AWARENESS AND USE OF ONLINE PUBLIC ACCESS CATALOGUE AMONG THE SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCHERS AT DR V.K.R.V RAO LIBRARY, ISEC BANGALORE: A STUDY

Krishnappa, S.
T.D. Kemparaju

Mr. Krishnappa, S.
Selection Grade Assistant (Lib)
Institute for Social and
Economic Change (ISEC)
Nagarabhavi, Bangalore -560
072
Email: krishnas.mlisc@gmail.com
Corresponding Author

Dr. T.D. Kemparaju
Professor
Dept of Library and Information
Science
Jnanabharathi Campus,
Bangalore University
Bangalore – 560 056
Email: tdkv2000@gmail.com

This paper examines the awareness level and the use of Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC) by the Social Science researchers at Dr. V.K.R.V Rao library, ISEC, Bangalore. The study assesses the usage pattern in terms of awareness, frequency and the purpose of use, search pattern, problems faced while using the OPAC. A survey method with a questionnaire as a tool was used for determining the usage patterns of OPAC among social science researchers. The authors distributed 140 questionnaires and received 117 (83.57%) questionnaires. The findings of the study show that 80.34% of the researchers are aware of OPAC provided by the library. Those who use OPAC occasionally, use title of the work and name of the author search options. Majority of the researchers are highly satisfied with OPAC in locating the library resources. The study also reveals that most of the researchers use OPAC for locating current journals and books for their research work. Hence, the study suggests in improving the OPAC functionality and organizing user orientation programmes so as to facilitate a proper utilization of the OPAC.

Keywords: Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC), Social Science Researchers, Catalogue Use Studies, Academic and Research Library

INTRODUCTION

Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC) has changed the traditional card catalogue system with users being able to easily check the availability of library collections and issue status of the library documents. The application of ICT in the area of library and information centres has changed the techniques of access, storing, retrieval and dissemination of library resources. Nowadays, a large number of libraries have automated their technical operations and services using this technology to fulfill their user requirements. OPAC, as part of information technology, requires knowledge and skills for searching required documents or information. Infact, OPAC has revolutionized the way to bibliographic information

through search options such as Title, Author, Keyword, Subject, Publisher name and ISBN etc. A large number of libraries are providing OPAC facility to their users for searching documents, books, reports etc. Therefore, in this context, a study was undertaken on the use of OPAC by the social science researchers at Dr. V.K.R.V Rao library, ISEC, Bangalore.

DR. V. K. R.V. RAO LIBRARY, ISEC

Dr. V.K.R.V Rao library, Institute for Social and Economic Change (ISEC), Bangalore, is a multidisciplinary social science research institute established in 1972 by the academician and well known statesman, late Dr. V.K.R.V. Rao. It is one of the multidisciplinary social science research institutions funded by ICSSR. The library provides information to faculty, research scholars, researchers, policymakers, administrators, consultants and students from all over the country. The library possesses a large number of collections such as current, historical and statistical sources published by the state and central governments and multilateral institutions. These include statistical yearbooks, bulletins, population censuses, trade statistics and a vast range of economic, financial and social data etc. The library has been fully automated using Libsys library management software for in-house keeping activities such as circulation of documents, library membership, periodicals, cataloguing as OPAC etc.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Tyopev et al. (2020) explore the level of awareness regarding OPAC, extent of usage, level of satisfaction derived from the usage and challenges involved in the use of OPAC in the Benue State University Library. The population consisted of 9,864 undergraduate students with the sample size of 384. The results show that most of the respondents (60.4%) were not aware of OPAC service facility, while only 39.6% of respondents indicated their awareness of OPAC services while retrieving their needed library materials. The study also pointed to a low usage and dissatisfaction with the OPAC of the Benue State University library. The study was concluded that creation of OPAC services would facilitate retrieving information resources acquired and organized by the university library. Aju and Tofi (2020) present the results of an investigative study on awareness, utilization and satisfaction with online public access catalogue (OPAC) across selected university libraries in Nasarawa State, Nigeria. The study findings show that, undergraduates were fairly aware of OPAC across selected university libraries utilizing it to a certain extent and those students were not satisfied with the use of OPAC despite being aware of it. Further findings reveal factors affecting the use of OPAC by undergraduates such as the absence of a library guide to explain how to use OPAC, unstable power supply, unfriendly library staff, network / server problems, lack of computer systems and others. Swaminathan (2019) in his study examined the use of Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC) in academic libraries. The survey was conducted at the academic library with a questionnaire distributed to 150 staff and students of Madurai Kamaraj University, Madurai, out of which 132 (88.00%) filled in questionnaires were used for analysis. The author examined the paper use and

