

ICT Infrastructure in Private College Affiliated to Kumaun University: A Study with Special Reference to Library & Information Services

Abstract:

Education plays a key role for the development of any society. College level education is one among the different levels in the education system in imparting the value based education in different disciplines. Colleges are the most important institutions of society for the creation, preservation and dissemination of knowledge as well as the custodians of intellectual and ethical traditions and values in society. Colleges serve teaching, learning and research needs of education in the country. They primarily serve undergraduate students, and teaching community. In these days in view of reaching the higher education to all, quite a good number of undergraduate colleges have started post-graduate level education also and a few of them are also recognized as research centers. The standard of teaching, learning and research at a college largely depends upon the quality of the service rendered by the library. A library is an essential corollary to every college because it has come to be regarded as an important and integral part of the academic system whose primary function is not only to provide resources but also to serve users to meet their information needs. Present research is an effort to highlights the library in private college.

Keyword: Library, Information and Communication Technology, private colleges of Haldwani

Introduction

The growth and development of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is playing vital role in the process of advancement of society in general and in library and information science in particular. Rapid advances in ICT in the fast two decades have brought revolutionary changes in the concept, organization, functioning and management of library and information systems throughout the world. The impact of these changes is pervasive and effecting all the aspects of library operations, information resources and services, staff skills requirements and user expectations.

The accelerating pace of developments in WWW has tremendously increased the ability to access, store, process, communicate and deliver information services to the library users. ICT has a huge potential for providing wide range of new opportunities and offering better solutions to achieve greater levels of efficiency, productivity and higher standards of quality services in libraries. Automation of library services is important for efficient and effective working of the library and information centers. Library automation provides wider horizons for the proper handling,

organization, retrieval and dissemination of information, thus making library services more scientific, systematic and effective.

The college libraries have wide range of opportunities and variety of challenges offered by new technologies. ICT has become an integral part of all library operations and information services in these days. As this technology provides libraries with new choices, new opportunities and new challenges. There has been a phenomenal progress in the use of ICT applications in library operations and information services in the college libraries. The dreams of librarianship is to serve the information needs of users timely, efficiently and economically. Libraries all over the world realised that demands and expectations of their information consumers are rapidly increasing at a rate with which any library with limited resources can hardly cope with through conventional means. Therefore, it has become imperative on the part of libraries to revise their approach, mode of operation and means of information acquisition, organization, retrieval and dissemination to users.

Human resource is paramount importance for the success of any library. Libraries and librarians must cope with the demands of an information society. Librarians interact with more groups and provide services for users with various characteristics. They need patience and initiative and a user-oriented approach. Librarians must have the knowledge, skills and tools in handling digital information to be efficient creators, collectors, consolidators and communicators of information. Librarians with the knowledge, skills and tools required of information professionals in an information society will be the key success factors in enabling the library to perform its role as an information support system for institution.

A competency is a core characteristic of a person which enables them to deliver superior performance in a given role or situation. Competencies are a combination of skills, knowledge, and behaviours important for organizational success, personal performance and career development. Professional competencies of librarians relate to the special knowledge in the areas of information resources, information access, technology, management, and research, as well as the ability to use these areas of knowledge as a basis for providing library and information services.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Large numbers of studies have been conducted by the researchers in different contexts on the topic chosen for the present study. Here is a humble attempt is made to review few of them. College libraries are facing major constraints in reaching high level usage of ICT for automation of library services.

