

Academic Library Websites and User Satisfaction in the Digital Information Environment

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ABSTRACT

The websites of academic libraries have emerged as an important tool for accessing information resources in the digital information age and for promoting teaching-learning and research activities. This paper is a study on the level of user satisfaction with the academic library websites in the digital information environment by analysing the perception of the users about the website features and the digital library services. A quantitative descriptive research approach was used for the study, and primary data was collected with the help of a structured questionnaire from 150 respondents, which included postgraduate students, research scholars, and faculty members. Data collection was followed by the descriptive statistical analysis of the data collected through frequency and percentage analysis. It was found that 70.0% of the respondents were using the academic library websites daily or weekly, signifying their regular usage for academic purposes. High level of satisfaction was reported for digital resource availability, navigational ease, search facility, and access to e-journals and e-books; however, comparatively less satisfaction was recorded in mobile compatibility and website loading speed. Thus, it can be concluded that academic library websites effectively cater to the information requirements of the users through digital services. The findings highlight the importance of continuous improvements in website usability, mobile responsiveness, and digital service quality to further enhance user satisfaction

and strengthen the role of academic libraries in the evolving digital information environment.

Keywords: Academic Library Websites, User Satisfaction, Digital Information Environment, Digital Library Services, Website Usability, Electronic Resources.

I INTRODUCTION

The fast-paced development of information and communication technology has led to considerable changes in the way in which academic libraries provide information and services to their patrons. Academic library websites have advanced beyond mere information portals to become full-fledged digital platforms offering seamless access to e-books, academic journals, institutional repositories, online databases, and several reference services. It is through such websites that learners, researchers, and educators are able to access reliable academic information at all times, thus making it possible to facilitate learning and research processes. With increasing adoption of digital learning environments in higher education institutions, academic library websites have become indispensable in facilitating efficient information searches and digital literacy.

User satisfaction is an important measure that determines the effectiveness and quality of library web sites in colleges. Elements such as navigational features, searching capabilities, performance, digital resource accessibility, mobile compatibility, and the presence of library services online greatly affect users. A good library web site that is easy to use makes access to information

easier and also helps increase usage of digital resources by users. On the other hand, poor usability of library web sites and low-quality library services may make users unable to fully utilize the resources provided by the library. Therefore, evaluating user satisfaction provides valuable insights into the strengths and areas for improvement of academic library websites.

In the information age, continuous evaluation of library websites is very essential in enhancing service delivery and responding to the changing demands of library patrons. It becomes important for educational institutions to know how patrons view websites and digital library services since that would enhance accessibility and technological-based library system design. In this respect, this study seeks to evaluate patron's satisfaction levels in academic libraries websites through analysing their perceptions on website usability, digital resources, and online library services. The results would be important in improving digital library services. The findings are expected to contribute to enhancing digital library services and supporting the effective delivery of academic information in higher education institutions.

II LITERATURE REVIEW

Soltani-Nejad et al. (2020) created a comprehensive framework for identifying the antecedents and outcomes of user satisfaction in relation to digital libraries. In this study, variables like system quality, information quality, service quality, and user experience were considered, and it was discovered that these variables had an impact on the level of user satisfaction. In their conclusion, the researchers noted that the more user satisfaction, the greater was the intention of users to use digital library services. Digital information systems also became more effective because of high levels of user satisfaction.

Masrek et al. (2018) studied user engagement and satisfaction through the quality, usability, and user experience of web-based digital libraries. It was discovered that there was a positive impact of the website quality, usability, and user experience on

user engagement and satisfaction. The conclusion made by the study is that an easy-to-use interface and efficient services in the digital library increased the usage of digital library services.

Amarasekara and Marasinghe (2020) evaluated the satisfaction levels of users regarding library resources and services at the Main Library of the Open University of Sri Lanka using a questionnaire survey. The findings reveal that users were satisfied with library resources, staff assistance, and online services to a significant extent, though there were areas that required improvements in order to improve service delivery. It was recommended that regular evaluation of user satisfaction levels and development of library resources and online services were vital for improving the performance of libraries.

III RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

This research study adopted a scientific approach to investigate user satisfaction with academic library websites in the digital information environment. The methodology includes the research design, sample selection, data gathering techniques, and analysis approaches that will be used in conducting the study.

3.1 Research Design

The research used the quantitative descriptive research design approach in investigating user satisfaction with the academic library websites in the digital information age. A survey approach was used in collecting primary data from the users of academic library websites. The use of this research design was justified on the basis that it is easy to systematically collect and analyze perceptions of users about the website usability and digital information.

3.2 Study Population and Sample Size

The target population consisted of those who use academic libraries' websites such as undergraduate students, postgraduate students, research scholars, and faculty members. A total of 150 respondents were involved in the survey.

Out of this, there were 87 postgraduate students (58.0%), 37 research scholars (24.6%), and 26 faculty members (17.4%).

