

Importance of web-resources as experienced by university students

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ABSTRACT

The emergence of the World Wide Web as a new medium of information storage and delivery represents a revolution which will have a everlasting impact on the publishing and information delivery system in the twenty first century. One of the main reasons for the web's success is that it provides information to millions of people. The study attempts to measure the quantum of use and importance of web resources by the students of Ranchi University with a questionnaire-based survey. A questionnaire containing total of 100 questions was distributed and 80 valid responses were received. The study revealed that majority of the students of the university often used web-resources for enhancing their knowledge. Students preferred e-journals in PDF format and it was the major information tool for the students followed by printed text books. It was observed that majority of respondents from the university were satisfied with the web-resources provided by the university library.

Keywords: Library; WWW; web-resources, e-resources, search engine, satisfaction

INTRODUCTION

The World Wide Web (also known as WWW or just the Web) is the provision of independent distributed servers which can work together and link together in a seamless way. The emergence of the internet and web resources particularly the World Wide Web as a new medium of information storage and delivery represents a revolution which will have an everlasting impact on the publishing and information delivery system

in the twenty first century. One of the main reasons for the web's success is that it provides information to millions of people. We can integrate information already available somewhere on the web in our own pages by just adding a link. However finding relevant information has become more difficult. Increasing number of publishers both commercials and private as well as individuals are using the internet as a global means to offer their publications and writings to the international community

of scientists and technologists as well as students. Use of internet and web resources by student community is an important area of study in today's information environment. As the World Wide Web becomes an increasingly popular platform for the delivery of digitized information, users face the challenge of finding and using the information that is accurate and reliable. Browsers such as Netscape, Microsoft Explorer, Mozilla Firefox, Google, Bing etc have demystified the internet and made its contents accessible to users who have a minimum of technical expertise.

The developments in information technology have changed drastically the way information is collected, stored, retrieved and distributed. And it is very beneficial for everyone who is looking for any information on anything. Now a days we are just a click away from any information we need. World Wide Web is most commonly used in our society and students mostly use internet. Students are primary users of a university library. Developing and maintaining a good collection of both print and electronic resources is a tremendous challenge for libraries facing budget constraints. Electronic resources and services refer to the variety of electronic and digital sources of information available to teachers and learners within an academic context. Today libraries are providing electronic access to a wide variety of resources including indexes, full-text articles, complete journals and Internet/web resources. Web-based

electronic resources were widely available beginning in the mid 1990s. Nowadays any library and information science (LIS) professional tries as much as possible to make electronic resources available to the users.

People use web and web search engines in order to investigate and retrieve information. As web seeking becomes increasingly necessary for information access across the world. There is a need for more effective models describing people's interaction with web systems. Web searching is usually characterized as multitasking information seeking behavior described as the process of searches over time in relation to more than one possibly evolving a set of information problems.

Universities are facing glassfuls of digitally native students who are demanding a new kind of teaching. They have been brought up under the influence of audiovisuals and the web. The new technological tools have given them the power to share, create, inform and communicate and have become an essential element in their lives. All the applications or social media to have emerged from the Web 2.0 entail active participation by the users who have become both producers and recipients.

Previously libraries were trying for bigger collections but gradually the concept bigger the better changed and much

emphasis is now given to the quality and access to e-resources. Due to change in the information environment the method of collection, storage, organization and dissemination of information is also changing. Electronic publishing is one of the important developments of information needs of the users. E-resources have now become an important part of the library. Use of e-journals is more in research libraries as compared to print e-journals whereas it is found that in academic libraries use of e-journals is comparatively less.

In the modern library electronic resources are becoming more and more important. The printed resources are now being digitized which has given rise to increase of the availability of books and journals in the electronic format.

Sohail and Alvi (2014) conducted a study on the use of web-resources by the students of medical sciences at Aligarh Muslim University, Aligarh. Olczak (2014) reported that even after taking into account the possibility of self-selection bias, using the web-based resource had a significant positive effect on student learning. Swain (2010) studied the keenness of students of business schools in Orissa on the use of e-resources in general and found that students prioritized their interest in use of e-journals followed by e-books, e-newspapers and e-reports and least interest was shown towards the use of electronic theses and dissertations. Kannappanavar and

Rajanikanta (2008) highlighted the use of e-learning resources in medical colleges and found that majority of the colleges had e-information resources and e-databases. Almost all colleges under study were also becoming members of a consortium. All the colleges under study had provided very good infrastructure facilities to their libraries to serve their clients effectively.

