LIBRARY AUTOMATION IN POLYTECHNIC COLLEGE LIBRARIES

IN HARYANA: PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS

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ABSTRACT

This paper briefly discusses the Need, Advantage and Problems of Library Automation of Polytechnic college libraries in Haryana. It emphasis that today's library could not survive without Automation. Library automation is the application of automatic and semiautomatic data processing machines (computers) to perform traditional library housekeeping activities such as acquisition, circulation, cataloguing, reference services and serials control.

KEYWORDS: Automation, Library Automation, Computer, Polytechnic Colleges, Haryana

INTRODUCTION

Library Automation refers to the use of computers to serve the needs of library users. The operations of a library get a quantum jump with the introductions of computers. The computers help to provide fast and reliable access to the resources available in the library as well as elsewhere. The application of computers in the library operations avoids repetitive jobs speeds up operations, increases use of library resources and saves lot of labour time. Computers are not only used as a tool for processing the data, but also for data storage and accessing. Planning for an automated system, no matter how big or small, should be part of an overall long-range plan for the library. Automation should always be used as a means to achieve overall better patron service. Careful planning for technology will assure that your automation project is "sustainable", i.e. enhances the organization's ability to meet its service mission without disrupting the organizational stability of the institution.

HISTORY OF LIBRARY AUTOMATION

Punched cards were invented by Hollerith in 1880 and used in tabulating the US census data. The library at the University of Texas was perhaps the first to use punched cards in 1936 for circulation control. The Library of congress used the unit record machines for the production of catalogues in 1950. Many libraries in the US followed the system for automating their activities.

Library automation entered into its second era in 1960s with the advent of computers. The notable ventures were MEDLARS, MARC, etc. Until the early 1990s, "Automating the library" involved generally the same features as those in place since the advent of machine readable cataloguing record in the late 1960s. Libraries created integrated text based systems using micro/mini computers in which traditional library Housekeeping operations were computerized using the library's database as the foundation.

In the last decade, library automation has undergone a transformation that reflects Changing definitions of library service in general and access to resources in particular.

The introduction of global networking such as internet, cheap availability of technology and new media technologies made information more accessible. Today's integrated library systems must not only provide modules which automate traditional library functions but also capable of connecting through the local systems into systems of other information or knowledge suppliers, databases and internet.

AREA OF LIBRARY AUTOMATION

Acquisitions

- Selection

- ordering

- Claiming/cancellation

- Invoice processing

- Extended procurements

- Fund Control

- Cash Balance

- Track fund allocations and adjustments

- Create Purchase Orders

Classification

- Books

- Serials

- Special Collections

Cataloguing

- Books

- Serials

- Special Collections

Circulation

- Charge/Renewal

- Discharge

- Loan Periods

- Processing schedules

- Messages

- Notices

- Transaction Recording Devices for off-line processing

- Member control

- Inventory Control

Serials Control

- Receipt (check-in)

- Claiming

- Bindery control

- replacements

- monographic serials

- invoice processing

Reference Services

- User tools

- Bibliographic utilization

- Reprography

- Inter-library communications

- General Administration

- Grants Administration

- Library Publications

- Bindery

- Periodical Citation Searching

- OPAC

- Bibliographic Database

NEED OF LIBRARY AUTOMATION

Due to following reasons automation is needed:

- For the good administration of the library.

- Capacity to handle any amount of data and information.

- Participating in network programmers and resource sharing.

- Standardization of library procedures.

- Speedy processing of information and its retrieval.

- Heavy bulk of data can be stored in the computer and thus certain problems, which arise with storing records in wooden cabinet, are avoided.

ADVANTAGE OF LIBRARY AUTOMATION

Many activities of a library are routine in nature; a few are repetitive. Automation of these activities helps in managing the library's resources in a better Way at the same time saving time, money and manpower. For example, once the bibliographic details like author, title, edition, publisher, price, ISBN number, etc are entered at the time of ordering, the same data can be used for accessioning, Cataloguing (OPAC), and circulation. Other important factors associated with automation are speed, and accuracy. One can imagine the time saved in literature searches and in preparing bibliographies. Automation also offers freedom from doing repetitive and routine works as well as enables providing efficient services properly and more efficiently cutting down time and improving productivity Automation also facilitates generation of a number of reports for better decision making in the effective management of the library. Availability of various statistical and other usage reports and performance reports will ensure better appreciation from library users. For example, vendor performance analysis is possible. Subject-wise or project department-wise budget can be monitored. Circulation data can provide information on titles that are in great demand so that more copies can be procured if needed. Many current awareness services like current additions, contents of books and journals, etc can also be provided to users.

MAJOR PROBLEMS IN LIBRARY AUTOMATION

It is a fact that the concept of Library Automation undoubtedly is very useful in recent environment in the area of science, technology & engineering. The implementation of this concept needs careful, constant and concerted efforts on the part of Technical Educational institutions. On the basis of experience, the potential problems pertaining to the implementation of Automation of Library in Polytechnic Colleges are listed below:

- Physical Isolation

- Rigid Procedures

- Closed Policy

- Disinterest

- Low Priority

- Infrastructure

- Level of skill of library staff

LEVEL OF SKILL OF LIBRARY STAFF

The level of skill of library staff also played a very important role. In Polytechnic Colleges Haryana there are no

standard for level of subordinate staff to be recruited in libraries. There educational qualification and designation is not according to AICTE (All India Council for Technical Education) norms. The institutions having better stuff went far ahead (though there are exceptions to that). The better qualified staff was better oriented towards progressive thinking which could move the things fast. This point emphasizes the requirement of a uniform qualification policy for the recruitment of staff in Polytechnic institutions.

CONCLUSIONS

Prospects

Having talked about the problems and areas of applications let us talk about future prospects. I can definitely say that the things are changing for the good. Now Technical Education department, Haryana is realizing that there is an urgent requirement of library automation. Library staff is also realizing that they cannot remain indifferent to the change; otherwise they will be labelled outdated. Existing staff is getting rid of the fear of computerization. They are coming forward to learn and make themselves suitable to face the challenges of the new millennium. Standardization is increasing and the better softwares are available in Market.

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