

Use and Awareness of Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC) facility by users of SVS College Library, Bantwala, Mangalore: A study

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ABSTRACT

The objective of this study is to investigate awareness and use of Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC) by users of SVS College Library, Bantwala. The study adopted a questionnaire-based survey research design, 120 questionnaires were distributed to the students, out of which 116 filled questionnaires were received after duly filled for analysis. The present study examines various aspects of OPAC such as frequency of use, purpose, benefits of use, etc. The result of the revealed that 66 (56.89%) of respondents used OPAC facility daily, 40(34.48%) stated that they aware how to use the OPAC from shelf/friends/colleagues, 43(37.07%) of the respondents used OPAC search by author. The results of the study indicated that a majority of users search information concerning the library resources through OPAC.

Keywords: OPAC; Online Public Access Catalogue, Library Automation, Library Users, Information Communication Technology, SVS College, Library Resources.

Introduction

The application of Information Communication Technology in the area of Libraries and Information Centres (Vijayakumar, 2011) has undergone a enormous change in the techniques of access, storage, retrieval and dissemination of library resources that a library obtained to serve its users (Gohain, Anjan, and Mukesh Saikia,2013). It has also modified the methods of providing services obtainable to user's community. Online Public Access Catalogue is a progressively familiar piece of equipment in libraries and Information Centres (Waller, Vivienne, 2010). Today, a great number of libraries have automated their technical operations and services implementing this technology to fulfil their users' requirements (Gopinath, 1995). OPAC is one of these technologies facilitate access to any of the information restricted in the documentation for an item in the library (Sankari, and others, 2013). OPAC is an device of change in today's libraries as it helps allows users search for



library resources and to find out the availability of such documents in the library at a given point in time (Fati, Olufunmilayo Iyabo, and Airen Adetimirin, 2015). It may describe as a database of bibliographic records relating the collections of a library. It facilitates users to search information by authors, titles, subject and keywords from a computer terminal and also permits printing, downloading or exporting documents via different electronics means (Asokan, and Dhanavandan, 2015). Today a huge number of libraries and Information Centres are providing OPAC service to their user's community to recognize their needed documents (Onwuchekwa, Edeama o, and Jegedy Olumakinde Richard, 2011). In such a circumstances, the libraries should inspect occasionally every so often, how much comfort the users feel with this service so that some initiatives could be taken timely to improve this facility. Therefore, the present study has been undertaken on the use of OPAC facilities by the users in Sri Venkataramana Swamy College, Bantwala, Mangalore.

Review Literature

Devendra and Khaiser Nikam (2012) jointly conducted a study to examine the user perception towards the use of OPAC in Law University libraries in Karnataka. The results of the study identified that users have different levels of perceptions with regard to OPAC and there is a positive perception towards OPAC search, but the study also point out that not all users are fully satisfied with the OPAC system's an ability to assist in finding books and with the results of OPAC searches. Only 17.2% users indicated 100% rate of success in locating the document of their interest from the OPAC search.

Adenike, Omoike, and Oke T. Akin. (2014) carried out a study to investigate the effects and constraints of Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC) in Nigerian Libraries: A case study of Kenneth Dike Library and University of Lagos Library. The findings of the study reveals that 52 (31.70%) of respondents stated that they learnt how to use the OPAC from a friend, while 16 or (9.8%) claimed that they learnt how to use the OPAC during library orientation and 150 of the respondents agree that the OPAC is faster than the manual catalogue. It was found from the study majority of the students admitted that OPAC is much faster than the manual catalogue. The study also revealed that most of the students encounter difficulty in operating OPAC and most of tens there friends usually comes to their aids in order to bail them out.

Onuoha, Uloma Doris, Felicia Oumahi, and Itunu A. Bamidele (2013) examined OPAC usage among final year students in Redeemer's University and University of Agriculture Abeokuta, Nigeria. It was found from the study majority of the respondents (75.38%) indicated that they do not use the OPAC at all. Only 11 (16.92%) affirmed using it to a moderate extent, and Only 53 (26.5%) confirmed using it to a moderate extent. 45 (69.24%) of respondents indicates large/moderate extent of satisfaction with the use of OPAC followed by 111(55.5%) equally indicated large/moderate levels of satisfaction with the use of OPAC. The results of the study indicated orientation as the major problem facing the use of OPAC as indicated by 139 (69.5%) who agreed (A)/strongly agreed (SA). Unstable power supply followed closely as indicated by 133 (66.5%) who also affirmed positively.

