

Students' Use of Cyber Library resources: a Case study of Banaras Hindu University

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ABSTRACT

This paper highlights the students' use of cyber library: A case study of Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi. The study employed descriptive survey research method and structured questionnaire as an instruments for data collection. Population of the study was regular students' who are visiting to the cyber library was involved in the study. The study was conducted by seven research questions. 200 copies of questionnaire were distributed and 163(81.5%) were collected and analyzed by applying descriptive statistics which include percentages, frequencies. Findings revealed that more than half of the population they use the cyber library for their academic pursuit. 62(36.69%) of students expressed that information overload and lack of searching skills are the major problems they faced while using the resources of cyber library.

Keywords: *Information Technology, Internet, Cyber Library, E-resources, library users*

Introduction

Library has always been regarded as backbone of education system. In the 21st century, the digital revolution shows no signs of slowing. To stay significant, any organisation, including one as established as libraries, must assess its place in a world progressively lived on the web. The uplifting news is that numerous library experts perceive this need and are driving alterations intended to guarantee that libraries remain an essential part of our society commitment to education, impartiality, and access to information (Hendrix, 2010). With many technological revolutions "cyber library" concept has emerged. Libraries have transformed into digital and virtual libraries where books, journals and magazines have changed into e-books, e-journals, and e-magazines. This has increased the world wide dissemination of information (Abinew & Vuda, 2013). These changes has played an important role in libraries everywhere. Their role as repositories for printed information is significantly expending (Kapitzke, 2001). Therefore, electronic information sources are becoming more and more significant by the academic community for their academic pursuit (Egberongbe, 2011).

Background of the Study

Banaras Hindu University is an internationally reputed temple of learning. It is one of the largest residential University in the Asia. This innovative university was founded by the great nationalist leader, Pandit Madan Mohan Malviya, in 1916. The area of the main campus of this premiere Central University is 1300 acres. Another campus of the university at Barkachha, in Mirzapur district, covering an area of 2700 acres is coming up. The university comprises 3 Institutes, 14 Faculties 140 Departments, 4 Inter disciplinary Centers a constituent college for women's and 3 Constituents Schools, spanning a vast range of subjects pertaining to all branches of humanities, social science, technology, medicine ,science, fine arts and performing arts. It has 6 centres of Advanced Studies, 10 Departments under Special Assistance Programme and a large number of specialized Research Centers. Four Degree Colleges of the city are affiliated to the University. Bharat Kala Bhavan, the reputed museum of the university, is a treasure trove of rare collections. The university has taken a leadership role in promoting new ideas, the spirit of integration of the world, and cultivation of intellect and culture (<http://www.bhu.ac.in/aboutus/history.php>). The University has Central Library, which is kept open round the clock. In addition, the university has established Cyber library to its users. It has started functioning since 03 March 2013. It has 250 computers with Air conditioned facility. Remarkably, the cyber library has access to more than one lakh e-books, 20,000 online journals. It has also access to UGC Infonet Digital Library, World Digital Library, Digital Library of India, Hindi Literature, Sanskrit Literature and several other research and learning resources of various subjects (<http://bhulibrary.blogspot.in/2013/03/cyber-library-bhu.html>).

Literature Review

Many studies have been carried out on use of internet and e-resources by various researchers in different countries: Makkini & Reddy (2014) conducted a study on use of e-journals by the research scholars in the libraries of Sri Venkateswara University (SVU), Andhra University (AU) and University of Hyderabad (UH). Study was aimed to find out responses of users such as type of e-journals used, purpose of use, time spent for accessing, problems faced in accessing e-journals, methods used for accessing. The authors were trying to find out the users' satisfaction levels with print and e-journals. They were also trying to see the adequacy of

e-journals and training attained in accessing e-journals. Thanuskodi (2012) claimed that the fast growth of information and communication technologies and mainly Internet and e-resources have changed the traditional methods of research, storage, retrieval and communication of scholarly information. Further, the author has expressed due to rapid developments in information communication technology, it simplified the new electronic resources. Millawithanachchi (2012) explains that e-resources have become popular and it help users in retrieving precise, appropriate and timely information as and when they required it for learning and research requirements. Gorla (2012) noted that numerous scholarly international e-journals are now accessible in Indian libraries through consortium approach. On the other hand, it is essential that every user should be oriented from the latest technologies to maximize use of e-resources in minimum efforts. The author has described some of the techniques in her paper for effective use of e-resources which are very useful for users specially academicians and researchers. Although, it is a fact that the role of library professionals has been increased manifold in this knowledge surge era to conduct the regular training of their users on new technologies. Thanuskodi & Ravi (2011) explained that the sources of information available via the Internet are increasing exponentially. Use of internet has increases in education and research activities. Since last few years, free on-line information sources are increased extensively e.g.-journals, e-books, e-databases etc. Sudhier & Seethalekshmi (2011) examined in the use of e-resources by the students and research scholars of Faculty of Arts in the University of Kerala. Their findings show that 56.67% of the respondents use internet for educational purposes and 19.16% of respondents use internet for checking e-mail. Google was the most preferred search engine for the most of the respondents. The purpose for the use of e-resources revealed that 49.2% respondents' use-resources mainly for academic purposes, 27.5% respondents for seminar presentations and 11.7% use for project works. The study also revealed that internet resources are the most used e-resources among the respondents from the Arts Faculty. It gives the indication on the basis of the analysis that most of the departments are not giving enough facility for the use of e-resources.

