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Use and awareness of online library services among faculty members of KFUPM, Dhahran, Saudi Arabia

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Abstract:

Purpose: The library is an integral part of every academic institution because it provides users with information, resources, and services to help them with their studies and research. This paper aims to investigate the use and awareness of online library services among faculty members of KFUPM, Dhahran, Saudi Arabia.

Research methodology: A survey method employed to perform the research, Google form generated and distributed through official emails targeted faculty members. The sample includes all eight academic colleges and 33 departments of KFUPM and received 101 responses.

Findings: The study reveals that most of the faculties used library online services for research and in teaching. The results show that the growing interest amongst faculty members in the library online services use and awareness. However, they face some challenges when using online library services, including a lack of awareness about the available online library services, trouble locating relevant information and restricting websites. Some participants suggested improving hassle-free online library services.

Originality: The findings and recommendations of this study might help the Deanship of library affairs at KFUPM, especially in identifying the requirement of faculties from library services to overcome the problems they face during searching and accessing of online library services.

Keywords: Online library services; User studies, KFUPM Main Library; University and awareness of faculty members

Introduction

In recent years, libraries' electronic services or online services have significantly changed scientist's and academicians' use habits in Saudi Arabia. With the emergence of the technology revolution, the quantity and type of online services have changed rapidly. Consequently, libraries' positions and librarians' roles have changed drastically to cope with the new user needs, tools, and services. Academic libraries are considered the heart of institutions. Information professionals and librarians face many challenges and challenges in fully providing library services to their esteemed patrons possible. The University Library plays a crucial role in every institution by delivering services to faculties, scientists, and other users. Academic libraries' task is to provide and maintain

standard intellectual tools that foster users' interest in promoting and adding value to such institutions. University libraries support new users by providing them with relevant facilities and services, whether distance learning teachers or those involved in unique teaching and learning methods. The relationship between effective teaching, learning, and research activities in the educational institute can be attributed to library services' effective delivery to different library environment users. Library service consists of all packages of operations that the library offers to patrons to improve and accomplish the parent organization's aims. These services can be delivered manually or via a digital process. The online services are Reference, Online book reservations, Online Databases, OPAC, Internet Service, services for document delivery, services for bibliography, Book recommendations, Inter-library loan services, service for plagiarism tools, indexing and abstracting services, Library orientation services, user education services, knowledge management services and consulting services, etc. (Popoola, 2008).

King Fahd University of petroleum and minerals (KFUPM) Main Library

the Deanship of Library Affairs manages the KFUPM library, known as the Main Library. KFUPM Main Library provides a variety of services. KFUPM's main libraries' major services are reference, borrowing, interlibrary loan, services for creating plagiarism tools (Turnitin and iThenticate), online book reservation, online database, Literature search, and online Document delivery online catalog search, Book reservations, library orientation, bibliographic services, etc. Most of the main library collection is in the English language (90%), and only 10% is in the Arabic language. Monographs (3, 62,640 titles), Textbooks (3,827 titles), Reference books (11,934), Theses & Dissertations (5,272), Subscribed electronic books (5, 46,110) and E-Journals (91129) are housed in the main library. The main library also has 208 online databases in Arabic and English. Moreover, the library is a Saudi Digital Library (SDL) member with more than 310 000 scientific references, covering all academic disciplines from 300 global publishers. In addition to the library collection, KFUPM's main library has an institutional repository (e-print) for scholarly works produced by the university's faculty, staff, and students.

Literature Review

The faculty's use and awareness of electronic services have acquired considerable attention from researchers globally. Researchers investigated the student's and faculties' usage and perception of electronic services. They concentrated on faculty and research scholars' use of electronic sources and services. Some of the researches in electronic services carried out to understand the topic better.

Rahman and Khare (2020) examined the faculty, researcher, and students' use of electronic resources and services at the central library of north Bengal University, India. The study showed that 41.11 % of 90 users utilized electronic resources. The primary purpose of using electronic resources was to teach (94.44%). The respondents most frequently used the bibliographic database. The study also revealed that remote access was the barrier to use electronic resources by the patrons of the North Bengal university library

Ilori (2019) investigated the postgraduate (PG) students' library services use at the Federal Universities of Agriculture, Abeokuta. The analysis of the 45 returned questionnaires revealed that PG students were very much aware of the library's services. The PG students mostly used the service of borrowing books. The study suggests that user satisfaction evaluations need to be remarkably improved.

Donabedian, Carey, and Balayan (2018) surveyed two Armenian universities to assess academic library services' use and awareness. Library services include reference and information services, inter library loans, and subscriptions of databases, etc. Most respondents reported frequent use of library services. The library services varied according to academic rank and employment duration. Many respondents made suggestions for services not accessible to their libraries. These findings help to illuminate user preferences among faculty at these universities and help librarians identify underutilized resources in similar institutions to promote or offer new services.