functional lapses in the operation of OPAC at the academic libraries in Madurai. This provided original data from library end-users in Madurai Kamaraj University about their experience while using OPAC services.

Swaminathan (2017) studied the use and awareness regarding OPAC services with respect to students and faculty members of Anna university regional campus, Coimbatore. The results of the study reveal that a significant number of users searched for information despite encountering several problems. The study observed that it was important to organize quality instruction programmes as part of improving knowledge and skills of users. Srinivasaragavan et al. (2019) in their study, focused on the effective use of Web Online Public Access Catalogue at R.V.S College of Engineering and Technology, Dindigul. The study found that the tool was useful, but at the same time, respondents felt the need for user-orientation to help retrieve the required information from the Web-OPAC. The study further examined the utilization and satisfaction level of users regarding Web-OPAC and highlighted the suggestions made by users for further improvement. Kumar and Burman (2019) conducted a survey on OPAC service across different university libraries of Haryana. The study found that 89.7% of users were aware of OPAC services in CUH; 24.8% of users had learnt the use of OPAC by making self efforts in MDU; 30% of used the OPAC system weekly; 46.3% of users used OPAC for searching the required documents in MDU; 82.2% of users used simple search method in CUH; 45.2% of users found the documents misplaced on shelves in KUK; 74.1%

of users observed that library staff were never available for assistance in KUK; 39.8% of users found the OPAC terminals limited in KUK; and 49.4% of users were satisfied with the present OPAC facilities in MDU.

Rajput et al. (2018) while presenting the results of an investigative study on the use of Online Public Access Catalogue at Devi Ahilya University Library, Indore, observed that the tool was useful, but at the same time, noted that respondents expected someone to help them retrieve the required documents. Rout and Panigrahi (2018) conducted a study on the usage pattern in terms of awareness, frequency of use, purpose of use, search pattern, success in locating the documents and problems faced while using OPAC. The study found that not many respondents were using OPAC, while those using were found frequently conducting title and author search and also that they were moderately successful in locating the required documents using OPAC, while encountering problems while searching. The study found it necessary to improve the OPAC functionality for an effective and proper utilization. Krishnamoorthy and Muthusamy (2018) conducted a survey on the effective use of OPAC at the library of Jeppiaar Maamallan Engineering College in Chennai. The results of this study are helpful for librarians, and further examined the helpful empirical proof for librarians on the usage of OPAC across libraries in the state and country. Anil Kumar (2017) evaluated users' awareness regarding the use of library OPAC, in terms of searching patterns, the purpose of using OPAC and problems faced while using OPAC at Jawaharlal Nehru Library,

Kurukshetra University, India. The study found that a majority of the respondents were using OPAC for locating documents on shelves with the most popular search approach of i.e., title. The findings of the study show that users had a Poor knowledge of OPAC service use.

