

Awareness and Use of Online Public Access Catalogue by Post-Graduate Students of Library and Information Studies in Yadanabon University

Mon Mon Kyaw*

Abstract

This paper examines the use of Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC) by Post-Graduate students of Library and Information Studies, Yadanabon University. OPAC means an online bibliography of the library collections such as books, non-book materials, periodicals, reference books and electronic resources, etc. Thus, using the OPAC, users can search freely required information on the internet. The purpose of this study is to identify the wider use of OPAC than that of card catalogue, and problems during the use of OPAC. The method used in this study is quantitative method. Collected data were analyzed and presented in percentage terms. The results indicate that most students have not awareness of OPAC effectively. Based on the results of the study, librarian can manage and conduct the training to be aware of OPAC for its community.

Key words: OPAC, Post-Graduate students, electronic resources, card Catalogue

1. Introduction

Information resource is meaningless without access. Online Public Access Catalog (OPAC) has this role to connect with the users and provides access to all available information resources within the library. Library activities and functions have undergone changes over the years. The libraries today are more proactive in their activities especially with the introduction of online public access catalog (OPAC) facilities to university libraries. OPAC is a device of change in today's libraries as it helps users search for library resources and to find out the availability of such documents in the library at a given point in time. OPAC system is one of the technologies that provide access to any of the information contained in the records of the library. University libraries are now moving from the manual retrieval system characterized by short bibliographic records, mainly of books, journals and audio-visual materials available in a particular library.¹

Online Public Access Catalog (OPAC) may be defined as a database of bibliographic records describing the holdings of a library. An OPAC is a computerized library catalogue that is available to the public, which provides bibliographic information about information resources in the library.² An Online Public Access Catalog (OPAC) has revolutionized traditional accessibility to resources of libraries in general and academic libraries in

* Lecturer, Department of Library and Information Studies, Yadanabon University.

1 Rachael Ejwokoghene Eserada and Stanley Efe Okolo, "Use of Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC) in Selected University Libraries in South-South Nigeria", *Library and Philosophy and Practice (e-journal)* (2008): 2, accessed February 5, 2020, <http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/liphilprac>. (hereafter cited as Eserada and Okolo)

2 Eserada and Okolo, 3.

particular. It is an interface of information retrieval system which assist information searchers to access resources of libraries using several access points.³ It has made searching and retrieval of bibliographic records of materials easier and faster.

1.1 Yadanabon University Library and Its Services

The Yadanabon University Library was organized in Mandalay Regional College established in 23rd May 1979. On the 1st April 1980, the Regional College was changed as Mandalay University (Yadanabon Campus) and on 18th September, 1996 it was renamed as Mandalay Yadanabon College. With the change of various names, the origin of the University library gradually developed to the present status.

On 22nd February 2000, Mandalay Yadanabon College was upgraded as Yadanabon University. Along with the establishment of Yadanabon University, the library started to open in February 2000. It started with the old collections of the Yadanabon College Library. The library was first founded at the south wing of the main building of the Yadanabon University. In 2003, it was shifted to the east wing of the main building. In 2005, it again was moved to the CR-28 extension building of Yadanabon University. In 2014, the library was shifted to the current new building.

The librarians who served at the library were Daw Tin Tin Win, Library Assistant Grade-1 from the 1st August 2000 to 12th March 2001, Daw Aye Aye Win, Assistant Librarian from fifth March 2001 to 11th December 2001. Dr. Sanda Oo served from 11th December 2001 to 6th April 2016. She took dual responsibilities: the librarian of the University Library and Head of the Department of Library and Information Studies. At present, Daw Aye Aye Myint is the librarian who has served from 7th April 2016 to present day.

The library started e-Library in 2014. E-Library is situated on the first floor of the library. The free internet access service is provided for students and teachers in a separate room with 20 computers. Wifi free access and online database access service are available at the e-Library. The library could start to provide Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC) at the Circulation Desk in 2018. The users can access it at the two stations on the left and right of the Circulation Desk. The library provides e-circulation system in 2018. In addition, reference services, reading room service, and photocopying service are provided. The library always gives online database access training to the academic staff and students. The library always tries the best to fulfill the needs of its user community.

