Information Retrieval Through OPAC in the Perspective of College

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Abstract- This study analyse the satisfaction level of users and problem faced by the users in using OPAC and the suggestions made by the users to improve the facility of information retrieval through OPAC . A good number of students are satisfied about the use of OPAC. But there is small group of students are not well satisfied with the use of OPAC. Some searches users are not able to find relevant documents on account of various factors such that errors in personal names, non-updating of catalogue details, page scrolling problem, small font size etc.. A big number, consisting of more than half of the respondents (112, i.e., 51.85%) suggested indicating the location (such as shelf number, floor number, etc.) of the documents in the OPAC and 77 (37.65%) respondents suggested that the number of terminals for accessing OPAC must be increased.

Index Terms- OPAC, Web OPAC, Catalogue, Library Automation, Information Retrieval

I. INTRODUCTION

OPAC, Online public access catalogue stimulates the library house holding work in library management since 1970. It brings great change in the handling of information retrieval. WEB OPAC it is an OPAC, which is provided on the web and with the help of internet anybody can access it even from remote quarters, again extend the availability and use of information in world wide. In India most of the college libraries become automated and provide OPAC service in their library. However many users are not interested to use OPAC in their information need and some librarians not interested in updating of OPAC. It is expected that information searchers with access to the Internet whether at homes, offices, hostels or even on their smart mobile phones should be able to access library web-based OPAC before coming to the library to borrow their needed materials. Hence, this study investigated students' awareness of Library OPAC; the use of library OPAC and their experiences so as to gain insight into why they use manual catalogues most often in order to ensure that they make maximum use of OPAC services. Of course, OPAC availability should translate to its accessibility and effective usability. Therefore, it is imperative to measure the effectiveness and efficiency of the OPAC services provided for library patrons from time to time so that all necessary adjustment could be made to ensuring maximum exposure and utilization of library resources.

II. OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The main objectives of the study is
1. To analyze the satisfaction level of users with the existing library OPAC
2. To know whether the users face problems while using OPAC
3. To give suitable suggestion.

III. LITERATURE REVIEW

Shivakumaraswamy, KN and Narendara, BK conducted a study to investigate the use and user satisfaction on Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC) services at B G S Institute of Technology. The final result revealed that 36 (27.69%) respondents used OPAC to locate the books in the library. Lack of skills to use OPAC independently, lack of awareness about OPAC and lack of proper guidance to use OPAC were the major problem faced by the users while using OPAC. Finding revealed that satisfaction level of engineering students of school of engineering were quite encouraging and they were very much satisfied with the performance and quality of OPAC service.

Kumar (2015) conducted a study to investigate the use and usage of OPAC in public libraries in Chandigarh City, India. Attempt has been made to know the usage of OPAC in public libraries in terms of; users frequency, purpose of use, search pattern, search approach, usage of help tips and help, problem faced and satisfaction level. The final result revealed that there is lack of computer skill and awareness on part of users, lack of proper orientation and cooperation from the library staff. In the last suggestions have been made on the basis of the study for the effective and proper utilization of OPAC and its services.

Sarika, Reena and Rupali (2015) investigated the use of Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC) by the students of various universities of Mumbai & Navi Mumbai districts of Maharashtra state of India. Students recommended that a complete specification of the books should be provided. They also suggested that spell check and book review as a additional features should be added to the existing OPAC.

IV. METHODOLOGY

Data were collected from the students using questionnaire. The total number of students in St. John's College Anchal is 1270. Since the population is too large to manage, a sample of 300 students (i.e., 23.62% of the total population) was

taken for the study. The investigator spent two days in the college library and distributed questionnaires to the first 300 library visitors irrespective of department, year, gender, etc. Out of 300 questionnaires distributed among the students 262 were returned. Out of these filled questionnaires 46 were discarded due to the serious mistakes they contained such as marking both options for "Yes" or "No" questions, writing unnecessary comments which show that they have not taken this questionnaire seriously, etc. The questionnaires finally considered are 216 and it is 17.01% of the total population and 72% of the sample selected

