

Web 2.0 Usage in University Libraries in Karachi

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ABSTRACT

Library services are reshaping round the clock and paradigm shift from manual to virtual space. Users to Users (U2U) service sharing information, ideas, views, comments, blogging, tagging frequently updating of information on web domain and instant replies of users query is big challenge task for the information experts and librarian. Information handling is become testing task due to opening of multiple channels of information. Dynamic role of information via web 2.0 create an unlimited responsibility to information provider, facilitator and users.

The topic is so significant due to its importance because it's directly link with the skills of library professionals if they have good skills & technique related to web this will be more beneficial for library users. In this challenging environment we review the Web 2.0 technology impact universities Librarian in Karachi which is the mega city of Pakistan. The purpose of this research study is to find the librarians and library staff Web 2.0 skills at universities in Karachi.

Keywords: Web 2.0, university libraries, library skills

LITERATURE REVIEW

During this study different literature were reviewed like The Changing Role of Librarians in the Digital World: Adoption of Web 2.0 Technologies in Pakistani Libraries by Arif, M. & Mehmood, K. (2010)¹. Use of Web 2.0 and its Implications for Libraries: Perceptions of information professionals in Pakistan (Ata-ur-Rehman & Shafique, F. (2011) ². Web 2.0 and libraries: Facts or Myths by Aqil, M., Ahmad, P. and Siddique M. A. (2011) ³. Application of Social Application of social media in marketing of library and information services: A case study from Pakistan Bhatti, R. and Shakeel Ahmed, S (2012)⁴. This work is different from the above pervious works because it focus on universities of Karachi librarian either from public sector or private sector.

METHODOLOGY

Questionnaire designed and floated into librarian and other library staff via e-mails and online (monkey survey) period between 04 Jan to 14 April 2014. Few senior librarians interviewed and personal observation included during the visits of different universities. Data analysis and tested with SPSS windows version 17.

Introduction

Static characteristics of Web 1.0 where communication channel use in flat wave however in web 2.0 communication channels use in transverse wave in dynamic waves. Birdsall ⁵ (2007) believes that web 2.0 is a social movement it can revolute the library services.

The concept of collaborative communicative, social networking and the usage of these applications have brought a major change in the internet usage style of internet surfers in the world. The fame of social networking applications, blogs and sharing of media has also altered the entire mode of practices in library science as well as and a new concept of Library

2.0 has been introduced⁶. Web 2.0 application tool become very important component of society its make great impact on information professionals.

Library 2.0

The idea of Library 2.0 was first generated by Michael Casey and published on his blog, library crunch in 2006⁷. The idea is a transformation of the library services the way they are delivered to the user community, basically allowing the library services to operate in an interactive, collaborative atmosphere driven by community needs. Library 2.0 encourages synchronous social interactions between library staff and users. It is evident from the characteristics of library services that many things of what libraries implemented in the first generation of web are static.

RSS Feeds

The RSS abbreviates for 'Rich Site Summary' or 'Real Simple Syndication'. Weblogs another sites can support a 'feed' in XML language which enables anyone to pledge the content and receive it on their chosen page, thereby eliminating the need to visit the site repeatedly. It is a web utility which facilitates the publication of frequently updated works such as news headlines, blog entries, and audio-video files in a standard format. It is a channel for a subscriber to automatically receive updates from blogs, newspaper, and podcast.

Libraries may apply this idea to provide the current awareness services to its use community, upcoming new items, services, and new content which have been added in the library collection and databases. Updates on library services, events, exhibition etc. can also be accessed by subscribing to the RSS feeds from the library website. Zanin-Yost⁸ mentioned the utility of exhibitions or other events of the library; RSS saves the time of librarian and user community as librarian has choice which links can be distributed; and user has choice what to receive or accept.

Instant Messaging

Instant messaging (IM), also known as synchronous messaging allows real time text communication between individuals and groups. This utility has already been adopted by many libraries especially in the western world. Libraries can provide the reference services such as 'chat reference' via IM applications where users can communicate with reference librarians in a real time environment or as they would in a face to face communication.