The literature reviewed above has covered library users mostly students from universities and colleges and thus figures the use of OPAC in academic libraries. The present study is covering purely a research institution and most of them are engaged in active research and that to in social sciences, focusing on social and economic change. Hence, the present study.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To understand the awareness level regarding the use of OPAC among the Social Science Researchers at VKRV Rao library ISEC, Bangalore;

2. To find out the frequency of OPAC use among the Social Science Researchers;

3. To investigate the purpose of using OPAC;

4. To analyze the search pattern of Researchers while using OPAC;

5. To find out the problems faced by the Researchers while using OPAC; and

6. To study the satisfaction level regarding the use of OPAC.

METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted at the Institute for Social and Economic Change (ISEC), Bangalore, Karnataka. The library users can be majorly categorized as Faculty members, PhD scholars and Research staff engaged in social science research. A survey method was adopted for collecting the necessary data from the respondents, using a structured questionnaire. The questionnaire was distributed to different user groups such as Researchers and Faculty groups. Further, the questionnaire was distributed to about 105 Researchers out of which 89 responded and returned the filled questionnaire with a response rate of 76.07%. In respect of Faculty, out of 35 members, 28 returned the filled questionnaire. In all, 117 (83.57%) filled in questionnaires were received back.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

The collected data was analyzed, organized and tabulated using SPSS (Version 22) in the form of tables and charts etc. Based on the demographic information presented in table 1, it is evident that a majority of the respondents (57.30%) are males and the remaining (42.70%) are females. Most of the respondents belong to the age group of below 30 years (64.10%), indicating that most of them are young researchers. Further, researchers constitute the major portion of respondents (76.07%), followed by faculty members (23.93%). An analysis of basic educational qualification reveals that 73 (62.90%) respondents possess masters' degree, presently pursuing Ph.D. degree, while 33 (28.23%) and 11 (8.87%) of the respondents have completed PhD and M. Phil. degrees respectively, constituting faculty and research staff, denoting higher levels of research experience.

Table 1: Demographic profile

Demographic information	Particulars	No. of respondents	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	67	57.30%
	Female	50	42.70%
Age groups	Bellow 30	75	64.10%
	31-40	25	21.37%
	41- 50	7	5.98%
	Above 51	10	8.55%
Designation	Researchers	89	76.07%
	Faculty	28	23.93%
Educational Qualification	PhD	33	28.23%
	MPhil	11	8.87%
	Masters	73	62.90%

Awareness of OPAC services

Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC) is a very important service provided by any library system. OPAC is an electronic database that contains bibliographic information about resources available with a library and researchers can search the required information using OPAC on the topics of their interest. An attempt is made here to understand the awareness level regarding the use of OPAC among the Researchers and Faculty members of ISEC. The data are presented in table 2. It is evident that a majority of them, i.e., 74 (83.15%) Researchers and 20 (71.43%) Faculty members are aware of OPAC service. Moreover, respondents, who are aware of OPAC, are found statistically significant. Based on the analysis, it becomes evident that majority of users, both Researchers and Faculty members are aware of the library OPAC.

Table 2: Awareness regarding Library OPAC service

Sl. No.	Awareness regarding OPAC	No. of. Respondents		
		Researchers	Faculty	Total
1	Yes	74 (83.15%)	20 (71.43%)	94 (80.34%)
2	No	15 (16.85%)	8 (28.57%)	23 (19.66%)

Frequency of OPAC use

Apart from understanding the awareness level of OPAC service among the Researchers and Faculty members, a further attempt has been made to explore the frequency of library OPAC use in order to understand the importance of this service for their research activities. The data are presented in the table 3. It is evident from table that 25 (28.09%) Researchers and 8 (28.57%) Faculty members use OPAC "Once in a week", while 21 (23.60%) Researchers and 7 (25.00%) Faculty members use OPAC "Occasionally" and only 12

(13.48%) Researchers and 2 (7.14%) Faculty members use OPAC on "Daily" basis. Further, it can be observed that 8 (8.99%) Researchers and 2 (7.14%) Faculty members use OPAC "Thrice a week". Lastly, only 8 (8.99%) Researchers and

1 (3.57%) Faculty members use OPAC "Twice a week". Based on the analysis, it can be observed that majority of respondents use OPAC on a "Once a week" basis.

