Impact of Internet on Library and Information Services: Experience of an Academic Library in a Technical University

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Abstract

Internet technology has been used to enhance teaching and learning in higher education. Computer literate population is ever increasing and the majority of the students have basic computer skills when they arrive at the university and able to use online resources and interact via social media. In such circumstances, Internet can be heavily used as an information resource, retrieval tool, communication tool than the physical library.As such, academic libraries have also taken advantage of the trend and made them visible online.Though, Internet has not replaced the physical library but has made an impact. Therefore, objective of this paper is to highlight some changes Internet has brought to an academic library in a technical university. Trend analysis of library reader services data within year 2011 to 2016 along with the observation of usage of electronic information sources and services was done. According to the data, library registration of undergraduates and diploma students are parallel to university admissions but postgraduates registrations have declined by 22% and academic staff registrations by 50%. Registration renewals have increased in undergraduates (170%). Issuing of library materials has recorded a decline by 27% in undergraduates; 19% in diploma students; 36% in postgraduates and 42% in academics. Reservations of library materials has also reduced (70-80%). However, online renewal of library materials has increased by 110 % - 150% in four user categories. Usage of online databases has been greatly increased and 27275 average total article downloads have been recorded for online databases subscribed by Consortium of Academic Libraries and 68545 average total article downloads by self-subscribed databases over the period 2014-2016. Since its inception, digital library has archived nearly 4000 documents and over 6000 user logins and 500, 000 searches have been recorded. In conclusion, all categories of library users have a declining trend in using physical library materials and services and have positive developments towards electronic information sources and services. Hence, it is recommended to design novel user education programmesteachmedia and information literacy for undergraduates and diploma students. It is essential to include subject specific library skills programmespostgraduate students and new academic staff members.

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