Maness⁹ expressed the similar views, "the time will almost certainly soon come when web reference is nearly indistinguishable from face to face reference; librarians and patrons will see and hear each other, and will share screens and files". There is plenty of free software available such as Skype, gtalk AIM, which can provide the real time face to face virtual reference services, through which users can start the interactive video session with a reference librarian. Though this concept is becoming very popular in developed countries, it's still not so well-liked in the third world countries. Librarians of the third world countries must pay their notice towards this as it is one of the efficient tools to handle real time reference queries.

A simple example can be of Chat services at Van Pelt/ Opie Library, Michigan Technological University¹⁰. It is evident how the library has expanded its real time reference services to include both instant messaging (IM) and embedded web chat. Both of the services are available during reference desk hours and work best to get quick answers to brief reference queries.

Web Podcasting

The term ‘podcasting’ was first mentioned by Ben Hammersley ¹¹ in the Guardian newspaper in a February 2004 article, along with other proposed names for the new medium and formally came into existence in the year 2005, when “podcast” was named word of the year by the New Oxford American Dictionary. A podcast (or non streamed webcast) that are released episodically and often downloaded through RSS feed.

The way information is delivered via podcasting makes it significant and different from other methods of accessing media files over the internet such as direct download, or streamed webcasting.

Usually a list of all media files launched earlier and recently on a particular aspect or series is maintained on the network of the service provider. Podcasts use the RSS feeds to distribute the latest information to its target community. The users receive the new items automatically or manually by checking the new updates.

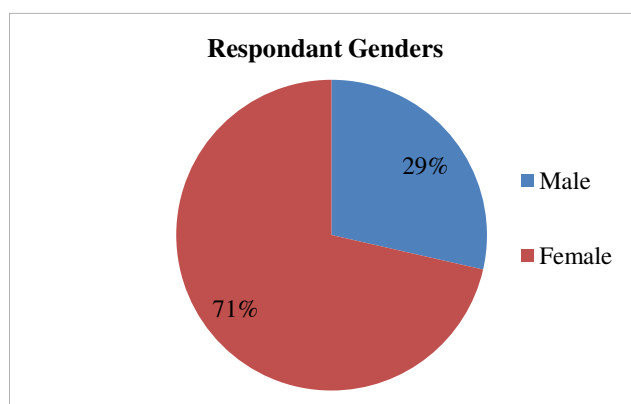
Librarians can do a lot many things with podcasts. For example, podcast could be very helpful for the children with learning or reading disabilities. Podcasts could be a good for kids as they normally like to read loudly. It is also a beneficial and excellent learning tool for the partially deaf, blind and low vision community. Also librarians can record the stories from the books in public domain and organize story telling sessions. The rare books and documents which are in public domain and there is no more copyright issues, can be provided as podcast to target user community. Moreover, libraries might propagate their important audio/video collections, speeches of dignitaries and important personalities, classroom lectures, multimedia presentations to its user community via podcasting.

DATA ANALYSIS & DISCUSSION

Total number of N= 42 respondents from public and private sector universities professional Librarian participated in this survey, 19 (45.23%) were female and rest of them were Male. The frequency distribution is presented in Table 1.

Table 1. (Frequency Distribution of Respondents Gender)

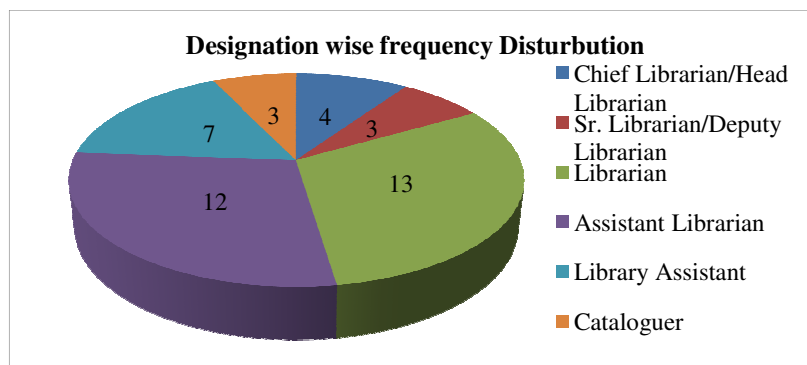
<i>Gender</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Male	23	45.24%
Female	19	54.76%
Total	42	100.00



The participant professional were asked to mention their designation. Table 2 shows that 47.61 percent respondents belonged to the group of Decision making of Chief/Head/Sr/Deputy/Librarian.