Table 3: Frequency of OPAC use

Sl. No.	Frequency of OPAC use	No. of. Respondents		
		Researchers	Faculty	Total
1	Daily	12 (13.48%)	2 (7.14%)	14 (11.97%)
2	Once a week	25 (28.09%)	8 (28.57%)	33 (28.21%)
3	Twice a week	8 (8.99%)	1 (3.57%)	9 (7.69%)
4	Thrice in a week	8 (8.99%)	2 (7.14%)	10 (8.55%)
5	Occasionally	21 (23.60%)	7 (25.00%)	28 (23.93%)

Purpose of using OPAC

The table 4 shows the purpose of using OPAC. It can be observed that 75 (84.27%) Researchers and 20 (71.43%) Faculty members use OPAC to "Locate current journals", while 72 (80.90%) Researchers and 19 (67.86%) Faculty members use OPAC "To locate books". Similarly, 35 (39.33%) Researchers and 15 (53.57%)

Faculty use OPAC "To compile a bibliography on a particular subject / topic". Further, 19 (21.35%) Researchers and 7 (25.00%) Faculty use OPAC "To check the number of copies available with the library", and 16 (17.98%) Researchers and 7 (25.00%) Faculty members use OPAC "To find out the bibliographic details of documents". Lastly, a very few numbers of respondents i.e.,

Table 4: Purpose of using OPAC

Sl. No.	Purpose of use	No. of. Respondents		
		Researchers	Faculty	Total
1	To locate books	72 (80.90%)	19 (67.86%)	91 (77.78%)
2	To Locate current journals	75 (84.27%)	20 (71.43%)	95 (81.20%)
3	To compile bibliography on a particular subject / topic	35 (39.33%)	15 (53.57%)	50 (42.74%)
4	To check the number of copies available with the library	19 (21.35%)	7 (25.00%)	26 (22.22%)
5	To find out the bibliographic details of documents	16 (17.98%)	7 (25.00%)	23 (19.66%)
6	Any other	10 (11.24%)	6 (21.43%)	16 (13.68%)

10 (11.24%) Researchers and 6 (21.43%) Faculty members use OPAC for other purposes. It is clear from the table 4 that, a majority of the respondents use OPAC mainly "To Locate current journals" and "To locate books".

User information search on OPAC

OPAC is an information retrieval tool for users related to their information needs. The system requires a fair amount of knowledge and skill when it comes to searching for information using OPAC. The system provides different bibliographic information search options such as Title, Author, Keyword, Subject, Publisher name and ISBN etc. The table 5 shows that a majority i.e., 59 (66.29%) Researchers and 19 (67.86%) Faculty members search the required

information "By title of the work" as their most preferred search option, while 57 (64.04%) Researchers and 18 (64.29%) Faculty members search OPAC "By author's name". Further, it can be noted that 48 (53.93%) Researchers and 14 (50.00%) Faculty members search information "By keyword", and 34 (38.20%) Researchers and 15 (53.57%) Faculty members "By subject", whereas 18 (20.22%) Researchers and 10 (35.71%) Faculty members consult OPAC "By call number". A very few respondents i.e., 5 (5.62%) Researchers and 2 (7.14%) Faculty members search for required information "By ISSN number". From the analysis, it can be observed that a large number of respondents among the Researchers and Faculty members search the required information using OPAC "By title of the work" and "Name of the authors".

