Issues and Challenges of Library Automation in the College Libraries of Assam with Special Reference to Kamrup District (Rural): A Study

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Abstract

The present study aims to highlight the issues and challenges of library automation and its importance as well as a brief assessment of the present status of library automation in selected college libraries of Assam with special reference to Kamrup District (Rural). For this article, a case study is observed on the college libraries on that particular selected area and findings are also discussed in this article. On the basis of this survey, some suggestions are also given for eliminating the problem faced by those college libraries during automation.

Keywords: Library Computerization, Library Automation, College Library

1. Introduction

The term Automation was first concerned by D.S Harder in 1936.Automation is a process of using the machineries for easily working and saving the human power and time. It is the techniques of making a process or a system operate automatically. That means it is the mechanised form of manipulating information storage, selects, presents as well as records data.

Library Automation started in late 1970's in few special libraries has now reached most of the University libraries. It is yet to take off in College libraries in Assam owing to various problems.

2. Objectives of the Study

The objectives of this particular topic include:

1. To find out how many libraries have undertaken automation.

2. To find out which areas are automated.

3. To find out whether sufficient staff is available to carry out automation.

4. To find out what are the main drawbacks during automation.

3. Methodology

The methodology used for the research was a combination of survey distributed to college libraries of Kamrup district. For this particular study more than one methodological approaches are used. These methods are questionnaire method and personal interview method.

4. Scope of the Study

Generally there are many Colleges either in provincialized or non-provincialized in Assam. But the area of study is only covered with the selected provincialized College Libraries of Assam specially in the Kamrup District (Rural).

5. Observations and Analysis

The data collected has been analysed using different tables to draw the conclusions.

5.1 Layout of the College Libraries of Assam with special reference to Kamrup District (Rural)

At present there are sixteen (16) provincialized Colleges in the Kamrup (rural) district. Among sixteen (16) colleges, The data of twelve (12) college libraries i.e. 75% of the College libraries has been carried out for this particular study.

5.2 Status of Automation along with Initiation of Automation

The application of computer to information service comprises general and collection of information, information retrieval, CAS, SDI, information transfer and distribution etc. The following represents the status of automation on the selected college libraries of Kamrup District.

Table 1: Status of Automation in the Surveyed College Libraries

Sl No	Name of the College Library	Fully	Partially	Not Automated	Year of Automation	Software used
1	Chhaygaon College Library		YES		2013	SOUL2.0
2	Dakshin Kamrup College Library		YES		2004	SOUL2.0
3	D.K Girl's College Library		YES		2014	SOUL2.0
4	Damdama College Library			YES	NA	NA
5	Jawaharlal Nehru College Library		YES		2014	SOUL2.0
6	Pati Darrang College Library			YES	NA	NA
7	Pub Kamrup College Library		YES		2006	SOUL2.0
8	Puthimari College Library		YES		2009	SOUL2.0
9	Rangia College Library	YES			2014	SOUL2.0
10	Saraighat College Library		YES		2011	SOUL2.0
11	S.B.MS College Library		YES		2015	SOUL2.0
12	Suren Das College Library		YES		2010	SOUL2.0

It is cleared from the above table that out of twelve (12) selected college libraries Ten (10) College libraries are having library automation and the rest two (2) college libraries are not automated till now. All Ten (10) college libraries are using Software for University Libraries (SOUL) software (2.0 version) for automation purpose. Out of Ten (10) College libraries, One (1) college library is fully automated; remaining Nine (9) college libraries are partially automated.

5.3 Areas of Automation:

Areas of automation are one of the key factors of any library. The application of computerization to library operation has two aspects namely housekeeping operations or overall management purpose.

Following Table depicts the areas of automation done by those selected College libraries.

Table 2: Areas of Automation covered by the Surveyed Libraries

Sl No	Name of the College Library	Acquis-ition	Catalo-guing	Circul-ation	Serial Control	OPAC	Budget	Administ-ration
1	Chhaygaon College Library		√					
2	Dakshin Kamrup College Library		√	√		√		√
3	D.K Girls College Library		√			√		
4.	Jawaharlal Nehru College Library		√	√		√		
5.	Pub Kamrup College Library		√	√				
6	Puthimari College Library		√	√		√		
7	Rangia College Library		√	√		√		√
8	Saraighat College Library		√	√				
9	S.B.MS College Library		√	√		√		
10.	Suren Das College Library		√	√				

It is cleared from the above table that most of the colleges perform cataloguing, circulation and OPAC module through automation. These three areas are performed mainly by the surveyed libraries. Adding to these three module, two colleges i.e. Dakshin Kamrup college and Rangia college are performing another module namely administrative module.

5.4 Library collections:

One of the important component of a library is its collections. The library collections of surveyed college libraries of Kamrup rural districts are displayed in the following Table .

