variation in their mean scores. It appeared that law faculty members needed the same type of information sources for teaching and research and publication work.

Table 8: Importance of Information Sources for Research and Publication

Ranking	Information Source	N	Mean Score	Standard Deviation
1	Books	66	4.62	.55
2	Law Reposts	65	4.58	.73
3	Statues	62	4.53	.74
4	Research Articles	66	4.38	.74
5	Review Articles	63	4.14	.84
6	Legal Digests	62	3.84	.89
7	Conference abstracts & Proceedings	63	3.75	.97
8	Theses and Dissertations	63	3.73	.94
9	Abstracting and Indexing Sources	57	3.67	.93
10	Encyclopaedias	59	3.36	1.17

Scale: 1= Not important   2= Somewhat important   3=   Important
            4= Very important   5= Extremely important

Adequacy of Library Collections

Respondents were asked to provide their assessment of the adequacy of the IIUM library collections in meeting their information needs. Law reports obtained the highest mean score of 3.58, closely followed by statutes with a mean score of 3.54. Journals and books were ranked 3rd and 4th for their adequacy with mean scores of 3.27 and 3.15 respectively (Table 9). Audio-visual materials and CD-ROM databases were ranked the lowest with mean scores of 2.78 and 2.96, respectively. The respondents who responded to an open-ended option for this question mentioned that newspaper clippings were inadequate at the IIUM library. It was noted that most library collections received mean scores in a range from 3.0 to 4.0 for their adequacy. This means that IIUM law faculty members consider the library collection to be quite adequate in meeting their information needs.

Table 9: Adequacy of Library Collections

Collection Type	N	Mean Score	Standard Deviation
Law Reports	62	3.58	.98
Statutes	63	3.54	1.08
Journals	64	3.27	1.07
Books	66	3.15	.98
Reference Materials	62	3.03	.96
CD-ROM Databases	52	2.96	1.03
Audio-visual Materials	48	2.78	1.35

Use of IT-based Library Sources and Facilities

Among the IT-based library sources and facilities offered by the IIUM library, respondents used the library OPAC (Online Public Access Catalogue) more frequently (mean score = 3.05). It was followed by CD-ROM databases and access to local and international online databases with a mean score of 2.74 and 2.55, respectively (Table 10). Audio-visual and multimedia collections were the least used (mean score = 1.96) library resources.

Table 10: Use of IT-based Library Sources and Facilities by Respondents

IT-based Sources and Facilities	N	Mean Score	Standard Deviation
Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC)	58	3.05	1.33
CD-ROM databases and products	58	2.74	1.38
Online local and international databases	58	2.55	1.33
In-house information databases	53	2.42	1.34
Audio-visual and multimedia collections	55	1.96	1.05

Scale: 0= Never ; 1= Rarely ;   2 = Frequently ; 3= Quite frequently ; 4= Very frequently

Use of Internet

Fifty-eight (87.9%) of the respondents reported using the Internet. These respondents were further asked to provide information on the use of various Internet-based services and applications (Table 11). Electronic mail appeared to be the most popular Internet application among the respondents (mean score = 4.18). It was followed by Internet-based electronic information sources such as electronic journals and contents pages (mean score = 3.47) and OPACs of local and overseas universities (mean score=2.75). The file transfer protocols (ftp) appeared to be the least popular Internet application. In response to an open-ended option for this question, seven respondents reported using the Internet for accessing online databases, newspapers and news services.

Table 11:Use of the Internet-based Services and Applications

Internet-based Services and Applications	N	Mean Score	Standard Deviation
Electronic mail	55	4.18	.92
Electronic information sources (e.g. electronic journals, contents pages)	55	3.47	1.25
OPACs of local and overseas universities	52	2.75	1.31
Electronic bulletin boards and discussion groups	47	2.32	1.45
File transfer protocols (ftp)	43	2.07	1.40

Scale: 0= Never ;   1= Rarely ; 2= Frequently ; 3= Quite frequently ; 4= Very frequently

All the Internet applications were most popular among associate professors and the least popular among professors. Similarly, for almost all Internet services and applications the male respondents showed better mean scores compared to their female counterparts.

Library Effectiveness

Respondents were asked to provide their overall assessment of the effectiveness of IIUM library in meeting their information needs. Out of the 66 participants, 37 considered the library 'effective' in meeting their information needs (Table 12). Another 26 (39.4%) of the respondents perceived the library as 'somewhat effective'. None of the respondents assessed the library as 'very ineffective'. It appeared that a majority of the law faculty members were satisfied with the collections, services and facilities provided by the IIUM library for meeting their information needs.

Table 12: Overall Effectiveness of the IIUM Library

Effectiveness Level	N	Percentage
Very effective	2	3.0
Effective	37	56.1
Somewhat effective	26	39.4
Ineffective	1	1.5
Very ineffective	-	-

CONCLUSION

The study investigated the information needs and information-seeking behaviour of law faculty members at the International Islamic University Malaysia. It was found that respondents used a variety of information sources for teaching and research. Books, law reports and statutes were considered more important. It is interesting to note that, although respondents perceived the IIUM library as effective in meeting their information needs, they prefer to first consult their personal collections. It might be due to easy and convenient access to the personal collection and/or unawareness about library collections, services and facilities. It is also noted that a considerable number of respondents also visited certain other libraries, which are quite far from the IIUM campus. It is understandable that no one library can acquire all materials produced in a particular discipline. However, in view of the fact that a considerable number of respondents visited other libraries, it is possible that they might not be aware of the interlibrary loan service provided by the IIUM library. Presently, the OPACs of all major academic libraries in Malaysia are accessible through the Internet. Thus, the IIUM law faculty members might like to search these online catalogues to identify the needed

materials and requests the IIUM library to acquire them through the interlibrary loan service. This would help to save time, money and efforts of these academics.