Table 5: User information search on OPAC

Sl. No.	Search Options	No. of. Respondents		
		Researchers	Faculty	Total
1	By Author's name	57 (64.04%)	18 (64.29%)	75 (64.10%)
2	By Subject	34 (38.20%)	15 (53.57%)	49 (41.88%)
3	By Title of the work	59 (66.29%)	19 (67.86%)	78 (66.67%)
4	By Keyword	48 (53.93%)	14 (50.00%)	62 (52.99%)
5	By Call Number	18 (20.22%)	10 (35.71%)	28 (23.93%)
6	By ISSN number	5 (5.62%)	2 (7.14%)	7 (5.98%)

Problems faced in using OPAC services

An attempt has been made to find out the problems faced by users, both Researchers and Faculty members, while using OPAC service. The data are presented in the table 6. The study shows that 60 (67.42%) Researchers and 20 (71.43%) Faculty members face the problem of "Lack of

Time" when it comes to using OPAC, while for 45 (50.56%) Researchers and 20 (71.43%) Faculty members "Lack of knowledge in using OPAC" is the major problem. Further, it is interesting to note that for 26 (29.21%) Researchers and 12 (42.86%) Faculty members, "OPAC is not comprehensive", whereas, for 12

(13.48%) Researchers and 8 (28.57%) Faculty members, "Lack of sufficient number of computers" is the problem and only for 8 (8.99%) Researchers and 3 (10.71%) Faculty members "Lack of assistance from the library staff" is the

problem while searching for information using OPAC. A very few respondents, i.e., 6 (6.74%) Researchers and 2 (7.14%) Faculty members find it difficult to use OPAC service due to "Non-availability of LAN on the campus".

Table 6: Problems faced in using OPAC services

Sl. No.	Types of Problems	No. of. Respondents		
		Researchers	Faculty	Total
1	Lack of knowledge in using OPAC	45 (50.56%)	20 (71.43%)	65 (55.56%)
2	OPAC is not comprehensive	26 (29.21%)	12 (42.86%)	38 (32.48%)
3	Lack of sufficient number of computers	12 (13.48%)	8 (28.57%)	20 (17.09%)
4	Lack of assistance from the library staff	8 (8.99%)	3 (10.71%)	11 (9.40%)
5	Lack of time	60 (67.42%)	20 (71.43%)	79 (67.52%)
6	Non-availability of LAN on the campus	6 (6.74%)	2 (7.14%)	8 (6.84%)

Overall satisfaction level related to OPAC service

The respondents were asked to indicate their opinion with regard to OPAC service offered by the library. The table 7 shows the levels of satisfaction among the users with respect to OPAC service. It can be observed from the table 7 that 41 (46.07%) Researchers and 13 (46.43%) Faculty members are "Highly satisfied" with

OPAC service provided by the library, whereas, 32 (35.96%) Researchers and 7 (25.00%) Faculty members are "Moderately satisfied" with OPAC and only a few respondents i.e., 7 (7.87%) Researchers and 5 (17.86%) Faculty members are "Partially satisfied" with OPAC service provided by the library. Based on the analysis, it can be concluded that majority of respondents are "Highly satisfied" with OPAC service.

Table 7: Satisfaction levels related to OPAC service

Sl. No.	Satisfaction level regarding OPAC services	No. of Respondents		
		Researchers	Faculty	Total
1	Highly satisfied	41 (46.07%)	13 (46.43%)	54 (46.15%)
2	Moderately satisfied	32 (35.96%)	7 (25.00%)	39 (33.33%)
3	Partially satisfied	7 (7.87%)	5 (17.86%)	12 (10.26%)

CONCLUSION AND SUGGESTIONS

The social science library of ISEC has a large number of collections and a sufficient ICT infrastructure. The library provides various services along with OPAC to the social science researchers. OPAC is an information access tool for locating the desired documents related to the bibliographic information needs. The search process on OPAC has, more or less, remained the same, as in the case of card catalogue, but with increased access points, varieties of search features and increased complexity of the process. The study shows that a large number of users, both Researchers and Faculty members, are aware of the library OPAC service and also use it on a more or less on a regular basis for accessing information. Majority of the respondents consult OPAC for locating the current journals and other research materials and also it can be observed that a good number of users are highly satisfied with OPAC service being provided by the library. Therefore, it can be suggested that Dr. V.K.R.V. Rao library at ISEC make an initiative to upgrade the present OPAC system so as to ensure a better utilization of the library collections in the days to come.

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