Sohail and Ahmad (2017) evaluated the impact of electronic resources and services on the Fiji national university library campuses. The researcher selected eight libraries from 16 FNU campus libraries. The study showed that most FNU library users were aware of advances in electronic resources, facilities, and their proper use in academic and research fields. The study revealed that there was an increasing demand among users in sources and services. The study also enumerated some obstacles in accessing sources and services. These obstacles consisted of slowness in a download of needed items and the website's blocking.

Natarajan (2017) investigated the use of electronic resources and services at the social science library of Jimma university. The main aim was to examine the information science students' use of electronic resources and access resources and services. The study revealed that electronic resources and services have increased among the students; most of them accessed them from home, hostel, and departmental library.

Altaf and Warraich (2017) conducted a study to know about the level of awareness and utilization of Pakistan university students' electronic information sources. Students from four faculties of social sciences and commerce participated in the study. The results revealed that students used both formats of resources with slight inclinations to hard copy. Electronic journals and electronic books were less used than print resources. Most of the students depended on the World Wide Web for searching required information irrespective of its authenticity. Slow internet speed and lack of IT knowledge were the hurdles while using electronic resources.

Singh (2016) examined the Use of E-Resources by the PG understudies of Doaba College Jalandhar. PG understudies use e-assets for investigation, research, and consultancy purposes. Libraries have been assuming an exceptionally dynamic job in giving satisfactory chances of E-resources to the clients. The examination concerns the use of electronic assets by the PG understudies of Doaba College Jalandhar. The examination centers around the job of e-assets in their investigation, explore direction, level of fulfillment, nature of the search, number of e-assets, availability, administrations, preparing, and help given by the library to the utilization of e-resources and services.

Bhattacharya and Das (2015) conducted a study entitled "Present Status of e-resources available in the Engineering College Libraries of West Bengal: Problems towards sustainable collection development." In this paper, the investigators found that 87% of colleges provide access to electronic databases to their users, and 15% of colleges do not have any electronic resources. And, out of 20 colleges, only 16 colleges subscribe to AICTE databases. Only 25% of colleges have more than 3 million as library budget for allocation of e-resources.

Prakashe and Tayade (2015) have explored the Indian Institute of management libraries' electronic resources and services in India. The study revealed that the availability of e-resources in all the libraries (100%) comprising e-journals, databases, and CD/DVDs with books. Those libraries have 76.92% e-books. Eight libraries have (61.53%) JSTOR. AV material was available in 53.84% and

e-newspapers in (38.46%) of the libraries. 30.76% of libraries have e-dissertations. Only 15.38% have e-thesis and magazines in their portal. Most of the e-resources are accessible through IP addresses, while some require login ID and password. It revealed that IIM libraries' users provide specialized databases like EBSCO discovery, institutional repository, and remote login. They framed a consortium for resource sharing such as Sage (HSS Collection), Wiley, Springer links, and Wilby-Blackwell (HSS Collection). Membership of library network also found as DELNET, INFLIBNET, NICMAN, AACSB, and National HRD Network.

Naqvi (2014) analyzed use of the library collections and services by postgraduate and research scholars of Govind Ballabh pant university of agriculture and technology. The study showed that library collections and services mostly used for research work, project work, study, and personal work. The study also revealed that the CD-ROM database, electronic journals, and online database were the most frequently used electronics resources and services. AGRIS, AGRICOLA, CAB Abstract, and Agriculture & Natural Resources were the most used databases among PG students and research scholars. The study further suggested boosting library collections and services.

Kumari et al. (2014) illustrated library services' use and awareness offered by Women's college and Tika Ram Kanya Mahavidyalaya library, Aligarh. The study revealed that most users visit the library to borrow books from Women college (64.44%) followed by TRKM (63.53%). The research shows that 100% of users from TRKM and 97.78% of WC users were aware of book borrowing services. 45% of library users from WC faced problem of getting the required information due to complicated library rules. In comparison, 41.18% of users from TRKM faced the problem of insufficient library resources. 62.35% of TRKM were satisfied with the services, followed by 51.11% users from WC.

Objectives

This research investigates the use of the electronic services provided to faculty by the KFUPM main library and the difficulties experienced while accessing electronic services. The main goals of the study were:

- To examine the purpose of using electronic library services by faculty
- To know about KFUPM faculty awareness of available electronic services.
- To explore the frequency of use of electronic services by faculty of KFUPM

- To identify the level of satisfaction when using electronic services
- To know about the faculty opinion regarding the use and access of electronic library services
- To examine the difficulties KFUPM faculty faced during access to library services.

