Research Paper

Usage of Information Products in the First Grade College Libraries of Karnataka: A Study with Special Reference To Dakshina Kannada District

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ABSTRACT: *Academic libraries have always aimed to fulfill their research objectives and ambitions by using any means at their disposal, particularly in these times when drastic changes have been occurred because of the IT application on libraries. To satisfy their readers, the traditional academic libraries need to organize and manage its resources in relation to the requirement of its users. In this context, this paper discusses the opinions and views of its users towards the use and management of information products and services in the college libraries of Dakshina Kannada District of Karnataka State and to give suggestions for the improvement of the same.*
Keywords: *Information Products- Services, Library services- management, College library- library services*

I.   INTRODUCTION

In the present age of information technology, libraries and information centres have become an integral part of its parent organizations due to the adoption of new technological storage, processing, retrieval and service. So also in case of a college library which tries hard to develop in each student a sense of responsibility in the pursuit of knowledge. Majority of the college libraries do not have proper facilities to meet the needs of their users. Among other things, the quality of higher education and research, especially at the graduate level, depends upon the standard of the college libraries, the information products available, the usage and the management of its services to its users.These libraries are now being challenged by a new environment which demands changes in the attitudes and skills towards information handling. The traditional approaches to information processing are renovated by the advent interaction of modern computer technologies and have become a challenging task to the librarians. Therefore, the libraries need to organize and manage the resources in relation to the information use and requirement of the users. In this regard, it is essential to know the opinions and levels of awareness of the users towards their seeking information and its management and services render to them in the First Grade College libraries under study.

II.   INFORMATION PRODUCTS AND SERVICES

Products which contain information either in the form of books or non-books are called information products. The information products also refer to those sources of information and knowledge contents that are available in electronic forms also such as CD-ROMs, interactive video, films, audio digital products, online publishing, public domain and commercial online databases available through internet and other databases available through private network providers.

III.   OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. To survey the users' opinions towards the available information products and services in the First Grade College libraries under study.

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2. To determine the extent of use of the various information products and services in the First Grade college libraries under study.

IV. METHODOLOGY

To conduct this study, 4 colleges of Mangalore University which come under Dakshina Kannada District of Karnataka State were chosen. Through purposive random sampling, a total of 120 respondents were chosen and the questionnaires were distributed amongst them. The data thus collected was classified, tabulated and analyzed for representation in the study.

V. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

Library service is the supreme activity to attract the attention of the user community. It is more so in the case of a college library also. The impact of IT environment in college libraries on the management of information products is highly significant. The library users ought to evaluate and assess the usability of the library resources in the light of the huge investment made in acquiring the information products, resources and the cost of the manpower in managing the library activity.

VI. DATA ANALYSIS

6.1 Satisfaction towards information products

Table 1 indicates the users' satisfaction on information products available in their respective libraries under study. It is noticed that out of 120 respondents, 64 respondents with 53.33 percent opined that book bank books are used most by the users for their study pursuit. Further, it is observed that 17.5 per cent of respondents depend on text books.

Table 1. Satisfaction towards Information Products

N=120

Information Products	SriMahaveera College (SMC)	AlvasCollege (AC)	SriDhavala College (SDC)	GFGC, Siddakatte (GFGCS)	Total
Ref. Books	2 (6.66)	5 (16.66)	3 (10)	1 (3.33)	11 (9.16)
Text Books	6 (20)	6 (20)	4 (13.33)	5 (16.66)	21 (17.5)
Book Bank Books	16 (53.33)	8 (26.66)	18 (60)	22 (73.33)	64 (53.33)
Periodicals	2 (6.66)	4 (13.33)	3 (10)	2 (6.66)	11 (9.16)
CD-ROM	0	1 (3.33)	0	0	1 (0.83)
OPAC	2 (6.66)	4 (13.33)	0	0	6 (5)
E-Journals	1 (3.33)	1 (3.33)	1 (3.33)	0	3 (2.5)
E-books	1 (3.33)	1 (3.33)	1 (3.33)	0	3 (2.5)
Total	30	30	30	30	120

Source: Field survey

Note : Figures in the parentheses are the percentages on row totals

6.2 Application of IT on Library Services

Information Technology has brought revolutionary changes in the functioning of libraries and for a variety of application in libraries. It establishes an efficient information support and an effective communication system in the organization of libraries. Table 2 indicates that 42.5 per cent of respondents agree that the application of information technology improves the quality of library services, whereas 2.5 per cent of respondents strongly disagree this point.

