USE OF ICT & E- RESOURCE AMONG PUBLIC LIBRARY USERS OF NORTH 24 PARGANA DISTRICT, WEST BENGAL: DESCRIPTIVE CUM SURVEY STUDY

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Abstract

Public libraries always play an important role towards development of our society as well as our nation from ancient time. The role of the public libraries and its usage patterns have changed a lot over the centuries and the pattern of library users have also changed over the time with the advancement of Information Technology. In this paper I mainly discussed about use of E-resource among selected public libraries users in North 24 PGS districts, West Bengal, India. It is found that most of the users are aware of information technology application, about 82% users use some forms of ICT tools to reading purposes among them most of the users are men belongs to the age group 16 to 30. Only 18% users they do not use any ICT tools regarding reading purposes, among them most of them children and old people belong to the age group 5 to 15 and 40 to 65 because lack of knowledge about uses of ICT tools and lack of money.

Key words: *West Bengal, North 24 PGS, Public library, ICT uses, Public Library Users*.

1. Introduction

West Bengal is one of the prominent states of India as well as in the world, its population about more than 91 million (census 2011). North 24 PGS is one of the 23 districts of West Bengal whose population is approx. 10,009,781 (Census 2011) and total area 4,094 km^2 (1,581 sq mi). Presently in West Bengal there are 2480 Public Libraries in West Bengal out of which, there is 13 Govt. Public Libraries, 2460 Govt. Sponsored Public Libraries and 7 Govt. Aided Public Libraries. Out of 2473 Govt. and Govt. sponsored Libraries there are 1 State Central Library, 1 Special Library (i.e. Uttarpara Jaikrishna Public Library), and 26 District Libraries, 236 Town / Sub division Libraries and 2209 Rural / Area / Primary Unit Libraries. In North 24 PGS district total no of libraries is 225 (Two hundred twenty-five) among them number of Govt. Libraries is 3 (three), number of Govt. sponsored libraries-District library is 1 (one), Govt. sponsored libraries-Town / Sub-divisional/upgraded Town library is 38 (thirty-eight), Govt. sponsored libraries- Rural/Primary unit/ area library is 182 (One hundred eighty-two) and Govt. aided libraries is 1 (one). The total no of books in all these libraries is 18,03,392 as per record of directorate of library services in West Bengal [1], 2017. Among these 15 libraries are selected for study and no of respondents among 15 libraries are 150.

2. Literature Review

This kind of study is the first time that's why no related information is not available on the web. So it is not possible to conduct literature reviews on narrower terms, so all the literature review here discussed on the basis of broader term. The public libraries have veritably important part in the society. It builds Citizen, educate individual, and fosters thoughtful communities. The free-flowing nature of public libraries support the knowledge programme tied with artistic values for community development. Public libraries are original gateways to information for individual and social development. Public libraries give common platform, make vital donation towards the social capital, educational and recreational development of original communities and enhances popular values among people [2]. Libraries are one amongst the few places within the world that offer even the worst-off individuals an opportunity to enhance themselves. There are plenty of activities that you simply will do there [3]. Information and communication technologies have greatly affected human life. Since the industrial revolution, man has begun to develop machines and equipment that facilitate his work. Information and communication technology contributes greatly to education because it improves the way of education and provides a better educational environment, through the use of computers, tablets, data displays, interactive electronic boards, and others in the process of communicating information to students [4]. Data from Statista and Internet World Stats estimates the total number of internet users in 2021 is between 4.3 billion to 5 billion active users [5]. In 2021, the number of mobile users worldwide stood at 7.1 billion, with forecasts suggesting this is likely to rise to 7.26 billion by 2022. In 2025, the number of mobile users worldwide is projected to reach 7.49 billion [6].

3. Purposes of the study

Public libraries are one of the most valuable key factors in today's modern societies as information providers, as information bank. Today in 21st century ICT is connected with our every aspect our lives, like education, health, etc. The purposes of the present study are discovering the accessibility status and use of ICT and e-resources for study or reading purposes among the users of public libraries, also the differences in the accessibility status and use of ICT and e-resources for academic purposes by the male and female users of selected public libraries and finally discovering the differences in the accessibility status and use of ICT and e-resources for study or reading purposes by the different kind of users on the basis of age of selected public libraries of North 24 PGS district, West Bengal.