V.   ANALYSIS

5.1 USER FRIENDLINESS OF THE OPAC/Web OPAC

Respondents were asked to indicate their feeling of the user friendliness of the OPAC/Web OPAC. The result is shown in Table 1

Table 1: User Friendliness of the OPAC/Web OPAC

Sl. No	User Friendliness	Number of Respondents
1	Very Easy	46 (21.3%)
2	Easy	126 (58.33%)
3	Difficult	33 (15.28%)
4	Very Difficult	11 (5.09%)
Total		**216 (100%)**

126, which is more than half (58.33%) of the respondents, opine that the OPAC is easy to use. The next biggest group of 46 respondents (21.3%) feels it very easy to use. 33 (15.28%) say that it is difficult to use the OPAC/Web OPAC. The smallest group consisting of 11 (5.09%) respondents finds it very difficult use.

5.2 TYPE OF SEARCH MADE USING OPAC/WEB OPAC

Libsoft SV 4.1 OPAC provides Simple and Boolean search options. In Libsoft Web OPAC Simple, Quick and Advanced search facilities are available. The following Table 2 summarizes the answers to the question regarding the type of search the respondents make using OPAC/Web OPAC.

Table 2: Type of Search Made using OPAC/Web OPAC

Sl. No	Type of Search	Number of Respondents
1	Simple	152 (70.37%)
2	Boolean	63 (29.17%)
3	Quick	1 (0.46%)
4	Advanced	0
Total		**216 (100%)**

Majority of the respondents (152, which is 70.37%) are satisfied with Simple search whereas 63 (29.17%) opt for Boolean Search. Only one among the respondents (0.46%) make quick search and no one among the respondents prefer advanced search.

5.3   Over all satisfaction regarding the use of the OPAC/WEB OPAC

Table 3: Use of OPAC/Web OPAC: Over All Satisfaction

Sl. No	Level of Satisfaction	Number of Respondents
1	Very Satisfied	47 (21.8%)
2	Somewhat Satisfied	118 (54.6%)
3	Somewhat Unsatisfied	41 (19%)
4	Very Unsatisfied	10 (4.63%)
	Total	216 100%

Most of the respondents are somewhat satisfied with the OPAC/Web OPAC provided by the College Library. Those who are fully satisfied with the OPAC/Web OPAC come in the second position with a number of 47 (21.8%) respondents. A group of 41 (19%) respondents is somewhat unsatisfied with the OPAC and a small group of 10 respondents (4.63%) are very unsatisfied with the OPAC.
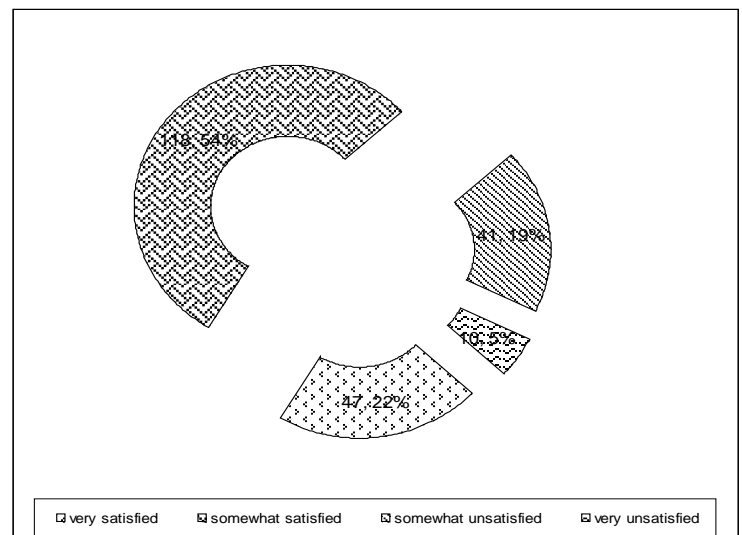

Figure 1: Doughnut Diagram Overall Satisfaction

5.4 MAIN PROBLEMS FACED DURING THE OPAC SEARCH

The main problems faced by the respondents during the OPAC/Web OPAC search is listed in Table 4 according to the order of priority.