3.3 Sampling Technique

The study used a technique of convenience sampling while picking the participants who had been using the academic libraries' websites. The participants were selected depending on their availability and willingness to be involved in the survey process. Through this method of sampling, it became easy to collect responses from experienced participants.

3.4 Data Collection Instrument

The primary data were obtained through a questionnaire that was specifically tailored to measure users' level of satisfaction with the academic library websites. The questionnaire had two parts. In the first part, information about gender, user type, and library website usage frequency was collected. In the second part, perception towards features of websites and level of satisfaction with digital libraries was measured using a five-point Likert scale.

3.5 Data Collection Procedure

The questionnaire was administered to the subjects through both online and offline means. The participants were made aware of the research objective, and the participation was completely voluntary. Informed consent was taken before collecting the completed questionnaire.

3.6 Data Analysis

The collected data was then analysed through descriptive statistics. The frequency distribution table was utilized to describe the demographics of the respondents and their perceptions on the academic library websites and also the satisfaction level they get from using the digital library services. The results were presented through the use of charts and graphs.

IV RESULTS AND FINDINGS

The demographic structure of the 150 participants in the study is outlined in Table 1 below, where data is provided in relation to gender, type of user, and frequency of use of the academic library

website. There were 82 (54.7%) females and 68 (45.3%) males among the respondents. postgraduate students formed the majority of users (58.0%), followed by Research scholars (24.6%) and faculty members formed 17.4% of users. The frequency of use of the website was as follows: 38.7% of the respondents visited it daily, 31.3% weekly, 18.0% monthly, and 12.0% occasionally. A graphical representation of the demographic data is shown in Figure 1.

Table 1: Demographic Profile of Respondents

Demographic Variable	Category	Frequency (n)	Percentage (%)
Gender	Male	68	45.3
	Female	82	54.7
User Category	Postgraduate Students	87	58.0
	Research Scholars	37	24.6
	Faculty Members	26	17.4
Frequency of Library Website Use	Daily	58	38.7
	Weekly	47	31.3
	Monthly	27	18.0
	Occasionally	18	12.0

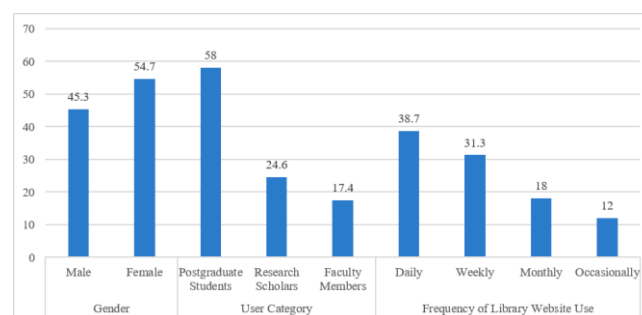


Figure 1: Graphical Representation of Demographic Profile of Respondents

Based on the demographics, the findings show that there is a fair distribution of various types of academic users in the sample, thus providing a thorough analysis of the user satisfaction regarding the academic library website. The respondents included both male and female participants. Female respondents formed a slightly higher proportion (54.7%) than male respondents. Since the study was conducted in women's universities, this higher

participation of female respondents is expected and reflects the actual gender composition of these institutions. The presence of both genders in the sample also provides a balanced view of users' opinions. It also shows that most of the users of the academic library website are mainly made up of postgraduate students. Moreover, the fact that many of the respondents use the library website daily or weekly shows that digital library websites have become an essential part of education and research activities.

The perceptions of the characteristics of academic library websites made by respondents in terms of navigation convenience, search engine, website loading time, mobility, and availability of digital content are presented in Table 2. Perceptions were grouped into five satisfaction rates: highly satisfied, satisfied, neutral, dissatisfied and highly dissatisfied. Results show that the availability of digital content was perceived as the most highly satisfying factor (42.0%), while navigation convenience and search engine got 36.7% and 34.0% respectively. In addition, most of the users were satisfied with website loading time (46.7%) and website mobility (44.0%). The results are shown in Figure 2.

Table 2: User Perception of Academic Library Website Features

Website Feature	Highly Satisfied (%)	Satisfied (%)	Neutral (%)	Dissatisfied (%)	Highly Dissatisfied (%)
Ease of Navigation	36.7	42.0	12.0	6.0	3.3
Search Functionality	34.0	44.0	10.7	8.0	3.3
Website Loading Speed	30.0	46.7	12.7	8.0	2.6
Mobile Compatibility	28.0	44.0	14.0	10.0	4.0

