

IMPORTANCE OF LIBRARY AUTOMATION

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Abstract

Implementation of Modern Technology and multimedia is playing vital role in the field of library and information science and library automation in particular. The present article is referred to the status and problems of library automation under RUSA, in government degree colleges at district Aligarh, Uttar Pradesh. The study clearly presents the status of Library automation and main problems for library automation are inadequate staff, lack of infrastructure, insufficient funds and lack of training to library staff. This study also gives a status view of the software packages used by libraries and modules of library automation are using. It is evident from the study out of 7 libraries 4 libraries are using e-granthalaya, in this some of libraries are partially completed and some of are in initial stage. Further about 3 colleges are using Easy Lib Software.

Key words: *Library Automation, Government Colleges, Benefits of Library Automation, E-Granthalaya.*



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Need for the study:

After the development of powerful microcomputers at comparatively low cost, libraries in India have been utilizing computers for their routine as well as other activities. One can vividly see the upsurge of articles/reports in Indian journals and conferences about the computerization activities in Indian libraries. Some surveys have also been conducted to study and report the computerization activities in India.

Objectives of the study:

Following are the broad objectives envisaged for the present investigation:

1. To study and examine the functional performance ability of the automated housekeeping systems used by certain selected libraries in South India.
2. To determine the reasons underlying success or failure of each system covered in the study.
3. To explore and suggest areas of improvement for increasing the performance level of the systems.

4. To find out common problems faced by the libraries in relation to automated systems.
5. To find out the impact of Automation on Government Colleges.

Limitations of the Study:

The present study being a one – man investigation, the work had to be done with available resources and time. The following are the limitations of the study: only . The system has not been covered in this study.

Discussion and Findings:

The word „library automation“ is being used in literature for the last four decades. A perusal of the literature would indicate that many authors have not tried to define the term explicitly. They use the term „Library automation“ to mean the use of computers as an aid for library activities. However, some authors have tried to define the term. For instance Markers on (1967) says “Library automation in the broadest sense can be taken to mean the employment of machines for library processes. In general, however, library automation has come to mean the application of computers and related data processing equipment to libraries.

Salmon (1975), has tried to give a more exhaustive definition. According to him “Library automation is the use of automatic and semi- automatic library activities as acquisition, cataloguing, and circulation.

„Library automation“ is now far the most commonly used term for mechanization of library activities using data processing equipment.”

The areas of library automation include: 1 The application of data processing equipments to do/to support the clerical/repetitive functions found in technical processing circulation control and serials control. 2 The application of data processing equipments to the fields of information storage and retrieval, automatic indexing and abstracting and in reference work; and 3 The application of computers/data processing equipments for operation research and system analysis.

Library automation in India –

A brief historical perspective In 1936 Ralph H. Parker, then loan librarian at the University of Texas Library, published one of the first articles on library automation (1936). This article described the implementation and detailed the practical usage of two Hollerith punched card machines. One machine perforated punched cards and the

other sorted them. The process enabled the lending department to more easily handle collection and circulation clerical issues. The significance of this first step towards library automation was not lost on Parker, who summed it optimistically with regards to the future of librarianship as a “new day of no mistakes, no nervous strain, and much less manual labor for the library worker”

As early as 1955, computerization work started with the installation of HEC – 2m computer system imported from UK, at the Indian Statistical Institute (ISI), Calcutta. ISI also acquired a Soviet built computer URAL – I as gift in 1958. The first indigenous computer was designed in 1964 by ISI, Calcutta in collaboration with Jadavpur University, Calcutta. During the introductory phase period (1955 – 64) as many as sixteen computers were installed in different parts of India. During the period 1966 – 72 the process of computerization speeded up with the installation of one hundred and seventy more computer systems, although most of them were imported from the Western countries. Later particularly during 1980s, many institutions/organizations started using computers. The advent of affordable and powerful micro – computer is responsible for the upsurge in the in the usage of computers in India.

The Bhabha Atomic Research Centre (BARC) developed a system called „Automation for Storage and Retrieval of Information“ (AFSARI) and also a set of programs in COBOL for current awareness services and preparing indexes such as author, corporate bodies, personal, subject and KWOC. The Physical Research Laboratory (PRL), Ahmedabad produced „Library additions list“ with a KWOC index. Later, a periodical management system and book procurement system were developed. IIT, Delhi developed a computerized acquisition routine of serials in 1969. At a later date a list of textbooks available in library was generated using ICL 1960 computer available on its premises. IIT, Madras has conducted a number of experiments and operations pertaining to library automation and bibliographic data services. It has also developed a book acquisition system in PL/I language. However, in, mid – 80s a separate and more comprehensive system was developed in dBase.1 BHEL (R&D), Hyderabad imported Clark Library Acquisition System from USA in 1982. Even this system was replaced by a system developed within the library (This study covers this system also).

Generally books are not returned by the users within the due date putting the users to inconvenience. It has been felt that regular issue of reminders will regulate the return of books both from the teachers and the students in time. Reservation system is existent only for name's sake. Infact, the required books are never made available for months together to the users.

To avoid this confusion the university should give a unique number for every staff Member, which can be used both for library and other purposes. The unique number Helps in easy retrieval of borrower information by manipulating the same In automated system.

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