Table 2. Frequency Distribution of Respondents Professional Positions

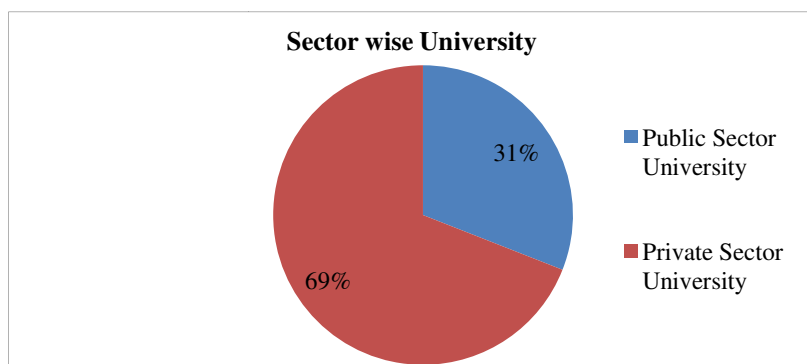
<i>Designation</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Chief Librarian/Head Librarian	04	09.52%
Sr. Librarian/Deputy Librarian	03	07.14%
Librarian	13	30.95%
Assistant Librarian	12	28.57%
Library Assistant	07	16.67%
Cataloguer	03	07.14%



The participant professional were asked to mention their universities either you belongs to private sector university or Public sector University. Table 3 shows that 29 percent respondents from public sector universities and 71% belong to private sector universities

Table 3. Frequency Distribution of Respondents Public/Private Sector Universities

<i>Institution</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Public Sector University	12	28.57%
Private Sector University	30	71.43%
Total	42	100.00



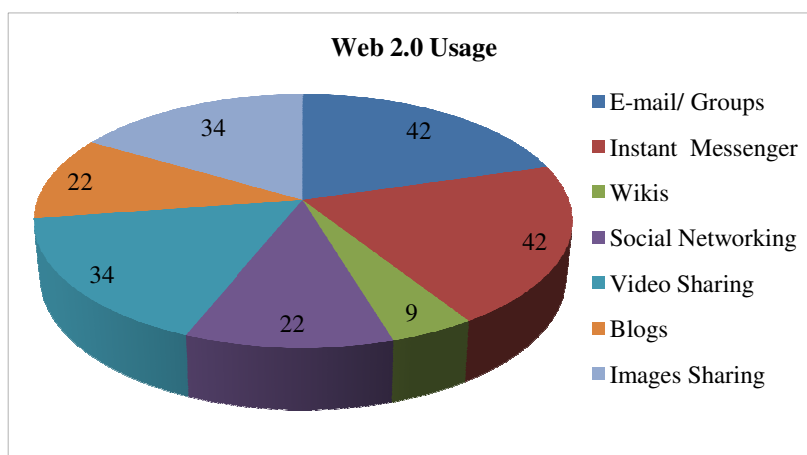
Use of Web 2.0 Technology by the Libraries of Karachi

Frequency of Usage

Respondents were asked about how they usage different web application of web 2.0. Table 4 Shows that except the wikis applications respondent replies is higher than 50%.

Table 4. Descriptive Statistics of Respondent about Web 2.0 Technology

<i>Web 2.0 Application</i>	<i>Total</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
E-mail/ Groups	42	100%
Instant Messenger	42	100%
Wikis	9	21.43%
Social Networking	22	52.38%
Video Sharing	34	80.95%
Blogs	22	52.38%
Images Sharing	34	80.95%

