

Library Automation in the Academic Institutions

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Abstract: *The study presents the review status of automation for the academic institutions like libraries and the information centers. The utilization of Information and communication Technology (ICT) facilitate facile & immediate access to Information. Automation of libraries has availed the libraries to keep pace with the latest Development. This has suppled mentally facilitated precision, flexibility and reliability in the library and information center. Automation of libraries reduces the perpetual work and preserves time and brings precision and speed. It withal increases efficiency in technical processing of library materials and amend the efficiency of library administration and manager. Today virtually libraries and information utilizing the library automation for their accommodations. Modernizations of library operations and accommodations in India since 1980's.*

Keywords: Information and communication Technology, administration and manager, modernization, library operations, academic institutions.

1. Introduction

A process of great change has been taking place today in libraries due the impact of information technology and application of computers in library work.

Library automation can be defined simply as the utilization of computers and networking technologies in the library. Library automation is the general term for information and communication technologies (ICT) that are acclimated to supersede manual systems in the library. Thus library automation betokens the application of machines to perform the different routines, perpetual and clerical job involved in functions and accommodations of the libraries.

According to Webster's Third new International Dictionary of English Language Automation is defined as "automatically controlled operation of an apparatus, process or system by mechanical or electronic device that takes place of human organs of observation, effort and decision". (Gove, 1966).

According to Encyclopedia of Library and Information Science, "automation is the technology concerned with the design and development of process and system that minimize the necessity of human intervention in operation". (Kent, 1977)

2. Why Automate?

In a quotidian routine of library activities we are utilizing computers, information and communication technologies, Lots of libraries and information centers adopted library automation for the benefits of the users as well as for the library staff. For the automation of the library the main objectives are:

- **Improve accommodations**

Due to library automation accommodations of the library more amended and dissemination of information of time. Time and human power preserving with qualitative accommodations. Congruousness for library cooperation & coordination development

- **Reduces Costs**

Elimination of duplication of work, so cost of procurement the same is reduces.

- **Improve Access**

There are no circumscriptions for access; anybody can access the information on his pc. Felicitousness for resource sharing and networking

- **Improve Control and Management:**

Establishment of a well storage & retrieval system. The library staff can manage and control the entire accommodations of the circadian routine. Staff expeditiously and timely disposal of library work.

3. Areas of Library Automation

- Automation of library functions (acquisition, cataloging, circulation, reference)
- Use of electronic sources within the library (e. g CD ROMS)
- Accessing remote electronic resources (e.g. the Internet)
- Office automation (e. g Word-processing, spread sheets, data bases, etc.)
- Patron accommodations (e.g. Computer laboratory, Multimedia centre)

4. Basic Requirements of Library Automation:

- Adequate collection.
- Financial assistance (include purchase of network specific hardware, software and cabling, internet connection costs, ongoing operation costs, maintenance cost of system hardware and software.)
- Computer hardware.
- Library software.
- Training of staff and users.
- Maintenance and development.

5. Benefits of Library Automation

- Improved productivity/efficiency in term of staff work and service, collections.
- Accurate and updated information, Better use of information resources through improved access
- Improved resource sharing among the libraries through the virtual catalog or network
- Increasing the controlling over the circulation of collections.
- Reduce the time of staff and the patron to get relevant information
- Facilitates interlibrary loan
- Elimination of duplication of work/Reduces duplication
- Avoids duplication of cataloguing effort
- Optimizes the use of human and other resources

6. Benefits to Staff

- Increasing the effectiveness of the staff.
- Timely access the library collection and provide it to the patron with research skills.
- Development of new patterns of communication among staff, especially between computer services and library staff
- Empowerment of the staff in making decisions
- Improved the computer awareness among the staff and the patrons.
- Acquisition of new skills and knowledge

7. Software Needs for Automation

- Knowledge explosions resulting in numerous specializations and flow of non-stop information (Growth of documents).
- Availability of information that appears only in electronic format (e. g CD-ROM, internet resources, data bases, graphics, auto visual and electronic media etc.)
- Challenges of information technology before the librarians.
- Lack of space.
- Varied needs of libraries and their limitations.
- To improve the level of service and quality of output.
- To fulfill needs that cannot be achieved by manual system like resource sharing in library.
- Excess of repeating and duplication of work, in- house function of libraries.
- Networking, resource sharing and internet application in libraries.
- Expectations of society from libraries.
- Accuracy and promptness.

8. Housekeeping Activities

The housekeeping activities are essential for the day-to-day functioning of the library. These include:

- Acquisition (ordering, receiving and invoicing materials).
- Circulation (classifying and indexing materials).
- Cataloging (lending materials to patrons and receiving them back).

- Serials control (Tracking magazine and newspaper holdings).
- OPAC (Public interface for user).
- Administration.
- Reminders: for library patrons as well as vendors of books and periodicals

9. Services to Users

- **Online Public Access Catalog (OPAC):** an electronic record of holding, bibliographic, and item information.
- **Circulation:** allowing librarians to check materials in and out, place renewals or holds, and enter payments.
- **Reference Services:** to the users and other communities.

10. Resource Sharing

1. **ILL:** for sharing resources.
2. **Cooperative Cataloguing:** for sharing the cataloguing work among a group of libraries.
3. **Union Catalogue:** to enable easy identification of a resource in the holdings of a group of libraries.

11. Conclusion

No doughty automation plays a vital role in the ICT environment, due to automation of the libraries and information centers; we get pin pointed information on tips without vesting a time. Benefits outweigh disadvantages ICTs are here to stay and society is becoming an information society demanding the use of ICTs to improve access to information.

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