- **Kumar & Biradar¹ (2010)** reported the findings of the survey in use of ICT in college libraries in Karnataka, India. It was found that college libraries not reached the very level in using ICT for automation due to lack budget, lack of manpower, lack of skilled staff and lack of training. They also pointed out the badly need of extensive and appropriate training to library professionals to make use of ICT tools and techniques. This paper also suggests changing the mindset of librarians in their attitudes to use ICT applications in various activities of the library and information centers.
- **Kumar & Kumar² (2010)**, in their study “application of ICT and related manpower problems in the college libraries in Burdwan”, pointed out college libraries of Burdwan Sadar face several hindrances in full-fledged IT application. The primary factor was inadequate funds, insufficient manpower, lack of ICT skill among the library professionals and lack of right attitude of the authorities.
- **Ramakrishnegowda³ (2009)** concluded in his keynote address at UGC sponsored state level seminar on “challenges to academic libraries in the emerging technological environment” as, the developments in ICT’s, internet, and World Wide Web have brought change in every walk of life. The power and speed of every bit of human activity both at individual and institutional level gain tremendous power and improvement. The academic librarians move out of their ivory towers and try to understand the pulse of the users, their information needs, information seeking behavior/patterns and try to understand what are they actually trying to achieve.
- **Sadanand⁴ and Shamin Periera (2008)** also pointed out in their survey “A survey of library automation in college libraries in Goa state, India” inadequate funds, insufficient manpower, Lack of ICT training, lack of ICT skill among the library professionals etc., are major factors in lagging behind automation of college libraries.
- **Smith⁵ and Macklin (2008)** expressed the functioning style based on the changes in the technology. ICT literacy is the ability to use digital technology, communication tools, and/or networks appropriately to solve information problems in order to function in a knowledge society
- **Babu⁶ Vinayagamoorthy and Gopalakrishnan (2007)** pointed out the need to acquire knowledge and skills of ICT by library professionals to extend better services. Library and information professionals today need to acquire knowledge and skills in ICT as the services of more and more libraries are now centering on information technology, especially in educational institutions. This paper examines the ICT skills among

¹Sampath Kumar, B.T and Biradar, B.S. “Use of ICT in College Libraries in Karnataka, India: a Survey”. *Electronic Library and Information Systems*, 44.3 (2010): 271-282.

²Arup Kumar and Bandyopadhyay, Amit Kumar. “Application of ICT & Related Manpower Problems in the College Libraries of Burdwan” *DESIDOC Journal of Library and Information Technology*, 30.4(2010): 44-52.

³Ramakrishnegowda, K.C. “Challenges to Academic Librarians in the Emerging Technological Environment.” *Proceedings of the State Level Seminar on Challenges to Academic Librarians in the Emerging Technological Environment*, 1-5. 2009:

⁴Bansode, Sadanand Y and Shamin Periera. “A Survey of Library Automation in College Libraries in Goa State, India” *Library Philosophy and Practice* 2008

⁵ Mary M, Smith, Gordon W, and Macklin, Alexius Smith “The ETS Skills™ Assessment: A Digital Age Tool.” *The Electronic Library* 26.2 (2008): 158-171.

⁶ Ramesh Babu, B et al. “ICT Skills Among Librarians in Engineering Educational Institutions in Tamil Nadu.” *DESIDOC Bulletin of Information Technology* 27.6 (2007): 55-64.

librarians in engineering colleges in Tamil Nadu. The analysis of the data represents the extent and the level of ICT skills possessed by the librarians of these institutions.

- **Watane⁷, Vinchurkar & choukhande(2005)** studied the “computer literacy and use of IT in college libraries of Amravati city” covering IT awareness of the library professionals and IT application in libraries.
- **Lohar⁸ & Kumber(2005)** in their study on the present situation of college libraries in Shimoga District (Karnataka) have concluded that the situation do not meet the prescribed norms.
- **Chakraborty⁹ & Maisal(2005)** found library automation and networking do not depend only on the capacity of the computer or the networking server or even the software used since they are only tools. Much depends on the quality of manpower of the libraries and the perfection of the work they do.
- **Sen¹⁰(2005)** studied on automation of a college library. Entire library automation programme requires judicious decision making at various stages. Such decision may be related to ‘do it’ or ‘buy it’ services, selection of hardware and software platform, application software, types of services to be rendered, etc.

Objective

1. To study ICT infrastructure for Office Automation 30/30 (100%)
2. To study the constraints in acquiring ICT infrastructure in college libraries
3. To study library automated 28/30 (93.3%)
4. To study internet facility in college library 29/30 (96.6%)
5. To study the uses of internet by the users
6. To study skills of library professional professionals

Hypothesis

- Colleges affiliated to the Kumaun University, are having adequate ICT infrastructure for their office automation.
- College Libraries equipped with adequate ICT infrastructure for their library automation.
- Library professionals affiliated to the Kumaun University are having lot of constraints at different levels in implementing ICT infrastructure in the college libraries.

⁷ Watane, Anjali; Vinchurkar, A.W. & Choukhande, Vaishali. Library professionals’ computer literacy and use of information technology application in college libraries of Amaravati city. *IASLIC Bulletin*, 2005, **50**(3), 131-41.

⁸ Lohar, M. S. & Kumber, Mallinath. College libraries in Shimoga district: A survey. *SRELS J. Inf. Manag.*, 2005, 42(3), 335-53.

