Usage of Information Technology in Libraries: An Opinion Survey

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Abstract

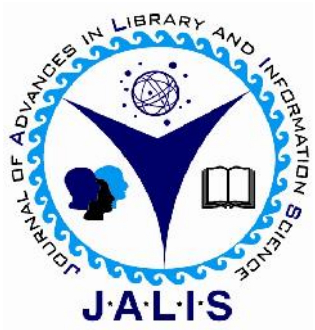
The main focus of the study is to describe the needs, requirements and use of information in libraries by the engineering students in Annamalai University. The students have different views in applying the information technology. Though the students are familiar with internet search engine sources such as google, yahoo, msn etc. It found that m*ore female students (47.9%) feel comfortable in using the electronics sources at the library compared to male students (39.4%). 29.9 percentage of male students and 27.8 percentage of female students give their views that they are not interested in using the information technology but preferred to reach the resource by intuition.*

Keywords

Technology, information and communication technology, University Library.
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Electronic access

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INTRODUCTION

Information played an important role in all societies since the dawn of civilization. However, in recent years its increase in volume and accuracy as well as greater access, have significantly elevated its value in all aspects of social life. The world is undergoing an Information Communication Technology (ICT) revolution, a revolution that has enormous socio-economic implications for the developed and developing countries. Information and Communication Technologies form part of the functions of today's complex society. Without this, the present society would be inarticulate chaos devoid of direction and technology floods us with information and entertainment. The influence is tremendous in decisions of government, leap over national frontiers and stimulate trends in society especially in the field of education. ICT comprises a diverse set of technological tools and resources to create, disseminate, store and manage data and information.

The advent of information technology has its influence on the students who study in engineering colleges. The level of application of information technology by the student varies, particularly in libraries while seeking for information in order to statisfy their information needs. The students have different views in applying the information technology. Though the students are familiar with internet search engine sources such as google, yahoo, msn etc. web tools such as chat, messenger, email etc, social networking sites like twitter, whatshapp, facebook etc. the familiarity in accessing these sites alone does not yield them in getting their information needs be satisfied in a satisfactory manner. This study examines four views of students on the usage of information technology while retrieving sources of information.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

The satisfaction level of information needs of users depends upon their awareness on the information sources, which they identify and use. In the process of identifying students' information needs, their awareness on information sources and their preferences, Majid and Tan (2002) carried out a study among computer engineering students of Nanyang Technological University, Singapore. A questionnaire was distributed among 200 randomly selected students and 102 students responded. The purpose of the study was to investigate the types of

information sources used by the students. The study found that printed materials were the most preferred format among the students. The order of preference of information seeking materials was books, lectures, internet, friends and manuals. The use of databases and electronic journals was low among the computer students.

Internet was found to be the most crucial source to satisfy the information needs of students through the investigation of Ajiboye and Tella (2007). They analysed the impact of information seeking behaviour on the quality in higher education in Africa. The study was conducted among university undergraduate students. The study adopted a descriptive survey design and data was collected using a questionnaire administered among two thousand respondents randomly selected from six departments in the University of Botswana, Gaborone, Botswana. It was found that the students gave primary importance for academic information. In order to know the users preference on information sources, Sudharani and Veeranjaneyulu (1999) invited views of users through a survey on the information needs and use of faculty members of Sri Padmavathi Mahila Visvavidyalayam, Tirupati, Andra Pradesh. The study brought out about various library resources such as books, periodicals, other resources and through interlibrary loan from which the faculty sought for information for satisfying their needs. Gurdev (2002) examined the use of college libraries by faculty members of University of Delhi. The study found that textbooks were most frequently needed resources, followed by reference books and general books. Main purpose of visiting library was to prepare notes for students. The study found out that journals and textbooks were not adequately available. Almost all the faculty members wanted the library services to be computerized Giving focus on the electronic resources, Patil and Parameshwar (2009) undertook a study to find out the information needs and usage of electronic resources by the research scholars in various PG departments and to assess whether their information needs were fulfilled through the e-resource facilities provided in the Gulbarga University, Gulbarga, India. The studies showed that the information needs were satisfied using the electronic resources available in the University Library. It was recommended to include more number of journals in the UGC-Infonet Consortium.

Swarna (2004) conducted a study to know the information needs of the users at the B.Ed. college libraries in Andhra Pradesh, India. The study was conducted with an aim to gather the views of students and teachers on library collection, services, facilities, rules and regulations, reading facility and organization of documents.Achonna (2008) conducted a study on the students' awareness, access and the usage of e-journal resources at the library of Yaba College of Technology, Yaba- Lagos. The study assessed the level of awareness, access and usage of e-journal resources among the students. It was revealed that inadequate infrastructure of computers, lack of skill in utilizing the e- resources, insufficient power supply were found to be the hindrances for the effective usage of e- resources.

RESEARCH METHOLOGY

The students of engineering faculty in Annamalai University are the sample of the study. Data was collected from 1613 students.. The data further analysed on the basis of gender, location of the institution and course of study.WAM were calculated and ranked. Standard deviation was also calculated in addition to chi-square test.

