HRD ASPECTS OF LIBRARY AUTOMATION IN COLLEGE LIBRARIES OF GUWAHATI : A STUDY

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ABSTRACT

Library Automation is a phenomenon through which computer-based information processing is used to do day-to-day operations of library system and library services. It can be said that computer can serve as universal remedy for all the existing ills of libraries. Since these can be made use of for performing each and every activities of the library. This paper mainly focuses on the manpower aspects of library automation in the college libraries of Assam. The status of automation has been discussed along with library survey, library software, and library services.

Keywords : Library Automation, Library Software, Information Technology.

1. Introduction

Guwahati is the gateway of North East and capital city of Assam. It is an ancient city having mentioned in Mahabharata and Purans. Of course in those days it was known as Pragjyotishpur and Kamrup. It has been a glorious city since old days. It was famous for astrological studies besides the regular studies in education and philosophy. It is covered by 340 sq km in area with a population of about 11 lakks. With the passage of time, the city is also trying to develop its educational scenario by adopting the latest techniques in this field as far as possible. However, due to different factors, such as geographical isolation, political situation, insurgency problem there has not been much improvement as compared to other cities of India.

2. College of Guwahati City

At present the city of Guwahati has a total number of 20 colleges including deficit and non-deficit colleges. Besides there are a good number of junior colleges, law colleges, B.Ed. colleges, technical colleges, which has not been taken into consideration in this study. The colleges under study are shown below which are arranged according to their year of establishment.

From the table-1 it is seen that some colleges are very old while some are newly established. Cotton College established in 1901 is the oldest while West Guwahati Commerce College was established in the year 1992. Out of 20 colleges, 6 college libraries are named on the great legendary of Assam.

Name of college library with year of establishment

S. No.	Name of College	Year of Estd.	Name of Library
1.	Cotton College	1901	Dr Surya Kumar Bhuyan Library
2.	Handique Girls' College	1938	Handique Girls' College Library
3.	B.Borooah College	1943	Hem Barua Library
4.	Pragjyotish College	1954	Pandit Tirthanath Sarma Library
5.	Arya Vidyapith College	1958	Arya Vidyapith College Library
6.	K K Handiqui Sanskrit College	1960	K K Handiqui Sanskrit College Library
7.	Gauhati Commerce College	1962	Dr Brinchi Kumar Baruah Library
8.	Pandu College	1962	Pandu College Library
9.	North Guwahati College	1962	North Guwahati College Library
10.	Gauhati College	1964	Surabala Bardoloi Memorial Library
11.	Lalit Chandra Bharali College	1971	Lalit Chandra Bharali College Library
12.	KRB Girls' College	1971	KRB Girls' College Library
13.	Kanya Mahavidyalaya	1977	Kanya Mahavidyalaya Library
14.	R G Baruah College	1978	R G Baruah College Library
15.	Dispur College	1978	Dispur College Library
16.	K C Das Commerce College	1983	K C Das Commerce College Library
17.	S B Deorah College	1986	S B Deorah College Library
18.	Karmashree Hiteswar Saikia College	1988	Dandeswar Gogoi Memorial Library
19.	Narengi Anchalik Mahavidyalaya	1991	Narengi Anchalik Mahavidyalaya Library
20.	West Guwahati Commerce College	1992	West Guwahati Commerce College Library

Table: 1

The colleges of Guwahati city are offering all the Stream of Gauhati University i.e. arts, science and commerce.

2.1 Collection of the Libraries

Collections of any type of library reflect the types of services offered by the library to its reader. A balance collection selected on a judicious basis is a must to offer the appropriate service by the library. The college libraries have to acquire a wide variety of learning materials both in printed and non-printed forms. The table- 2 shows the collection of different college libraries of Guwahati. It reveals that the collection of Cotton College has highest collection and Karmashree Hiteswar Saikia College has the least collection. The table further reveals that 5 colleges are having CD-ROMs, DVD-ROMs, VCD, etc.

Collections

S. No.	Name of College	Collections		
		Printed	Non-Printed	Total
1.	Cotton College	119114	-	119114
2.	Handique Girls' College	38000	-	38000
3.	B.Borooah College	37000	20	37020
4.	Pragjyotish College	52100	-	52100
5.	Arya Vidyapith College	41065	45	41110
6.	K K Handiqui Sanskrit College	8680	-	8680
7.	Gauhati Commerce College	38499	-	38499
8.	Pandu College	35625	216	35841
9.	North Guwahati College	25897	-	25897
10.	Gauhati College	32000	-	32000
11.	L C B College	12800	-	12800
12.	KRB Girls' College	6935	-	6935
13.	Kanya Mahavidyalaya	16271	-	16271
14.	R G Baruah College	8684	-	8684
15.	Dispur College	10000	-	10000
16.	K C Das Commerce College	11500	120	11620
17.	S B Deorah College	6500	25	6525
18.	Karmashree Hiteswar Saikia College	2540	-	2540
19.	Narengi Anchalik Mahavidyalaya	4200	-	4200
20.	West Guwahati Commerce College	3820	-	3820

Table: 2

3. Library Services

The colleges under the studies are having library facilities of different levels. The traditional services such as issue and return and reference service being common to most of the colleges a few of them are initiating the library automation to provide different modern information services to the users. The table- 3 reveals the different services being offered by the colleges of Guwahati.