Research Questions

The present study's primary purpose is to explore the use and awareness of electronic services offered to faculty by the Deanship of library affairs (DLA), King Fahd University of petroleum and minerals. Following are the questions this study aims to answer:

- Q1. What are the types of electronic services offered by DLA, KFUPM?
- Q2. What is the purpose of using electronic services?
- Q3. What is the frequency of utilizing electronic services?
- Q4. What is the satisfaction Level pertinent to using electronic services?
- Q5. what are the problems faced when using electronic services by KFUPM faculty

Methodology

The researcher employed a well-structured questionnaire to answer these research questions for data collections from KFUPM, Dhahran, Saudi Arabia. An online google form employed to conduct the survey. Google forms are commonly used to produce surveys easily and quickly because they allow to schedule activities, ask employees or customers questions, and gather different information types quickly and efficiently. They provide various types of questions, including short answers, paragraphs, multiple selections, checkboxes, pull-down, linear scale, multiple options grid, etc. (Google, 2020). In the survey, the questions prepared in English. The first question starts with demographic data, and the last question on their issues and recommendations. Using Google Forms, the data, statistics, and data charts were collected and imported. There are eight academic colleges with 33 departments, and the target populations include only the teaching faculty member from all the colleges, including professors, Associate professors, Assistant professors, and Instructors.

Result and Discussion

Characteristics of the respondents: The researchers received 101 responses, comprising of 8 colleges. Table (1) demonstrates that the faculty of the college of science (30.69%, freq=31) was the highest respondent in the survey, followed by the college of general studies (18.81%, freq=19) and college of engineering (16.83%, freq=17). KFUPM faculty belong to 33 academic departments, out of which only 22 (66.66%) departments participated in the survey. Fig.1 depicted the results that Mathematics & Statistics (Freq=14) was the most respondent department, followed by chemistry and Preparatory English Program (freq=10 each). The participants covered a wide range of academic ranks. Table (2) reveals that the majority of the respondents were Assistant professor (42.57 %, Freq=43), a similar type of result have been found in another study (Hendal, 2020), followed by the lecturer (19.80%, freq=20), and Associate professor (15.84 %, freq=16).

Table (1): College and academic rank wise distribution of respondents

Colleges	Freq
College of Science	31
College of General Studies	19
College of Engineering	17
College of Computer Science and Engineering	9
College of Environmental Design	8
KFUPM Business School	7
College of Petroleum Engineering and Geosciences	6
Dammam Community College	4

Table (2): Academic rank wise distribution of respondents

Academic Rank	Freq
Assistant professor	43
Lecturer	20
Associate professor	16
Professor	15
Instructor	7

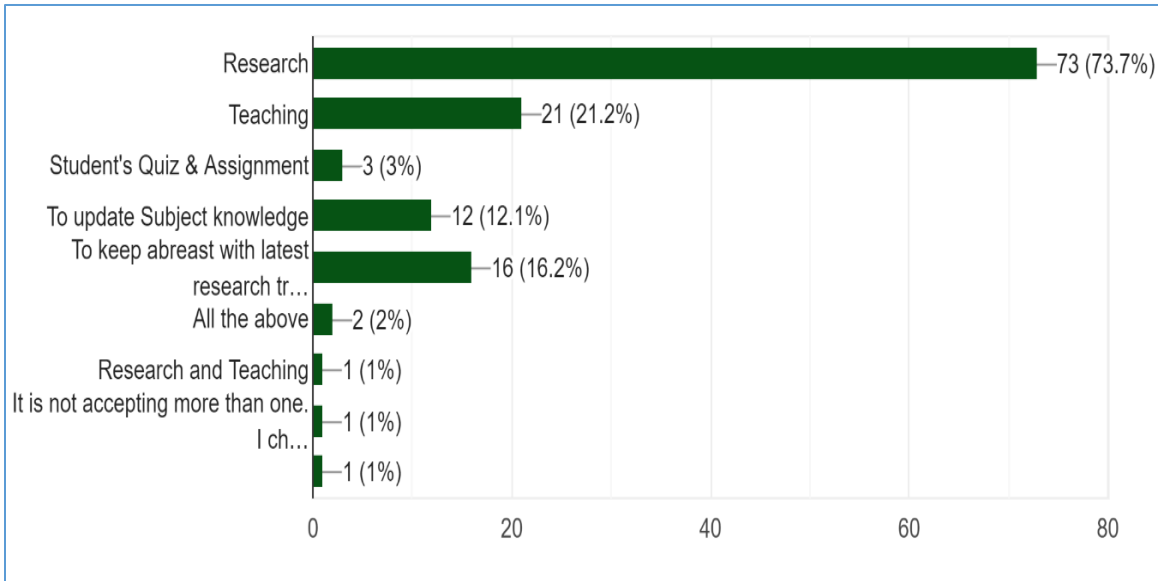


Figure (2): Purpose of using electronic services

Frequency of using electronic library services

In response to the frequency of use, the faculty member stated that they frequently use the library's electronic services. The highest number of respondents reported they used them weekly (44%), followed by occasionally (28%) and monthly (17%). These results are like those reported by (Sohail and Shakil).