1.2 Aim and objectives of the study

The main aim of the study is to enumerate the utilization of Online Public Access Catalog (OPAC) in Yadanabon University Library by post-graduate students.

3. O.M.Fabunmi and B.O. Asubiojio , "Awareness and Use of Online Public Access Catalogue by Students of Obafemi Awolowo University, Ile-Ife, Nigeria," *Library Philosophy and Practice (e-journal)* (April 2013): 2, accessed February 5, 2020, <http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/libphilprac>.

The objectives of the study are:

- i. To identify the use of OPAC by post-graduate students of the Yadanabon University
- ii. To facilitate easier ways for searching information sources
- iii. To find out the purposes of using OPAC
- iv. To assist solutions to problems encountered using OPAC
- v. To encourage the students to use OPAC

1.3 Scope of the study

There are varieties of sources and services provided at the Yadanabon University Library. The scope of this study limited the use of Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC) by the students. But, among the students, this study focuses mainly on post-graduate students of Library and Information studies from Yadanabon University.

1.4 Method of the study

This study was based on the data collected from post-graduate students in Yadanabon University, using a questionnaire. The required data were collected through survey method. A questionnaire comprising (16) items was designed. A total of 81 copies of the questionnaire were distributed to the target group of students. But, only 75 copies of the questionnaire could be received from these students.

1.5 Statement of the Research Problem

Nowadays, libraries have changed the use of catalogue from manual catalogue to online catalogue. Most of the university students encounter to access and retrieve needed information through OPAC. This study carries out a survey on the awareness of OPAC for post-graduate students of Library and Information Studies, Yadanabon University.

1.6 Research Questions

This study will answer the following research questions:

- i. How often do the post-graduate students of library & Information Studies use OPAC?
- ii. What are the purposes of post-graduate students for using OPAC?
- iii. What are the challenges of post-graduate students while using OPAC?

2. Literature Review

Online catalogs have been moved beyond the scope of individual library collections. It also allows users to search a document by authors, titles, subject and keywords from a terminal and allows printing, downloading or exporting records via different electronic means. Thus, it provides users a means of searching and accessing information.⁴

K. R. Mulla and M. Chandrashekara did a research entitled “A study on the effective use of online public access catalogue at the libraries of engineering colleges in Karnataka (India)”. The study of Mulla and Chandrashekara revealed that the satisfaction levels of their respondents were quite encouraging and they were much satisfied with the performance and quality of OPAC services.⁵

R. L. Sankari, K. Chinnasamy, P. Balasubramanian, R. Mathuraj revealed a research entitled “A study on the use of Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC) by students and faculty members of Unnamalai Institute of Technology in Kovilpatti (Tami Nadu).” The use of OPAC by students and faculty members had increased their information, retrieval rate especially in locating books and other reading materials in the library. This is evident in the fact that all the respondents are satisfied with their search outputs.⁶

O. Adenike & O. T. Akin observed a research titled “Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC) in Nigerian Librarians: A case study of the Kenneth Dike Library and University of Lagos Library.” On the other hand, Adedibu as cited by Aenike and Akin, his study based on use of catalogue by science students in the University of Ilorin. It found out that the card catalogues and the OPAC, the most essential library tools in accessing the library collection, are not always consulted because of inadequate knowledge on how to use them.⁷

Novotny as cited by Thanuskodi conducted a protocol analysis and studied to determine the usability of the Pennsylvania State University library OPAC. It is found in the

4. David A. Labonero et al., “Knowledge Satisfaction and Challenges on Online Public Access Catalog in an Academic Library in Northern Philippines,” *Library Philosophy and Practice (e-journal)* (2020): 4-5, accessed February 5, 2020, <http://digitalcommons.unl.edu/libphilprac>.

