



Usage and problems to using OPAC in libraries: A literature review

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Abstract

The paper reviews various studies which have done to examine the usage of online public access catalog (OPAC) in Indian libraries. Advantages and problems of using OPAC in libraries are reviewed in this study. The study carried out to review the published article on the Google Scholar an open-access database for the last four years (2014 to 2018).

Keywords: Indian libraries, OPAC, Usage of OPAC, online public access catalog

Introduction

Now a day's technology is growing in every field. We hear and see about new technology day by day in our daily life. Libraries are also moved traditional services to modern services for the users using technology. OPAC is the modern version of traditional catalog card which helps the users to find, locate, available and reserve the required documents which are in the collection of a library within the library and remotely. Two types of OPACs are using in libraries, one is OPAC and another is Web-OPAC. We can use OPAC in the library or within organization boundary or LAN of an organization but another that is Web-OPAC can be accessed remotely wherever we are. Fourth law of library science save the time of the user can be fully implementing using OPAC. There is lots of Library management software and these software's are offering OPAC for library users to search required document from library collection by author, title, subject, call no., keywords. Vashista said that new 'avatar' of OPAC has brought a paradigm shift from the card catalog to computerized record.

Methodology

Following literature reviews, the studies carried out through Google Scholar an open-access database. In Google, Scholar advance searches the keywords "use of OPAC" used in the title of the document and time range is 2014 to 2018. Then selected articles from 2014 to 2018 published in India have been taken for this literature review. In Google Scholar advance the option with the exact phrase also used to find the published literature.

Kathuria said in her paper entitled 'Use of OPAC in Bhai Kahan Singh Nabha Library, Punjabi University Patiala: A Case Study' online service have added more intuitive and user-friendly approach to library services e.g. card catalog has been replaced by Online Public Access Catalogue. She studied on gender wise usage of OPAC wherever out of 88 respondents 45.50% and 54.50 male and female respectively using OPAC in the campus library. The author also studied on age, department, and qualification. Paper reported that 64.77% respondents feel OPAC useful while very few 9.09% respondents do not find using it. The study discovered problems and difficulty to use OPAC which is regional language wherever 4.55% respondents are dissatisfied due to

regional language. On the basis of suggestion in her paper, it should be mandatory for every student to attend the orientation programs, proper training to staff.

Vashista stated her paper entitled 'Awareness and Use of OPAC as Information Retrieval Tool: A study of PEC University of Technology, Chandigarh India' In fact, new 'avatar' of OPAC has brought a paradigm shift from the card catalog to computerized record thereby providing an exact location of various documents in the holding of a library and provisions of using Boolean combinations and truncations for the refined search. The author has done comparative study use of card catalog and OPAC in which reported that only 2.84% card catalog user respondents and 45.45% OPAC user respondents out of 176 and remains never revealed that most users search required documents by keyword and title and mostly for knowing the availability of required documents. The author found in this studies mostly users encountered difficulties and problems while using OPAC that is lack of training and lack of links to e-resources. Overall 120 users satisfied out of 176 in her study.

Shivakumaraswamy in his paper use and users satisfaction on online public access catalog (OPAC) services in BGS institute of technology: a survey observed that out of 130 respondents responded which includes 86 male and 44 female 66.15% and 33.85% of 130 respondents respectively. The author also reported that 75 male and 55 female were aware of the OPAC and its services out of 130. Most respondents were faced lack of skill to use OPAC independently and lack of support from library staff. In his study, he suggested that we can expect a better utilization of available library resources if users can make fully aware about OPAC and motivate to use it.

