A Comparative Study on Library Automation Among the College Libraries of Sivasagar and Dibrugarh District in Assam

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Abstract

The paper is based on a comparative study on library automation among 20 college libraries of Sivasagar and Dibrugarh affiliated to Dibrugarh University. The methodology used for collecting data for the study is a combination of questionnaire and interview method. The findings of the study reveal that most of the college libraries of both the districts are not up to the mark at all in the application of the latest ICT in various housekeeping operations.

Keywords: Library Automation, College Libraries-Library Automation

1. Introduction

Automation is defined as a technique, a process or a system that operates automatically. According to *Encyclopedia of Library and Information Science*, "Automation is the technology concerned with the design and development of process and system that minimizes the necessity of human intervention in operation". According to Webster's dictionary "Automation is the technique of making an apparatus, a process or a system to operate automatically".

Information communication technologies have changed the way information is created and distributed. They have also changed the way libraries select, acquire, organize and deliver information. Librarians must adapt to this change and acquire skill in using automated library systems. Library automation is thus a process that improves every library facility to higher levels. It can be defined simply as the use of computer and networking technologies in the library. It implies a high degree of mechanization of various routines and repetitive tasks performed by human beings and has facilitated accuracy, flexibility and reliability in the services of libraries. It also increases the efficiency in technical processing of library materials and improves the efficiency of library administration and management.

2. Objectives of the Study

The main objectives of this study are as follows:

❖ To find out existing manpower in the college libraries of Sivasagar and Dibrugarh district of Assam,

❖ To find out the total collection in the college libraries of Sivasagar and Dibrugarh district, and

❖ To find out the current status of library automation in the college libraries of Sivasagar and Dibrugarh district.

3. Scope of the Study

This study includes 20 college libraries of Sivasagar and Dibrugarh affiliated to Dibrugarh University, that is, ten (10) colleges from Sivasagar district and ten (10) colleges from Dibrugarh district.

4. Methodology

The methodology used for this comparative study of college libraries in two districts of Dibrugarh University is based on the survey research method. For authenticity of data, a combination of questionnaire and interview method is used to collect data from the library professionals.

5. Analysis and Interpretation of Data

Analysis of data collected from the questionnaires is presented in this research paper. The data elements gathered are grouped into library staff, library collection and status of library automation.

5.1 College Libraries of Sivasagar and Dibrugarh District

The basic information of all the college libraries of Sivasagar and Dibrugarh district covered under this study has been given in the Table1.

Table-1: Basic information about the college libraries of Sivasagar and Dibrugarh district

Sivasagar			Dibrugarh		
Name of the College	Name of the Library	Year of Estd	Name of the Libary	Name of the Library	Year of Estd
Amguri College	Amguri College Library	1967	Dibru College	Dibru College Library	1963
Demow College	Demow College Library	1970	D.H.S.K. Kanoi College	D.H.S.K. College Central	1945
Gargaon College	Gargaon College Library	1959	D.H.S.K. College	D.H.S.K. Commerce College Library	1960
H.C.D.G College	H.C.D.G College Library	1964	Duliajan College	Duliajan College Library	1969
Moran College	Moran Colge Library	1981	Duliajan Girl's College	Duliajan Girl's College Library	1992
Nazira College	Nazira College Library	1947	M.D.K. Girl's College	M.D.K. Girl's College Library	1963
Sivasagar College	Sivasagar College Library	1964	Nahortia College	Nahortia College Library	1964
Sivasagar Girl's College	Sivasagar Girl's College Library	1964	Namrup College	Namrup College Library	1973
S.M.D. College	S.M.D.College Library	1964	Tengakhat College	Tengakhat College Library	1967
Sonari College	Sonari College Library	1970	Tingkhong College	Tingkhong College Library	1972

5.2 Library Manpower

The library manpower depends on library collection, library users and the services provided by the library. Implementing automation in the library needs sufficient qualified staff. The current position of professional and non-professional staff in the college libraries of Sivasagar and Dibrugarh district is presented in the Table 2.

The Table 2 shows that the Gargaon College has maximum number of library staff, i.e., 7 followed by Sibsagar College, i.e., 6 whereas the SMD College and Nazira College have least number of library staff,

i.e., 2 each in Sibsagar district. In Dibrugarh district, MDK Girls College has largest number of library staff, i.e., 6 followed by DHSK College with 5

library staff members, while Tengakhat College and Tingkhong College have least number of library staff, i.e., 2 each.