5. K. R. Mulla & M. Chandrashekara, “A Study on the Effective Use of Online Public Access Catalogue at the Libraries of Engineering Colleges in Karnataka (India),” *International Journal of Library and Information Science*, 1(3), 029-042, accessed 5 February, 2020, <http://www.academicjournals.org/journal/IJLIS/article-full-text-pdf/F79D6CB758>.

6. R. L. Sankari, K. Chinnasamy, P. Balasubramanian and R. Mathuraj, “A Study on the Use of Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC) by Students and Faculty Members of Unnamalai Institute of Technology in Kovilpatti (Tamil Nadu),” *International Journal of Library and Information Studies*, 3(1), 17-26, accessed 5 February, 2020, <http://www.ijlis.org/img/2013-Vol-3-Issue-1/17-26.pdf>.

7. O. Adenike & O. K. Akin, “Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC) in Nigerian Libraries: A Case Study of the Kenneth Dike Library and University of Lagos Library,” *Ozean Journal of Social Sciences*, 6(3), 55-65, accessed 5 February, 2020, <http://ozelacademy.com/ojss.v6.i3-1.pdf>.

study that the use of the internet search engines has had a great effect on the way. The library patrons tried to use OPACs the library has.⁸

Online Public Access Catalog is a bibliography of a library collection that is available to the public; a database of bibliographic records describing the library holdings. The most basic function of the OPAC is for browsing the entire collection.

3. Data Collection and Analysis

The study used descriptive statistics to analyze the frequency, purpose and challenges associated with the use of OPAC among post-graduate students of Library & Information Studies in Yadanabon University Library.

i. Response Rate of Post-Graduate Students

The total number of the responses is 75 out of 81 copies of the questionnaires distributed to post-graduate students from the department of library and information studies.

Table 1. Response Rate of Post-Graduate Students

| No. of Questionnaires Distributed | No. of Questionnaires Received | Percentage |
|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|------------|
| 81 | 75 | 93% |

*Source:*Survey

The above table shows that the overall responses are satisfactory giving on average rate of 93%. According to this, 93% of students answered the distributed questionnaires.

ii. Gender

This table shows the distribution of questionnaires by gender of post-graduate students. It presents the number of responses by percentage.

Table 2. Users Categorized by Gender

| Gender | No. of Questionnaires Distributed | No. of Questionnaires Responded | Response % |
|--------|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|------------|
| Male | 9 | 8 | 10% |
| Female | 72 | 67 | 90% |
| Total | 81 | 75 | 100% |

Source: Responses of Post-Graduate Students of LIS of Yadanabon University

8. S. Thanuskodi, "Use of Online Public Access Catalogue at Annalai University Library," *International Journal of Information Science*, 2(6), 70-74, accessed 5 February, 2020, <http://article.sapub.org/pdf/10.5923.j.ijis.20120206.01.pdf>.

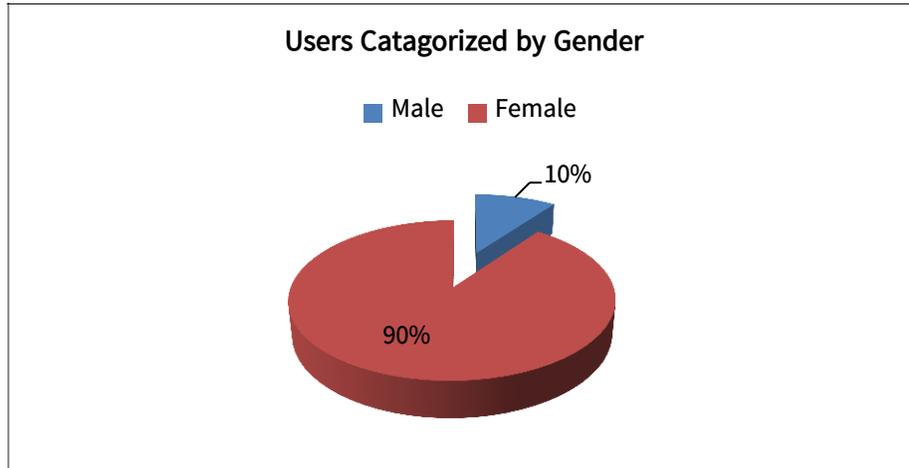


Figure 1. Response Percentage

According to Figure 1, the number of females (90%) is greater than that of the males because the number of males is smaller than females as shown in Table 2.

lii Level of Education

Respondents were asked to indicate their education standard to know the course year.