Thirumagal, A. stated in his paper entitled 'use of online public access catalog (OPAC) at sadakathullah appa college, thunevali district, Tamilnadu: a study that OPAC is the gateway to the library collection. He introduced a generation of OPACs also. He said the first generation of OPACs were primarily book lists and worked best for known item searching. The second generation of OPACs, the characteristics distinguishing and each generation were fairly clear. Web OPACs with GUI interface Z3950 compliant system to be the third generation. The study has done through survey method with 170 questionnaire distribution.150

respondent responded out of 170. Gender wise response is 58.7% by male and 41.3% by the female. In this study area of users also have been taken to examine the usage of OPAC from the rural area and urban area users, wherever 43.% users used OPAC from the rural area and 56.7% from urban area includes UG, PG, M.Phil and Ph.D. students. Most users use OPAC to find and search the books by the title of the books. 11% (150) users use OPAC on daily basis and 13% (150) users learn to use OPAC by library staff assistance. 32% (150) users satisfied and 10.7% users very dissatisfied to using OPAC. Many responded to organize orientations and training hours to make usage of OPAC effectively.

K. Rajinder defined in his paper entitled 'Use of OPAC in the library of GGIPU. Delhi' that the online public access catalog is an information retrieval system characterized by short bibliographic reads mainly for books, journals and audiovisual materials available in a particular library. He studied postgraduate students were using OPAC more in the comparison of research scholar and faculty members through 182 respondents data. Most users are using OPAC to find bibliographic detail of the document on daily basis. 24.73 % (182) users have the problem of using OPAC due to less awareness of OPAC and 23.8% (182) due to the location of OPAC. In this study 99 (54.4% users fully satisfied, while only 7 (3.8%) dissatisfied using OPAC out of 182.

K. Rajinder also have done a comparative study on OPAC usage in libraries of Maharishi Dayanand and Kurukshetra University. He stated in his study computers are used as the latest tool for searching information in the library, which is known as an online public access catalog (OPAC/Web-OPAC). The study carried out by questionnaire, observation and interview methods. Out of 350 questionnaires, 250 were taken which further divided 125 for Maharishi Dayanand and 125 for Kurukshetra University. In this study, he categorized respondents to age wise which shows that 20-25 years group users are using OPAC more comparison to 26-30 and 30-35 age group. The author reported in his study majority of the OPAC users in both Universities of male (71.6%/250). The main reason in both the universities in case of gender was that the male users took more interest in filling the questionnaire while the female users had a psyche of hesitation in filling the questionnaires. Based on overall responses, out of 250, 131 (52.2%) of the users of the users searched the information with the help of friends, 96 (38.4%) direct browsing of shelves, 138 (55.2%) through OPAC. Both the university libraries, the maximum of 138 (55.2%) users searched the information through OPAC and the minimum of 52 (20.8%) users by taking help from their teachers. Out of 250 in both Universities 283 (95.2%) users were of OPAC. Mostly users 113 (49.2%) learned the use of OPAC by making self-efforts and 109 (47.8%) with the help of library staff out of 228 of both Universities respondents.

Swaminathan said in his paper entitled 'Use and awareness of online public access catalogue by students and faculty members of Anna University Campus, Coimbatore, Tamilnadu : A case study that OPAC is a device of changing today's libraries as it helps users search for resources and to find out the availability of such documents in the library at given point in time. He received 150 questionnaires out of 190 on students and faculty, wherever 48.70% male and 51.30% female out of 150. The study found students used OPAC more than faculty members on daily basis. Purposes of using OPAC in his study to know the availability, location

of the document and new arrivals, wherever students and faculty members used OPAC more to know the location of the document. Information seeking behavior of the faculty members and students is by the title of the document which is 57.90% (38) and 61.21% (116) respectively. 81.58% (38) faculty members and 84.48% (116) students fully satisfied and satisfied with using OPAC. The author also suggested in his study libraries should build up an information policy to make consciousness about OPAC and orientation, handbills, billboards should be sustained to further improve awareness of OPAC.

Conclusion

The above study review shows the usage of OPAC in Indian libraries. Most of the studies show use of OPAC in male and female users and suggestion by authors and respondents also given in above studies. Questionnaire is the most used tool to collect the data from respondents to do study. Orientation program, training and library staff is considered the best learnt resources to use the OPAC in above studies. Many problems also carried to using OPAC in the studies.

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