

User Preferences of Web-Based Services at Academic Libraries: A Study of Telangana State Universities

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ABSTRACT

The primary of this study is to examine the use pattern and their preference of web-based services by patrons of university libraries of Telangana state. It is hypothesized that users at higher-tier institutions (Central Universities) utilize online tools for more nuanced content filtering (Abstracts) compared to their peers at State Universities who prioritize speed (Titles). For this purpose, the researched administered a questionnaire using survey method. The primary data was collected from the library users of state and central universities of Telangana, analyzed the data with SPSS-26.0 and the results obtained through descriptive statistics were presented in tables. The findings shows that 28.9% state university users preferred 'read-only tiles online', 39.5% central university users preferred 'read abstract only online' and both university users given preference to 'read only titles online'. It is concluded that reading only titles is the most significant common preference across the combined sample, suggesting that online platforms are primarily used for initial discovery and filtering rather than comprehensive consumption.

Keywords: Web-Based Technology, Read pattern, Download pattern, Universities.

1.0 INTRODUCTION

With the development of technology in modern society, the users of academic libraries are also changing their attitude towards new environments and offering new Web-based library services. For this purpose, how the users, i.e., students, scholars and faculty of universities, are using the Web-based library services and what are the parameters or access points to retrieve the information through Web-based services.

Regarding information retrieval, the students, scholars and faculty of either state or central universities use a number of web applications. The preference of use patterns are based on retrieval of online titles, online abstracts, read online, save the text, store the information in secondary format, and sometimes download them. In this paper, the researchers draws the use patterns of state and central university respondents' preferences.

The Web-based Library Services are those that are delivered through the Internet and the library website acts as a gateway with the help of an integrated library management system. It offers the special ability to link to full-text articles, policies, staff lists, cleaning procedures, and other library resources for quick assistance.

The responses received from the users to all the questions are analyzed and presented in the form of tables and figures. The analyzed data were interpreted in the data analysis and interpretation section.

2.0 REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Numerous research studies have been conducted by several researchers on web-based library services. For example, in second decade of 21st century, Madhusudhan and Nagabhushanam (2012)¹ outlined certain ways that university libraries might use the web to enhance and create new and imaginative online-based library services. Gichora and Kwanya (2015)² looked at how Web 2.0 tools are used in Kenyan academic libraries and found that they improve the efficacy and efficiency of the services Umesha Naik (2017)³ undertaken a research in response to the issue of the importance of academic library Web sites as a tool for the content representation. Shivakumaraswamy (2019)⁴ and Patil & Dhananjaya (2020)⁵ examined the utilization of web based information resource by library user community conducted at Mysore City Engineering Colleges and at GMIT Engineering College, Davanagere.

Later, Deepa (2022)⁶ emphasized the importance of library and information service personnel need to acquire the advanced technological skills necessary to utilize web-based services to their full potential. The usage and trends of web-based services in Telangana state university libraries were investigated by Kiran Kumar and Chandrashekhara Rao (2023)⁷. The current condition of college libraries in the state of Goa was carried out by Bala and Vitthalrao (2024)⁸ in order to investigate the web-based services that these libraries provide. Bhosale and Patil (2023)⁹ and Kapoor and Tiwari (2025)¹⁰ focused to assess the utility and effectiveness of web-based library resources and services in assistance of academic activities. In recent studies, Ramteke et al. (2025)¹¹ explained the key benefits of web-based library services such as - 24/7 accessibility, expanded reach, enhanced user experience, cost-effective and innovation and collaboration. Ranasinghe and Angamma (2025)¹² findings revealed that the library professionals have adopted various web-based library services and facilities on the websites of the universities.

Research Gap: Based on the literature discussed in the above section, the earlier studies mainly focused on use of web 2.0 tools, content studies of web sites, different web-based services for library users, acquire of advanced technological skills necessary to utilize web-based services, benefits of web-based library services, etc., for benefit of library patrons. As such there is a research gap. Therefore, the researchers thought that there is a need of research on user preferences of web-based services at academic libraries.

Objective: Based on the research gap found the following objective is outlined: To read and download patterns of web-based library services at state and central university users of Hyderabad and Telangana.

Hypothesis: The users at higher-tier institutions (Central Universities) utilize online tools for more nuanced content filtering (Abstracts) compared to their peers at State Universities who prioritize speed (Titles).

3.0 METHODOLOGY

The investigators followed a survey method. They reviewed literature and compiled secondary sources like books, research preview studies, periodicals, journals, issued reports, theses, publications, books, websites, etc. The primary data was collected administering a research questionnaire 109 teaching faculty and 150 research scholars of state and central universities of Telangana state in India. The questionnaire consists of information on user preferences of web-based library services. Using descriptive means and simple dialogue boxes helped do most of the work. The publication Manual of the American Psychological Association (6th ed.) is used for providing references and citations.