4. Objective of the study

The main objectives of the study are-

1. To find out the accessibility status and use of ICT and e-resources for study or reading purposes by the users of public libraries of North 24 PGS district, West Bengal.

2. To find out the differences in the accessibility status and use of ICT and e-resources for academic purposes by the male and female users of selected public libraries of North 24 PGS district, West Bengal

3. To find out the differences in the accessibility status and use of ICT and e-resources for academic purposes by the age of users of selected public libraries of North 24 PGS district, West Bengal.

5. Hypothesis

Hypothesis– 1: Most of users of public libraries are well known about 21st centuries ICT skills and about using Electronic resources of North 24 PGS district, West Bengal.

Hypothesis– 2: There is no significant difference in the accessibility status and use of e-resources for study or reading purposes by the male and female users of selected public libraries of North 24 PGS district, West Bengal.

Hypothesis– 3: There is a significant difference in the accessibility status and use of e-resources for study or reading purposes by the age factors of users of selected public libraries of North 24 PGS district, West Bengal.

6. Name of the public libraries of North 24 PGS from where samples are collected are given below:

Table 1 shows the list of public libraries of North 24 PGS district. These were collected from the list of public libraries in North 24 PGS available at West Bengal Directorate of Library Services website.

Sl.	Name of Library	No. of Respondents
1	Abhijatri Pragatishil Anchalik Panchayet Pathagar	8
2	Chanak Pathagar	6
3	Barrackpur Jimnasiam Library	9
4	Sriguru Granthashram	6
5	Bandipur Sammilani Pathagar	7
6	Jagarani(Tirthabharati) Library	5
7	Panihati Town Library	12
8	Panshila Sadharan Granthagar	9
9	Swami Vivekananda Seba Samiti Granthagar	7
10	Subhas Institute Sub Divisional Library	11
11	Nabarup Granthagar	6
12	Sanskriti Sansad Public Library	8
13	Birati Aikatan library	9
14	Bharati Milan Sangha Granthagar	8
15	Agarpara Pathagar	7
16	Panshila Sadharan Granthagar	10
17	Najrul Pathagar	9
18	Ajoy Mukherjee Smriti Pathagar	6
19	Ramkrishna Mission Boy's Home District Library	7

Table 1 Names of the public libraries of North 24 PGS from where samples are collected

7. Methodology

The investigator had used the descriptive – cum – survey method for this study. The constituted populations of this study were the users of public library from different public libraries of North 24 PGS district of West Bengal. A self-developed questionnaire has administered on the sample for the collection of data through email, interview, Google form and using some social networking site. To reach the users researcher uses different WhatsApp groups, Facebook groups of public libraries of North 24 PGS district and also uses some personal contacts and library visit. The sample of this study comprised of 150 respondent [90 (60%) male and 60 (40%) female] users coming under the population of this study and the selection of the sample had done randomly from different age group. Mostly Snowball sampling techniques used to gather information and identify the respondents from different public libraries of North 24 PGS districts. The analysis and interpretation of the data has done by the use of a simple percentage (%) through Microsoft Excel.

8. Analysis and Interpretation

The analyses of the study has been made as per the objective wise as given below:

Objective-1

1. To find out the accessibility status and use of e-resources for study purposes by the users of public libraries of North 24 PGS district, West Bengal.

Use of E-Resource	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Always	45	30%
Sometime	78	52%
Never	27	18%
Total	150	100%

Table 2 Percentage analysis of the Use of e-resources for study or reading Purposes

Interpretation – In table 2 it is seen that an exceedingly high proportion i.e. 52% of users indicated that they 'Sometimes' make use of e-resources for their study or reading purposes while 30% of users indicated that they 'Always' use e-resources and only 18% indicated that they 'Never' make use of e-resources for study or reading purposes.

Device Used to access e-resources	Frequency	Percentage %
Smart Phone	60	40%
Tablet+ Smart Phone	9	6%
Laptop+ Smart Phone	24	16%
Desktop+ Smart Phone	30	20%
Don't Use (Include mobile phone without Internet Connection)	27	18%
Total	150	100%

Table 3 Percentage analysis of Device used to access e-resources by the users of selected public libraries for study or reading Purposes

Interpretation – In table 3, it has been seen that 40% of users indicated the use of 'Smartphone' for accessing e-resources. While 6% indicated the use of 'Tablet', and similarly 16%, 20% indicated the use of 'Laptop' and 'Desktop'. It had also found that 18% of users do not use any device for accessing e-resources.

