An Exploratory study of the use and usability of E-Documents of Calcutta University Central Library by Master degree students

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Abstract

The paper presents the study on the use of idea of master degree students about different types of electronic documents of Calcutta University Central Library. It also shows the different types of electronic documents usage by master degree students of Calcutta University central library, how the various problems encountered while using electronic documents of Calcutta University central library, Knowledge of ICT skills of master degree students of Calcutta University Central library and the gender wise electronic documents uses by master degree students of electronic documents. At last some recommendations are incorporated regarding this matter.

Introduction

The development of information communication technology and the growth of web documents open to all our society have gained popularity of web documents. In the recent years, there has been a phenomenal growth of electronic documents. A large number of e-journals and e-books are available in different consortiums and different sources area. The impact of e-journals in academic world is too important to say. Before, the study of their use and usage, it is necessary to study the preference of the e- journals and e-books. Information researchers eager to know which factors help a person to find out e-information. So at present the study has been done on those factors which play a decisive factor in deciding the use of the electronic documents of the library to find out information. In the past several research studies have been conducted to develop a well-designed pedagogy to instruct the students how to use library. Students are unaware of the usage of e-documents of the library. It is an important work for library professional to try and understand what characteristics and factors will help one student to use e- documents.

Review of the Literature: Both Indian and foreign literature have been reviewed thoroughly. In the past, several research studies have been conducted on the use and usability of e-documents in their library. From these studies many conclusions have been drawn about the behavior and preferences of library users. But the conclusions are sometimes unclear to researchers. The report for the Council on Library and Information Resources (CLIR)[1] states that over 200 recent research publications stresses on the use of e-documents of the library. These types of reports were published from 1995 to 2003. Research done by Atkinson and Kydd[2] in 1997 has presented the intrinsic and extrinsic motivation factors. They pointed out that the intrinsic motivation factors like enjoyment not only had

a positive effect on the extrinsic motivation factor like usefulness, it also had a positive effect on the willingness to use information technology. Moreover, the extrinsic motivation factor like usefulness was also found to have a positive effect on the willingness to use computers.

Objectives: i. To study the idea of master degree students about different types of electronic documents who use the Calcutta University Central Library (CUCL). ii. To study the different types of electronic documents Usage by master degree students who use the Calcutta University Central Library (CUCL). iii. To identify the various problems encountered while using electronic documents by postgraduate students who use the Calcutta University Central Library (CUCL). iv. To show the knowledge of ICT skills of master degree students of CUCL. v. To study the gender wise electronic documents uses by master degree students who use the Calcutta University Central Library (CUCL).

Methodology

Questionnaire, survey method as well as interview method was applied to elicit information on the present condition of the usage of e-documents of master degree students who are using e-documents of CUCL in Kolkata. A well-designed questionnaire stating eliciting questions on the different aspects of e -documents was followed. Some surveys or interviews stating questions on the preferences at the time of using e-documents have been done. All the result collectively shows the real picture regarding the use of e-documents of the library.

Sources of Data: The primary data for the present study was collected from the of master degree students who are using of e-documents of CUCL in Kolkata. The study is mainly analyzed on the primary data collected from master degree students who

are using CUCL in Kolkata through a well-designed questionnaire. The secondary data was taken from sources like journal articles and Internet. Moreover, researchers collected some information by visiting of libraries under study, and taking interview of some master degree students who are using e-documents of CUCL. The study will take into account both primary and secondary sources of information. Raw and primary data will be collected. Analysis will be done on relevant data.

Sampling Procedure: Total 105 master degree students who are using e-documents of CUCL of Kolkata are taken into consideration for the present study. The statistical analysis of the data has been done by applying simple percentage method.

Scope and Coverage: The study is conducted among master degree students who are using e-documents of CUCL. There are about 3000 master degree students who are using CUCL which are under the purview of the present study. The period of

coverage is up to June 2014.The present study has evaluated the use of proficiency in information technology among the master degree students and availability of the components of Information technology in CUCL in Kolkata.

Tools and Techniques for Data Collection: Tools: Annual Report of the University

Techniques: Survey, Questionnaire Preparation, Face to face interview individually

Limitations of the study: The study was limited to 105 master degree students who were using e-documents of CUCL.

Results and Discussion

Analysis and interpretation of results: Total 105 questionnaires were supplied to master degree students and all were successfully returned.