4.0 DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Table 1 explains preferences on the use patterns of Web-based library services by the users of state university libraries. 50 (28.9%) of them have given their first preference to ‘read-only titles online’ and 29 (16.8%) to read abstract-only online and placed it in second preference. The third, fourth and fifth ranks were given to ‘read full text in online’, ‘read online and print abstract’ and ‘download without reading abstract’, respectively, with 34 (19.7%), 59 (34.1%) and 37 (21.4%) preferences. The respondents placed the Web-Based pattern ‘Download and print with reading full text’ in eighth preference with 41 (23.7%). Finally, the pattern ‘Download and read later on a computer screen’ was preferred by 42 (24.3%) and it was given as their last preference.

The central university respondents preferred the user pattern ‘read abstract only online’ in the first place with 34 (39.5%). The second preferred user pattern was ‘read online and save full text’ with 17 (19.8%), and the third preference was ‘download online and full text’ with 34 (39.5%). The patterns ‘read online and print abstract’, ‘download without reading abstract’ and ‘download and print with reading full text’ were preferred fourth, fifth and sixth, respectively, with 16 (18.6%), 17 (19.8%) and 12 (14.0%) respondents. They placed the ‘read the full-text online’ as the ninth preference (12 or 14.0%) and the tenth preference occupied by the pattern ‘download and read later on a computer screen’ (14 or 16.3%). The responses of both types of universities, indicate the use pattern of Web-based library services ‘read-only titles online’, is given as their first preference by 65 (25.1%) respondents, followed by the pattern ‘download online and full text’ (62 or 23.9%). The ‘read online and print abstract’ user pattern occupied the fourth preference with the percentage of 29.0, and the ‘download without reading abstract’ pattern was preferred by 54 (20.8%) respondents, which is their fifth preference. The sixth preference is ‘download and save in storage device’ (16.6%). The respondents also chosen the ‘download and print with reading full text’ pattern (49 or 18.9%), and they gave it as their eighth preference. The last preference, i.e., the tenth, is ‘download and read it later on a computer screen’ (56 or 21.6%).

Table 1: User Preferences on Use Pattern of Web-Based service at State University Libraries (N=173)

Sl. No.	Use pattern	First	Second	Third	Fourth	Fifth	Sixth	Seventh	Eighth	Ninth	Tenth	Not responded
1.	Read only titles online	50	29	18	0	25	3	12	5	17	7	7
		28.9 %	16.8 %	10.4 %	0.0%	14.5 %	1.7%	6.9%	2.9%	9.8%	4.0%	4.0%

2.	Read abstract only online	24	29	17	11	6	33	27	14	1	6	5
		13.9 %	16.8 %	9.8%	6.4%	3.5%	19.1 %	15.6 %	8.1%	0.6%	3.5%	2.9%
3.	Read full text online	27	8	34	20	5	23	17	10	22	0	7
		15.6 %	4.6%	19.7 %	11.6 %	2.9%	13.3 %	9.8%	5.8%	12.7 %	0.0%	4.0%
4.	Read online and print abstract	17	5	20	59	19	6	4	10	5	13	15
		9.8%	2.9%	11.6 %	34.1 %	11.0 %	3.5%	2.3%	5.8%	2.9%	7.5%	8.7%
5.	Download without reading abstract	0	12	6	13	37	11	10	21	31	14	18
		0.0%	6.9%	3.5%	7.5%	21.4 %	6.4%	5.8%	12.1 %	17.9 %	8.1%	10.4 %
6.	Download and print with reading full text	17	25	1	4	7	20	13	41	9	0	36
		9.8%	14.5 %	0.6%	2.3%	4.0%	11.6 %	7.5%	23.7 %	5.2%	0.0%	20.8 %
7.	Download online and full text	17	20	28	33	20	10	23	5	0	0	17
		9.8%	11.6 %	16.2 %	19.1 %	11.6 %	5.8%	13.3 %	2.9%	0.0%	0.0%	9.8%
8.	Read online and save full text	0	15	27	17	26	11	12	24	10	16	15
		0.0%	8.7%	15.6 %	9.8%	15.0 %	6.4%	6.9%	13.9 %	5.8%	9.2%	8.7%
9.	Download and save in storage device	17	27	21	5	7	32	10	6	22	9	17
		9.8%	15.6 %	12.1 %	2.9%	4.0%	18.5 %	5.8%	3.5%	12.7 %	5.2%	9.8%
10.	Download and read later on a computer screen	13	2	12	5	18	7	22	1	25	42	26
		7.5%	1.2%	6.9%	2.9%	10.4 %	4.0%	12.7 %	0.6%	14.5 %	24.3 %	15.0 %

Table 2: User Preferences on Use Pattern of Web-Based service at Central University Libraries (N=86)