Table 4: Main Problems Faced During the OPAC/Web OPAC Search

Sl. No	Problems Faced	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII-XIV
1	Accessibility Problem	0	0	19 (8.8%)	32 (14.82%)	10 (4.63%)	18 (8.33%)	84 38.89%	53 (24.54%)
2	Language Problem	0	11 (5.09%)	33 (15.28%	29 (13.43%	0	49 22.69%	61 28.24%	33 (15.28%)
3	Difficulty in Preparing Search Queries	39 18.06%	62 28.70%	18 (8.33%)	47 (21.76%	44 (20.38%	6 (2.28%)	0	0
4	Page Scrolling Problem	44 20.37%	28 12.96%	38 17.59%	29 13.43%	37 (17.13%	21 (9.72%)	18 (8.33%)	1 (0.46%)
5	Small Font Size	67 31.02%	32 14.82%	70 32.41%	36 16.67%	11 (5.09%)	0	0	0
6	Delay in Getting the Results	0	18 (8.33%)	0	0	0	16 (7.41%)	25 11.57%	157 (72.69%)
7	Links Failure Problem	0	0	0	0	2 (0.93%)	1 0.46%)	5 (2.31%)	208 (96.3%)
8	Errors in Personal Names	27 12.5%	36 16.67%	0	0	45 20.83%	34 15.74%	18 (8.33%)	56 (25.93%)
9	No records Coincide with the Search	0	9 4.17%	7 3.24%	31 14.35%	16 7.41%	9 (4.17%)	0	144 (66.67%)
10	Lack of Practice in Using the Catalogue	0	0	12 5.56%	0	0	0	0	204 (94.44%)
11	Catalogue is not Up-to-date	6 2.78%	13 (6.02%)	8 (3.7%)	7 3.24%	0	21 (9.72%)	0	161 (74.54%)
12	Difficulty in Searching Books with Titles in Languages other than English	1 0.46%	0	2 (0.93%)	0	8 (3.70%)	14 (6.48%)	0	191 (88.43%)
13	Getting Irrelevant Results	32 14.82%	7 (3.24%)	9 (4.17%)	5 (2.31%	43 19.91%	27 (12.5%)	5 (2.31%)	88 (40.74%)
14	Any Other (Please Specify)	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

First Problem

Small Font Size (67, i.e., 31.02%), Page Scrolling Problem (44, i.e., 20.37%), Difficulty in Preparing Search Queries (39, i.e., 18.06%), Getting Irrelevant Results (32, i.e., 14.82%), Errors in Personal Names (27, i.e., 12.5%), Catalogue is not up-to-date (6, i.e., 2.78%) and Difficulty in Searching Books with Titles in Languages other than English (1, i.e., 0.46%) are shown as first problem by the respondents.

Second Problem

The following are seen as the second problem in the order of priority by the respondents: Difficulty in Preparing Search Queries (62, i.e., 28.70%), Errors in Personal Names (36, i.e., 16.67%), Small Font Size (32, i.e., 14.82%), Page Scrolling Problem (28, i.e., 12.96%), Delay in Getting Results (18, i.e., 8.33%), Catalogue is not up-to-date (13, i.e., 6.02%), Language Problem (11, i.e., 5.09%), No Records coincide with the Search (9, i.e., 4.17%), and Getting Irrelevant Results (32, i.e., 14.82%).

Third Problem

Small Font size is felt as the third problem by 70 ((32.41%) respondents. While 38 respondents ((17.59%) show Page Scrolling Problem as the third one, 33 (15.28%) see Language Problem as the third in the order of priority. Smaller groups of respondents feel Accessibility Problem (19, i.e., 8.8%), Difficulty in Preparing Search Queries (18, 8.33%), Lack of Practice in Using the Catalogue (12, i.e., 5.56%), Getting Irrelevant Results (9, i.e., 4.17%), Catalogue is not up-to-date (8,

i.e., 3.7%), No Records Coincide with the Search (7, i.e., 3.2%) and Difficulty in Searching Books with Titles in Languages other than English (2, i.e., 0.93%) as the third important problem.