Thanuskodi (2012) pointed out only 31.35 % respondents frequently used the OPA C, 25.38% of respondents used occasionally, 20.89 % of respondents used rarely and 22.38% of respondents never used OPAC. 74.03 % of users consulted OPAC to know the availability of the requisite document in the library, 41.82 % to know whether the requisite document issued and 78.36 % to know the location of the requisite documents. 60 (22.38 %) of respondents never used OPAC, 95 % of 60 respondents expressed lack of knowledge, 70 % expressed confusing to use, 51.66% expressed no output, 45 % expressed lack of assistance



from library staff, 36.66% expressed slow speed and around one fourth expressed lack of computer systems. The study suggested University library should organise user education programmes on the use of different techniques and strategies in retrieving information about the documents.

About S V S College, Bantwala

Sri Venkataramana Swamy College was established in the year 1968 by a few philanthropic citizens of Bantwala with the motto 'Vidya Sarvartha Sadhake'. Nestled among a cluster of hillocks in serene surroundings, the college is away from the din and bustle of city life. A band of committed teachers supported by a devoted management offers affordable education to rural students who pursue learning with humility and keenness. S.V.S. College was founded on a commitment to academic excellence and moral integrity. The college provide a highly professional teaching staff and an array of modern facilities, in an enviable and spacious environment.

Objectives of the study

The objective of the study is;

- To assess frequency of using OPAC by the users.
- To find out the purpose of use of OPAC.
- To examine the students awareness about OPAC services
- To study the benefits of using OPAC.
- To find out the problems faced by students while using OPAC

Methodology

To fulfil the above objectives of the study, a survey method was conducted using a well structured questionnaire. In a total 120 questionnaires were distributed to students. Out of which, 116 filled questionnaires were received back. The collected data were classified, analyzed and tabulated by using statistical methods. The present study included postgraduate students of SVS College Library Bantwala.

Data analysis and Interpretation

Table: 1. Gender wise distribution of respondents

Gender	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Male	40	34.48%
Female	76	65.52%
Total	116	100.00%

The above table shows gender wise distribution of respondents. The number of female respondents were about 76 (65.52%) than the male counterpart with 40 (34.48%) respondents.



Table: 2. Frequency of use of OPAC

Frequency	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Daily	66	56.89%
Twice in a week	26	22.41%
Weekly	15	12.93%
Fortnightly	06	05.19%
Monthly	03	02.58%
Never	00	00.00%
Total	116	100.00%

The above Table revealed. 66 (56.89%) of respondents used OPAC facility daily followed by 26(22.41%) of respondents have the routine to use the OPAC services Twice in a week. Only 03(02.58%) of respondents indicated that they used OPAC Monthly.

Table: 3. Purpose of using OPAC

Purpose	No. of Respondents	Percentage
To locate a document on shelves	42	36.22%
To identify the availability of document and information	30	25.86%
To know about a document without Visiting library	22	18.96%
To know the bibliographical details	12	10.34%
To reserve the document or to know the status of reservation	10	08.62%
Total	116	100.00%

The above table indicated that majority 42(36.22%) respondents used OPAC to locate document on shelves. 30(25.86%) of respondents admitted that they use OPAC because it help them to identify the availability of document and information. 22(18.96%) of respondents indicated that they used OPAC because it facilitates to know about a document without visiting library.12 (10.34%) respondents revealed that they used OPAC to reserve the document or to know the status of reservation. It is clear from the table that majority of the users used OPAC to locate documents on shelves and to identify the availability of document and information

Table: 4. Level of OPAC Awareness by students

Awareness	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Library orientation	35	30.18%
Shelf/Friends/Colleagues	40	34.48%
From the help menu on OPAC	16	13.79%
Teachers/Research Supervisors	25	21.55%
Total	116	100.00%

The above table shows that most of the students 40(34.48%) claimed that they aware how to use the OPAC from shelf/friends/colleagues, followed by 35(30.18%) from library orientation,25(21.55%)of respondents reported the aware while using OPAC facilities from teachers/research supervisors.