The place for Internet connection	Frequency	Percentage %
Library	0	0
Home	84	56%
Cyber cafes	21	14%
Others	18	12%
Don't Access	27	18%
Total	150	100%

Table 4 Percentage analysis of Place for Internet connections for accessing e-resources for study or reading Purposes by the users of selected public libraries

Interpretation – In table-4 The majority of the users i.e. 56% reported that they access e-resources in their 'Home'. While 12% access e-resources in 'Other place', 14% access in 'Cyber Cafes', 18% indicated that they don't access e-resources and it had also found that no users access the internet from the library.

Frequency of Access to e-resources	Frequency	Percentage %
Daily	21	14%
Weekly	45	30%
Monthly	39	26%
Occasionally	18	12%
Never	27	18%
Total	150	100%

Table 5 Percentage analysis of Frequency of Access of e-resources for study or reading Purposes by the users of selected public libraries

Interpretation – The majority of the users i.e. 30% reported that they access e-resources 'Weekly'. While 14% access e-resources 'Daily', 26% access 'Monthly', 12% access 'Occasionally' and it had found that 18% of users 'Never Access' e-resources.

Time/Hours spent on the access of e-resources	Frequency	Percentage %
0-10 hours in a month	18	12%
10-20 hours in a month	39	26%
20-30 hours in a month	45	30%
More than 30 hours in a month	21	14%
Don't spent	27	18%
Total	150	100%

Table 6 Percentage analysis of Time/Hours spent on the access of e-resources for study or reading Purposes by the users of selected public libraries

Interpretation – Large proportion of the users i.e. 30% reported that they spent '20-30 hours' in a month accessing e-resources. While 26% access e-resources '10 – 20 hours' in a month, 14% access 'more than 30 hours', 12% access '0-10 hours' in a month and it had found that 18 % of users 'Don't Spend' time for accessing e-resources.

Objective-2

2. To find out the differences in the accessibility status and use of e-resources for academic purposes by the male and female users of selected public libraries of North 24 PGS district, West Bengal.

Use of e-resources/ gender	Always	Sometime	Never	Total
Male	25	50	15	90
Female	20	28	12	60
Total	45	78	27	150

Table 7 Observed Frequency on the use of e-resources for the study purpose of male and female users of selected public libraries

Device/Gender	Smart Phone	Tablet	Laptop	Desktop	Don't Use	Total
Male	35	5	14	21	15	90
Female	25	4	10	9	12	60
Total	60	9	24	30	27	150

Table 8 Observed Frequency on the device used to access e-resources for the study purpose of male and female users of selected public libraries

Frequency/Gender	Library	Home	Cyber cafes	others	Don't access	Total
Male	0	53	12	10	15	90
Female	0	31	9	8	12	60
Total	0	84	21	18	27	150

Table 9 Observed Frequency on the preferred place for accessing e-resources for the study purpose of male and female users of selected public libraries

Frequency/Gender	Daily	Weekly	Monthly	Occasionally	Never access	Total
Male	15	33	15	12	15	90
Female	6	12	24	6	12	60
Total	21	45	39	18	27	150

Table 10 Observed Frequency on the frequency of access of e-resources for the study and reading purpose of male and female users of selected public libraries

Time/Gender	0-10 hours Monthly	10-20 hours Monthly	20-30 hours Monthly	More than 30 hours monthly	Don't spent	Total
Male	12	15	33	15	15	90
Female	6	24	12	6	12	60
Total	18	39	45	21	27	150

Table 11 Observed Frequency on the time/hours spent on the access of e-resources for the study and reading purpose of male and female users of selected public libraries

Objective-3

3. To find out the differences in the accessibility status and use of e-resources for academic purposes by the age of users of selected public libraries of North 24 PGS district, West Bengal.