On the other hand, Loan (2011) conducted a questionnaire based survey method on Internet use among college students in Kashmir Valley. The study shows the students are using Internet for information. Information overload is the most common problem faced by students of all

faculties while searching the relevant information. It also said that the students of general science, social sciences and humanities find Internet illiteracy as the major limitation in using the Internet. Singh & others (2009) pointed out that the faculty, researchers, administrators/officials, students and other use internet as a source of information. The findings of the study show that unreliable power supply and low speed internet access are general problems related to internet based e-resources. In addition, limited full-text journals availability has been reported. It is well known that internet is very useful source of information; however the authors have suggested that adequate steps need to be taken to provide the requisite basic infrastructure for fast internet access, resource availability and training.

Objectives of the study

The following objectives of the study are:

- To find out frequency of visit to the library
- To identify the purpose of accessing library resources
- To explore types of information resources used by the students
- To identify the problems faced by the students while accessing the library

Significance of the study

The significance of the study is to have an understanding about the role of a cyber-library in student's academic deeds. This study will helpful to collect feedback about the resources which are being used by the students for their academic pursuit. It will also be a helpful sign to identify what are the resources are being used more. Further, it is also expected that the study will be a recommendation for the library authority to know more on the users' information needs and changing expectations and give them actual advices for future collection development activities.

Scope and limitation of the study

This study is limited within the students of the Banaras Hindu University who are visiting to cyber library. The main focus of this study is to find the use of cyber library and its resources by the student during their regular academic session. The study is also concentrated on finding out the student information seeking behaviour by means of various technologies to explore required information for their studies.

Methodology

In this research study we have adopted descriptive survey research method and practise structured questionnaire for data collection. The data acquired were analysed using tables, simple percentages, frequencies. Since the population is too small, there was no sampling technique was adopted. The entire population was studied. As a result, a total of 200 copies of questionnaire were distributed and 163(81.5%) were retrieved and found usable. The data was analyzed using descriptive statistics. The results and discussions are presented below.

Results and Discussions

Table.1: Age Wise Distribution of Users

Age Group	Frequency	%
16-20	57	34.97
21-25	100	61.35
26-30	5	3.07
41-45	1	0.61
Total	163	100.00

Table.1 shows that number and percentage of age wise distribution of users. 21-25Age group 100(61.35%) followed by 16-20 age group 57(34.97%), 26-30 age group 5(3.07%) and 41-45 age group 1(0.61%). The above table shows that age group 21-25 and age group 16-20 students often visit the cyber library.

Table.2: Gender wise distribution

Gender	Number	%
Male	125	76.69
Female	38	23.31
Total	163	100.00

Table.2 shows that number and percentage of gender wise distribution of users. Study reveals that male 125(76.69%) followed by female 38(23.31%). It is clearly shows that more than half of the students are male.

Table.3: Academic Rank Wise Distribution of Users

Academic Rank	Number	%
Under Graduate	97	59.51
Post Graduate	62	38.04
Research Scholar	4	2.45
Total	163	100.00

Table.3 indicates the number and percentage of users as per their academic rank. It shows that Under Graduate 97(59.51%) followed by Post Graduate 62(38.04%) and Research Scholar 4(2.45%). The findings indicate that under graduate, post graduate and research scholars are mainly users of the cyber library.

Table.4: Frequency of Visit

Sl. No.	Reason	Frequency	%
1	Daily	74	38.34
2	Weekly	7	3.63
3	Once in a week	13	6.74
4	Several times in a week	58	30.05
5	Once in a month	10	5.18
6	Several times in a month	31	16.06
	Total	193	100.00

Table.4 shows how often the students visit library. 74(38.34%) of the students agreed that they visit library daily, while 58(30.05%) said they visit library several times in a week and 31(16.06%) said they visit library several times in a month. Whereas 7(3.63%) students indicate weekly followed by 13(6.74%) once in a week and 10(5.18%) once in a month. Further, it shows that many students visit library daily.