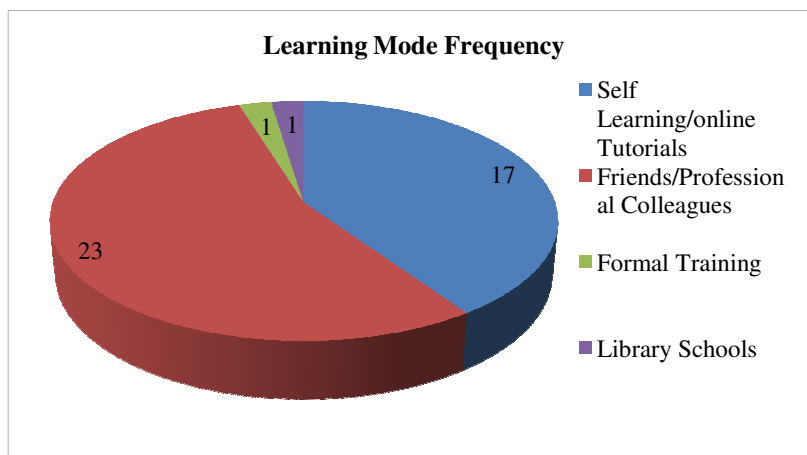


Learning Mode of Web to Technology

Respondents Query about Which mode they Learn Web 2.0 application it was found that 40% Percent of respondent Learn through self-Learning or through online Tutorial other hand 55% Percentage Learn it from their friends/Professional Colleagues Learn through formal training however 5% percent learn from formal training / from library school. Table 5 shows Learning mode of Web 2.0 application by the respondent.

Table 5. Descriptive Statistics of Respondent Learning mode Web 2.0 Technology

<i>Learning Mode</i>	<i>Frequency</i>	<i>Percentage</i>
Self-Learning/online Tutorials	17	40.48%
Friends/Professional Colleagues	23	54.76%
Formal Training	1	02.38%
Library Schools	1	02.38%

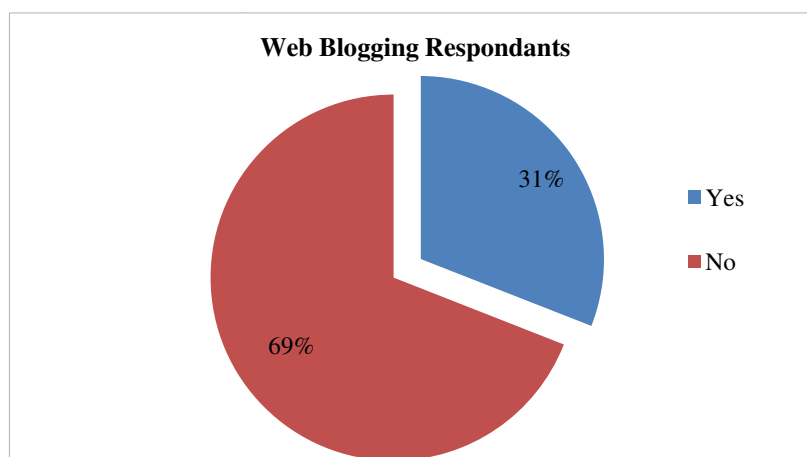


Personal Blogs/Website

For the Assessment of Personal IT Skills of Librarians/Information professional ask them about the possession of personal blog or website by them. The responses of Professionals are shown in Table.6 only 30.95% Percent have skill about personal blogging and websites.

Table 6. Descriptive Statistics of Respondent Personal Blogs/Websites

Possession of Personal Blogs	Frequency	Percentage
Yes	13	30.95%
No	29	69.05%
Total	42	



CONCLUSIONS

Web 2.0 is building library services more creative, it will surely perk up the quality of library services in terms user community needs. In future it will increase the user’s participation in various online library utilities such as cataloguing, classification, reference services, current awareness services, collection development process, information delivery, information retrieval, user orientation programs, library events and news, etc. The librarians, authority and domain will be open to a larger section of the user community and will actively

participate in the various library functions and services. University libraries have already adopted and implemented the Web 2.0 tools, especially in the developed countries, but the third world nations like Pakistan are still far behind in adopting and implementing the Web 2.0 tools mostly because of their restricted and tight budget.

Still in limited resources study reveals that university librarians in Karachi play vital role in web 2.0 application and skills are enough command to satisfy its users. However, training programme with collaboration HEC, library schools or other forum will increase competency of librarian.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Following recommendations are made on basis of this study.

1. Library Curriculum should include about the application of Web 2.0 technology. Through this future information professionals will get awareness about this technology.
2. Hands on practice workshops should be organized by the library schools and professional organizations like PLA, PLWO, PLC, HEC Other Library Organization or National library of Pakistan to groom unskilled IT person to bring in this circle.
3. Library and information science journals /Newsletters and magazines should be available through RSS feeds on their websites. The component of web 2.0 should display on the library websites.
4. Mobile technology can be very vital tool for enhancing performance of library and librarian.

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