⁹ Chakaraborty, Abira & Maisal, Anjali. Library automation and networking: A case study on Hoogly Mohsin College. *In Automation and Networking of the College Libraries*, edited by Biswajit Banerjee. Maulana Azad College, Kolkata, 2005, 224-25.

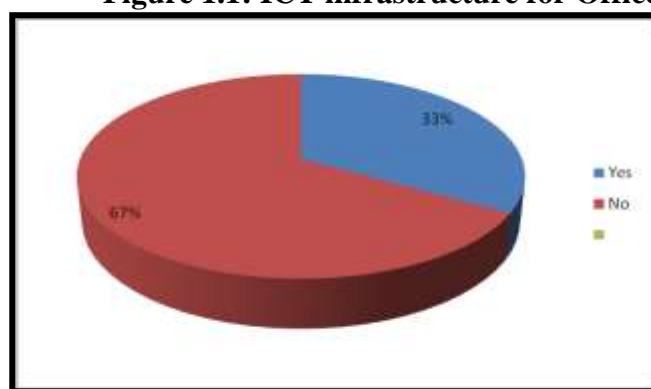
¹⁰ Sen, Puravi. Automation of a college library: Some issues. *In Automation and Networking of the college libraries*, edited by Biswajit Banerjee. Maulana Azad College, Kolkata, 2005, 125-26.

Research Methodology

Keeping in view the objectives of the study, an effort is made to evolve a suitable methodology for the research. The study is designed to determine and analyze the existing status and use of ICT in the college libraries. The study also covers the ICT competencies among the library professionals of affiliated college libraries. A questionnaire was the principal tool which was used for data collection covering the college libraries. Apart from it the secondary sources of data was also used for the data collections. Primary data was collected from 30 library professional who are working on private library colleges affiliated by Kumaun University Nainital.

Findings

Figure 1.1: ICT infrastructure for Office Automation



During the study, 33% respondents admitted to have basic ICT infrastructure for either present office automation or in near future. It was also found that 67% respondent didn't found ICT infrastructure for office automation.

Figure 1.2: Constraints in acquiring ICT infrastructure in college libraries

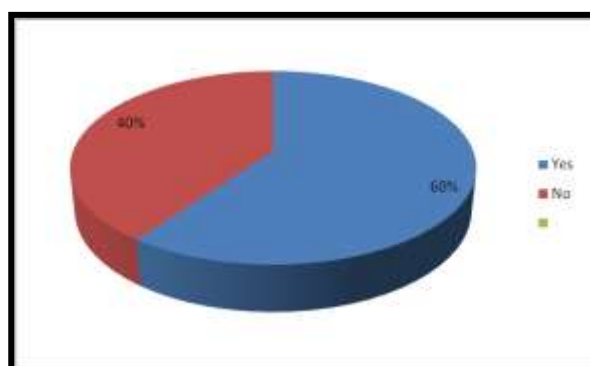


Figure 1.2 highlights the constraints to acquire ICT infrastructure in college libraries. 40% respondents didn't found any constraints to acquire ICT infrastructure in college libraries while 60% respondents were reported a numbers of constraints to acquire ICT infrastructure which may be related to either management side or others.

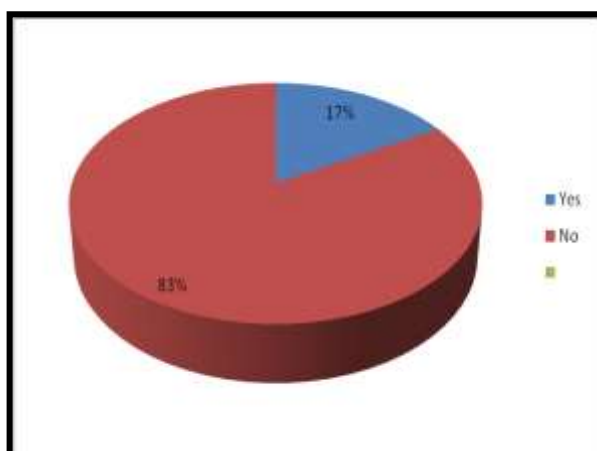
Figure 1.3: Library automation

Figure 1.3 presents data related to library automation according to which maximum respondents reported that the library they working was not automated while 17% library professional were satisfied with reference to the question of library automation.