Table-1
Idea of master degree students about different types of electronic documents of Calcutta University Central Library

Sl. No.	Particulars	Known or Unknown	Number of responses	Respondents (%)
1	Internet knowledge.	Known	103	98.09
		Unknown	2	1.91
2	Idea of search engines e.g. Google, Altavista, yahoo etc	Known	105	100
		Unknown	0	0
3	Experience with CD – ROM	Known	22	20.95
		Un known	83	79.05
4	Experience with topic maps	Known	17	16.19
		Un known	88	83.81
5	Experience with site maps	Known	19	18.10
		Un known	86	81.90
6	Experience with website inbuilt Search engines	Known	57	54.29
		Un known	48	45.71
7	Experience with online databases	Known	22	20.95
		Un known	83	79.05
8	Experience with ready made Questions (FAQs	Known	37	35.24
		Un known	68	64.76
9	Experience with navigating web links	Known	52	49.52
		Un known	53	50.48
10	Experience with mailing list	Known	69	65.71
		Un known	36	34.29
11	Experience with site help	Known	42	40
		Un known	63	60
12	Experience with web blog	Known	19	18.10
		Un known	86	81.90

Form table 1, it is found that there is not appropriate idea of different types of electronic documents by master degree students. Students are not very user friendly to appreciate the skills needed to search the e-documents.

Table-2
Different types of electronic documents Usage by master degree students of Calcutta University Central Library

Sl. No.	Purpose	Category	Number of responses	Respondents (%)
1	Leisure and Entertainment	Very Often	17	16.19
		Often	23	21.91
		Rarely	65	61.90
		Never	0	0
2	Educational/Academic	Very often	43	40.95
		Often	62	59.05
		Rarely	0	0
		Never	0	0
3	Sport	Very Often	21	20
		Often	62	59.05
		Rarely	18	17.14
		Never	4	3.81
4	Religious	Very Often	0	0
		Often	0	0
		Rarely	18	17.14
		Never	87	82.86
5	News	Very Often	27	25.71
		Often	57	54.29
		Rarely	21	20
		Never	0	0
6	Commercial	Very Often	0	0
		Often	0	0
		Rarely	37	35.24
		Never	68	64.76
7	Pornographic	Very Often	0	0
		Often	0	0
		Rarely	11	10.48
		Never	94	89.52
8	Military	Very Often	0	0
		Often	0	0
		Rarely	13	12.38
		Never	92	87.62
9	Library/Informational	Very Often	68	64.76
		Often	37	35.24
		Rarely	0	0
		Never	0	0
10	Full text of an article	Very Often	16	15.24
		Often	89	84.76
		Rarely	0	0
		Never	0	0

From the above table it is found that students' usage of the different types of e- documents and the number of responses usage of e-documents are marginally high. Master degree students use mostly e-documents like library/informational, educational/academics, full text of an article, news, and sports etc. On the other hand e-documents like the religious, commercial, entertainment and pornographic documents are less used by master degree students. Students highly use the news websites. Form the above table, it is found that educational or academic documents are highly exploited by master degree students.

From the above table it is clear to us that there are some general problems faced by master degree students. Master degree students faced some basic problems like huge volume of irrelevant information, the need for filtering the results at the time of searching e-documents. They face many other problems like delay in downloading, not to get needed information, inadequate search skills, expensive to access, power cut, non availability of some websites, inaccessibility of some websites, difficulties in navigating of electronic documents, etc.

The above table shows the skill of using of ICT among master degree students is not up to the mark. From the above table it can be said that the master degree students use the cybercafé for accessing e- documents from. The cybercafés are easily available due to the popularity of internet.

Table-3
Various problems encountered while using electronic documents of Calcutta University Central Library

Sl. No.	Particulars	Known or Unknown	Number of responses	Respondents (%)
1.	Information explosion (or too many information)	Known	47	44.76
		Unknown	58	55.24
2.	Filtering need for searching purpose	Known	57	54.29
		Unknown	48	45.71
3.	Delay in downloading	Known	72	68.57
		Unknown	33	31.43
4.	Problem with credibility of information	Known	39	37.14
		Unknown	66	62.86
5.	Failure to find information	Known	23	21.90
		Unknown	82	78.10
6.	Lack of search skills	Known	89	84.76
		Unknown	16	15.24
7.	High cost of access	Known	62	59.05
		Unknown	43	40.95
8.	Power cut	Known	73	69.52
		Unknown	32	30.48
9.	Inaccessibility of some websites	Known	69	65.71
		Unknown	36	34.29
10.	Difficulties in navigation of some websites	Known	81	77.14
		Unknown	24	22.86

Table-4
Knowledge of ICT skills of master degree students of Calcutta University Central Library