The present investigation was therefore conducted on the students of Ranchi University, Bihar to study and evaluate the purpose of using e-resources, awareness of e-resources among the students, to find out the important features of web resources and to find out their satisfaction level.

METHODOLOGY

The study was conducted on randomly selected 80 students of Ranchi University with a questionnaire-based survey. A questionnaire containing total of 100 questions was distributed and 80 valid responses were received. The responses thus received were converted to percentages for further analysis,

RESULTS and DISCUSSION

Data given in Table 1 show that out of the total respondents 56.25 per cent of the respondents were undergraduate and 43.75 per cent were postgraduate students. Maximum respondents (96.25%) were

Table 1. Distribution of respondents on various parameters of e-resources

Parameter	Category	Respondents	
		f	%
Programme	UG	45	56.25
	PG	35	43.75
Awareness about web-resources	Aware	77	96.25
	Unaware	03	3.75
Frequency of use of e-resources	Daily	40	50
	Weekly	22	27.5
	Few times in a month	15	18.75
	Occasionally	03	3.75
Preference of information tool	Printed text books	25	31.25
	Printed journals	10	12.5
	E-resources	45	56.25
File formats of e-resources	HTML	11	13.75
	PDF	60	75
	No preference	09	11.25
Satisfaction of getting web-resources	Fully satisfied	10	12.5
	Satisfied	60	75
	Not satisfied	10	12.5

aware about web-resources. Half of the respondents used e-resources daily and 22 per cent weekly. For majority of the respondents (56.25%) e-resources was the preferred tool for information whereas for 31.25 per cent it was printed text books. Majority of the respondents (75.00%) preferred PDF as file format and equal number of them showed their satisfaction about e-resources for seeking information.

Data given in Table 2 show that three-fourth of the students preferred library for use of the e-resources followed by cyber café (62.5%) and only 25 per cent students used e-resources at their home. For majority of them (81.25%) the main purpose of using e-information was

knowledge enhancement followed by 77.50 per cent who used it for completing assignments. Majority (87.50%) located information through web search engines and 43.75 via portals. For 87.50 per cent of the respondents full text searching followed by 81.25 per cent quick irretrievability were the important features of e-resources. Google was the most preferred search engine for 87.50 per cent respondents followed by Yahoo (62.50%). Respondents used e-resources mainly for e-journals (50.00%) followed by e-books (43.75%) followed by e-mails and audiovisual material. Main problem faced by the respondents during web-resource use was power cut (28.75%) followed by lack of time (25.00%).

Web-resources experienced by students

Table 2. Response of the sample students pertaining to different aspects of e-resources

Parameter	Category	Respondents	
		f*	%
Place for using e-resources	Library	60	75
	Cyber Café	50	62.5
	Home	20	25
Purpose of seeking e-information	To complete assignments	62	77.5
	To meet curriculum	35	43.75
	For research	20	25
	To enhance knowledge	65	81.25
Medium of locating e-information	Via on-line library catalogue	20	25
	Via portals	35	43.75
	Via web search engines	70	87.5
Important features of e-resources	Quick irretrievability	65	81.25
	Up to datedness	40	50
	Free of charge availability	59	73.75
	Full text searching	70	87.5
	Links to other resources	55	68.75
	Environmental friendliness (saving paper)	52	65
Search engines	Google	70	87.5
	Yahoo	50	62.5
	Rediff	15	18.75
	Bing	20	25
	Ask	10	12.5
Use of various e-resources	CD-ROM	15	18.75
	e-databases	15	18.75
	e-books	35	43.75
	e-journals	40	50
	Microfilms	07	8.75
	e-manuscripts	15	18.75
	Audiovisual material	30	37.5
	e-thesis	20	25
	e-newspaper	25	31.25
	e-mail	30	37.5
Problems faced during web-resources	Poor connectivity	20	25
	Limited access	15	18.75
	Unawareness of information in their field	19	23.75
	Poor database searching skills	15	18.75
	Lack of time	20	25
	Power cut	23	28.75

*Multiple responses

CONCLUSION

The findings of the study indicate that maximum respondents were aware about web-resources in Ranchi University. Majority of students used web-resources for enhancing their knowledge. Students preferred e-journals in PDF format and it was the major information tool among the students followed by printed text books. The study also indicate that full text searching, quick irretrievability and free of charge availability were the key features of e-resources. Major problems faced by the students were power cut and lack of time. It was observed that majority of the respondents were satisfied with web-resources provided by the university.

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