Table-2: Total library staff in the college libraries of Sivasagar and Dibrugarh district

Sivasagar				Dibrugarh			
Name of the college	Profess ional	Non-professional	Total	Name of the college	Profess ional	Non-professional	Total
Amguri College	01	02	03	Dibru College	01	02	03
Demow College	01	03	04	D.H.S.K. College	02	03	05
Gargaon College	02	05	07	D.H.S.K. Commerce College	01	02	03
H.C.D.G College	02	01	03	Duliajan College	01	03	04
Moran College	02	03	05	Duliajan Girl's College	01	02	03
Nazira College	01	01	02	M.D.K. Girl's College	02	04	06
Sibasagar College	02	04	06	Nahorkotia College	01	03	04
Sibasagar Girl'sCollege	02	02	04	Namrup College	01	02	03
S.M.D.College	01	01	02	Tengakhat College	01	01	02
Sonari College	02	03	05	Tingkhong College	01	01	02

5.3 Library Collection

The main objective of the college library is to become the instrument of instruction. The teaching in the classroom must depend more on the library than on the textbooks. The college libraries have to acquire a wide variety of learning material both in print and non-print forms. Table 3 shows the collection of different college libraries of Sivasagar and Dibrugarh district.

Table-3: Total collection in the college libraries of Sivasagar and Dibrugarh district

Sivasagar				Dibrugarh			
Name of the college	**Textbook**	**Reference book**	**Total**	**Name of the college**	**Textbook**	**Reference book**	**Total**
Amguri College	15000	2200	17200	Dibru College	15000	5000	20000
Demow College	13800	5500	19300	D.H.S.K College	21000	17500	38500
Gargaon College	25000	8500	33500	D.H.S.K. Commerce College	15600	8500	24100
H.C.D.G College	8000	4000	12000	Duliajan College	18000	4800	22800
Moran College	25000	5000	30000	Duliajan Girl's College	6000	1700	7700
Nazira College	12000	2000	14000	M.D.K. Girl's College	20000	11200	31200
Sibasagar College	38000	20000	58000	Nahortia College	15000	7500	22500
Sibasagar Girl'sCollege	35000	8000	43000	Namrup College	8000	4500	12500
S.M.D.College	18000	5700	23700	Tengakhat College	8500	2700	11200
Sonari College	10000	2000	12000	Tingkhong College	10000	1400	11400

The Table 3 shows that Sibsagar College has maximum number of collection, i.e., 58,000 followed by Sibsagar Girls College which has 43,000 numbers while HCDG College and Sonari College has least number of collection in Sivasagar district. In Dibrugarh district, DHSK College has the largest collection followed by MDK Girls College whereas Tengakhat College and Tingkhong College has least number of collection. Maximum number of reference books are available in Sibsagar College and DHSK College in each district.

5.4 Status of Library Automation

Library automation involves creation of databases and information retrieval, computerized library networking and use of telecommunication for informa-

tion with careful handling and systematic planning. It reduces the work stress of library staff and helps in getting the information immediately. The status of library automation in the college libraries of Sivasagar and Dibrugarh District has been shown in the Table 4.

The Table 4 shows that 4 libraries are fully automated and 6 libraries are partially automated in Sibsagar district while in Dibrugarh district, 3 libraries are fully automated whereas 5 libraries are partially automated and 2 colleges are yet to start automation. All the college libraries of both the district have internet connectivity and SOUL software is used for library automation.

Table-4: Status of library automation in the College Libraries of Sivasagar and Dibrugarh District

	Name of the College	Status of Automation	No. of Computer used	Internet connectivity	Software used	Total holdings	Total no. of records in database
Sivasagar	Amguri College	Partial Automated	03	Yes	SOUL	17200	10500
	Demow College	Partial Automated	05	Yes	SOUL	19300	8600
	Gargaon College	Partial Automated	25	Yes	SOUL	33500	12000
	H.C.D.G College	Partial Automated	04	Yes	SOUL	12000	7500
	Moran College	Fully Automated	10	Yes	SOUL	30000	30000
	Nazira College	Partial Automated	04	Yes	SOUL	140000	10000
	Sibasagar College	Fully Automated	15	Yes	SOUL	58000	57000
	Sibasagar Girl'sCollege	Fully Automated	17	Yes	SOUL	43000	40000
	S.M.D.College	Partial Automated	05	Yes	SOUL	23700	12500
	Sonari College	Partial Automated	06	Yes	SOUL	12000	8000
Dibrugarh	Dibru College	Fully Automated	05	Yes	SOUL	20000	20000
	D.H.S.K. College	Partial Automated	05	Yes	SOUL	38500	23000
	D.H.S.K.Commerce College	Partial Automated	05	Yes	SOUL	24100	7500
	Duliajan College	Fully Automated	06	Yes	SOUL	22800	22000
	Duliajan Girl's College	Not Automated	_	Yes	SOUL	7700	_
	M.D.K. Girl's College	Fully Automated	09	Yes	SOUL	31200	31000
	Nahortia College	Fully Automated	05	Yes	SOUL	22500	11000
	Namrup College	Partial Automated	04	Yes	SOUL	12500	10000
	Tengakhat College	Not Automated	01	Yes	_	11200	_
	Tingkhong College	Not Automated	01	Yes	_	1140	_

