Use of Information Sources in Digital Environment : A Case Study

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Abstract

Rapid advances in information processing, storage and communication technologies have revolutionized a role of worldwide libraries in disseminating information services to their users. Libraries are consolidating their positions, building digital collections, redesigning their services and information products to add value to their services in order to satisfy changing information needs of users. In this research paper the author covers the profile of Sri Padmavathi Mahila Visvavidyalayam, objectives of the study, use of electronic resources by the faculty, research scholars and students, suggestions and findings. Further, studies and research are suggested in application and implications of e-classrooms, e-teaching and e-learning should be the source of knowledge in future.

Keywords : E-Resources, Information Services

0.   Introduction

The University plays a significant role in the development of the society. The main function of any University is to seek and cultivate new knowledge by way of Research and extend higher education to the youth, to encourage academic investigations into the problems of the society and for advancement of civilization. The university library plays an important role in the achievement of this objective. Electronic sources plays a vital and viable role to cater to the needs of research and faculty in the process of advancement of society in the present environment.

1.   Profile of Mahila University Library

Sri Padmavathi Mahila University is the second Women's University in India, established in Andhra Pradesh in 1983 by the Late Chief Minister N.T. Ramarao. Under the UGC inflibnet programme University library has computerized all of its operations using SOUL software. Through INFONET programme the University gets e-journals(550 from Springer link and 650 from Kluwer online). The library has nearly 51,500 books, 230 periodicals, 50 CDs on books, 300 floppies on indexing and abstracting journals .

2.   Objectives

The aim of the present study is to make "An analytical Study of the use of Electronic Resources and Services by Faculty, Research Scholars and Students of SPMUL, Tirupati". The main objectives of the study are

- ✍ to ascertain the requirements of the users;
- ✍ to identity the various channels of electronic sources through which information is accessed by users of SPMUL;
- ✍ to assess the purpose of using the Internet and OPAC.;
- ✍ to Analyze how the users are benefited from the INFLIBNET programme;
- ✍ to identify the problems and difficulties faced by the users in searching the information through Electronic Resources and
- ✍ to seek the suggestions from the users for the overall improvement of the library.

3.   Methodology

The present study has been made by surveying the different user groups of the Sri Padmavathi Mahila University Library using the questionnaire method. The questionnaire has been distributed to the users following stratified sampling techniques. The respondents are stratified into three categories belonging the Teaching Staff, Research Scholars and P.G.Students, The sample respondents chosen for the study consists of 36 Teaching Staff, 42 Research Scholars and 58 P.G Students. In this study, the mode of collection of data, its presentation, and analysis and interpretation are presented in Table 1.

Table – 1
Category of Users

Sl.No.	Users Category	Users		Response	
		QD	%	QR	%
01	Teaching Staff	36	26.5	28	25
02	Research Scholars	42	30.9	38	34
03	P.G.Students	58	42.6	46	41
		136	100	112	100

QD : Questionnaire Distribution   QR : Questionnaire Response

Table 1 Shows that of the total 136 questionnaire distributed, 112 users returned the duly filled in questionnaire 82 percent response. The respondents from P.G. Students are high (41%) followed by Research Scholars and Teaching Staff respectively. Most of the user community of the SPMUL covered under the survey are Computer and Internet Literate, therefore questionnaire was distributed only among computer/internet literate persons.

Table-2
Category of Users Subject wise

No.	Subject	Teacher		Research		PG. Student		Total	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%	No	%
1.	Education	5	17.86	3	7.89	4	8.7	12	10.71
2	English	3	10.71	4	10.52	4	8.7	11	9.82
3.	Social Work	3	10.71	5	13.16	5	10.9	13	11.6
4.	Women's Studies	4	14.29	5	13.16	4	8.7	13	11.6
5.	Computer Science	4	14.29	5	13.16	11	23.9	19	16.07
6.	Mathematics	3	10.71	6	15.79	9	19.6	18	16.07
7	Microbiology	4	14.29	6	15.79	6	13.0	15	13.39
8.	Sericulture	2	7.14	4	10.52	3	6.5	11	9.82
	Total	28		38		46	100%	112	100%

Table – 2 Reveals Respondents discipline wise and their percentage.