Sl. No	Use pattern	First	Second	Third	Fourth	Fifth	Sixth	Seventh	Eighth	Ninth	Tenth	Not responded
1.	Read only titles online	15 17.4 %	15 17.4 %	5 5.8%	0 0.0%	5 5.8%	5 5.8%	4 4.7%	3 3.5%	12 14.0 %	4 4.7%	18 20.9 %
2.	Read abstract only online	34 39.5 %	10 11.6 %	5 5.8%	3 3.5%	4 4.7%	5 5.8%	8 9.3%	5 5.8%	0 0.0%	4 4.7%	8 9.3%
3.	Read full text online	8 9.3%	5 5.8%	12 14.0 %	12 14.0 %	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	5 5.8%	8 9.3%	12 14.0 %	0 0.0%	24 27.9 %
4.	Read online and print abstract	6 7.0%	10 11.6 %	5 5.8%	16 18.6 %	5 5.8%	5 5.8%	0 0.0%	3 3.5%	8 9.3%	3 3.5%	25 29.1 %
5.	Download without reading abstract	5 5.8%	3 3.5%	4 4.7%	7 8.1%	17 19.8 %	1 1.2%	1 1.2%	4 4.7%	3 3.5%	14 16.3 %	27 31.4 %
6.	Download and print with reading full text	8 9.3%	12 14.0 %	2 2.3%	0 0.0%	12 14.0 %	12 14.0 %	3 3.5%	8 9.3%	0 0.0%	0 0.0%	29 33.7 %
7.	Download online and full text	0 0.0%	10 11.6 %	34 39.5 %	9 10.5 %	0 0.0%	11 12.8 %	10 11.6 %	2 2.3%	1 1.2%	3 3.5%	6 7.0%
8.	Read online and save full text	0 0.0%	17 19.8 %	7 8.1%	10 11.6 %	7 8.1%	3 3.5%	12 14.0 %	10 11.6 %	6 7.0%	5 5.8%	9 10.5 %
9.	Download and save in	3 3.5%	6 7.0%	7 8.1%	2 2.3%	7 8.1%	11 12.8 %	6 7.0%	7 8.1%	10 11.6 %	1 1.2%	26 30.2 %

	storage device											
10.	Download and read later on computer screen	7 8.1%	0 0.0%	9 10.5%	2 2.3%	4 4.7%	4 4.7%	8 9.3%	0 0.0%	10 11.6%	14 16.3%	28 32.6%

Table 3: User Preferences on Use Pattern of Web-Based service at Both University Libraries (N=259)

Sl. No.	Use pattern	First	Second	Third	Fourth	Fifth	Sixth	Seventh	Eighth	Ninth	Tenth	Not responded
1.	Read only titles online	65 25.1%	44 17.0%	23 8.9%	0 0.0%	30 11.6%	8 3.1%	16 6.2%	8 3.1%	29 11.2%	11 4.2%	25 9.7%
2.	Read abstract only online	58 22.4%	39 15.1%	22 8.5%	14 5.4%	10 3.9%	38 14.7%	35 13.5%	19 7.3%	1 0.4%	10 3.9%	13 5.0%
3.	Read full text online	35 13.5%	13 5.0%	46 17.8%	32 12.4%	5 1.9%	23 8.9%	22 8.5%	18 6.9%	34 13.1%	0 0.0%	31 12.0%
4.	Read online and print abstract	23 8.9%	15 5.8%	25 9.7%	75 29.0%	24 9.3%	11 4.2%	4 1.5%	13 5.0%	13 5.0%	16 6.2%	40 15.4%
5.	Download without reading abstract	5 1.9%	15 5.8%	10 3.9%	20 7.7%	54 20.8%	12 4.6%	11 4.2%	25 9.7%	34 13.1%	28 10.8%	45 17.4%
6.	Download and print with reading full text	25 9.7%	37 14.3%	3 1.2%	4 1.5%	19 7.3%	32 12.4%	16 6.2%	49 18.9%	9 3.5%	0 0.0%	65 25.1%
7.	Download	17	30	62	42	20	21	33	7	1	3	23

	d online and full text	6.6%	11.6%	23.9%	16.2%	7.7%	8.1%	12.7%	2.7%	0.4%	1.2%	8.9%
8.	Read online and save full text	0	32	34	27	33	14	24	34	16	21	24
		0.0%	12.4%	13.1%	10.4%	12.7%	5.4%	9.3%	13.1%	6.2%	8.1%	9.3%
9.	Download and save in storage device	20	33	28	7	14	43	16	13	32	10	43
		7.7%	12.7%	10.8%	2.7%	5.4%	16.6%	6.2%	5.0%	12.4%	3.9%	16.6%
10.	Download and read later on a computer screen	20	2	21	7	22	11	30	1	35	56	54
		7.7	0.8%	8.1%	2.7%	8.5%	4.2%	11.6%	0.4%	13.5%	21.6%	20.8%

5.0 FINDINGS

The analysis revealed that

- 28.9% of state university respondents gave their first preference to ‘read-only tiles online’,
- 34 (39.5%) central university respondents preferred the use pattern ‘read abstract only online’ and placed in the first place.
- 65 (25.1%) respondents from both universities have given the use pattern ‘read only titles online’ as their first preference.

6.0 CONCLUSION

In light of the findings, it is concluded that ‘reading only titles’ is the most significant common preference across the collective sample, suggesting that online platforms are primarily used for initial discovery and filtering rather than comprehensive consumption.

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