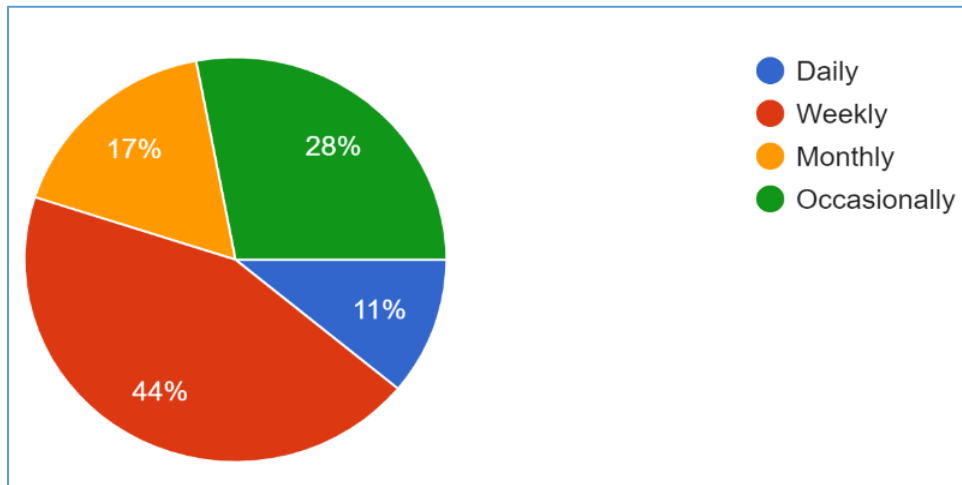


Figure (3): Frequency of Use

Mode of communication for availing library services

Figure 4 illustrates the mode of communication for availing library services. It depicts that much of the faculty preferred to get to the library through email (73.5%), followed by walk-in (14.3%) and telephone (9.2%). It is clear from the analysis that more than 85% of services are availing through online mode.

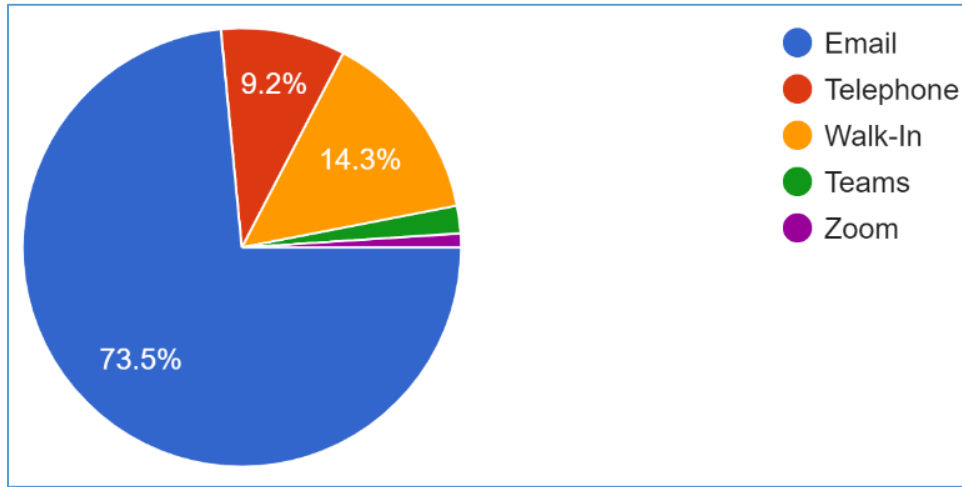


Figure (4): Mode of communication

Updates and newly introduced library services

Respondents questioned about "how they come to know about updates and newly employed library services"? Figure (5) displayed that most of the faculty received updates about the newly employed services through email (86%), followed by visiting library websites (16%) and library circulars. The study reveals that social media was the least used platform for getting updates and library services.