Table – 3.
Use of Electronic Rseources

S.No.	E-Resources	Teacher		Research Scholar		PG. Students	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1.	E-mail	26	24.5	35	23.2	38	25.2
2.	OPAC	22	20.8	34	22.5	46	30.5
3.	Internet Access	24	22.6	35	23.5	40	26.5
4.	Books Access	16	15.1	21	13.4	15	9.9
5.	Access to E-Journals	18	17.0	26	17.2	12	7.9
	Total	106	100	151	100	151	100

It is clearly seen that Internet Access, E-mail and OPAC are used by the almost all staff users. It is also found that teaching staff and Research Scholars are very much benefited from access to e-journals through Infonet. E-books and e-journals are found to be less used by P.G. Students. This may be due to e- books and e-journals are mostly used for reference by Research Scholars and semester system does not give scope for spending lot of time in the library. The user rate can be increased if Internet is established in the hostel premises.

Table – 4.
Purpose of Use of Internet

User	Email	%	Academic Website	%	E-Journal	%
Teachers	26	26.3	28	29.8	20	34.5
Research Scholars	35	35.5	34	36.2	24	41.4
PG Students	38	38.4	32	34.0	14	24.1
Total	99	100	94	100	58	100

Internet can be used for accessing the electronic resources, such as bibliography records, full text electronic journals with images, links to local and remote indices. It is useful as search utility to access information stored on millions of computers world wide. It also facilitates information book reviews that could enhance research and journal publications. It disseminates all kinds of data and information by keeping touch with the latest developments in various disciplines.

The survey further revealed that Internet service is used for different purposes by different groups of users. It is also observed that E-mail dominates over other purposes for which they use Internet-Use of e-journals through web is higher among the research scholars for their research work.

Table – 5.
INFLIBNET Services Meeting the Information needsof users.

Users	To Great Extent Extent	%	To Some Extent	%	To title Extent	%
Teachers	20	21.3	6	50	2	33.3
Research Scholars	34	36.2	2	16.7	2	33.3
Students	40	42.5	4	33.3	2	33.3
Total	94	100	12	100	6	100

Table – 5 reveals that most of the users one benefited from INFLIBNET Services available in SPMU Library. Thousands of check e-journals are going to be made available for seamless access via campus network very shortly through the UGC Infonet under the INFLIBNET Programme. Now of e-journals 550 from Springer Link and 650 from kluwer Online by users i.e Teaching Staff and Research Scholars under the UGC Infonet Programme.

Table – 6.
Use of E-Sources Subject wise.

S.No.	Subject	E-mail		Internet		OPAC		CD Ram Data Bases	
		No	%	No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1.	Education	10	10.3	10	10.6	12	10.9	—	
2.	English	10	10.3	8	8.5	11	10	—	
3.	Social Work	11	11.3	12	12.6	13	11.9	1	5.6
4.	Women Studies	12	12.4	10	10.6	12	10.9	2	11.1
5.	Computer Science	17	17.5	15	16	19	17.3	5	27.8
6.	Mathematics	16	16.5	14	14.9	18	16.4	4	22.2
7.	Microbiology	13	13.4	15	16	14	12.8	4	22.2
8.	Sericulture	8	8.2	10	10.6	11	10	2	11.1
	Total	97	100%	94	100%	110	100%	18	100%

Majority of the users are utilizing the OPAC system in library.   Respondents from all   the subjects are using Internet facility for their academic and research purposes. C.D ROM database is being used only rarely by staff and student when analyzed subject-wise

Table – 7
Use of E-Resources by Area of Research

S.No.	Subject	E-mail		Internet		OPAC	
		No.	%	No.	%	No.	%
1.	Child Labour and Parent-Child Relation	12	11.5	11	10.4	12	11.1
2.	Feminist Writings	11	10.6	10	9.4	11	10.2
3.	Gender & Development Women Empowerment	10	9.6	12	11.3	11	10.2
4.	Women in Higher Edu. Women and Health	12	11.5	11	10.4	12	11.1
5.	Graph Theory, Discrete Mathematics	18	17.3	17	16	18	16.7
6.	Speech Recognition Cryptography	17	16.3	19	17.9	18	16.7
7.	Mulberry Physiology	10	9.6	11	10.4	12	11.1
8.	Microbial Technology- Enzymology, Virology	14	13.5	15	14.2	14	13.0
		104	100	106	100	108	100

The distance is shortening due to the hi-tech development. The University has a larger percent of research scholars who are part timers and working in other places even outside the state. E-mail has enabled the Research guide and the research student to have easy interaction through E-mail. This can be seen from the Table-7. Though all the three OPAC, Internet and E-mail are being used OPAC is slightly on the higher side especially as it is used for bibliographical information.