Frequency/Age/ Gender	10 -20 years	20-30 years	30-40 years	40-50 years	More than 50 years	Total
Male	12	30	22	10	16	90
Female	8	25	18	5	4	60
Total	20	55	40	15	20	150

Table 12 Age wise Male and Female access of e-resources for study or reading Purposes by the users of selected public libraries

Time/Hours spent on the access of e-resources Age wise	Frequency	Use	Use (%) on age wise	Use (%)on Total sample	Not use	Not use (%) age wise	Not use (%) on Total sample
10-20 years	20	12	60%	8%	8	40%	5.333%
20-30 years	55	54	98.1818%	36%	1	1.8181%	0.666%
30-40 years	40	39	97.5%	26%	1	2.50%	0.666%
40-50 years	15	12	80%	8%	3	20%	2%
More than 50 years	20	6	30%	4%	14	70%	9.333%
Total	150	123		82%	27		18%

Table 13 Percentage analysis of age wise access of e-resources for study or reading Purposes by the users of selected public libraries

Time/Hours spent on the access of e-resources Gender wise	Total Frequency	Male Users	Male users		Use (%) of Male user age wise	Female	Female users		Use (%)of Female users age wise
			Use	Not use			Use	Not use	
10-20 years	20	12	6	6	50%	8	6	2	50%
20-30 years	55	30	30		100%	25	24	1	96%
30-40 years	40	22	21	1	95.45%	18	16	2	88.88%
40-50 years	15	10	9	1	90%	5	2	3	40%
More than 50 years	20	16	8	8	50%	4	1	3	25%
Total	150	90	74	16		60	49	11	

Table 14 Percentage analysis of gender and age wise access of e-resources for study or reading Purposes by the users of selected public libraries

Hypothesis –

Hypothesis – 1: There is no significant difference in the accessibility status and use of e-resources for study or reading purposes by the male and female users of selected public libraries of North 24 PGS district, West Bengal.

ICT Usage prediction among different users in selected public libraries	
ICT & E-resource Using (%)	**ICT & E-resource not Using (%)**
82 %	18 %

Table 15 ICT and E-Resources usage statistics
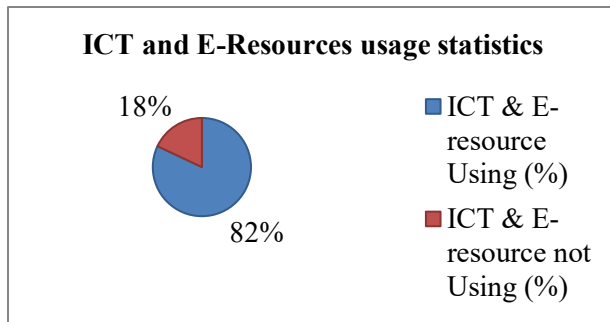
Figure 1 ICT and E-Resources usage statistics

Hypothesis– 2: There is no significant difference in the accessibility status and use of e-resources for study or reading purposes by the male and female users of selected public libraries of North 24 PGS district, West Bengal.

ICT Usage prediction among Male and Female user in selected public libraries	
Male	**Female**
82.2222%	81.6666%

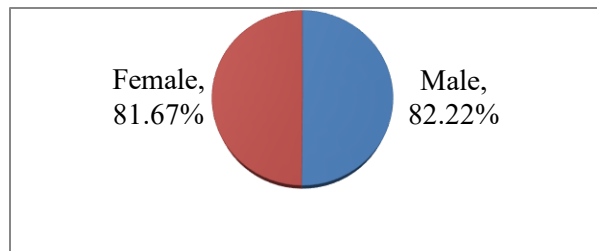**Table 16** ICT Usage prediction among Male and Female user in selected public libraries

Figure 2 ICT Usage prediction among Male and Female user in selected public libraries

Hypothesis – 3: There is a significant difference in the accessibility status and use of e-resources for study or reading purposes by the age factors of users of selected public libraries of North 24 PGS district, West Bengal

Time/Hours spent on the access of e-resources Gender wise	Total Frequency	Not using E-resources	Use (%) on age wise
10-20 years	20	8	60%
20-30 years	55	1	98.1818%
30-40 years	40	3	97.5%
40-50 years	15	4	80%
More than 50 years	20	11	30%
Total	150	27	