Table 3: Collections of Surveyed Libraries

Sl No	Name of the College	Printed			Non Printed		Others
		Books	Journals	Magazines	EBooks	EJournals	
1	Chhaygaon College	30000	9		00	00	00
2	Dakshin Kamrup College	49750	25		500	Journals from N-List	Dissertation+ Theses35
3	D.K Girls College	15000	08	17	00	00	00
4	Damdama College	12000	05	10	00	00	00
5	J. N College	21673	32	00		Journals from N-List	Menuscripts 4
6	PatiDarrang College	8000	00	02	00	00	00

Sl No	Name of the College	Printed			Non Printed		Others
		Books	Journals	Magazines	EBooks	EJournals	
7	Pub Kamrup College	21800	22	10	00	20	Menuscripts50
8	Puthimari College	12500	19	25	50	EJournals from N-List	00
9	Rangia College	61394	08	06	128	EJournals from N-List	00
10	Saraighat College	11970	14	00	00	20	Theses 4 Dissertation 2
11	S.B.MS College	24352	14	07	00	14	00
12	Suren Das College	17339	06	06	38	00	00

From the data its clear that out of twelve (12) colleges Rangia college has the highest number of book collections in their library and Puthimari college has the highest number of journals subscribed by their library

5.5 Library Services

To be a proper library there should be measure of service quality in academic libraries. Following are the number of library services delivered by the selected college libraries of Kamrup (rural) district, categorised under table .

Table   4:   Library   Services   of   Surveyed   Libraries

Name of the College	Cir.	Ref.	InterLibrary loan	Bibliography	CD-ROM	News paper clipping	Internet	Documentation	Book Bank	Reprography	Email	Fax
Chhaygaon College	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	No	No
Dakshin Kamrup College	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes
D K Girls College	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	No
Damdama College	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
Jawaharlal Nehru College	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
PatiDarrang College	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No	No	N0	No	N0
Pub Kamrup College	Yes	Yes	N0	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Puthimari College	Yes	Yes	No	No	No	No	No	No	Yes	No	No	No
Rangia College	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No
Saraighat College	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No
S.B.M.S College	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Suren Das College	Yes	Yes	No	No	Yes	No	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No

Out of twelve (12) selected colleges, only six (6) colleges are providing bibliographic services and the rest six (6) colleges are having CD-ROM services. On the other hand, seven (7) colleges are having their internet services, Five (5) college libraries are running email services to the user. Documentation services are utilised on only four (4) colleges namely Damdama College, Pub Kamrup College, Saraighat College and S.B.M.S College.

5.6   Drawbacks of the Library during Automation

This research article studied five (5) types of drawbacks in the selected college libraries of Kamrup District in case of automation plan as per following table xx

Table 5: Challenges faced by the surveyed Libraries

Sl No	Name of the College	Insufficient Fund	Inadequate Staff Training	Lack of Manpower	Lack of User IT Knowledge	Problems from Authority	Lack of Space
1	Chhaygaon College	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES
2	Dakshin Kamrup College	NO	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO
3	D.K Girls College	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES
4	Jawaharlal Nehru College	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	YES
5	Pub Kamrup College	NO	YES	NO	YES	NO	YES
6	Puthimari College	YES	YES	YES	YES	NO	NO
7	Rangia College	NO	YES	YES	NO	NO	YES

6.   Findings

The following observations have been made through this survey.

6.1   Status of Collections in the Surveyed College Libraries

The results of the survey shows that Rangia College Library stands highest in Book collections with 61,394 numbers, while Puthimari College Library stands highest in Journals and Magazine's collections with 44 numbers. Out of twelve (12) surveyed colleges, Six (6) colleges are members of N-List programme.

6.2   Status of Automation in the Surveyed College Libraries

Out of twelve (12) surveyed colleges, ten (10) colleges started automation project. Out of ten (10)

colleges Rangia college has covered highest area of automation process with a number of five module namely cataloguing, circulation, serial control, OPAC and administration.

6.3 Problems faced by the Surveyed College Libraries during Automation

From the survey, we can give a clear picture that four (4) colleges namely Chhaygaon college, Dakshin Kamrup Girl's college, Jawaharlal Nehru college and Puthimari college library faced the problem of insufficient fund during automation.

On the other hand, nine (9) out of ten (10) colleges falls under inadequate staff training. There is a shortage of manpower found in majority of the surveyed colleges.

One of the most important components of a library is its user. Users must possess good knowledge in information technology. But in the survey of the colleges it has been found that there is a lack of knowledge over information technology of the user's in eight colleges (8) out of ten(10) colleges.

From the survey it has been noticed that there is a need of support from the higher authority in Suren Das College only.

Among ten (10) colleges, seven (7) colleges are facing the problem of efficient space.

7. Suggestions for Library Automation

1. Financial help should be provided by state government and library authority according to library and information policy;

2. Libraries should be conducted training program time to time for the development of library staff;

3. Librarian should select best hardware and software for automation;

4. All the data or information should be secured with the help of different security tool such as use of Anti-virus, firewall and tacking a back up data time to time; and

5. Inverter should be used for power..

8. Conclusion

Automation of libraries is still in their formative stages in Assam. Libraries, librarians and college administrations must initiate automation in order to provide effective and efficient services to users. Library professional must upgrade their skills in order to meet the growing expectation of users from libraries.

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