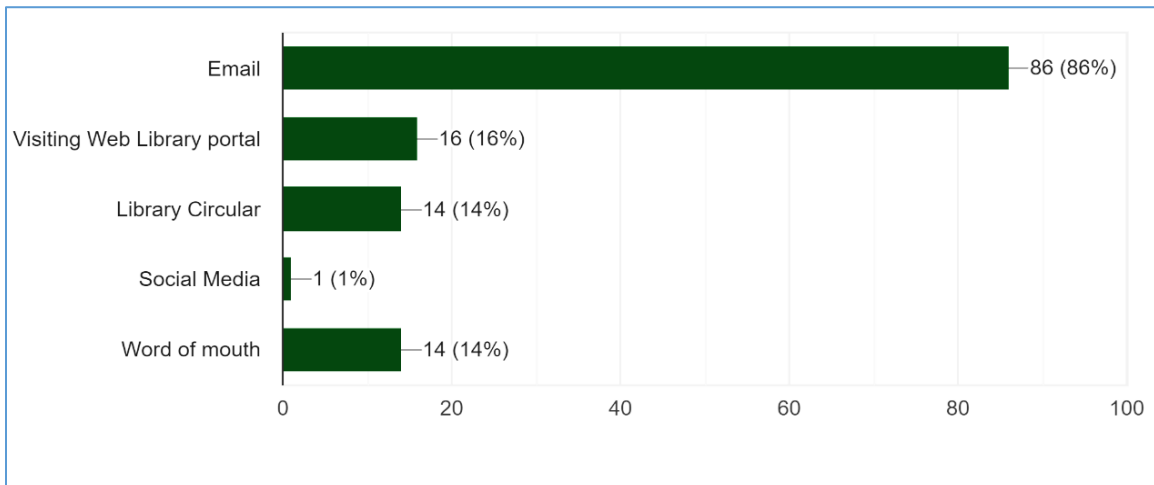


Figure (5): library updates & new services

Awareness of online library services

Figure (6) demonstrates the level of awareness about the online library services among KFUPM faculty. The target populations enquired about the electric services offered by KFUPM main library. Respondents gave their feedback about each service using five Likert scales (1-5). About 'Ask a librarian,' many of the respondents reported as 'mostly aware' (N=22) followed by 'extremely aware (N=21), and 'less aware and moderately aware' (N=19). Results about the Interlibrary loan and book recommendation services are the same as most of the respondents reported that they were 'not aware' (N=24), followed by 'extremely aware' (N=22), and 'mostly aware' (N=21). About the E-book reservation service, they reported that they were 'not aware' (N=34), followed by extremely aware (N=24) and moderately aware (N=19). The figure also reveals that most of the respondents were not aware of Web OPAC (N=68) and Electronic document delivery (N=61).

(1= Not aware, 2= Less aware, 3= moderately aware, 4= Mostly aware, 5= extremely aware,)

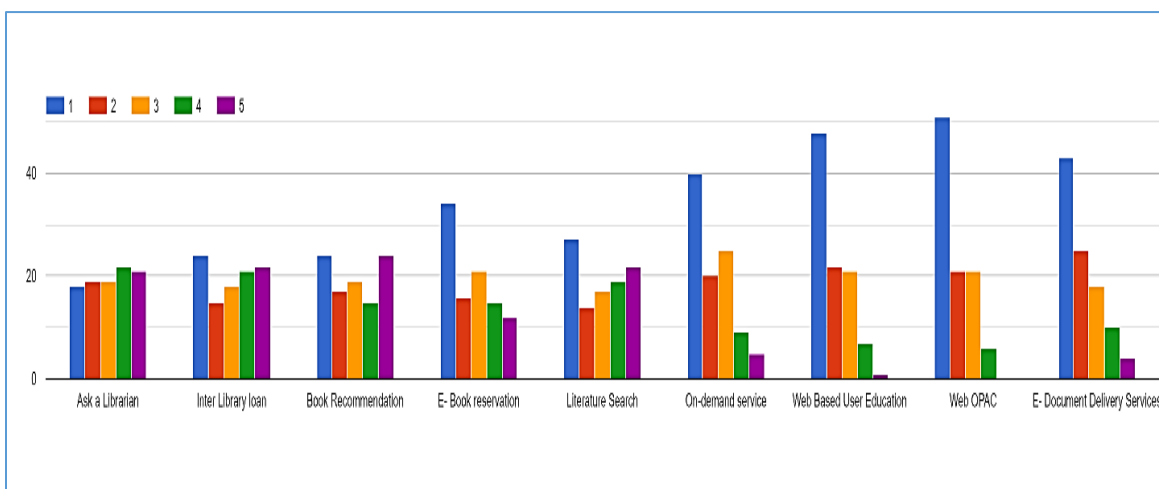


Figure (6): Awareness of library services

Level of usage of online library services

Figure (7) describes the level of usage of online library services among the respondents. It was asked from the respondents about their level of users about the online library service offered by KFUPM Main Library. The results reveal that the faculty members did not properly utilize most of the library's online services. The results about the offered services revealed that most of the respondents never utilized these services. Mainly, the ignored services are Web OPAC (N=67),

Web-based user education (N=63), and On-demand service (N=62). The figure also reveals that Ask a librarian (N=16), Interlibrary loan (N=19), and Book recommendation (N=13) are also among the 'rarely' utilized online library services. Occasionally utilized library services are Ask a librarian (N=22), Interlibrary loan (N=22), Book recommendation (N=21), E-book reservations (N=20), Library search (N=14), On-demand service (N=14), Web-based user education (N=16), Web OPAC (N=13), and E-document delivery (N=16). In the case of Frequently utilized online library services; Ask a librarian (N=16), Book recommendation (N=12), Library search (N=17). The always used online library services are Library search (N=14), followed by Book recommendation (N=10) and Interlibrary Loan (N=8).