5.5 House Keeping Operation in Libraries

Library automation means not only entering and reading the data in the computer, but also automation of different functional areas of library. The functional areas of automation in the college libraries of Sivasagar and Dibrugarh district are shown in the Table 5.

Table-5: Housekeeping operations performed by the libraries of Sivasagar District

	Name of the college	Administration	Cataloguing	Circulation	Acquisition	Serial Control	OPAC
Sivasagar	Amguri College	--	Yes	--	--	--	Yes
	Demow College	--	Yes	--	--	--	Yes
	Gargaon College	--	Yes	--	--	--	Yes
	H.C.D.G College	--	Yes	--	--	--	Yes
	Moran College	Yes	Yes	Yes	--	--	Yes
	Nazira College	--	Yes	--	--	--	Yes
	Sibasagar College	Yes	Yes	Yes	--	--	Yes
	Sibasagar Girl's College	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
	S.M.D.College	--	Yes	--	--	--	Yes
	Sonari College	--	Yes	Yes	--	--	Yes
Dibrugarh	Dibru College	--	Yes	Yes	--	--	Yes
	D.H.S.K. College	--	Yes	Yes	--	--	Yes
	D.H.S.K.Commerce College	--	Yes		--	--	Yes
	Duliajan College	--	Yes	Yes	--	--	Yes
	Duliajan Girl's College	--	--	--	--	--	--
	M.D.K. Girl's College	--	Yes	Yes	--	--	Yes
	Nahortia College	--	Yes	Yes	--	--	Yes
	Namrup College	--	Yes	Yes	--	--	Yes
	Tengakhat College	--	--	--	--	--	
	Tingkhong College	_	_	_	_	_	

The Table 5 shows that except one library, most of the college libraries in both the districts are in the process of adopting cataloguing, administration, circulation, acquisition, and serial control and OPAC modules. Only one library has fully adopted all the modules, i.e., Sibsagar Girl's College in Sibsagar district.

6. Findings

On the basis of the survey, following are the findings:

❖ It is observed that most of the college libraries of both the districts are not having sufficient number of staff with technical knowledge to provide up-to-date services in an ICT environment.

❖ In both districts, collection of textbooks varies from college to college. Though the number of textbooks is not discouraging, the number of reference books is also not very encouraging. The highest number of refer-

ence books is found in the colleges of Sivasagar district.

❖ The study reveals that most of the college libraries of both the districts are not up to the mark at all in the application of the latest ICT in various housekeeping operations. In Sivasagar district, 4 colleges are automated fully where as only 3 colleges are fully automated in Dibrugar district. In both the districts, automation is not fully done due to lack of budget, manpower, skilled library staff and lack of training. These constraints are the main reasons for not automating library activities.

7. Suggestions

Some suggestion regarding automation in the college libraries of Sibasagar and Dibrugarh district are given below:

❖ For the library automation, the willingness of the librarian and the authority is a must.

❖ Proper guidelines and planning should be maintained for implementing ICT in library activities.

❖ Adequate funds may be provided and utilized properly.

❖ Qualified and professionally trained manpower should be recruited.

❖ E-resource training programme may be organized by the concerned authority.

❖ Librarians must be encouraged to renovate themselves with the modern technologies.

❖ Specific fund should be allotted for automation process.

❖ In-service training should be provided.

❖ Latest technology as well as modern equipment should be introduced.

❖ Proper collection development policy should be maintained.

❖ Adequate infrastructure should be developed.

8. Conclusion

Chief benefits of library automation are improved productivity/efficiency, better use of information resources through improved access and development of new patterns of communication among staff, especially between computer services and library staff. Today the world is changing fast in every sphere as now everything is fast, handy and digital. So the library which has been a store of information should also not lack behind in any field. ICT makes the library more user friendly. Though the college libraries of both Sivsagar and Dibrugarh are adopting automation in a way or the other full automation is not done in all. Adequate funds, proper planning, staff training and motivation of library staff is necessary on the part of the college authorities. The library staff too has to be fully involved in the process of complete automation of a college library and while formulating policies, it must be kept in mind of all concerned.

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