Table: 5. Search Approached Use by the Respondents

Search Approached	No. of Respondents	Percentage
By Author	43	37.07%
By Title	33	28.44%
By Call number	08	06.89%
By Subject	20	17.24%
By Accession number	05	04.31%
By Place of publication	07	06.05%
By Year of Publication	00	00.00%
Total	116	100.00%

The above table illustrates that, 43(37.07%) of the respondents used OPAC search by author, 33(28.44%) search by the title, 20 (17.24%) through the subject, 08 (06.89%) of them search classification number and 05 (04.31%) of respondents approached through the Accession number respectively to identified the information. Based on the analysis, the kind of search used to acquire the information from library by author and title it is in the first and second position respectively.

Table: 6. The benefits of using the OPAC

Benefits	No. of Respondents	Percentage
It is more convenient to use	25	21.55%
Timesaving	37	31.89%
It facilitates easy access to library collection	22	18.96%
No need to go to library	14	12.07%
It has enhanced my ability to retrieve titles (books) from the library	18	15.53%
Total	116	100.00%

The above table indicated the benefits of using the OPAC. From the data gathered, majority 37(31.89%) of the students agree that the OPAC is saves the time of users.25 (21.55%) of the respondents opined that it is more convenient to use, 22(18.96%) of the respondents says that it facilitates easy access to library collection only 14(12.07%) of the respondents indicated that no need to go to library.

Table: 7. Problems faced while using OPAC

Problems	No. of Respondents	Percentage
Lack of skills to use OPAC independently	37	31.89%
Lack of awareness about OPAC	41	35.34%
Library Staff not willing to help.	26	22.41%
Lack of Computer knowledge	12	10.36%
Total	116	100.00%

Table 7 shows the problems faced while using OPAC by the respondents. Majority 41 (35.34%) of the respondents were strongly agreed the reason was lack of awareness about OPAC, 37(31.89%) were strongly agreed the lack of skills to use OPAC independently.26 (22.41%) of respondents reported the lack of co-operation from library staffs in library reason



for not using the library and 12(10.36%) of respondents were strongly agreed the Lack of Computer knowledge.

Findings

The findings of the study are as follows

- Out of 16 respondents only 40 (34.48%) of respondents were male while 76 (65.52%) were females.
- It is found from the study that 66 (56.89%) of respondents used OPAC facility daily, only 03(02.58%) of respondents indicated that they used OPAC Monthly.
- While examining the awareness of using OPAC facility, it was found that 40(34.48%) stated that they aware how to use the OPAC from shelf/friends/colleagues, followed by 35(30.18%) from library orientation, 25(21.55%) from teachers/research supervisors.
- About 43(37.07%) of the respondents used OPAC search by author, 33(28.44%) search by the title, and only 05 (04.31%) of respondents approached through the Accession number respectively to identified the information.
- While coming to address problems faced by the respondents while using OPAC facility, it was found that 41 (35.34%) of the respondents were strongly agreed the reason was lack of awareness about OPAC followed by 37(31.89%) are inability to use OPAC independently and 26 (22.41%) of respondents reported the lack of co-operation from library staffs

Conclusion and Recommendations

Now a day's rapid development in information and communication technology has emerged as most powerful medium for storage and retrieval of information. Online Public Access Catalogue is a very essential information retrieval tool of libraries and information centres. Today it considered as a gateway to library resources which every library users must be aware of and use it to search their needed document and to fulfill their information requirements. On the basis of the findings of the study, the following recommendations have been made for best utilisation of OPAC facility in the college library;

- College libraries should conduct various user awareness programmes at the beginning of each academic session for students and faculty members on how to use OPAC facility to enable them acquire basic skills to search OPAC.
- All the teaching and nonteaching library staff should be appropriately skilled on OPAC and its services, so that they could build up skills and make assistance if any user fined problems while using OPAC in the library.
- Librarians and staff encourage the students to use OPAC facilities in their colleges, hostels, homes and offices at any time of the day.
- Librarian should build up an information marketing policy to make consciousness about OPAC services among users. This can be done by offering user guide nearby OPAC terminals or providing guide on library web page.

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