

Evaluation of the Quality of Web Portals in the Iran Public Libraries Foundation offices in Razavi and South Khorasan Provinces

Mohammad Javad Hashemzadeh

Assistant Professor, Department of Information
Science and Knowledge Studies, Birjand University
mhashemzade@birjand.ac.ir

Habibeh Asghari (Corresponding author)

M A of Information Science and Knowledge Studies, Birjand University
hasghari93@yahoo.com

Received: 29th September 2012; Accepted: 20th February 2013

Abstract

Purpose: The present paper aims to study the quality of web portals in Razavi and South Khorasan Public Libraries Foundation Offices, using the survey and an evaluative method.

Methodology: This is an applied, which, in the first stage, is conducted via an analytical survey method using the E- Qual questionnaire. In the second stage the web portal quality is studied using evaluative methods, by means of a researcher-made checklist. The study population includes the librarians working at the public libraries of the South and the Razavi Khorasan provinces. The data was analyzed by SPSS software using the Wilcoxon and Paired t-tests. Microsoft Excel was also used to describe the checklist data.

Findings: The results of the study of the E- Qual aspects/components, i.e. information quality, transaction and safety quality, usability, and service interaction quality, show that there is a significant difference between the present quality and the expected one in the two web portals from the Internet user's point of view. This suggests that the desired quality level is yet to be achieved. The study of the checklist's quality aspects, i.e. writing quality, appeal, and flexibility, also shows that the writing and appeal aspects are at good levels, though the flexibility aspect is at a medium level.

Originality/Value: The findings of the research can familiarize the managers and designers of the web portals with the users' needs and their viewpoints, and help them to learn about the weaknesses and strengths of the web portals. This will help them to take actions to improve weaknesses and reinforce strengths in order to increase service quality and user satisfaction.

Keywords: Library portals, Public libraries, Razavi Khorasan province, South Khorasan province, E- Qual model, Quality evaluation method.