Table 3. Level of Education

| Course Year | No. of Questionnaires distributed | No. of Questionnaires received | Response Percentage |
|------------------|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------|---------------------|
| Qualifying Class | 16 | 12 | 15% |
| Diploma Class | 13 | 11 | 14% |
| MI | 22 | 22 | 27% |
| MII | 30 | 30 | 37% |
| Total | 81 | 75 | 93% |

Source: Response of Post-Graduate Students of LIS of Yadanabon University

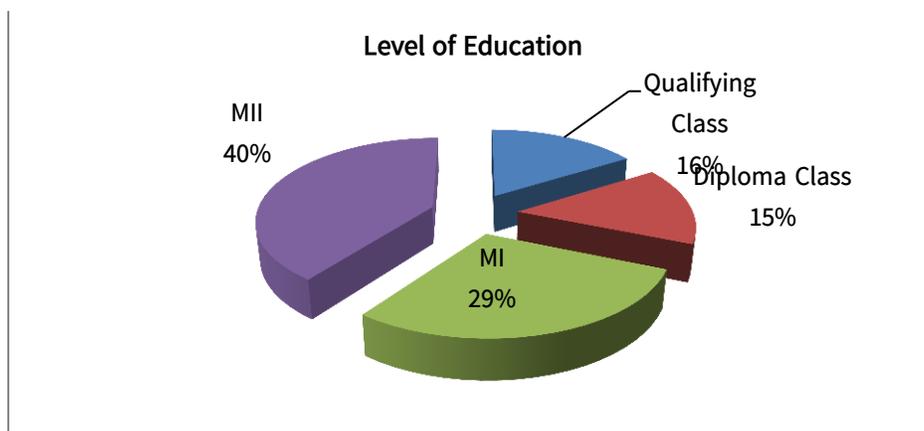


Figure 2. Level of Education

Table 3 reveals the education level of the Post-Graduate students of department of library and information studies. It can clearly be seen from the table that the percentage of first year master students and second year master students are more than any other students. The respective percentages are 15% in Qualifying class, 14% in Diploma class, 27% in first year Master class and 37% in second year Master class.

Iv. Frequency of OPAC Use

The result of the study reveals OPAC use among post-graduate students. The study had categorized their frequency of OPAC use such as Always, Often, Sometimes, Rarely and Never.

Table 4. Frequency of OPAC Use by Post-Graduate Students

| Use of OPAC | Frequency | Percentage |
|-------------|-----------|------------|
| Always | 2 | 3% |
| Often | 16 | 21% |
| Sometimes | 43 | 57% |
| Rarely | 7 | 9% |
| Never | 7 | 9% |
| Total | 75 | 100% |

Source: Responses of Post-Graduate Students of LIS of Yadanabon University

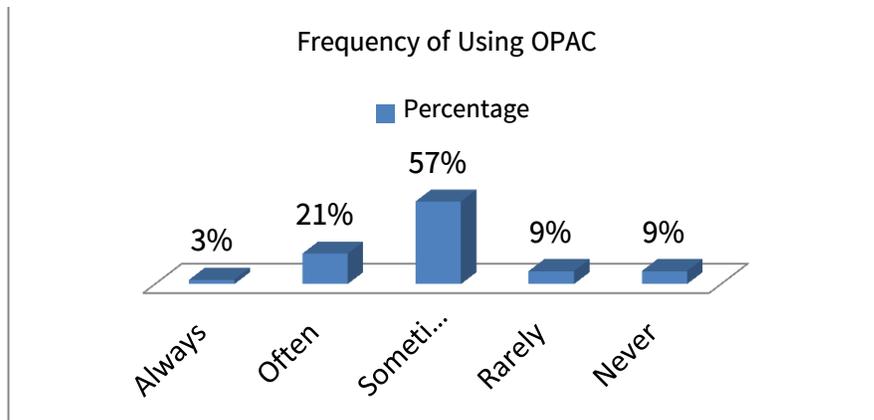


Figure 3. Use of OPAC

Table 4 shows frequency of OPAC use by post graduate students. Among the respondents, 3% of them always use OPAC. 21% often use it. 57% sometimes use OPAC. 9% utilize OPAC rarely. But, 9% of them have not used OPAC at all.