Fourth Problem

For 47 (21.76%) respondents the fourth problem is the Difficulty in Preparing Search Queries.   Small Font Size, Accessibility Problem and No Records Coincide with the Search are seen as the fourth problem by 36 (16.67%), 32 (14.82%) and 31 (14.35%) respondents respectively.   Page Scrolling Problem and Language Problem are shown as the fourth problem by two groups of respondents consisting of 29 (13.43%) each members. Catalogue is not up-to-date and getting irrelevant results are shown as the fourth problem by small groups of respondents consisting of 7 (3.24%) and 5 (2.31%) members respectively.

Fifth Problem

Errors in Personal Names (45, i.e., 20.83%), Difficulty in Preparing Search Queries (44, i.e., 20.38%) and Getting Irrelevant Results (43, i.e., 19.91%) are seen as the third problem by more than half of the respondents. Page Scrolling Problem comes in the fifth position for another group of 37 (17.13%) respondents. No Records Coincide with the Search (16, i.e., 7.41%), Small Font Size (11, i.e., 5.09%), Accessibility Problem (10, i.e., 4.63%) Difficulty in Searching Books with Titles in Languages other than English (8, i.e., 3.7%) and Links Failure Problem (2, i.e., 0.93%) are also shown as fifth problem.

5.5 SUGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT

Based on their experience with the OPAC/Web OPAC and the important problems faced by them during the OPAC search, respondents were asked to give suggestions for the improvement of the OPAC/Web OPAC. The suggestions given by them are summarized in the following Table 5

Table 5: Suggestions for Improvement

Sl.no.	Suggestions	Number of Responses according to the Order of Priority								
		I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX
1	Number of terminals for accessing OPAC need to be increased	77 (37.65%)	38 (17.59%)	29 (13.43%)	33 (15.28%)	39 (18.06%)	0	0	0	0
2	Provide step by step instruction on the screen during search	0	5 (2.31%)	18 (8.33%)	35 (16.2%)	41 (18.98%)	38 (17.59%)	29 (13.43%)	46 (21.3%)	4 (1.85%)
3	Proper training should be given by the library staff to the students	2 (0.93%)	0	1 (0.46%)	0	0	18 (8.33%)	44 (20.37%)	61 (28.24%)	90 (41.67%)
4	Indicate also the location (such as shelf no, floor no. etc.) of documents in the OPAC	112 (51.85%)	47 (21.76%)	26 (12.04%)	19 (8.8%)	8 (3.7%)	4 (1.85%)	0	0	0
5	Provide terminals in the stack room and reference library so that the users can refer to the catalogue without going out from the stack	21 (9.72%)	85 (39.35%)	37 (17.13%)	21 (9.72%)	31 (14.35%)	8 (3.7%)	13 (6.02%)	0	0
6	Assistance by the library	0	18 (8.33%)	47 (21.76%)	89 (41.2%)	0	44 (20.37%)	16 (7.41%)	2 (0.93%)	0

	staff must be improved		)	)	%)		)	)	)	
7	Add a summary of the contents of documents in the OPAC	4 (1.85%)	9 (4.17%)	28 (12.96%)	0	18 (8.33%)	45 (20.83%)	74 (34.26%)	23 (10.65%)	15 (6.94%)
8	Include the image of the document cover page in the OPAC	0	14 (6.48%)	30 (13.89%)	19 (8.8%)	66 (30.56%)	44 (20.37%)	29 (13.43%)	8 (3.7%)	6 (2.78%)
9	OPAC must be updated timely	0	0	0	0	13 (6.02%)	15 (6.94%)	11 (5.09%)	76 (35.19%)	101 (46.76%)
10	any other please specify	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0

First Suggestion

A big number, consisting of more than half of the respondents(112, i.e., 51.85%) suggested to indicate the location (such as shelf number, floor number, etc.) of the documents in the OPAC. Another group of 77 (37.65%) respondents suggested that the number of terminals for accessing OPAC must be increased. Small groups consisting of 21 (9.72%), 4 (1.85%) and 2 (0.93%) members suggested provide terminals in the stack room and reference library, add summary of the documents in the OPAC, and the need of proper training in the use of OPAC to students as the first in the order of priority.

