

Library Automation in Government Colleges in and Around Gangtok (Sikkim)

Abstract

Library automation is the process of automating the library function using the modern technology like application of computer and communication technology. A standard library software package has the key role on the success of the process. This paper highlights the present scenario of library automation in government colleges in and around gangtok, Sikkim. It attempts to highlight the issues and challenges of library automation and suggests for the improvement of the situation.

Keywords: Library Automation, Government Colleges.

Introduction

Over the past three decades, libraries have changed considerably as bibliographic utilizes, online catalogues, automated circulation systems and other new technologies have been implemented in majority of library operations and services. But still majority of the colleges in India could not initiate the process of computerization even now. This delay in automation is effecting adversely the academic environment of the higher education institutions. The status of the college libraries in North Eastern Region is also very poor. There are still colleges which are yet to plan to introduce IT concept to academic library operations. In many colleges even manual catalogue is not available. The reasons for this situation are quite obvious mainly due to passive attitude of the library authorities which have hardly any drive for modernization of library services. Their concept of library services is limited to issue and return of books. Therefore, to bring any change in the existing environment is a challenging job in spite of professional input. It becomes important to look into the matter to identify some of the measures bottlenecks which are responsible for failure of bringing electronic environment in libraries.

The present study has been attempted to identify some of the major factors responsible for failures in the field of library automation in government colleges in around Gangtok, Sikkim.

Library Automation

The term "Library Automation" refer to the phenomenon of mechanization of traditional library activities, such as acquisition, serial control, cataloguing and circulation control etc. Today the term "Library Automation" is however used extensively to refer primarily to the use of computers to perform the library activities in recent times even the related topics such as information retrieval, semi automatic/ automatic indexing, and network of automated systems. "Library automation" is generally define as the replacement of Manuel operation in libraries by computerized methods.

Need for Library Automation

There are 4 government colleges in an around gangtok, Sikkim 1. Sikkim Government College, Tadong 2. Sikkim Government College, law 3. Sikkim Government College, Burtuk 4. Nyingma Institution of Tibetology, Deorali. All these college need to be automated for effective use of library facilities by the students and faculty members. Computerization not only eases out the job of librarians who single handily manage library activities without assistant librarians in most of the college libraries. It also helps library is providing better services to the students and faculty members.

Objectives of the Study

1. The main objectives of the study were to survey those colleges with special reference to automation status.
2. To find out how many libraries have undertaken automation.
3. To find out which areas library functions and services are automated.



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- To identify the factors responsible for introducing or not introduction the concept of library automation.
- To find out present status of the library automation.
- To find out whether sufficient staff is available to carry out automation.

Methodology

The methodology used for the research was a combination of survey distributed to all government libraries. For this particular study more than one methodological approaches are used. These methods used are e-mail methods and face to face interview methods.

Areas of Library Automation

Followings are the areas of Library Automation i.e. House Keeping Operation, Services.

House Keeping Operation:

- Acquisition
- Cataloguing
- Circulation
- Serial Control

- Library Administration and management
- Generation of Annual / Statistical Report
- Stock Verification

Services

- Online Publication Access catalogue (OPAC).
- CD-ROM database search.
- Resource sharing through library.
- Internet based information searches.
- Information Retrieval and its dissemination.
- Current awareness service.
- Selective dissemination of information.

There may be so many advantages and importance of library. Automation and networking, but unless their fulfills certain requirements it is possible even to think for automation. The basic requirements are -

- Willingness of both the library authority and the librarian for library automation.
- Software in fracture compatible for library automation.
- Expert hands to operate the systems.

Analysis

Basic details of colleges with establishment, 12f/12 b/ & NAAC

S. No.	College Name	YOE	NAAC	YIC	NOC	LAN status	Software Used	Collection of Books
1.	Sikkim Government College, Tadong	1974	NAAC (2017)	2008	15	LAN	SOUL 2.0	21,379
2.	Sikkim Government College, Burthuk	2012	NO	00	00	NO LAN	NIL	1020
3.	Sikkim Government College, Law	1980	NO	2015	01 (not in working condition)	NO	NIL	4000 Approx
4.	Nyingma Institution of Tibetology, Deorali.	1953	NO	2013	03	LAN	SLIM	36,000

NB:

YOE: Year of Establishment;

YIC: Year of Introducing Computer;

NOC: No. of Computers;

Basically, the college libraries of North Eastern Region have started thinking about library automation after existence of NAAC for quality assessment of colleges. It is obvious from the study that only two colleges were interested to provide a computer to the library in question other than one, prior to existence of NAAC. It is witnessed in the above table as libraries have introduced computer during 2008 to 2018. Two colleges still lagging behind as they unable to provide a single computer to the library.

Table 2: Status of Library Automation

Completely Automated	01
Partially Automated	01
Initial Stage	02

Out of four government colleges, only one college is fully automated and one college is partially automated but two college libraries are still in initial stage.

Table 3: Librarian and Library Staff Having Library Automation Knowledge

SI. No.	College Name	Total No of Staff	Permanent Librarian/ Adhoc Librarian	SHLAK
1.	Sikkim Government College, Tadong	08	02 (P. Librarian)	01
2.	Sikkim Government College, Burthuk	02	01 (ad hoc)	00
3.	Sikkim Government College, Law	02	01 (ad hoc)	00
4.	Nyingma Institution of Tibetology, Deorali.	03	02	02

NB: SHAK (Staff Having Library Automation Knowledge)

Above table shows that the colleges are having very less computer knowledge staffs. Out of eight staff in Sikkim Government College, Tadong,

only one librarian is having a knowledge of using library automation and 2 from Nyingma institution of Tibetology, Deorali.

Table 4: Financial Sources for Library Automation

Sl. No.	College Name	Funding Agency State Government /RUSA/ UGC/ Any Other
1.	Sikkim Government College, Tadong	UGC, RUSA
2.	Sikkim Government College, Bhurtuk	UGC
3.	Sikkim Government College, Law	UGC
4.	Nyingma Institute of Tibetology, Deorali	UGC, Central Government, Department of Cultural and Haritage (State)

Table 3 shows that all the four government colleges were received UGC fund for library and library automation. Among this four colleges, Sikkim Government College, tadong received fund from RUSA also. In the same way Nyingma Institute of Tibetology, Deorali received fund from Central Government and Department of cultural and heritage. But because of the fund which is receiving from the UGC is not properly utilized in the library due to which automation is still in an initial stage in two colleges.

Suggestions

The suggestions, recommendations, opinion and reactions expressed by respondents are collected and presented as follows: -

1. Financial help which is provided by the UGC and others should be utilized in a proper way according to library and information policy.
2. It need to provide basic ICT infrastructure like desktops with good configuration, power back up, bar code printer, bar code reader, scanner and internet connection to make a library automation.
3. Computer and automation software training should be provided and made mandatory for all the library staff. Than only staff will be more comfortable with automation functions and modules.
4. Encouragement of library improvement.

Conclusion

Library automation brings great changes in the functioning of the library and proving effective and efficient library services. Automation of libraries is still in formative stages in the four government colleges of gangtok (Sikkim). Library professional must upgrade their skills in order to meet the growing expectation of users from libraries.

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