ANALYSYS AND INTERPRETATION

1 Demographic Details of the Respondents

Demographic details of respondents such as gender, location and course are shown in Table 1 and Figure 1

Table 1: Demographic Details of the Respondents

S.No.	Group	Description	Frequency	%
1	**Gender**	Male	1030	63.9
		Female	583	36.1
		Total	1613	100
2	**Course**	UG	1398	86.7
		PG	215	13.3
		Total	1613	100

Table 1 represents classification of respondents by gender, place and course. Out of 1613 questionnaires received, 63.9 percentages of the respondents are male students and 36.1 percentages of the respondents are female students. This shows that two-third of the respondents are male. Among students who represent UG/PG courses, majority of the students (86.7%) are studying in UG courses compared to PG courses (13.3%).

2 Mode of Access

The students' preference on mode of access while seeking for information is analysed. The mode of access is classified into print mode, digital/online mode and both of these forms of access..

Table 2: Mode of Access

Sl. No.	Mode of Access	Frequency	%
1	Print	266	16.5
2	Digital / Online	435	27.0
3	Both	912	56.5
Total		**1613**	**100**

Table 2 illustrates the mode of access preferred by students while seeking information. 56.5 percentage of students prefer both print and digital mode of access. While 27.0 percentage of students prefer only digital/online mode for accessing resources 16.5 percentage of students prefer print mode alone. It is understood that students prefer both print and digital modes for accessing information during the information seeking process.

3 **Usage of Information Technology in Libraries**

The opinions of students in using the information technology, such as their interest in using the technology, need for training, difficulties in retrieving the e-sources and their comfort level in getting the required information within right time are analysed. Gender wise, course wise and location wise analysis are carried out using chi square tests.

Table 3: Usage of Information Technology in Libraries

Sl. No.	Views	Frequency	%
1	I am not interested in using the technology rather than going strightaway to the resource by intution	470	29.1
2	I am not given proper training / information in making use of them.	260	16.1
3	The retrieval of e – sources consumes much time in getting right information I need, since the search lists large number of relevant and irrelevant informations	198	12.3
4	I feel comfortable in getting my information with in right time using the e – facilities.	685	42.5
Total		**1613**	**100.0**

Table 3 indicates that 42.5 percentage of students feel that they are comfortable in getting their information within right time using the electronic facilities. 29.1 percentage of the students indicate that they are not interested in using the technology rather than going strightaway to the resource by intution. 16.1 percentage of students specify that they are not given proper training / information in making use of the technology. 12.3 percentage of students point out that the retrieval of e – sources consumes much time in getting right information that they need, since the search lists large number of relevant and irrelevant information.

4 Usage of information technology in libraries vs gender

Analyses on the usage of the information technology in libraries are carried out based on the views of male and female students.

Table 4: Usage of Information Technology in Libraries Vs Gender

Sl. No.	Views	Gender	
		Male	Female
1	I am not interested in using the technology rather than going strightaway to the resource by intution	308 (29.9%)	162 (27.8%)
2	I am not given proper training / information in making use of them.	188 (18.3%)	72 (12.3%)
3	The retrieval of e – sources consumes much time in getting right information I need, since the search lists	128 (12.4%)	70 (12%)

	large number of relevant and irrelevant informations		
4	I feel comfortable in getting my information with in right time using the e – facilities.	406 (39.4%)	279 (47.9%)
Total		1030 (100%)	583 (100%)
Chi - Square		Calculated Value	14.914
		df	3

Table 4 unfolds views of students from gender point of view on the use of information technology in libraries. More female students (47.9%) feel comfortable in using the electronics sources at the library compared to male students (39.4%). 29.9 percentage of male students and 27.8 percentage of female students give their views that they are not interested in using the information technology but preferred to reach the resource by intuition. However, 18.3 percentage of male students and 12.3 percentage of female students feel that they were not given proper training in making use of information technologies available at library.The calculated value 14.914 is much higher than the table value 7.815. It shows that the variables vary significantly in the opinion of male and female students.

5 Usage of information technology in libraries vs course of study

Views of the students on the usage of the information technology in libraries are analysed based on their course of study.

Table 5: Usage of Information Technology in Libraries Vs Course of Study

Sl. No.	Views	Course of Study	
		UG	PG
1	I am not interested in using the technology rather than going strightaway to the resource by intution	390 (27.9%)	80 (37.2%)
2	I am not given proper training / information in making use of them.	236 (16.9%)	24 (11.2%)
3	The retrieval of e – sources consumes much time in getting right information I need, since the search lists large number of relevant and irrelevant informations	170 (12.2%)	28 (13%)
4	I feel comfortable in getting my information with in right time using the e – facilities.	602 (43.1%)	83 (38.6%)
Total		1398 (100%)	215 (100%)
Chi – Square		Calculated Value	10.311
		df	3

Table 5 shows that more UG students (43.1%) are comfortable in using the e-facilities than PG students (38.6%). PG students (37.2%) commented that they are not interested in using the technology.The calculated value 10.311 is higher than the table value 7.815. It shows that the variables vary significantly in the opinion of UG and PG students.

CONCLUSION

It is concluded that in the changing learning environment students irrespective of their gender, course of study and location of the institution are by and large, familiar in handling tools of information technology. By smooth handling of these IT tools, they get acquaintance in accessing mere information but majority of these information do not have the resource within its content to satisfy the needs of the students. So, it is important to give proper training to the students in using technology in such a way that the technology facilitates the users to get right information that is capable of solving their information needs and ultimately contribute for growth of knowledge of the students.

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