Second Suggestion

Provide Terminals in stack room and reference library (85, i.e., 39.35%), indicate also the location such as shelf number, floor number, etc. of the documents in the OPAC (47, i.e., 21.76%) and the number of terminals for accessing OPAC need to be increased (38, i.e., 17.59%) are the important among the second suggestion. Groups consisting of more than ten members each suggested the improvement of the assistance by the library staff (18, i.e., 8.33%), include the image of the document cover page in the OPAC (14, i.e., 6.48%) at the second place. Add the summary of the documents in the OPAC and Provide step by step instruction on the screen during search were suggested by small groups of 9 (4.17%) and 5 (2.31%) each members respectively.

Third Suggestion

47 respondents (21.76%) suggested that the assistance by the library staff must be improved. Provide terminals in the stack room and reference section, include the image of the document cover page in the OPAC, number of terminals for accessing OPAC must be increased, add a summary of the contents of the document in the OPAC, indicate also the location such as shelf number, floor number etc., provide step-by-step instruction on the screen during search, and proper training should be given by the library staff are the other suggestions given as the third in the order of priority by 37(17.13%), 30 (13.89%), 29((13.43%), 28 (12.96%), 26 (12.04%), 18 (8.33%), and 1 (0.46%) respondents respectively.

Fourth Suggestion

A big number of 89 respondents (41.2%) suggested the improvement of the assistance by the library staff as the fourth one. Provide step-by-step instruction on the screen during search (35, i.e., 16.2%) and number of terminals for accessing OPAC need to be increased are shown as the fourth suggestion by 35 (16.2%) and 33 (15.28%) respondents respectively. 21 among the respondents (9.72%) suggested to provide terminals in the stack and also in the reference section for accessing the OPAC. Two groups consisting of 19 (8.8%) each respondents suggested indicate the location of the documents in the OPAC and include the image of the document in the OPAC.

Fifth Suggestion

Include the image of the cover page in the OPAC, provide step-by-step instruction on the screen during search, number of terminals for accessing OPAC need to be increased, provide terminals in the stack and in the reference section, add a summary of the documents in the OPAC, OPAC must be updated timely and indicate also the location of the documents such as shelf number, floor number etc. in the OPAC are the important suggestions given as the fifth in the order of priority by 66 (30.56%), 41 (18.98%), 39 (18.06%), 31 (14.35%), 18 (8.33%), 13 (6.02%) and 7 (3.75) respondents respectively.

VI. FINDINGS

To sum up the major objectives of this research as follows

- A good number of students are satisfied about the use of OPAC But there is small group of students are not well satisfied with the use of OPAC.
- The main problem faced by the users while using OPAC are:

  - Accessibility problem
  - Language problem
  - Difficulty in preparing search queries
  - Page scrolling problem
  - Small font size
  - Delay in Getting the Results

- ➢ Links Failure Problem
- ➢ Errors in Personal Names
- ➢ No records Coincide with the Search
- ➢ Lack of Practice in Using the Catalogue
- ➢ Catalogue is not Up-to-date
- ➢ Difficulty in Searching Books with Titles in Languages other than English

VII. CONCLUSION

The St john's college will be beginning stage in the library automation. So students are not very well in the use of OPAC. The OP AC system has changed the traditional concept of access to library resources. It allows simple as well as complex searches. Document access is still one of the most important approaches of users to visit the library, and a study of the effectiveness of an OPAC is useful in this respect. Regarding results, sometimes users face problems of   getting irrelevant results. However, in some searches users are not able to find relevant documents on account of various factors such that errors in personal names,non-updation of cataloge details, pagescrolling problem, small font size etc.. Significantly, the satisfaction level of users was high with the OPAC facilities. Nevertheless, not many users are aware of the expert searches provided by OPAC.

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