International Journal of Science and Research (IJSR)
ISSN (Online): 2319-7064
Index Copernicus Value (2013): 6.14 | Impact Factor (2013): 4.438

ICT in Arts and Science College Libraries

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Abstract: ***This research paper analyses the role of ICT facilities and information services in arts and science college libraries. Higher education is the source of income and employment of large mass. So, the people join arts and science, engineering, medical, law and agricultural colleges and vocational training institutions for higher education. The quality of higher education and personality development of students depend on the quality of faculties and libraries. As far as higher education is concerned, quality libraries is essential for academic achievement and progress. Moreover, this is a competitive world where higher educational institutions show their facilities and faculties in order to attract the public and achieve their coals. Library is one of the important factors to get recognition from university and NAAC. So, every higher educational institutions give due importance to develop and modernize the library. ICT plays a vital role in the modernization of information service system. Consequently, ICT facility is found in all arts and science, engineering, medical, law and agricultural college libraries. However such facility is poor in arts and science college libraries. So, an attempt is made in this study to find out the role of ICT in arts and science college libraries.***

Keywords: Arts and Science College, information sources and services, information and communication technology, higher education, library automation, internet, networks.

1. Introduction

This is a dynamic world in which changes are inevitable. It can be seen in various fields such as agriculture, industry, transport, banking, engineering, education and medicine. Library is not exempted from this phenomenon. In fact, Information and communication technology has brought about marvellous changes in the dissemination of information services. Information communication technology plays a vital role in information services. It not only saves the time and energy of the users and library staff but also helps to get up-to-date information at national and international levels. ICT comprises internet, network services, library automation, digital library, institutional repository and security system. These devices speed up the information retrieval system at global level and change the information use pattern of users. In fact, several studies prove that ICT helps the users in their higher education and researches. Therefore, arts and science colleges also give due importance to modernize the libraries with ICT infrastructure. However, a few libraries are good, whereas others are poor in such facility. So, this study is significant one in the library field.

2. Theoretical Background

Several studies have analysed the role of ICT in engineering, medical and agriculture colleges. But, a few studies have touched this area in India and abroad.

Clyde (2000) conducted a study on school library automation. The study made clear that how the computers could make changes is the library services as an administrative tool as a resource for teaching information skill and as part of the library collection in the form of software and databases.

Ali and Husan (2003) made a study of users' opinion on the use of electronic services at IIT library, Delhi. The study opined that the users can easy access of online databases and other e-resources compared to CD-ROM databases. The study suggested that the library should subscribe to more web-based resources than CD-ROM databases.

Dollah (2006) made a study on digital reference services in selected public academic libraries in Malaysia. The study identified the usage of both traditional and digital library services, user awareness of digital reference services, user satisfaction. The study also stressed the need for digital reference service.

Haneefa (2007) assessed the use of ICT based resources and services in special libraries in Kerala. Most of the users used e-mail service, followed by world wide web. A good number of users were not satisfied with the application of ICT infrastructure, and proposed formal orientation and training in ICT based resources and services.

Ahmad and Fatima (2009) investigated the usage of ICT products and services for research in social sciences at Aligarh Muslim University. The study found that majority of the researchers is familiar to use the ICT products and services. The study suggested that there should be orientation workshops and training programmes for the researchers for the use of ICT products and services.

Sampath Kumar and Biradar (2010) examined the use of ICT in 31 college libraries in Karnataka, India by investigating the ICT infrastructure, library automation, barriers to the implementation of library automation and librarian's attitudes towards ICT. The study found that the application of ICT in such libraries has not reached high level due to lack of man power, trained and skilled staff and budget. Kamba (2011) studied the implication of ICT's in libraries of higher education institutes in Africa. The study identified that ICT has changed the way of information seeking. It has become user-friendly to access the library services from their homes, classroom and hotels to interact with the library staff and receive information services without physically visiting the libraries.

Syed Noor Mohd and Mohamed Ismail, S (2013) made an assessment on availability of ICT infrastructure facilities to

access e-resources. The study concluded that all the sample engineering college libraries having necessary ICT infrastructure and facilities to access the electronic resources for the benefit of their users.

3. Objectives

The specific objective of the study focuses on

- To find out ICT facility in arts and science college libraries.
- To trace ICT services in the study area.
- To give suggestion for modernising the library.

4. Methodology

The present study was conducted in the arts and science college libraries of Kanyakumari District. There are twenty four colleges in the study area. So, twenty four questionnaires were distributed to the libraries of respective colleges. Out of twenty four colleges, the researcher get back twenty two duly filled in questionnaires. In this way 22 respondents were selected for analytical purpose. The survey was conducted during November and December 2014.

3.1 ICT Facilities

ICT facilities refer to library automation, internet, network, digital library and institutional repository.

3.2 Library Automation

The present libraries have been modernised with various devices such as computer, internet, network facility and automation to retrieve world wide information. Library automation strengthens the information service. It saves the time, energy and money of the users and reduces number of library staff. So, automation has a great impact on arts and science college libraries in the study area. At the same time financial constraints, lack of space, and cost of materials interrupt the automation of libraries. It is shown in Table 1

Table 1: Library automation

S. No.	Library automation	Number of colleges	Percentage
1.	Non-automated	10	45.45
2.	Partially automated	9	40.91
3.	Fully automated	3	13.64
	Total	22	100.00

Source: Field survey

Table 1 displays the automation in arts and science college libraries. The study found that only 54.55 percent libraries have automation and45.45 percent have not been automated in the study area. It is made clear that 13.64 percent fully automated and 40.91 percent partially automated during the study period. This study identifies that lack of fund, cost of materials, lack of trained and skilled staff, lack of space and neglecting the importance of library automation are the causes of library non-automation.

