

Usage Of Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC) At Gulbarga University Gulbarga: A Study

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Abstract:

This paper examine usage of Online Public Access Catalogue by the PG students and Research Scholars of Gulbarga University Gulbarga Library. OPAC an information retrieval system has revolutionized access to bibliographic information through search capabilities such as keyword searching, Boolean searching, truncation, proximity searching, and item identity number searching. A questionnaire based survey was conducted randomly, the questionnaire sought information on use of OPAC, purpose, search pattern, rating and suggestions on the ways of improving the use of OPAC as an information retrieval tool.

Keywords: OPAC, E- Resources, Library Automation, University Library.

1. Introduction

Gulbarga University was established the developing region of Hyderabad Karnataka in the year 1980 by an Act of Karnataka State, Gulbarga University is recognized by the University Grade Commission (UGC) of India. University has a significant history of imparting quality education to the students. Through its 305 affiliated colleges, leading faculty members and a wide range of courses offered in the field of arts, commerce, fine arts, music, social sciences, science, technology, education and law.5 study centres. The library a knowledge center for accessibility developed on modern lines as a prominent Learning Resource Center on sprawling Campus, ideally situated and easily accessible by all the departments and students housing. The the university Library, makes sincere efforts to provide user focused services having over 2,27,831 books subscribes 654 scientific journals,16 CD-ROM databases (Current Archival), 5800 dissertation/theses and technical reports, microfilm, microfiche, conference papers and rare books. The Library is at the core of research and learning at the university and automated its in-house activates and services using KOHA- an integrated open source software using cloud technology. Virtual Learning Resource Center and Digital Library (VLRC&DL), with 150 computer systems and three main servers, a giant leap into information age is to the heart of the University Learning experience supporting e-LTR (e-Learning Teaching and Research), provides access to UGC INFONET e-resources (12,000 e-journals+ & databases), OCLC- USA, Institutional Repository, Career Planning and User Sensitization programs are a few unique services rendered to promote the optimum use of library resources. Wi-fi (Wireless Fidelity) access is available across the library.

The library has created a database of Books, Journals, theses, Reports and Reference sources and its made available through OPAC.

2. Scope of the study

This study was conducted with the purpose to assess the OPAC awareness among the users with a special focus on following core objectives.

1. Searching information pattern in OPAC
2. Find out the extent and purpose of use of OPAC by the users
3. Evaluate the usage of OPAC.

3.Literature review

The importance of information retrieval system cannot be overemphasized given the volume of information that were at present exposed to and he rate at which those information are needed. Information retrieval system facilities extraction of relevant documents or information from a large collection of documents in response to a user request. Sridhar (2004) carried out a comparative study of use of OPAC and card catalogue concludes that, moving from traditional card catalogue to modern OPAC has not made subject searching more attractive and effective S ingh et al., (2008) attempted to know the use and satisfaction of users about OPAC and the study revealed that the tool OPAC is useful and suggested there must be someone near the OPAC to help in retrieving the required documents.

Kumar and Vohra (2011) investigated the use of online public access catalogue and the findings revealed that most of the users use the OPAC to locate the documents despite facing some difficulties .Narang Asha and Singh Sukhdev (2013) Attempted to ascertain the use and opinion about OPAC and their finding revealed that OPAC significantly helped the users in speedily finding their required documents.

4. Methodology

The study was quantitative in nature. Hence a standard questionnaire method was adopted to conduct the study. The questions were formulated based on the objectives of the study. The designed questionnaire was randomly distributed to 200 library users. Of them 168 questionnaire were collected and analysed with the help of MS Excel software.

5.Data analysis

5.1. Category wise distribution of respondents

Table -1 Category wise distribution of respondents

Categories	PG students	Research scholars	Total
Questionnaire Distributed	94	106	200

Questionnaire Received	66 (70.21%)	102(96.22%)	168 (84%)
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Table-1 shows that major respondents were PG students (70.21%) and Research scholars (96.22%). Overall 84% of the total population responded for the survey.

5.2 purpose of using OPAC

The usage pattern of OPAC was analyzed in two methods namely general and specific purpose. General purpose includes the documents Books, Journals, Theses, Reports, and Reference sources availability, issue reserve and location.

Table-2 it is observed that of 52.3% respondents were using OPAC to the availability of the document and 27.3% were to know whether the document is issued. However, 14.2% and 5.9% were to know the location of document and reserve the document respectively.

Table -2 General purpose of using OPAC

General purpose of using OPAC	PG students	Research scholars	Total & % age
To know the availability of the document	40	48	88 (52.3%)
To know whether the document is issued	24	22	46 (27.3%)
To reserve the document	4	6	10 (5.9%)
To know the location of document	18	6	24 (14.2%)

The respondents were further asked to mention their specific use of OPAC with reference to their obtaining documents from the library. In this regard, books, journals and non-book materials including project report were chosen and a vast majority of the respondents (80%) mentioned books as a primary source to obtain from library through OPAC. A major respondents (78.5%) indicated using OPAC to obtain e-resources journals. Theses (75.5%), Reports (42.8%) (Table-3)

Table -3 Specific purpose of using OPAC

Specific purpose of using OPAC	PG students	Research scholars	Total & % age
E-Resources	50	82	132 (78.5%)
Books	60	75	135(80 %)
Theses	28	99	127 (75.5%)
Reports	24	48	72 (42.8%)

5.4 Searching information pattern by the OPAC users

Library users can approach the OPAC with any of the search elements viz., author, title, keyword and publisher. Table-4 depicts the searching information pattern by the OPAC users. Below figure shows that (60%) of the respondents approached the OPAC by title, (51.1%) under the author name, (42.2%) approached under the subject wise, (32.1%) approached the OPAC through the Publisher. However (24.4%) respondents approached through keyword details. It is further observed that, when we compare all the approaches of the users.

Table -4 Searching information pattern by the OPAC users

Searching information	PG students	Research scholars	Total & % age
Titles	42	60	102 (60.%)
Author	32	54	86 (51.1%)
Subject	25	46	71 (42.2%)
Keyword	20	21	41 (24.4%)
Publisher	25	29	54 (32.1%)

5.5 Improving strategies for the usage of OPAC

The respondents were also asked to indicate the improving strategies for the OPAC usage among various categories. Three opinions such as orientation programme, lecture series and providing instruction materials were given and (69%) of the respondents required orientation programmes for better usage of OPAC. (38.6%) mentioned the need of lecture. (25%) required instruction materials to use OPAC.

Table -5 strategies for improving the usage of OPAC

Improving the usage of OPAC	PG students	Research scholars	Total & % age
Orientation	54	62	116(69%)
Lecture	40	25	65(38.6%)
Instruction materials	22	20	42(25%)

6. Conclusion

OPAC plays an important role for finding out the required documents as retrieval tool. OPAC should have more user friendly online help that may provide direction to users to start a search and to show next steps during a search. To facilitate the users, the university library should organize user education programmes on the use of different techniques and strategies in retrieving information about the documents. The instruction programmes may enhance user knowledge and basic skills for searching OPAC.

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