Table 2. Application of IT on library services

N=120

Statements	Sri Mahaveera College (SMC)	Alvas College (AC)	Sri Dhavala College (SDC)	GFGC, Siddakatte (GFGCS)	Total
Strongly Agree	13 (43.33)	10 (33.33)	9 (30)	10 (33.33)	42 (35)
Agree	12 (40)	14 (46.66)	15 (50)	10 (33.33)	51 (42.5)
Neither Agree nor Disagree	3 (10)	4(13.33)	2 (6.66)	6 (20)	15 (12.5)
Disagree	2 (6.66)	2 (6.66)	2 (6.66)	3 (10)	9 (7.5)
Strongly Disagree	0	0	2 (6.66)	1 (3.33)	3 (2.5)

Source: Field survey

Note : Figures in the parentheses are the percentages on row totals

6.3 IT Skills of Library Staff

The application of information technology in library services has influenced greatly on the work culture of librarian and his/her supporting staff. To provide the best possible services in the library, the staff should be moderate and well acquainted with IT knowledge. Table 3 indicates that 61.66 per cent of respondents strongly agree that the library staff should be a very good computer literate, where as 4.16 per cent of the respondents disagree with this view.

Table 3. IT Skills of Library Staff

N=120

Statements	Sri Mahaveera College (SMC)	Alvas College (AC)	Sri Dhavala College (SDC)	GFGC, Siddakatte (GFGCS)	Total
Strongly Agree	23 (76.66)	20 (66.66)	18 (60)	13 (43.33)	74 (61.66)
Agree	6 (20)	5 (16.66)	8 (26.66)	12 (40)	31 (25.83)
Neither Agree nor Disagree	1 (3.33)	3 (10)	2 (6.66)	3 (10)	9 (7.5)
Disagree	0	2 (6.66)	2 (6.66)	1 (3.33)	5 (4.16)
Strongly Disagree	0	0	0	1 (3.33)	1 (0.83)
	30 (99.99)	30 (99.98)	30 (99.98)	30 (99.99)	120 (99.98)

Source: Field survey

Note   : Figures in the parentheses are the percentages on row totals

6.4 Utilization of the Services of Internet

The Internet is treated as the heart of the information age and the mother of all networks. Through internet we can do communication, document or file transfer, interactive browsing, bulletin boards and many more activities. Internet is the basic need of the hour. 37.5 respondents expressed their satisfaction to complete extent on services of WWW where as 25 per cent of respondents expressed their satisfaction towards E-mail. However, in almost all the libraries, users expressed their dissatisfaction with regard to Telnet, Internet phone, Web TV and chatting services. These services are not provided in the libraries under study.

Table 4. Views of users about Internet services

N= 120

Services of Internet	SriMahaveera College (SMC)	AlvasCollege (AC)	SriDhavala College (SDC)	GFGC, Siddakatte (GFGCS)	Total
WWW	15 (50)	20 (66.66)	10 (33.33)	0	45 (37.5)
E-mail	10 (33.33)	15 (50)	5 (66.66)	0	30 (25)
Telnet	0	0	0	0	0
Internet Phone	0	0	0	0	0
Web TV	0	0	0	0	0
Chatting	0	0	0	0	0

Source: Field survey

Note   : Figures in the parentheses are the percentages on row totals

6.5 Purpose of Using Information Products

Table 5 shows that 85 per cent of respondents use information products for seeking job oriented information, while 66.66 per cent of users use information products for acquiring general knowledge. The study shows that 60.83 users use information products for doing extra-curricular activities, 58.33 per cent of users use information products for their curricular needs and 47.5 per cent of users for creative needs.

Table 5. Purpose of Using Information Products

N= 120

Purpose of approach	SriMahaveera College (SMC)	AlvasCollege (AC)	SriDhavala College (SDC)	GFGC, Siddakatte (GFGCS)	Total
Curricular needs	18 (60)	20 (66.66)	19 (63.33)	13 (43.33)	70 (58.33)
Creative needs	12 (40)	14 (46.66)	13 (43.33)	18 (60)	57 (47.5)
General knowledge	25 (83.33)	19 (63.33)	17 (56.66)	19 (63.33)	80 (66.66)
Job Oriented information	28 (93. 33)	26 (86.66)	21 (70)	27 (90)	102 (85)
Extra-curricular	16 (53.33)	18 (60)	18 (60)	21 (70)	73

					(60.83)
activities					

Source: Field survey

Note   : Figures in the parentheses are the percentages on row totals

6.6 Preference of Search Engines for Searching Relevant Information

Nowadays, a number of new topics are added in the curriculum of various courses. With the help of search engines, latest information on these areas can be searched and used for study