v. Ways of Searching information

For all students, there are two ways to search information from the library such as: Manual Catalogue Card and OPAC. The respondents were asked which way is preferred for searching information.

Table 5. Ways of Searching information

| Ways of Searching information | Frequency | Percentage |
|-------------------------------------|-----------|------------|
| Manual Catalogue Card only | 33 | 44% |
| Online Public Access Catalogue only | 16 | 21% |
| Both | 26 | 35% |
| Total | 75 | 100% |

Source: Response of Post-Graduate Students of LIS of Yadanabon University

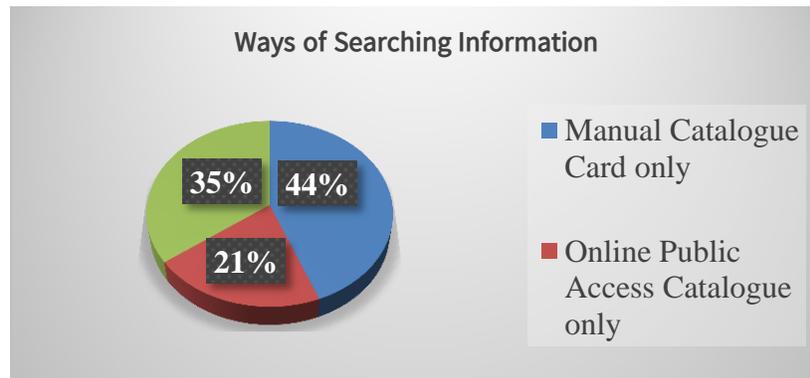


Figure 4. Ways of Searching Information

The results shown in Table 5 indicate that 33 (44%) respondents use only the manual catalogue card for their academic work. Besides, 16 (21%) respondents use only online public access catalogue to search information. Finally, the results indicate that 26 (35%) respondents use both the manual catalogue and online public access catalogue for their academic performance.

vi. Purpose of OPAC Use

Table 6 shows that students visit the library for different academic purposes. The study reveals the common reasons for using OPAC.

Table 6. Purpose of OPAC Use

| Purpose of OPAC use | Frequency | Percentage |
|---------------------|-----------|------------|
| General Knowledge | 18 | 24% |
| Research | 31 | 41% |

| | | |
|-------------------------------|----|------|
| Current Awareness | 17 | 23% |
| Reservation for Required Data | 9 | 12% |
| Total | 75 | 100% |

Source: Response of Post-Graduate Students of LIS of Yadanabon University

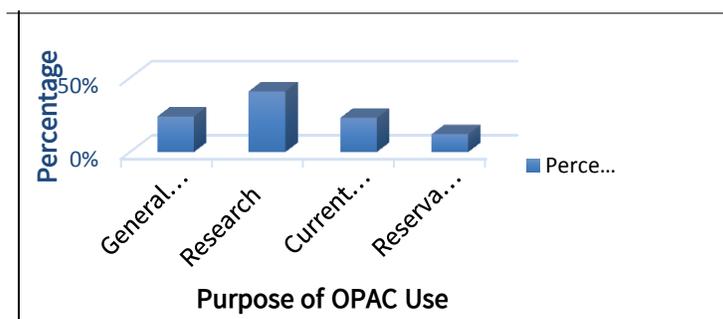


Figure 5. Purpose of OPAC Use

Table 6 shows the purpose of OPAC use. In terms of OPAC use, the types of purposes are general knowledge, research, current awareness and reservation for required data. Among the respondents, 24% of them are for the purpose of getting general knowledge, 41% for doing research, 17% for current awareness and 12% for reservation of resources for the library.

vii. Challenges in the Use of OPAC

There are many problems faced by students in using of electronic resources. Among them, this study reveals that the students are facing with challenges in the use of OPAC. The following Table shows challenges faced by the respondents in the use of OPAC.