Table.5: Purpose of Internet Use

Sl. No.	Use of Internet	Frequency	%
1	Academic & Research	66	36.46
2	Employment	58	32.04
3	News & Current affairs	18	9.94
4	Communication	38	20.99
5	Entertainment	1	0.55
	Total	181	100.00

Table 5 reveal the purpose of using Internet by the students. The findings show that 66(36.46%) of the students visit library to use internet for academic and research purpose, 58(32.04%) students visit library to search employment (Job opportunity), 38(20.99%) visit library for communication purpose. However, 18(9.94%) students visit library for searching on internet news and current affairs and only 1(0.55%) student's visit library for entertainment purpose. It was found from the above findings that students visit library for various reasons. Since, inception of information technology and its applications users are more comfortable with digital information.

Table.6: Information resources access

Sl. No.	Information resources	Frequency	%
1	E-books	65	31.40
2	Bibliographic databases	35	16.91
3	Open courseware	25	12.08
4	E-Journals	47	22.71
5	Electronic theses & dissertations	35	16.91
	Total	207	100.00

Information resources often use by the students are given in above table 6. Access of E-books 65(31.40%), E-journals 47(22.71%) while bibliographic databases/electronic theses and dissertations 35(16.91%) each. However open courseware 25(12.08%) access by students. The above findings indicate that e-books, e-journal closely followed by bibliographic databases/electronic theses and dissertations available in cyber library, BHU. Besides this there are many resources which are available through open access mode.

Table.7: Use of Internet based services

Sl. No.	Internet Based Service	Frequency	%
1	E-mail	48	25
2	Blogging	46	23.96
3	Social Networking	48	25
4	Video conferencing	13	6.77
5	List server/discussion groups	37	19.27
	Total	192	100

Table.7 illustrates the use of internet based services by students for communications. The findings show that 48(25%) of the students use internet for sending of E-mail and social networking while 46(23.96%) students use internet based service for blogging. Though, 37(19.27%) list server/discussion groups and 13(6.77%) for video conferencing purpose.

Table.8: Type of browser

Sl. No.	Type browser	Frequency	%
1	Mozilla	49	26.63
2	Google Chrome	81	44.02
3	Internet Explorer	40	21.74
4	Opera	14	7.61
	Total	184	100.00

Table.8 shows types browsers often use by students. The findings reveal that 81(44.02%) students use Google Chrome, 49(26.63%) Mozilla while 40(21.74%) Internet Explorer followed by 14(7.61%) uses Opera. The above findings indicate that the student mostly uses three browsers Google, Mozilla and internet explorer.

Table.9: Types of Search Engine

Sl. No.	Search Engine	Frequency	%
1	Google	67	38.51
2	MSN	16	9.20
3	Ask.com	34	19.54
4	Hot Bot	26	14.94
5	Yahoo	6	3.45
6	AltaVista	1	0.57
7	Bing	13	7.47
8	Others	11	6.32
	Total	174	100

The findings in table.9 above show Types of Search Engine often use by students. It is clear that 67(38.51%) use Google, 34(19.54%) Ask.com followed by HotBot 26(14.94%). However, other use includes MSN, Yahoo, AltaVista and others. The findings demonstrate cyber library, BHU students are mainly uses Google, Ask.com or Hot Bot.

Table.10: Problem faced while searching

Sl. No.	Problem faced	Frequency	%
1	Information overload	62	36.69
2	Unaware of the specific field	17	10.06
3	Lack of searching skills	31	18.34
4	Information pollution	17	10.06
5	Any others	42	24.85
	Total	169	100.00

Table.10 show the problems faced by students while searching internet. The responses given by the students 62(36.69%) Information overload, 31(18.34%) lack of searching skills followed by 17(10.06%) unaware of the specific field and information pollution. The study revealed that information overload, lack of searching skills, unaware of the specific field and information pollution were foremost problem faced by students of cyber library, BHU.

Recommendation

- Students need to be trained on how to use cyber library and its resources effectively which will enable students to achieve academic excellence.
- The Internet services of the cyber library must be improved upon, so as to facilitate easy access to the available e-resources.
- The University library authority must provide more user orientation programme on free online journals and electronic resources.
- Apart from above stated point's students must be given proper training, starting of every semester on use of computer for Information retrieval, searching techniques, Internet, World Wide Web and other IT applications.

Conclusion

The study concludes that use of cyber library by students for accessing of electronic information resources are extremely desirable and it has amplified productivity of work, learning, teaching and research. Therefore, it has expanded the ways of communication, storage and retrieval of information, Information needs and Changing expectations of users'

from the University library. Academic institutions must recognize the importance of cyber library and its resources in this digital era.

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