Availability of Digital Resources	42.0	38.0	10.0	6.7	3.3
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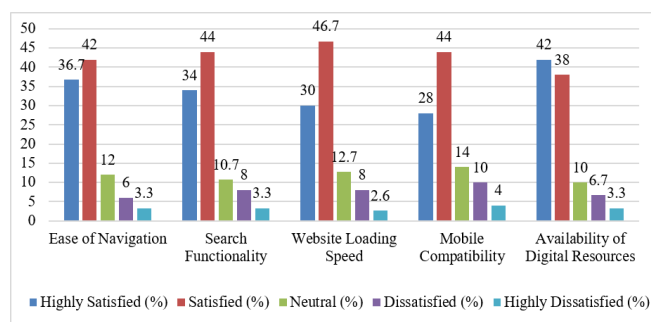


Figure 2: Graphical Representation of User Perception of Academic Library Website Features. According to the findings, the users tend to have a positive impression regarding the features offered on academic library websites, where the vast majority of respondents reported either satisfaction or high satisfaction on all assessed features. The highest level of satisfaction was recorded on the feature of having digital resources available, indicating the significance of the presence of an extensive collection of resources as a tool for fulfilling users' needs related to their academics. The second and third most important factors were easy navigation and efficient search functions, allowing the users to get access to the needed information fast and effectively. However, despite being positively evaluated by most of the respondents, website speed and mobile compatibility had quite high levels of dissatisfaction, making them the least satisfying features among all assessed.

Table 3: Satisfaction with Digital Library Services

Digital Service	Very Satisfied (%)	Satisfied (%)	Neutral (%)	Dissatisfied (%)	Very Dissatisfied (%)
E-Books Access	40.0	38.7	10.0	7.3	4.0
E-Journal	44.0	36.0	8.7	8.0	3.3

s Access					
Institutional Repository	32.0	42.0	14.0	8.0	4.0
Online Reference Services	30.7	41.3	16.0	8.0	4.0
Remote Access Facility	34.7	40.0	12.7	8.6	4.0

Table 3 illustrates the level of satisfaction among respondents for different digital library services like access to e-books, access to e-journals, institutional repositories, online reference services, and remote access facilities. The respondents were grouped into five categories which included very satisfied, satisfied, neutral, dissatisfied, and very dissatisfied. In terms of services offered, access to e-journals obtained the largest number of very satisfied respondents (44.0%) followed by access to e-books (40.0%). Access to institutional repositories got the largest number of satisfied respondents (42.0%) while access to online reference services and remote access facilities received favourable responses from the majority of respondents.

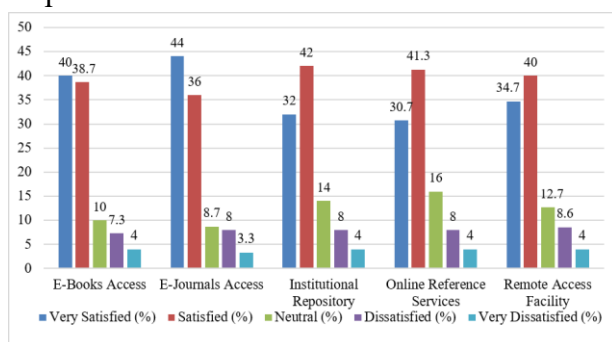


Figure 3: Graphical Representation of Satisfaction with Digital Library Services

This implies a high level of satisfaction among users of the services offered by digital libraries based on their effectiveness in facilitating academic learning and research processes. The e-

journals and the e-books were identified as the most favoured services, indicating that the scholars are increasingly dependent on the electronic scholarly materials in the current digital information environment. Users' positive reactions towards the institutional repositories and remote access services show that they value easy access to the research output from institutions and the resources of the libraries. Despite some dissatisfaction among a few users on specific services such as the online reference services and the remote access services, the outcomes clearly reveal the effectiveness of the services offered by the digital libraries in meeting the information needs of the users.

V DISCUSSION

The findings clearly show that the websites of academic libraries are extensively utilized by students, researchers, and teachers to access information available online. The majority of respondents were regular users of the library website and were extremely satisfied with the characteristics of the website like easy navigability, search function, and availability of digital materials.

Furthermore, satisfaction with digital library services such as electronic journals and electronic books was found to be very high. In spite of a couple of problems identified by some participants regarding mobile compatibility and website performance, the findings of the study clearly indicate that academic library websites fulfill the users' information requirements. Satisfaction levels can be raised even more with further developments in digital services and website usability.

V CONCLUSION

The conclusions drawn from this research include the fact that the academic library websites contribute greatly to teaching and learning through providing access to digital information services on the websites. It has been discovered that most of the participants use the library websites and express satisfaction concerning the following aspects: the presence of digital information, the convenience of

use and navigation, search options, and the availability of the e-books and e-journals. While some of the participants pointed out certain concerns connected with mobile responsiveness and the speed of loading, their level of satisfaction with the websites is quite high. The research comes to the conclusion that the good-quality websites of the academic libraries contribute greatly to digital learning experience of users and satisfy their information needs.

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