Services of College Libraries

Sl No.	Name of College	User Education	Circulation service	Reference Service	Internet	Bibliography/Doc/ Book Bank	CAS	SDI	Reprography
1.	Arya Vidyapith College	Yes	Yes	Yes	-	-	-	-	Yes
2.	B.Borooah College	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	-	-	-	Yes
3.	Cotton College	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Bibl	-	-	Yes
4.	Dispur College	Yes	Yes	Yes	-	-	-	-	Yes
5.	Gauhati College	-	Yes	Yes	Yes	-	-	-	Yes
6.	Gauhati Commerce College	-	Yes	Yes	-	-	-	-	Yes
7.	Handique Girls' College	Yes	Yes	Yes	-	-	-	Yes	Yes
8.	K C Das Commerce College	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Bibl, ind, abs, book bk	-	-	-
9.	K K Handiqui Sanskrit College	Yes	Yes	Yes	-	-	-	-	Yes
10.	Kanya Mahavidyalaya	-	Yes	-	-	-	-	-	-
11.	Karmashree Hiteswar Saikia College	-	Yes	Yes	-	-	-	-	-
12.	KRB Girls' College	-	Yes	Yes	-	-	-	-	Yes
13.	Lalit Chandra Bharali College	-	Yes	Yes	-	-	-	-	Yes
14.	Narengi Anchalik Mahavidyalaya	-	Yes	Yes	-	-	-	-	-
15.	North Guwahati College	Yes	Yes	Yes	-	-	-	-	Yes
16.	Pandu College	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	bibl	Yes	Yes	Yes
17.	Pragjyotish College	Yes	Yes	Yes	-	Book bk	-	-	Yes
18.	R G Baruah College	-	Yes	Yes	-	-	-	-	-
19.	S B Deorah College	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	-	Yes	Yes	Yes
20.	West Guwahati Commerce College	-	Yes	-	-	-	-	-	-

Table: 3

4. Library Automation

Library Automation may be defined in simple sense as a process of mechanization of library operations, which are of routine and repetitive in nature. This covers usually all the housekeeping operations, acquisition, serial control, cataloguing, circulation, reference, etc. Library Automation is a process that brought and will continue to bring profound changes to the library world, in terms of both technology and the involvement of people. Library automation refers to the processing of routine clerical function of the library with the assistance of computer or other mechanized or automation equipments. Actually it is nothing but the application of computer to the library operation.

Automation Status of Libraries

S. No.	Name of College	Fully Automated	Partiallty Automated	Not Automated	Year of Automation
1.	Arya Vidyapith College	-	Yes	-	2007
2.	B.Borooah College	Yes	-	-	2002
3.	Cotton College	-	Yes	-	2002
4.	Dispur College	-	Yes	-	-
5.	Gauhati College	-	-	Yes	-
6.	Gauhati Commerce College	-	Yes	-	2004
7.	Handique Girls' College	-	Yes	-	2004
8.	K C Das Commerce College	Yes	-	-	2004
9.	K K Handiqui Sanskrit College	-	-	Yes	-
10.	Kanya Mahavidyalaya	-	-	Yes	-
11.	Karmashree Hiteswar Saikia College	-	-	Yes	-
12.	KRB Girls' College	-	-	Yes	-
13.	Lalit Chandra Bharali College	-	Yes	-	2006
14.	Narengi Anchalik Mahavidyalaya	-	-	Yes	-
15.	North Guwahati College	-	-	Yes	-
16.	Pandu College	Yes	-	-	1999
17.	Pragjyotish College	-	Yes	-	2003
18.	R G Baruah College	-	-	Yes	-
19.	S B Deorah College	-	Yes	-	2003
20.	West Guwahati Commerce College	-	-	Yes	-

Table: 4

Automation of academic libraries in Assam is a recent phenomenon. Pandu College started the library automation in 1999, which was followed by B. Boarooah College in 2002. In the same year Cotton College also initiated library automation followed by Pragjyotish College in 2003. The table-4 gives a clear picture of automation status of college libraries of Guwahati.

From the table it is clear that only 3 colleges have fully automated, 8 colleges have partially automated while 9 colleges are yet to start automation services.

4.1 Library Software

Software packages are brain of the hardware system, which runs the system as well as helps in particular assignment. In the field of Library and Information Science, though there is a good number of library software only Libsys, SOUL and CDS/ISIS are popular among the library professionals in Guwahati city. The table- 5 shows the availability of library software in college libraries.