Sl. No.	Particulars	Agree or Disagree	Number of responses	Respondents (%)
1.	Expertise use of computer	Agree Disagree	72 33	69 31
2.	Knowledge of database Structures	Agree Disagree	20 85	19 81
3.	Working skill in an interactive Platforms e.g. video, conferencing, BBS LISTSERV, Chat room etc	Agree Disagree	17 88	21 84
4.	Habituated in formulating search queries	Agree Disagree	45 60	43 62
5.	Knowledge of online skills navigation techniques	Agree Disagree	83 22	79 26
6.	Knowledge of electronic Library tools uses e.g. CDROM, OPAC, SUBJECT Gateways etc.	Agree Disagree	98 7	93 12
7.	Knowledge of online acquisition Procedures/techniques	Agree Disagree	17 88	16 89
8.	Knowledge of working skills in network Environment	Agree Disagree	19 86	23 82
9.	Useable skilled in internet telephony	Agree Disagree	27 78	31 74
10.	Knowledge of different types of software e.g. MS Windows XP, Linux, MS Office, etc	Agree Disagree	89 16	85 20
11.	Converted knowledge of different electronic formats e.g. DF, JPEG, MPEG etc.	Agree Disagree	67 38	64 41

Table-5
Gender wise electronic documents uses by master degree students of Calcutta University Central Library

Sl. No.	Particulars	Known or Unknown	Female	Male
1.	Familiarity with electronic documents	Yes No	41 0	64 0
2.	Respondent of using electronic documents	Very Often Often Rarely Never	21 20 0 0	55 09 0 0
3.	Time taken using Electronic documents	Below 1 year 1 – 2 years 3 – 4 years Above 4 years	13 17 8 3	11 31 13 9

The result of the analysis revealed a high frequency of usage by both male and female master degree students. But the female students take less time to use E-documents than male students.

Major findings: i. In the last ten years there is phenomenal increase of the electronic documents and the correlation between the availability and awareness is found among master degree students who are using CUCL, where many of the participants are aware of the electronic journal collection available in their institution. ii. The young participants who use electronic journals show high level of awareness of the collection and willing to resort for more electronic journals. iii. Interestingly the users have knowledge about availability of electronic documents, but many use them as the supplementary way to use information. Many users need to know the complete potential of the electronic journals. iv. A large number of

participants understand that the number of electronic journals is increasing and the number of print versions is decreasing, and they resort to the electronic format. v. Many participants reveal that they would use the print occasionally if more electronic journals are available. vi. The young users are inclined for electronic journals particularly for study, research and carriers. vii. Students use the Internet more than the library for career and study, and many believe that they are more expert at searching than their teachers. viii. Personal subscriptions to journals continue to decrease, so users rely more on electronic subscriptions subsidized by the library and on the Internet. ix. Students use and like electronic documents and most readily adopt them if the sources are perceived as convenient, relevant, and time saving to their natural workflow. x. Students in different subject disciplines have different usage patterns and preferences for print or electronic media. There is no one right solution for services or system design for every subject discipline. xi. Most e-journal users still print out articles that are judged useful—so a printing format such as PDF is popular. xii. Students use hyperlinks to view related articles and sometimes the use of hyperlinks is less clear. xiii. Browsing a small number of searching by topic in an article database is important for all. xiv. Users will read articles from a wide variety of journal titles and sources if available to them, although most of the readings come from relatively few journals.

Suggestions and Recommendations: The following suggestions and recommendations were made based on the above study: i. Library will be fully equipped with the more ICT (Information and Communication Technology) infrastructural facilities to cope with the knowledge society. ii. Students should be encouraged for the usage of ICTs. iii. User education programme should be arranged regarding the use of ICT in a library. iv. Library must reach a position where the acquisition of Information and Communication Technology is very important. v. ICT skills are acknowledged as one of the key learning objectives for its students so that students will be fully equipped to cope with the information intensive world as an end-user. To this end more practical courses on ICTs should be inculcated into the curriculum. vi. Government should equip schools with the enabling infrastructure such as adequate power supply, effective internet connectivity etc. that will encourage the usage of ICT by students. vii. ICT centers with well trained personnel should be established in the universities where students can have free access to computers, the web and other electronic sources. viii. Library should be equipped with more technical staff to improve ICT skills on students.

Conclusion

In a nutshell it may be said that many users will resort to electronic documents if more orientation programmes are conducted in this regard. It may be said that the studies may offer different equations if studies are conducted prior to the consortium. It is clear to everyone that putting documents or pages on the web is easy, cheap or free, unregulated, and unmonitored. It is a self-publishing medium, that is, anyone can publish anything. This means that not everything one finds on the Web is equally valuable or reliable. There is a famous saying in this "On the Internet, nobody knows you're a dog". Unlike most print sources, web sources do not have to be professionally accepted and edited to be published. Print is still used for some reading and is part of research in almost every discipline. It is considered important in certain disciplines, especially in the humanities. Many publishers still publish both print and online versions of their publications. At last it is said that Print remains the most popular medium for books and journals, etc. and the use of e-documents is still in the very early stages.

References

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