(1=None, 2 = Rarely, 3 = Occasionally, 4 = Frequently, 5= Always,)

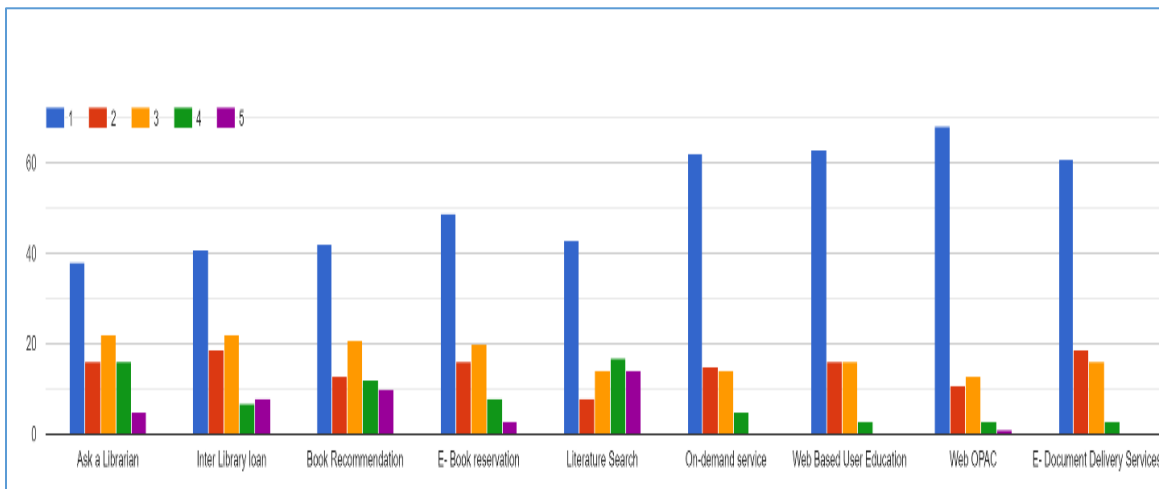


Figure (7): usage of online library services

User satisfaction

Respondents asked if they were satisfied while accessing and using online library services. Figure 8 reveals that more than half of the users were satisfied (56.7%), followed by neutral (27.8%), dissatisfied (9.3%), and only one percent were extremely satisfied.

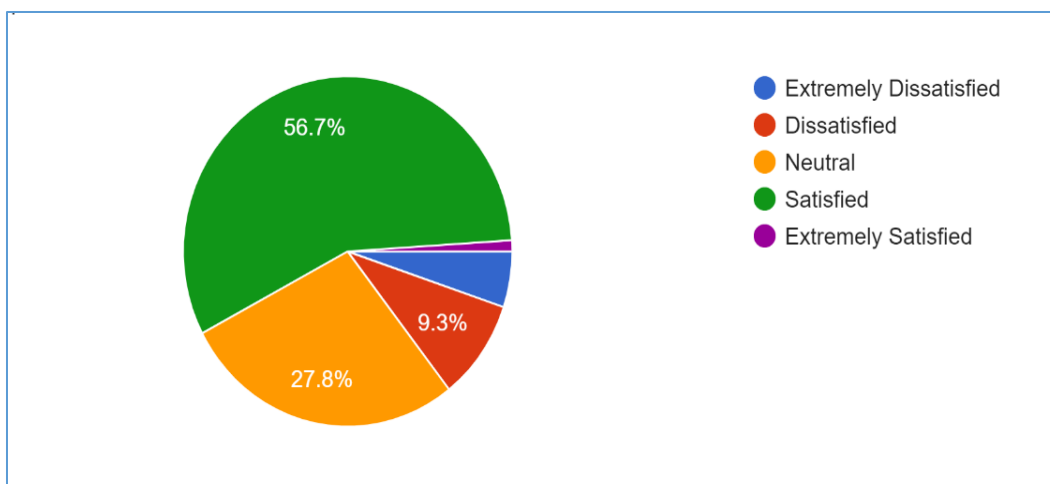


Figure (8): user satisfaction

Training, assistance, and support to use library services

Respondents were also asked about training, assistance, and support from the library while accessing online library services. Figure (9) reveals that a little less than half (45.9%) of respondents have neutral opinion followed by agreeing (31.6%), and only (11.2%) disagree that they received any training, assistance, and support while accessing online library services.