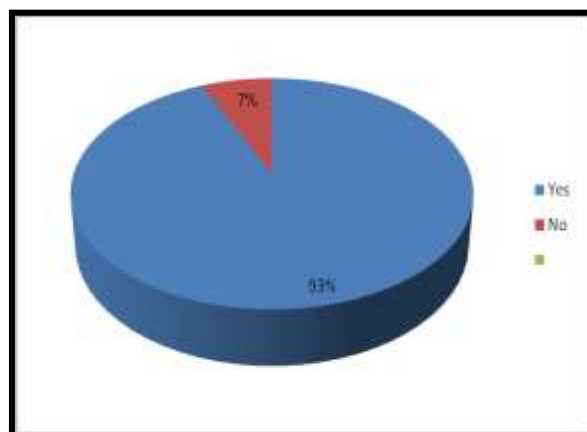
Figure 1.4: Internet facility in college library

Figure 1.4 present data related to internet facility in the college library according to which maximum i.e 97% respondents were unanimously agree to have internet facility in the college library. Only 7% respondents reported not to have internet facility in their college library.

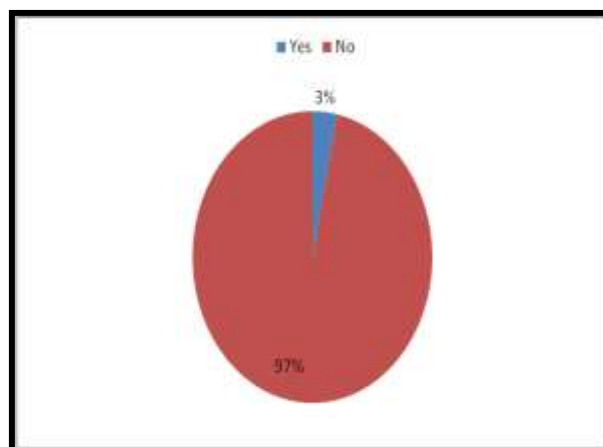
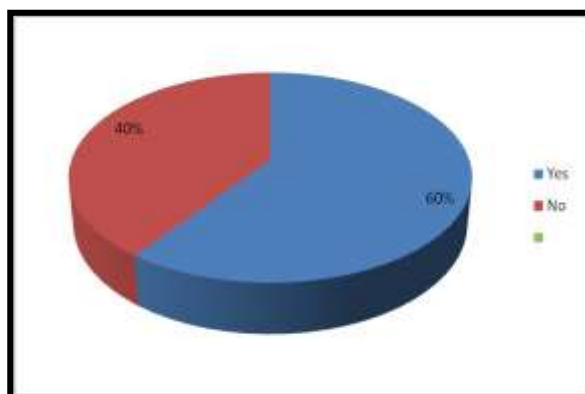
Figure 1.5: Uses of internet by the users

Figure 1.5 presents a data related to the uses of internet by the users & more specifically by the students. The study revealed that around 97% respondents reported non-application of internet services by the user either due to inappropriateness basic library infrastructure or others reason. Only 3% respondents were able to answer the question.

Figure 1.6: Skills of library professional professionals

According to Figure 1.6 60% respondents reported not to have library professional in their college compare to 40% respondents who said to have library professional in their college library.

Conclusion

1. During the study, it was found that ICT infrastructure in the college library was not upto satisfactory levels which need to improve. In today's competitive era, colleges need to have overall improvement, library is one of them.
2. Technological adaptation has become one of the important tasks for each & every person or organization & when we adopt technology or decide to adopt it, we face a number of constraints to acquire ICT infrastructure which need to be solved as early as possible.
3. Library automation, which is also called an integrated library system or library management system, is the demand of the educational system in the 21st century. Therefore, it becomes necessary to change our system to adopt a library automated system as early as possible.
4. During the study, it was found that most college libraries had internet facilities but it was non-applicable with reference to users, most specifically to the students. Internet facilities provided by educational institutions to their college libraries were just for chat & mailing purposes & in most cases, it was also found that the internet was not in use for a couple of months. Educational institutions need to improve internet facilities in their college libraries so that users, which include teachers, library staff, or the students, may use the library & get information by using the internet.
5. Lack of library professional staff was another important factor found during the study. It was also found that in some educational institutions, only one person, sometimes called the head of library, was a library professional & the rest of the library staff was non-professional, which needs improvement.

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