Preface

The basic objective of library service is to increase the ability of users of library to acquire their information in their own way. Due to the proliferation of knowledge as well as the multiple growth of literature is facing a challenge to provide its services to the users. It cannot deny the universal truth of the laws of library science that books are for use ad every reader must find his/her books and vice-versa. Now a days it is an accepted fact that academic libraries are under used or they are used relatively low by a very small group of readers. This is mainly because of ignorance of readers about the useful resources available in their libraries. To achieve these objectives and to aware the useful resources available in the library we are to organize our library or information centers in a more scientific way by which every book can be utilized for extracting the information that it contains. The enormous resources of the library will be wastage if we do not educate the users in finding out their informational needs. The right information at the right time to the right readers must be provided in order to generate new ideas. From reader’s point of view also they must get the correct information out of the resources of the library without losing much time and energy.

The last of the present century has seen as living in an information world. Because of unbelievable scientific and technological progress and accompanying stress and strains of society, so much information is being generated that the present day society is confronted with information explosion, information pollution and turbulent growth of information, under the circumstances, user education for the effective use of the library is to be restored to. It is no doubt educating the users to using the library, its resources and facilities; it is thus concerned with institution given to the user to help him to make optimum use of the library, various information resources and communication process. According to A E Guskin (1980) it is a message (information about the institution) communicated by a communicator (library personnel) to a receiver (society).

User education is an important and essential part of education. It bridges the gap between formal education and the education beyond. By proper user education, maximum utilization and effective dissemination of information can be possible and can develop
real personality in students provided they have acquired life long learning skills. The library user is the judge of library organizations effectiveness. In cases in which the person is using the library for the first time or is conducting research which requires use of unfamiliar reference tools, the librarian is the only person who can help him in this regard by explaining him how to use catalogue which provides access to its collection. The librarian also helps users to learn how to search electronic database, e.g. library’s online catalogue or a bibliographic database at a CDROM work station. Although both of these computerized tools are designed user friendly but demonstrating a successful search is a more effective teaching technique than merely telling the user how to conduct one.

User education is a continuous process consisting of two components- orientation and instruction which are considered necessary. Orientation is concerned with introducing the user to the general technique of library usage and services available to the organization, layout and facilities of the library. Instruction is concerned with learning by the user to use the information resources available in a specific discipline.

Recent changes heavy cut on library budget, fast socio-economic changes, application of science and technology, growing realization of under-utilized resources have focused the attention of library professionals on ‘users and utilization’ of resources.

When I had joined D K D College as a Librarian, I have seen that the attendance of Higher Secondary students were very low in the library. A few of them come to the library for searching some note-type books which are usually not purchased in the library. (In Assam, Higher Secondary section is also included in degree colleges). Even the degree students also use library for searching text book only. Periodicals and reference tools were lying unused in the library which is very much essential for their educational as well as examination purposes. Major/ honours students very often used these sections but they did not have idea how to search information from these books. Earlier, in the library, text book section was always covered by students whereas the reference section and periodical section were found almost empty. I brought it to the notice of the authority and requested them to provide me a few classes to make aware the new students for solving this problem. After these classes it is shown that users of the reference section and periodical section are increased comparatively. This job encourages me to do something regarding this field because most of the college libraries are having rich of resources but
the same is happening. This is because of having no user awareness or orientation programme in college or university level in Assam. Due to this reason our valuable resources are remain unused for a long period. I have shared my feelings with some subject experts and sought their help to undertake an exhaustive study in this area. All I met encouraged me for the study particularly Dr. R K Barman, Reader, Dept. of Library and Information Science; Gauhati University encouraged me a lot and also kindly consented to guide me for the study.

If this piece of study helps the user for developing reading habits among them and utilization of available resources lying unused in the library, my work will be rewarded.

SYSTEM OF REFERENCES MADE IN THE TEXT-

While preparing the study, references to document have been made in the text in different pages according to the practices made in recent times. Accordingly, author’s surname, year of publications and the pages of the work appearing in the text have been cited. e.g. (Sehgal: 1983:7). Details of referred works are given in the selected bibliography arranged according to University Library (Anglia Ruskin University) Harvard system of referencing guide, July’ 2007 and attached at the end.