

Use and Awareness of Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC) by Students and Faculty members of Anna University Regional Campus, Coimbatore, Tamil Nadu – A Case Study

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ABSTRACT

This paper aims to present the results of a survey conducted to determine the use of online public access catalogue (OPAC) at the library of Anna University Regional Campus, Coimbatore. The questionnaire based survey conducted at the library. 190 samples of the questionnaire is distributed randomly between the staff and students of Anna University Regional Campus, Coimbatore, out of which 154 completed and valid questionnaires (81.00%) are received for analysis. The data received from the respondents through the questionnaires is analyzed. The result of the study reveals that a significant number of users search information regarding the library material through despite encountering problems. It is suggested that the library should organize quality instruction programmes to improve knowledge and skills of the users.

Keywords: OPAC, Online Public Access Catalogue, Library users, Library Automation.

Introduction

OPAC provided users a means of searching and accessing information. Users can see the collections and issue status of each document of the library. They can also reserve and renew a document of their interest when needed. The application of Information Communication Technology in the area of Libraries and Information Centers has undergone an enormous change in the techniques of access, storage, retrieval and dissemination of library resources that a library obtained to serve its users. Today, a great number of libraries have automated their technical operations and services implementing this technology to fulfil their user's requirements. OPAC is one of these technologies facilitate access to any of the information restricted in the documentation for an item in the library. OPAC is a device of change in today's libraries as it helps users search for library resources and to find out the availability of such documents in the library at a given point in time.

Objectives of the study

The objectives of the study:

- To find out the frequency of visit to library for the use of OPAC
- Reason for using OPAC
- To find out the types of Search Information finding on OPAC
- Ro find out the overall satisfaction level in using OPAC

Methodology

To fulfill the above objectives of the study, a survey method is conducted using a well-structured questionnaire. In a total 190 questionnaires are distributed to faculty and students. Out of which, 154 filled questionnaires are received. The collected data are classified and analyzed by using statistical methods.

Review of Literature

Thanuskodi (2012) pointed out only 31.35% respondents frequently used the OPAC, 25.35% 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 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 organize user education programmes on the use of different techniques and strategies in retrieving information about the documents. 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 result of the study reveals that 52 (31.70%) of respondents stated that they learnt how to use the OPAC from a friend, while 16 of (9.8%) claimed that they learnt how to use OPAC during library orientation and 150 of the respondents agree that OPAC is faster than the manual catalogue. Madhusudhan & Aggarwal (2014) examine the various features and components of web-based Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC) of IIT libraries in India with the help of a specially designed evaluation checklist. The study explored different features of web-based OPACs, of which page layout received the highest average scores with 93.33%, it is hoped that the libraries at the IIT's attend to the lacunae and soon develop fully functional web-based OPACs with Web 2.0 and 3.0 technologies.

Analysis of Data Collected

Table-1 Distribution of questionnaires and the responses received

S.No.	Types of users	No. of questionnaires distributed	No. of responses received	Percentage of responses
1	Students	140	116	85
2	Faculty	50	38	76
	Total	190	154	81

Table-1 shows that 190 questionnaires are distributed to the students and the faculty members of Anna University Regional Campus, Coimbatore and the responses received from them are mentioned in Table-1 and the response rate is 154 (81%). Among the total responses 116 (85%) are students and 38 (76%) are faculty members.

Table-2 Gender wise distribution of respondents

S.No.	Gender	Faculty members	Students	Total	Percentage
1	Male	23	52	75	48.70
2	Female	15	64	79	51.30
	Total	38	116	154	100.00

Table-2 indicates the gender wise distribution of respondents. Out of 154 respondents, 75 (48.70%) respondents are male and 79 (51.30%) of respondents are female.

Table-3 Frequency of library visit to use OPAC

S.No.	Regularity	Faculty members	%	Students	%	Total	Total %
1	Daily	17	44.74	68	58.62	85	55.20
2	Once in a week	8	21.05	23	19.83	31	20.13
3	Fortnightly	6	15.79	11	9.48	17	11.04
4	Once in a month	3	7.89	5	4.31	8	5.19
5	Occasionally	4	10.53	9	7.76	13	8.44
	Total	38	100.00	116	100.00	154	100.00

Table-3 shows that the frequency of using OPAC as per the record above. The result shows that 85 (55.20%) of the respondents are using it daily which includes 68 (58.62%) of them students and 17 (44.74%) of them faculty members. 31(20.13%) of the respondents are using OPAC once in a week which includes 23 (19.83%) of them students and 8 (21.05%) of them faculty members. 8 (5.19%) of respondents were using OPAC once in a month.

Table-4 Reason for using OPAC

S.No	Reason for using OPAC	Faculty members				Students			
		Strongly Agree	Agree	No idea	Total	Strongly Agree	Agree	No idea	Total
1.	To know the availability of document.	23 (60.53)	12 (31.58)	3 (7.89)	38	78 (67.24)	31 (26.72)	7 (6.04)	116
2	To know the new arrivals	27 (71.05)	6 (15.79)	5 (13.16)	38	81 (69.83)	24 (20.69)	11 (9.48)	116
3	Time consuming	19 (50.00)	13 (34.21)	6 (15.79)	38	62 (53.45)	34 (29.31)	20 (17.24)	116
4	To know the location of the document	32 (84.21)	5 (13.16)	1 (2.63)	38	87 (75.00)	23 (19.83)	6 (5.17)	116

Table-4 show the reason for using OPAC by the respondents. Out of 38 faculty respondents, 23(60.53%) and out of 116 students 78 (67.24%) are them strongly agree for using OPAC to know the availability of documents. 27 (71.05%) of faculty members and 81 (69.83%) are strongly for using OPAC to know the new arrival of documents. 1 (2.63%) of faculty members and 6 (5.17%) of students are rarely using the OPAC system.

