Digital Libraries

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ABSTRACT

In this study an attempt is being made to highlight the access to Information Services System for Digital Libraries in Selected Academic Institutions in Chennai. Academic Libraries, particularly in recent past are providing some of notable information services that can be accessed via the College library websites are Web OPAC, latest addition display, data search, and federated search, access to full text and bibliographic databases, online document delivery, access to institutional repository and open access resources, databases and multimedia access resources, live chat, RSS feeds, compilation of research profile, web based CAS and SDI, remote access and so on. Libraries and Information Centre's have been employing information resources and services system to satisfy the diverse information needs of their users. It also points out the need for assessing the impact of the Web based Services in the College Libraries on library users. College Libraries launch their websites with a view to provide services to users without their physical presence.

KEY WORDS: Information, Digital Library, Academic Institutions.

1. INTRODUCTION

A digital library is a collection of digital objects. A collection of research papers is a typical example. When this collection gets sufficiently large, users of the digital library cannot examine each paper individually to find if its subject interests them. To address this problem, digital librarians create an interface to stand between the content of the collection and the user. In a traditional library, an example of this would be a card catalog – a collection of small cards that represent the larger objects contained in the collection. These cards are more manageable than the books that they represent. In a digital library, there are a number of ways that we can present the digital collection to the user The first thing that we need to do is to describe each object in a manageable way. This description is called metadata – data (the description) about data (the digital object). This metadata is more manageable than the digital objects that it represents. Metadata is written in a standard format. This allows the metadata to be manipulated using automated tools.

Digital Libraries is a heterogeneous phenomenon. It is a system in which information is available in hard copy on various magnetic discs and also from online systems. It provides coherent access to large, organized, nascent and repository information and knowledge, according to the interest and need for the users. It operates on digital materials such as e-journals, web pages, database multi-medias, programs, bulletin board notices, sites and searches.

Information has always played a significant role in history. The statement 'knowledge is power' is becoming ever more significant as it is backed with Information and Communication Technology tools and this increases the efficiency of the productive transformation process of inputs to goods and services as outputs. Information is the raw material for the process of communication, and that (information) should be treated as a marketable commodity regulated by economic forces alone. People require information to enable themselves live as reasonable members of the society.

Information and Libraries: Digital library is the newly emerging trend in the modern world and it's the hope for the future. Apart from this there is more scope to these, but none addresses the field as a whole comprising digital libraries its research agenda. The field of digital libraries will be limited if viewed only as a sub field of prior research interests. To realize its full potential, the field must be viewed as a union of sub fields from a variety of domains combined with additional goals, and thus it becomes an important site for exploring new research issues.

Methodology: The present study is descriptive in nature and it is a case study on the "Information Services System for Digital Libraries in selected Academic Institutions in Chennai." The researcher has chosen descriptive research design and the method is normative survey. The survey is also analytical in terms of collecting the details of the use of web based information services in selected Academic Institutions in Chennai. This covers descriptors such as objectives of the library information services, the process, the impact of user's practices, e-resources required and the data have been collected using structured Questionnaire. The Questionnaire is refined and modified based on the basis of the pilot study carried out in selected Academic Institutions in Chennai, with the consultation of experts.

Objectives of the Study:

➢ To identify the e-Resources and Web Resources which are made available in the Selected College Libraries in Chennai.

➢ To find out the Information services and Web enabled access facilities provided in the Selected College Libraries in Chennai.

➢ To know the extent of development and use of Information Service in the Library surveyed the access to library facilities and services prevailed in the College environments.

➢   To study the information access and Web resources usage among the Library users in the Selected College Libraries in Chennai.

➢   To know the productivity of the respondents among the surveyed Selected College Libraries in Chennai.

➢   To find out the limitations on access to prevailing ICT facilities and Web enabled services and e-resources.

Hypotheses: The following hypotheses are formulated based on the framed objectives and they are tested by employing appropriate statistical tools.

a) There is no significant difference in their dependency on library for research and teaching among university faculty members and Students of selected College Libraries in Chennai.

b) There is no significant difference in using the browser and search engines among college teachers and Students of selected College Libraries in Chennai.

c) There is no significant difference in the purpose of using e- resources among the respondents of selected College Libraries in Chennai.

d) There is no significant difference in the frequency of accessing e- resources among respondents of selected College Libraries in Chennai.

e) There is no significant difference in the level of satisfaction with the availability of e-resources among teachers and the students of College Libraries in Chennai.