Library Software

Sl No.	Name of College	Library software used
1.	Arya Vidyapith College	SOUL
2.	B.Borooah College	SOUL
3.	Cotton College	SOUL
4.	Dispur College	Third Eye Library Management
5.	Gauhati College	SOUL
6.	Gauhati Commerce College	SOUL
7.	Handique Girls' College	SOUL
8.	K C Das Commerce College	SOUL
9.	K K Handiqui Sanskrit College	-
10.	Kanya Mahavidyalaya	-
11.	Karmashree Hiteswar Saikia College	-
12.	KRB Girls' College	-
13.	Lalit Chandra Bharali College	SOUL
14.	Narengi Anchalik Mahavidyalaya	-
15.	North Guwahati College	-
16.	Pandu College	SOUL
17.	Pragjyotish College	Third Eye Library Management
18.	R G Baruah College	SOUL
19.	S B Deorah College	SOUL
20.	West Guwahati Commerce College	-

Table: 5

From the above table it is seen that out of 20 colleges under this study 11 colleges used SOUL software for library automation while 2 colleges used Third Eye Library Management software (a local software package developed at Guwahati). The remaining seven doesn't have any library software. The study further reveals that the colleges without library software are not taking part in library automation.

4.2 Prerequisites for Library Automation

Library automation demands the following prerequisites:

1. Willingness of the library committee and librarian.

2. Adequate finance.

3. Proper planning.

4. Hardware requirement, such as PC, UPS, Scanner, Printer, Storage media, etc. (Always it should be latest hardware available in market)

5. Software requirement, such as operating system, system software, application software, etc.

6. Human ware, such as trained staff or manpower.

4.3 Areas of Automation

Ranganathan's five law of library science stipulates that documents of the library should have the maximum number of users. With the application of ICT in the area of libraries there has been tremendous improvement in the library services offered to the users by the libraries. Following are the main areas of library automation:

1. Library management.

2. Library house keeping operation, and

3. Information Retrieval System.

5. Manpower for Library Automation

Fully trained professional staff is a must for any type of library. The college libraries under the study are having a staff trends from 1-3 on average, however fully trained librarians in those colleges are not sufficient in relation to their work load arising out of number of users. The table-6 shows the existing position of different professionals and non-professionals in the colleges.

Library Staffs

S. No.	Name of College	Professional	Semi Professional	Nonl Professional	Total
1.	Arya Vidyapith College	1	-	2	3
2.	B.Borooah College	2	2	2	6
3.	Cotton College	3	3	5	11
4.	Dispur College	1	1	2	4
5.	Gauhati College	1	1	2	4
6.	Gauhati Commerce College	1	-	4	5
7.	Handique Girls' College	1	-	5	6
8.	K C Das Commerce College	2	-	2	4
9.	K K Handiqui Sanskrit College	1	-	2	3
10.	Kanya Mahavidyalaya	-	-	2	2
11.	Karmashree Hiteswar Saikia College	1	-	1	2
12.	KRB Girls' College	1	-	1	2
13.	Lalit Chandra Bharali College	2	1	4	7
14.	Narengi Anchalik Mahavidyalaya	1	-	2	3
15.	North Guwahati College	1	-	1	2
16.	Pandu College	1	1	4	6
17.	Pragjyotish College	-	1	2	3
18.	R G Baruah College	1	-	2	3
19.	S B Deorah College	1	-	2	3
20.	West Guwahati Commerce College	1	-	-	1

Table:6

The table further reveals Cotton College has the maximum staff followed by LCB College, B. Borooah College, Handique Girls' College, Pandu College, etc. while West Guwahati Commerce College has the least number of library staff i.e. only one. From the observation it is found that out of the 20 colleges in 15 colleges the librarians besides being professionally qualified have acquired special skilled in library automation by attending different short-term courses, orientation, refresher course, etc. However from the observation of the college library, it is found that the training skilled acquired by the librarians is reflected only in 5 colleges. It may be observed that simply acquiring library skill is not sufficient for ensuring library Automated services to the readers. The mindset of

the librarians has to be changed in a positive way to make the benefit of library automation passed on to the users. Again the cooperation of college authorities also factors for which many college librarians are not in a position to reflect their library automation expertise in an effective manner.

6. Suggestions

1. In view of the tremendous development in the field of ICT, the professionals must undertake library automation in an effective way.

2. The colleges of Guwahati should take the library automation in a systematic way.

3. Authority should not hesitate to encourage the librarian for undertaking library automation, as the prices of computer hardware as well as software are quite affordable by the college authority. Besides INFLIBNET is also giving financial support for this purpose.

4. Librarian and other professionals should visit any developed computerized libraries to have better idea and to train the staff of the library.

5. The library professionals should take the job of library automation in a challenging way and prove themselves to be real partner in the academic process of the library users.

6. The library professional should undertake library users' education to make the users aware of the emerging services offered by the library.

7. INFLIBNET should also take feed back of college library services and ensure continuing education for the library professionals who update their skills and services.

7. Conclusion

This is the age of computers. Computers have revolutionized all fields of knowledge. It has been gradually swearing electronic webs in various parts of the globe for quite a few decades now. Today information technology coupled with computer technology has conquered even space and time with regard to dissemination of information. The need for automation in libraries is emphasized because of the effective handling of information, updating of information, resource sharing and to maintain profession wide standard.

Academic libraries play a crucial role in dissemination of information services to the academicians, students, and research scholars. The entire phenomenon is a joint venture where library professionals, library authorities, library users play the key role. All of them should come forward to make it a successful one by their full-fledged cooperation. Then only the college libraries of Guwahati will prosper in new direction.

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