The study revealsed that the respondents used IT-based library sources and facilities less frequently compared with printed sources. It might be due to the lack of awareness about their availability, improper selection of materials or unfamiliarity with these products. Similarly, it is also noted that e-mail is the most popular Internet application, whereas other Internet-based services and applications are only used by a limited number of respondents. This is a matter of concern, as presently, electronic information sources and the Internet are considered extremely important tools for effective teaching and research. Therefore, the IIUM library might like to review its electronic information resources, while at the same time embark on an extensive library promotion and user education programme.

REFERENCES

Abels, E.G; Liebscher, P. and Denman, D.W. 1996. Factors that influence the use of electronic networks by science and engineering faculty at small institutions: part 1- queries. *Journal of the American Society for Information Science,* Vol. 47, no. 2: 146-158.

Abdullah Kadir Bacha. 1995. Use of Internet in Malaysia with special reference to International Islamic University Malaysia. Paper presented at the *COMLIS IV Conference,* Tehran, June 1995.

Adedibu, l. and Adio, G. 1997. Information needs and information seeking patterns of medical students at Lautech, Ogbomoso. *Aslib Proceedings*, Vol. 49, no. 9: 238-242.

Al-Shanbari, H. and Meadows, A.J. 1995. Problems of communication and information-handling among scientists and engineers in Saudi Universities. *Journal of Information Science*, Vol. 21, no. 6: 473-478.

Bandara, S. 1993. The problem of managing agricultural research information systems: a profile of Jamaica. *IAALD Quarterly Bulletin,* Vol. 38, no. 1: 16-21.

Bane, A.F. and Milheim, W.D. 1995. Internet insights: how academics are using the Internet. *Computers in Libraries*, Vol. 15, 2:32-36.

Barry, C. 1996. Information-seeking in advanced IT-culture: a case study. In: P. Vattari, et al. (eds.) *Information seeking in context.* London: Taylor Graham.

Dee, C. and Blazek, R. 1993. Information needs of the rural physician: a descriptive study. *Bulletin of the Medical Library Association,* Vol.81: 259-264.

Fidzani, B.T. 1998. Information needs and information-seeking behaviour of graduate students at the University of Botswana. *Library Review*, Vol. 47, no. 7/8: 329-340.

Guest, S.S. 1987. The use of bibliographic tools by humanities faculty at the State University of New York at Albany. *Reference Librarian,* Vol. 18: 157-172.

Hart, R.L. 1993. *The information-gathering behaviour of the faculty of a four-year state college.* Ph.D. Thesis : University of North Carolina.

Krishnamurthi, M. 1998. Electronic mail: a useful communication tool for the college students. *Malaysian Journal of Library & Information Science,* Vol. 3, no. 2: 99-110.

Kuruppu, D.C. 1999. Information needs and information seeking behaviour of users in organizations. *Information Studies*, Vol.5, no. 1: 53-66.

Majid, S.; Anwar, M.A. and Eisenschitz, T.S. 2000. Information needs and seeking behavior of agricultural scientists in Malaysia. *Library and Information Science Research*, Vol. 22, no. 2: 145-163.

Mwila, A.B. 1993. *The use of the University of Zambia library by the social science, humanities and science faculties*. Ph.D. thesis, University of Michigan.

Nkereuwem, E.E. 1984. *An analysis of information used by scientists and engineers in the petroleum industry of Nigeria.* Ph.D. thesis, University of Michigan.

Pelzer, N.L.; Wiese, W.H. and Leysen, J.M. 1998. Library use and information-seeking behavior of veterinary medical students revisited in the electronic environment. *Bulletin of the Medical Library Association*, Vol. 86, no. 3: 346-355.

Reid, E.O.F. 1995. The Internet and digital libraries: implications for libraries in ASEAN region. *Asian Libraries,* Vol. 4, no, 2: 16-31.

Reneker, M. 1992. *Information seeking among members of an academic community*. PhD thesis, Columbia University.

Prasad, H.N. 1998. Information seeking behaviour of physical scientists and social scientists: a report. *Annals of Library Science and Documentation*, Vol. 45, no. 2: 41-48.

Sethi, A. 1990. *Information seeking behaviour of social scientists: an Indian conspectus.* New Delhi : Hindustan Publishing Corporation.

Shade, L.R. 1995. Wired in the ivory tower: access and copyright issues surrounding the Internet and higher education in North America. *Education for Information*, Vol. 13, no.3: 211-228.

Smith, E.S. 1987. Document supply: developments and problems. *IAALD Quarterly Bulletin,* Vol. 32, no.1: 19-23.

Verhoeven, A.H.; Boerman, E.J. and Jong, B.M. 1995. Use of information sources by family physicians: a literature survey. *Bulletin of the Medical Library Association,* Vol. 3, no. 1: 85-90.

Wasserman, P. 1991. Information transfer in science and technology: an overview. *Asian Libraries,* Vol. 1, no.2: 27-38.

Wilkins, J.L.H. and Leckie, G.J. 1997. University professional and managerial staff: information needs and seeking. *College & Research Libraries,* Vol. 58, no. 6, 561-574.

Zhang, W. 1998. Analyzing faculty and staff's information needs and use of electronic technologies: a liberal arts college's experience. *Journal of Educational Media and Library Sciences,* Vol. 35, no. 3: 218-241.

Majid, S & Kassim, G.M.