3.3 Internet

Internet is the network of millions of computers all over the world, which enables information to be shared by the users. It has an enormous quantity of information with newsgroups and web pages. Internet is not a substitute for the library but it is used in accessing current information. It helps the users to make use of information resources as well. It is seen that 50 percent of college libraries have such facility. It can be seen in Table 2

Table 2: Internet Service

S. No.	*Internet facility*	*Number of colleges*	*Percentage*
1.	Available	11	50
2.	Non-available	11	50
	Total	22	100

Source: Field survey

Table 2 displays the availability of internet facility in the arts and science college libraries. It is seen that out of the total (22) libraries, 50 percent have internet facility, where as 50 percent do not have. This is because of financial scarcity, lack of trained staff, lack of space and ignorance of importance of such facility.

3.4 Network

The requirement of global information can be met possible only through network services. In fact, information sources are available at regional, national and international levels. It should be made available at global level to meet the information requirements of users. But, network facility is not available in most of the college libraries in the study area. It is exhibited in Table 3

Table 3: Network facility

S. No.	*Network services*	*Number of colleges*	*Percentage*
1.	Available	8	36.36
2.	Non-available	14	63.64
	Total	22	100.00

Source: Field Survey

Table 3 depicts the number of college libraries having network facilities in the study area. Among the 22 college libraries, 36.36 percent have network facilities and 63.64 percent do not have such one. It shows that most of the arts and science college libraries are lack in network facilities. This is due to financial constraints, cost of materials, lack of internet and inadequate space and other infrastructural facilities are the reasons for not connecting the libraries with networks in the study area.

3.5 Digital Library

Digital library facility is one of the growing services in the information technological world. It facilitates the use of multimedia such as CD, DVDs, CD- ROM databases, e-books, collection of movies, lectures, speeches and encyclopaedias. This service is offered in arts and science college libraries in recent years. It is shown in Table 4

Table 4: Digital Library

S. No.	*Digital Library*	*Number of colleges*	*Percentage*
1.	Available	6	27.27
2.	Non-available	16	72.73
	Total	22	100.00

Source: Survey data

Table 4 displays the digital facility available in the select college libraries. Among the 22 arts and science college libraries, 27.27 percent have digital facility and 72.73 percent do not have such one. It is observed that many college libraries do not have this facility due to financial constraint, lack of maintenance services and trained staff and poor utilization of such devices in rural college libraries and ignorance of such facility.

3.6 Institutional Repository

An Institutional Repository is an online archive for collecting, preserving and disseminating digital copies of the intellectual output of an organisation, especially in research institution. This service is offered in arts and science college libraries in recent years. It is shown in Table 5

Table 5: Institutional Repository

S. No.	Institutional Repository	Number of colleges	Percentage
1.	Available	4	18.18
2.	Non-available	18	81.82
	Total	22	100.00

Source: Field Survey

Table 5 displays the institutional repository in the select colleges. Among the 22 arts and science colleges, 18.18 percent have institutional repository and 72.73 percent do not have such one. It is identified that many colleges do not have this facility due to financial constraints, lack of knowledge in online uploading and ignorance of importance of such one.

3.7 ICT Services

ICT service includes multimedia, internet, network and OPAC

Table 6: ICT based services

Sl. No.	Service	Number of colleges		
		Available	Non-available	Total
1.	Multimedia	6 (27.27)	16 (72.73)	22 (100)
2.	Internet	11 (50)	11 (50)	22 (100)
3.	Network	8 (36.36)	14 (63.64)	22 (100)
4.	OPAC	12 (54.55)	10 (45.45)	22 (100)

Source: Field survey

Figures in parentheses indicate percentages to total

Table 6 indicates the availability of ICT based services in the arts and science college libraries. The study shows that out of the select college libraries, 27.27 percent have multimedia, 50 percent have internet, 36.36 percent have network and 54.55 percent have OPAC service. It reveals that about 50 percent of the arts and science colleges do not have ICT based services in the study area.

5. Findings

- The study found that about 54.55 percent libraries have automation and the remaining (45.45%) do not have such facility.
- It is observed that 50 percent arts and science college libraries have internet facility, where as 50 percent do not have such one.
- The study identified that about 36.36 percent of the arts and science college libraries have network facility and the remaining (63.64 %) do not have such one.
- It is seen that most of the arts and science college libraries (72.73%) do not have digital facility and a few colleges (27.27%) have such one in the study area.
- The study identified that adout18.18 percent arts and science colleges have institutional repository and the remaining (72.73%) do not have such facility.
- The study found that out of the select college libraries, 27.27 percent have multimedia, 50 percent have internet, 36.36 percent have network and 54.55 percent have OPAC service.

6. Suggestion

The following suggestion may be implemented to provide ICT based services in arts and science college libraries.

- The management should give due importance to modernize the information service system with ICT facilities.
- It should reserve adequate fund for the development of library, especially automation and ICT facilities.
- It should expand the space, infrastructural facilities and recruit trained staff to provide better ICT based services.
- The government and higher educational authorities should demand the private-aided and self-financed arts and science colleges to provide ICT based services.

7. Conclusion

Information service is unthinkable in the absence of ICT facility. The non-availability of ICT based services affects the information services. Moreover, the users of respective colleges depend on browsing centers and other internet cafes for information. It causes waste of time, energy and money. So, every library should provide such facility not only to the satisfaction of users but also fulfillment of the fourth law of library science.

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