Table 7. Challenges in the use of OPAC

| Challenge with OPAC use | Frequency | Percentage |
|---|-----------|------------|
| Lack of OPAC knowledge | 21 | 28% |
| Lack of assistance from library staff | - | - |
| Electricity failure | 14 | 19% |
| Network problem | 33 | 44% |
| Lack of skills to access electronic resources | 7 | 9% |
| Total | 75 | 100% |

Source: Response of Post-Graduate Students of LIS of Yadanabon University

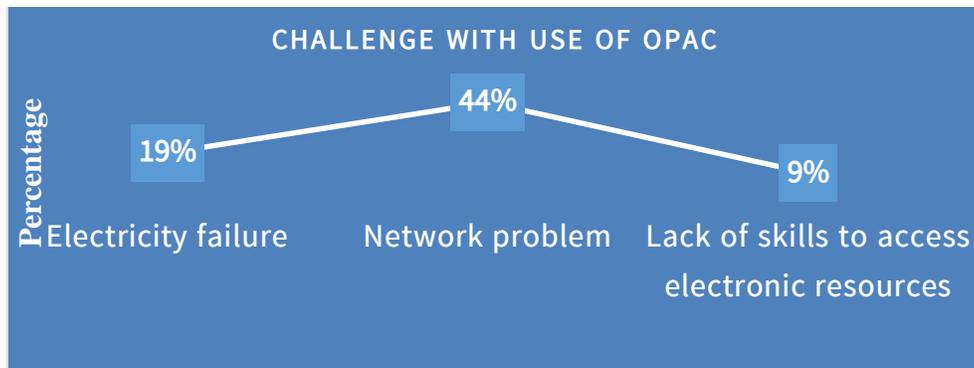


Figure 6. Challenges With Use of OPAC

As shown in Table 7, the students are facing the challenges while they are using OPAC. Among these problems, the lack of OPAC knowledge are 28%, electricity failure is 19%, network problem is 44% and lack of skills to access electronic resources is 9%.

4. Findings and Discussion

The present study has been undertaken to identify the use OPAC by LIS post-graduate students, Yadanabon University. The findings of present study offer to the following information.

- In this study, all of the respondents 75 out of 81 questionnaires are received back. Among them, 8 (88.9%) are male respondents and 67 (93.1%) are female respondents. Thus, the female students are more use the OPAC than male students in the Yadanabon University Library.

- In this study, 22 (29%) first year master and 30 (40%) second year master students were answered completely this questionnaire. It found that 16 (21%) of students use often the OPAC and 43 (57%) of students use sometimes the OPAC.

- The result found that 33 (44%) of students use only manual catalogue card and 16 (21%) of students use only OPAC. Moreover, 26 (35%) of students use both manual catalogue card and online public access catalogue.

- This study found that some of the students 18 (24%) uses OPAC to know general knowledge, the majority of the students 31(41%) use OPAC to do research for their academic work and some students 17 (23%) uses OPAC to know the current awareness and so on.

- In this result the majority of the students 21 (28%) faced challenge with lack of OPAC knowledge and 33 (44%) facing with network problem in using online public access catalogue.

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC) is an indispensable information retrieval tool of library resources. OPAC is a gateway to library collections which library users must know how to search information. As the results show that most of the students use library for the purpose of research and assignment, they need to have the awareness of OPAC. According

to findings of the study, post-graduate students of Library and Information Studies (LIS) prefer card catalogue to OPAC because most of students are not aware of how to use OPAC and power of electricity and lack of information literacy skills. Thus, It can be suggested that the university librarian should provide the OPAC services to meet the users need. Besides, the university librarian should provide training and workshops concerning with OPAC to its users.

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