Table 6. Preference of Search Engines for Searching Relevant Information
N=120

Search Engines	SriMahaveera College (SMC)	AlvasCollege (AC)	SriDhavala College (SDC)	GFGC, Siddakatte (GFGCS)	Total
Google	16 (53.33)	15 (50)	17 (56.66)	20 (66.66)	68 (56.66)
Yahoo	12 (40)	13 (43.33)	13 (43.33)	10 (33.33)	48 (40)
Alta Vista	0	0	0	0	0
MSN	0	1 (3.33)	0	0	1 (0.83)
Open Text	2 (6.66)	1 (3.33)	0	0	3 (2.5)
Netscape	0	0	0	0	0
Archive	0	0	0	0	0
Total	30	30	30	30	120

Source: Field survey

Note   : Figures in the parentheses are the percentages on row totals

Table 6 indicates that 56.66 per cent of users prefer Google, 48 per cent of users prefer Yahoo, 2.5 per cent of users prefer Open Text and only 0.83 per cent of users prefer MSN. However, it is observed that the respondents do not prefer the search engines like Alta Vista, Netscape and Archive.

6.7 Computer Access Points for Web Resources

Due to the application of IT, electronic information products have been promoted as having potential to replace printed books. In the digital environment, with the help of computers, these e-products can be accessed. For that, computer access point is essential in college libraries also. This study revealed that 40 per cent of the users prefer to access the computer at their home, 28.33 per cent of users in the college library, 13.33 per cent of users in the computer lab in the departments, 10 per cent of users in the computer centres and 8.33 per cent of users in the cyber café.

Table 7. Preference of Search Engines for Searching Relevant Information
N=120

Comp.Access Points	SriMahaveera College (SMC)	AlvasCollege (AC)	SriDhavala College (SDC)	GFGC, Siddakatte (GFGCS)	Total
College Library	5 (16.66)	8 (26.66)	9 (30)	12 (40)	34 (28.33)
Computer Centre	2 (6.66)	6 (20)	4 (13.33)	0	12 (10)
Cyber café	5 (16.66)	3 (10)	2 (6.66)	0	10 (8.33)
Computer Lab in the departments	3 (10)	7 (23.33)	6 (20)	0	16 (13.33)
At home	15 (50)	6 (20)	9 (30)	18 (60)	48 (40)

Source: Field survey

Note   : Figures in the parentheses are the percentages on row totals

6.8 Frequency of using information products available in the library

Both print and electronic information products not only help the students for their education and job opportunities, but also influence the reading habits among them.

Table 8. Frequency of using Information Products
N= 120

	Number of Respondents				
	Every day	2 – 3 times in a week	Oncein a week	Oncein a month	Never
CD – ROM	0	0	0	12 (10)	108 (90)
Internet	19 (15.83)	78 (65)	7 (5.83)	5 (4.16)	11 (9.16)
OPAC	19 (15.83)	12 (10)	16 (13.33)	6 (5)	67 (55.83)
Online database	0	0	0	16 (13.33)	104 (86.66)

E - Journals	2 (1.66)	5 (4.16)	14 (11.66)	42 (35)	57 (47.5)
E – Books	9 (7.5)	18 (15)	23 (19.16)	27 (22.5)	43 (35.83)
Books	69 (57.5)	26 (21.66)	18 (15)	7 (5.83)	0
Journals	21 (17.5)	38 (31.66)	39 (32.5)	22 (18.33)	0
News Papers	93 (77.5)	16 (13.33)	6 (5)	5 (4.16)	0
Thesis	0	0	0	23 (19.16)	97 (80.83)

Source: Field survey

Note : Figures in the parentheses are the percentages on row totals

Table 8 shows the frequency of using these information products in the college libraries under study. 90 and 86.66 per cent of the users never used CD-ROM and online databases respectively in their libraries whereas 77.5 per cent of the users use news papers and 57.5 per cent of users use books every day. 65 per cent of the users use internet for 2-3 times in a week, 19.16 per cent of users use E-books once in a week and 35 per cent of users use E-journals once in a month.

VII.   SUGGESTIONS

1. Libraries are the reservoirs of knowledge. In order to provide good and efficient services to its readers, the staff of a college library should be moderate and computer literate.
2. User education programmes should be organized at regular intervals so that the maximum users can improve their excellence or efficiency in the use of computers and e-resources.
3. Awareness should be generated among the users to obtain current information.
4. Vast amount of information is available on the internet. Effective use of internet must be encouraged to enhance the existing the library service.
5. The technology is giving a valuable opportunity for the libraries to create new avenues for the information seekers. Hence, the college librarians must renew their skills periodically and achieve excellence in providing library services.

VIII.   CONCLUSION

Collection of information products in any college library depends on the users demand. College libraries are playing key role in providing information to users by adopting new techniques through information and communication technology. In modern electronic era, the user expectations are changing rapidly. Therefore, the librarians have a better role to play in the process.

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