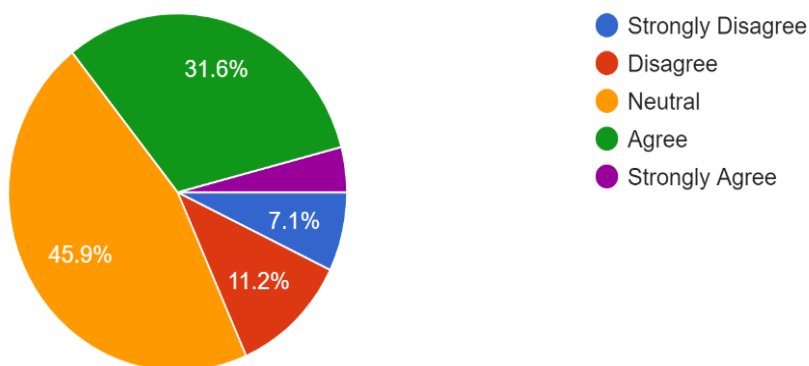


Figure (9): Training, assistance, and support

Online library service for plagiarism checking tools

KFUPM's main library provides two types of plagiarism checking tools, namely Turnitin and iThenticate. The respondents were asked about their preferred plagiarism checking software. The

study reveals that most of the faculty preferred iThenticate (73.1%), followed by Turnitin (26.9%). The faculty members were also asked about the technical assistance for both software, it was found that most faculty had a neutral opinion regarding technical assistance for both Turnitin (N=44) and iThenticate (N=35), followed by agreeing (Turnitin=16) and iThenticate =31), strongly agree (turnitin=9,iThenticate=20).

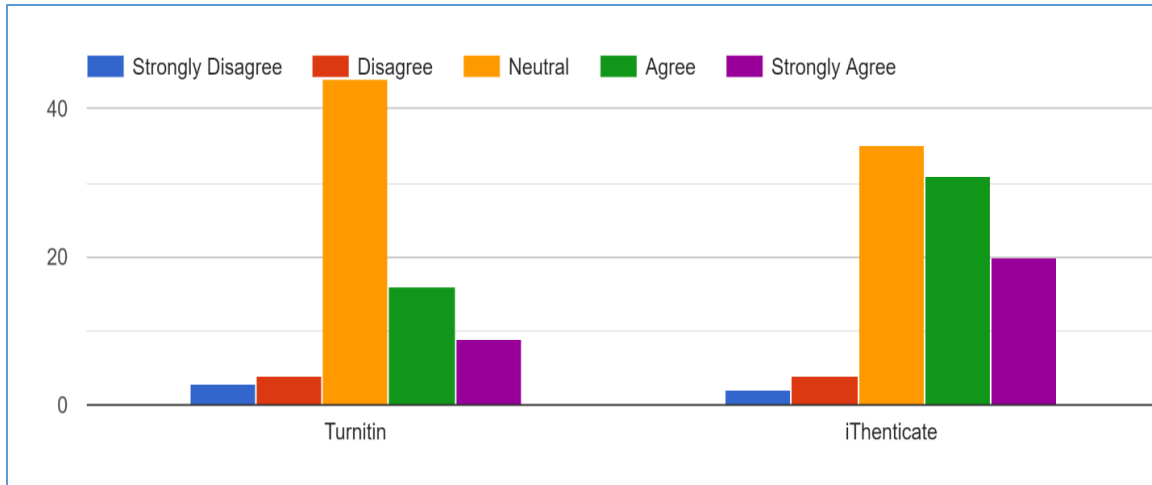


Figure (10): Technical assistance for Turnitin and iThenticate

Impact of social media in the use of electronic library services

Participants were asked about the impact of social media on the use of electronic library services. Figure (11) reveals that 51% of the participant had neutral opinions upon the use of social media to increase online library services, followed by 27.6% (Agree) and 10% (disagree).