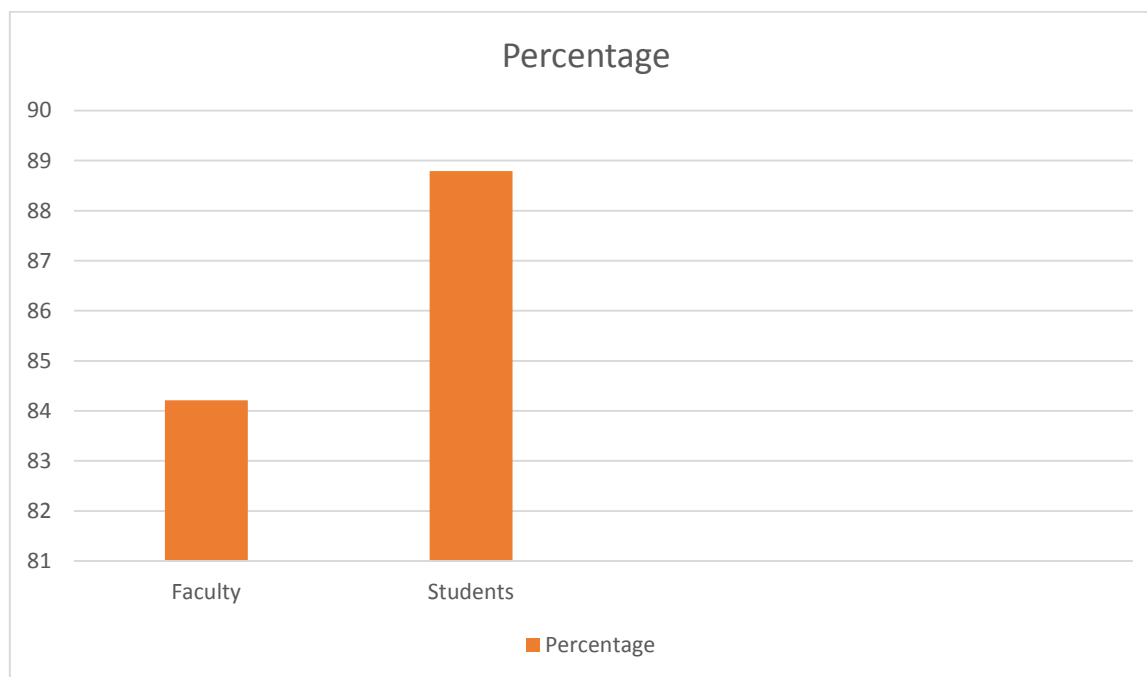
Table-5 Use of OPAC in respondents wise

Figure:1

The above figure shows that nearly 89% of students are using OPAC and 84% of faculty members are using OPAC. The maximum number of students are using OPAC for various aspects of their study.

Table-6 Types of Search Information finding on OPAC

Sl. No.	Findings of Information	Faculty members	Percentage	Students	Percentage
1	By Title	22	57.90	71	61.21
2	By Author	9	23.68	21	18.10
3	By Subject	2	5.26	6	5.17
4	By Accession Number	5	13.16	18	15.52
	Total	38	100.00	116	100

The above table shows that 22 (57.90%) of faculty members used OPAC search by title followed by 9 (23.68%) of faculty members used OPAC search by author. 71 (61.21%) of student used OPAC search by title followed by 21 (18.10%) search by author.

Table- 7 Overall satisfaction level in using OPAC

S.No.	Satisfaction level	Faculty members	Percentage	Students	Percentage
1	Fully satisfied	13	34.21	57	49.14
2	Satisfied	18	47.37	41	35.34
3	Moderately satisfied	7	18.42	18	15.52
	Total	38	100.00	116	100.00

Table 7 exhibits overall satisfaction level of users in using OPAC. It highlights that out of 38 faculty members 117 (47.37%) are satisfied followed by 13 (34.21%) are fully satisfied. Out of 116 students 57 (49.14%) are fully satisfied followed by 41 (35.34%) are satisfied with OPAC use.

Findings

- Out of 154 respondents, 75 (48.70%) respondents are male and 79 (51.30%) of respondents are female are using library OPAC facilities.
- It is found that 85 (55.20%) of the respondents are using OPAC daily which includes 68 (58.62%) of them students and 17 (44.74%) of them faculty members.
- Out of 154 respondents, 1 (2.63%) of faculty members and 6 (5.17%) of students are rarely used the OPAC system.

It is found that 71 (61.21%) of student used OPAC search by title followed by 21 (18.10%) search by author.

Suggestions

- Librarians should build up an information marketing policy to make consciousness about OPAC services among users.
- Librarians and staff encourage the students to use OPAC facilities in their college premises.
- Continuous and far-reaching awareness programs such as sensitization of students and faculties, orientation, billboards and handbills should be sustained to further improve awareness of OPAC.
- The main aim of OPAC is to encourage wider access to library holdings.
All the teaching and non-teaching library staff should be appropriately skilled on OPAC and its services, so that they could build up skills and make assistance if any user find problems while using OPAC in the library.

Conclusion

Online Public Access Catalogue is a very essential information retrieval tools of libraries and information centers. Today it is 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. The search process in OPAC has more or less remained the same, as in the card catalogue but with increased access points, varieties of search features and increased complexity of the process. The use of OPAC by students and faculty members has increased their information, retrieval rate especially in locating books and other reading materials in the library. OPAC is an instrument of change in today's libraries. Librarians must continue to play the role of an "Agents of Change" in the use of online catalogues.

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