Table 15 Accessibility and use of e-resources for study or reading purposes by the age factors of users
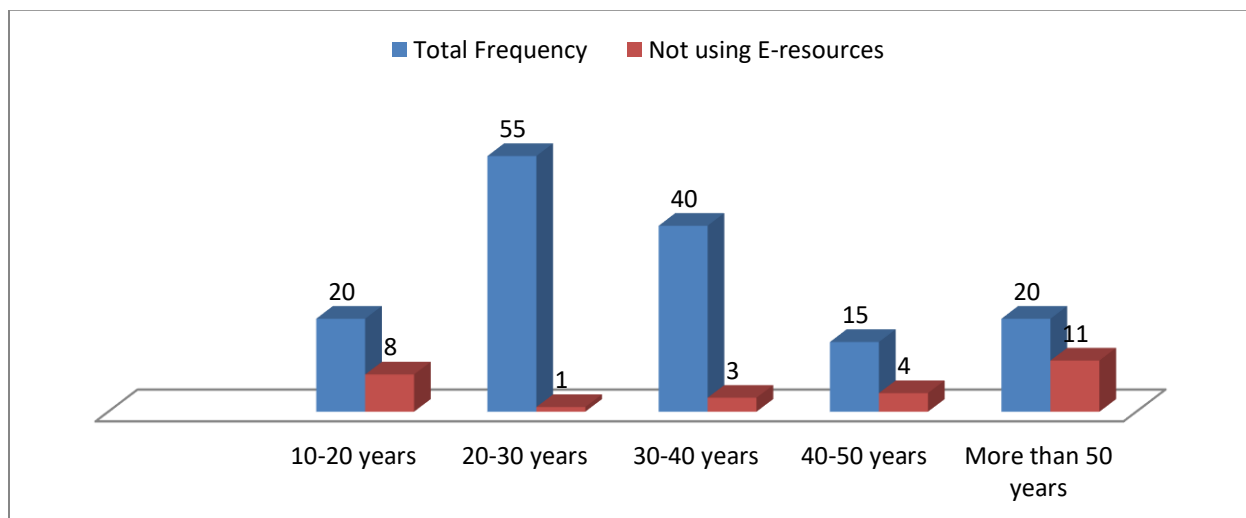
Figure 3 Time/Hours spent on the access of e-resources Gender wise

Interpretation –

a) It is clear from the table that there is no significant difference between male and female users on the Use of e-resources for their academic purposes.

b) Results through (%) using Microsoft Excel test also exposed that there is no major dissimilarity between male and female users on the use of devices/ gadgets to access e-resources for academic purposes.

c) Similarly, it has also revealed that there is no significant difference between male and female users on the preferred place for accessing e-resources

d) However, the table depicts that there is no significant difference between male and female users on the frequency of access to e-resources.

e) It had also found that no significant difference between male and female users on the time/ hours spent on the access of e-resources.

8. Results and Discussion

In this study, it has found that a large proportion of users i.e. 82 % reported that they make use of e-resources among them most of them using e-resources for reading and study purposes 'Sometimes' 52% while 30% use e-resources 'Always' and 18% 'Never' use e-resources for their reading and study purposes purpose. A large group of users i.e. 40% reported using 'Smartphone' for accessing e-resources as followed by 'tablet' (6%), 'Laptop' (16%), 'Desktop' (20%) respectively. Only 18% reported them not using any kind e-resource. Among them most of the users are belongs to the age group more than 50 years are not using any kind of e-resources or ICT tools for reading or study purposes is (70 %), and also belongs to the age group 10 to 20 years not using percentage is 40%. The majority of the users (56 %) reported accessing the internet or e-resources at 'Home' while 14% access from 'Other place' 12 % access from 'Cyber Cafes' and 18% 'Never' use e-resources for their reading and study purposes. A high percentage (30%) of respondent indicated to access e-resources 'Weekly' followed by 26% (Monthly), 14% (Daily), 12% (Occasionally).

30% of the respondents had found to spent 20-30 hours in a month accessing e-resources and 26% (10-20 hours in a month), 14% (More than 30 hours in a month), and 12% (0-10 hours in a month.). Besides this, it has also been found that gender (male and female users) do not differ on the use of e-resources, on the use of device/gadget to access e-resources as well as on the preferred place for accessing e-resources. However, any kind of gender divide (difference) has not been found in the frequency of access to e-resources and time/ hours spent on access to e-resources.

9. Conclusion

ICT is the demand or need of the present time.ICT is now inextricably linked in every aspect of our life. We cannot deny the importance of ICT tools in the field of education and our daily life. From the above study it was found that most of the people are currently using ICT among public library users. But it is also found that still some people uses only hard copy for study and reading purposes they are not using any kind of ICT devices. However the hope is that use of ICT tools in the field of education in our country has grown exponentially at present and is expected to increase further in future.

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