Table-8
Information Source Provided in the Library

S.No.	Item	Teaching Staff		Research Scholars		P.G.Students	
		S	US	S	US	S	US
1.	Text books	26 (15.4)	2 (3.6)	38 (15.3)	0 (15.3)	46	0
2.	Ref. books	25 (14.8)	3 (5.5)	34 (13.7)	4 (7.1)	44 (14.7)	2 (2.9)
3.	Periodicals	22 (13.0)	6 (10.9)	32 (12.9)	6 (10.7)	36 (12)	10 (14.7)
4.	Bibliographical Services	24 (14.2)	4 (7.3)	35 (14.1)	3 (5.4)	42 (14)	4 (5.9)
5.	Photocopying	20 (11.8)	8 (14.5)	25 (10.1)	13 (23.2)	38 (12.7)	8 (11.8)

6.	Computer lending	16 (9.5)	12 (21.8)	34 (13.7)	4 (7.1)	46 (15.3)	0
7.	OPAC	26 (15.4)	2 (3.6)	38 (15.37)	0 (14.6)	46 (2.9)	2
8.	C.D. ROM Search	10 (5.9)	18 (32.7)	12 (4.8)	26 (46.4)	4 (1.3)	42 (61.8)
		169	55	248	56	300	68

98% and 91% of the users in the sample studied were highly satisfied with the sources available on textbooks and reference books respectively. The Online Public Access System is appreciated by 98% of the respondents. 95% of the P.G Students are satisfied about the computer lending service . 76% of the users are not aware of the CD ROM databases.

Opinions expressed by the respondents about the Soul OPAC in the Library

- ✍ Presently books/journals are traced or immediately without much strain and in certain new areas books are quickly located and identified.

- ✍ Lot of time and effort are saved

- ✍ Most of the respondents expressed that through OPAC users can access the records by name of the author, title, subject, publisher etc.

- ✍ Easy to use and search because, it has user friendly s/w.

- ✍ Online cataloguing is very useful to the users.

- ✍ Required books/journals can be picked in a short time.

- ✍ Status of the document can also be known immediately i.e available or issued.

- ✍ Most of the respondents expressed the process of computerization has helped them for their search.

Suggestions given by the respondents:

- ✍ In future digitalization of library is required

- ✍ Use of documents in the form of electronic media may be useful to Scholars and students.

- ✍ Most of the respondents suggested to conduct awareness programme about OPAC and also use of e-sources.

- ✍ Internet facility should be provided to more number of users in the library.

- ✍ If UGC infonet is connected i.e LAN then every staff and scholars are more benefited and services can be utilized from their departments itself and relevant material may be copied into CD or Floppy for leisurely reading at home or staff room.

- ✍ Space can be saved through storage of information in digital environment.

- ✍ Resource sharing is more feasible in a digital environment.

4. Conclusion

The role of library and its viability in the electronic publishing environment pose serious problems. There is no doubt that electronic resources are expanding rapidly. Electronic resources clearly allows for the rapid distribution of information at a reduced cost. Electronic or digital environment demands multiple websites for variety of information sources. The websites recommended for users must be current and easily accessible through internet. Today any academic library must equip digital collection on par with print media. Further the library should also provide browsing facility by providing number of terminals with internet connectivity and also it should provide offline and online facility using VSAT. Thus the University libraries in developing Countries like India should provide pinpointed information to the right user at the right time at their doorsteps. As language was the medium of communication for transformation of knowledge, e-class rooms and e-teaching should be the source of knowledge in future. Therefore, the curriculum of all the disciplines should teach e-library use to all students henceforth.

5. References

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