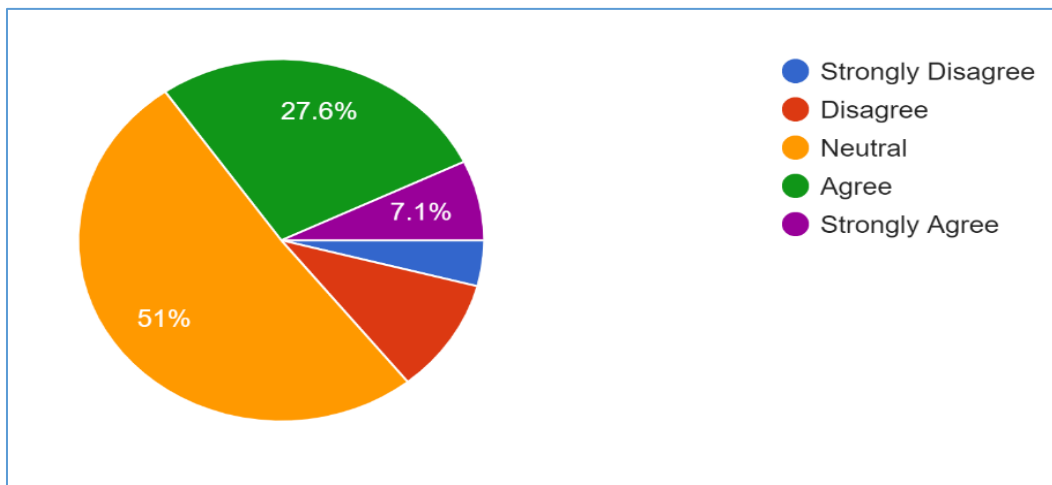


Figure (11): impact of social media on library services

Problem faced while using online library services

The respondents asked if they face any problems/challenges while using online library services. Table (3) provides details about the problems/challenges faced by respondents. The majority (45) of the respondents stated that 'Less awareness about the online library services provided the biggest challenge /problem, followed by 'Off-campus access is difficult.' Thirty-eight respondents and Difficulties stated it in finding relevant information reported by 13 respondents. There was only one participant who criticized 'slow internet speed' while availing online library services.

Table (2): Difficulties faced while using online library services

Difficulties/Problem	Respondents	percentage
Less awareness about the online library services provided	45	46.4
Difficulties in finding relevant information	13	13.4
Prefer print resources than e-sources	6	6.2
Slow internet speed	1	1
Blockage of websites (Security Checkups)	13	13.4
Off-campus access is difficult	38	39.2
Guide/help/training in using electronic information resources is not enough	8	8.2
Other: don't know about library services, login problem, and library timing, etc.	8	8.2

Findings

- The majority (73.7 %) of faculty members utilized library online services for their research purpose.
- The highest (44%) number of participants reported weekly use of online library services
- 73.5% of faculty members preferred to get library services through email.
- Most (86%) of the faculty received updates and newly employed services from the main library through email.
- The majority (22%) of faculty are 'mostly aware' about Ask a Librarian service.

- Faculty members were asked in the survey for their awareness about interlibrary loans and a book recommendation. The same 24 respondents reported that they are extremely aware, and the same numbers reported as not aware.
- The faculty members have less awareness about the e-book reservation service as 34 members reported that they are not aware of this service.
- Faculty need more awareness about literature searching as it was also reported less awareness by 27 faculty members.
- Maximum (22%) participants reported that they occasionally utilized Ask a librarian and Interlibrary loan.
- Most (56.7%) of the faculty members were satisfied with the present provided library services.
- 31.6% of respondents agreed that the library provided training, assistance, and support while accessing online library services.
- It also concluded that the majority (73.1%) of the faculty preferred iThenticate
- Most of the faculty members have a neutral opinion regarding technical assistance for both Turnitin (44%) and iThenticate (35%)
- 51% of the participant also had neutral views for using social media to increase online library services.
- 46.4% of faculty members stated less awareness about online library services.

Recommendations

Following are the recommendations from participants to improve hassle-free online library services. Out of 101 respondents, 38 respondents made a few recommendations, such as

- library should conduct more training, workshops, and seminar for the better utilization of library services,
- the plugin should be user friendly to access library services
- library websites must be upgraded for more user friendly
- there should be a regular campaign about sources and services
- the renewal of books should be done online without visiting the library physically
- iThenticate access should be provided uninterruptedly.

Conclusion

In the present scenario, online services and facilities seem to be regarded as quite important. Library services play a significant role in the operation of every academic institution. It is important to leverage and adequately use these libraries' online services. Concerning the group it represents, the sustainability of an academic organization primarily depends on the usefulness of its library services. Library services based on the principles and guidelines need to be renewed periodically, taking into account evolving customer requirements. The hour has become important for many new resources, creative library services, the need for sufficient information literacy, and the opportunity to use current sources and services. The analysis suggests that online library services are known to faculty members who participated in this survey. Most of them have used these KFUPM main libraries' online services for research and teaching. The study also reveals that when using online library services, less awareness about the online library services provided, 'Off-campus access is difficult', 'Difficulties in finding relevant information', and 'Restriction on the websites are some of the challenges' faculties are facing. It is essential to provide literature search training as searching skills are crucial and are needed to enhance online library services' efficient use. It is therefore critical that the library incorporate training in information literacy skills to the faculty. For all new faculty entering the university to raise knowledge of the available resources and services, training on library services and resources should be made compulsory. It is also vital to provide hassle-free access from outside the campus.

Suggestion for further research

The study has been done for the faculty members and suggested that the same study be conducted for students KFUPM in use electronic services and how these services relate to their research. A comparative analysis of library services and academic performance should be carried out among academics and students. Research should also be carried out on Comparative analysis of use and awareness of library and information sources and services by researchers and students. Besides, studies should attempt to bridge these gaps.

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