Source of Data: The following Institutions were selected and the survey was conducted to collect primary data among the selected College Libraries in Chennai with Websites:

Name of the College in Chennai	URL	Year of Establishment
Meenakshi College for Women	www.meenakshicollege.com	1975
Bharathi's Women's College (Autonomous)	www.bwcas.com	1964
Ethiraj College for Women (Autonomous)	www.ethirajcollege.in	1948
Dhanraj Baid Jain College (Autonomous)	www.dbjaincollege.org	1972
Loyola College (Autonomous)	www.loyolacollege.edu	1870
New College (Autonomous)	www.thenewcollege.in	1951
Women's Christian College (Autonomous)	www.wcc.edu.in	1915
M.O.P. Vaishnav College for Women (Autonomous)	www.mop-vaishnav.ac.in	1992
Madha Arts and Science College, Chennai	www.madhaartsandscience.com	2006
Mohamed Sathak College of Arts and Science,	www.mscartsandscience-edu.in	1991
Anna Adarsh College for Women	www.annaadarsh.edu.in	1985
A.A. Arts and Science College (Women)	www.alphagroup.edu/alpha_arts	1996
Stella Maris College for Women (Autonomous)	www.stellamariscollege.org	1947
Justice Basheer Ahmed Syed College for Women	www.jbascollege.edu.in	1955

Limitations of the Study: The study is confined to select Libraries in Chennai Colleges only. The result arrived at from the study may or may not be applicable to other Colleges. There may be response bias. Time and other resource constraints have restricted the selection of more college libraries. The survey method which adopted for collecting the data in this study has its own limitations. Hence, the generalization of the findings of the study is subject to the above condition. The study is confined between the data collection period of January 2011 to March 2013.

Using the Web for Learning: Computer based training and Web –based training are two sites to teach various types. The most common technologies used for learning are:

•   The Internet allows students to register for a class, view prerecorded or live lectures, complete assignments, interact with teachers and other students, and take tests.

•   Videoconferences: Video conferencing provides a "Virtual Classroom" where students and teachers can see and hear each other and participate in online discussed in as real-time lectures and discussions

•   E-Mail: Students can use e-mail to participate in discussions, receive homework assignments, and deliver completed assignments, completed assignments to the instructor.

•   Chat: Web based chat room for students and teachers to engage in real-time instant message sharing.

•   Discs: Computer-based training uses compact discs (CD –ROMs) or digital Video discs (DVDs). CBT Programs can offer customized study for each student, and provide feedback on student performance. Many printed textbooks have companion discs that act as CBT, offering online tests and other features.

E-Resources and Libraries: The letter 'e' has completely changed the face of libraries particularly higher academic libraries in terms of resources, facilities and services with the economy, accuracy and usability. The importance of Electronic Publications is:

•   Tend to allow grated flexibility of access to materials which is critical in the virtual library environment

- Can allow remote access
- Access at any time, day or night
- Can permit linking between one part of a publication and another or indeed, between different publications.
- Eliminate the problem of missing late or stolen documents and the need for binding of materials.

Table.1. Use of Electronic Sources of Information – Gender Wise

Use of electronic source of information	Male, N=343	%	Female, N=223	%
Wikipedia	301	87.76	187	83.86
Blogs	281	81.92	120	53.81
Social networks	240	69.97	113	50.67
Online Databases	265	77.26	122	54.71
CD-ROM Databases	182	53.06	113	50.67
Websites	298	86.88	124	55.61
Portals	221	64.43	83	37.22
Subject Gateways	172	50.14	87	39.01

The Gender wise distribution of data with regard to use of electronic information services found that a highest percentage of Male (87.76%) and Female (83.86%) preferred Wikipedia. The other e-resources usage between Male and Female respondents differ significantly, more number of male preferred Websites (86.88%), Blogs (81.92%), while higher percent of female respondents preferred Websites (55.61%), Blogs (53.81%), Online Databases (54.71%). A less number of Female respondents preferred Subject Gateways (39.01%) and portals (37.22%).
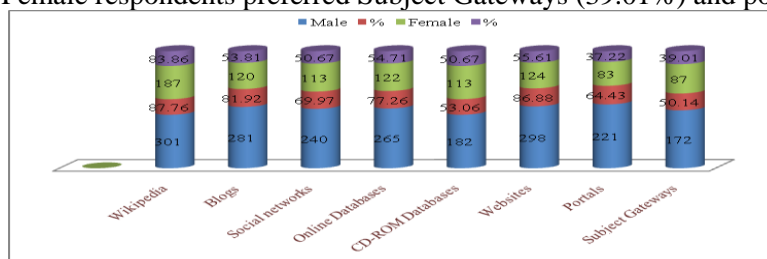
Figure.1. Use of Electronic sources of Information - Genderwise

2. CONCLUSION

This chapter summarizes the findings of the study, provides the conclusion and recommendations, and suggests directions for further research. The study was set out to examine the digital library information services in the selected college libraries in Chennai. A summary of findings is provided, in each case highlighting various observations and important variables are studied.

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