LIBRARY AUTOMATION TECHNOLOGY IN ACADEMIC LIBRARIES

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ABSTRACT

Library Automation is a process of using the machineries for easily working and saving the machineries for easily working and saving the human power and time. The functions that may be automated are any or all of the following: acquisition, cataloging, public access (OPAC and Web PAC), indexing and abstracting, circulation, serials management, and reference. During the process of Automation understanding and analyzing the various problems faced by the Management and the staff. This study also gives a status view of the software packages used by different engineering college libraries & the opinion of the librarians & library staff about the performance of software they use. The main purpose of library automation is to free the librarians and library staff and to allow them to contribute more meaningfully to spread of knowledge and Information. In the simple language “When we use machineries for collection, processing, storage and retrieval of information and do another works of library with the help of machineries that called library automation.”

KEYWORDS: Acquisition, Cataloging, Public Access (OPAC and Web PAC), Circulation, Serials Management, Reference, Indexing & Abstracting

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INTRODUCTION

Library automation is the general term for information and communications technologies (ICT) that are used to replace manual systems in the library. Automation of libraries reduces the repetitive work and save time and bring accuracy and speed. It also increases efficiency in technical processing of library materials and improve the efficiency of library administration. Computerization is the part of library automation. At present use of the computer automation. Technology for library keeping operation such as administrative work, acquisition, cataloguing, Circulation, serial control, OPAC etc. known as library computerization. The development of library services in higher learning is a complex process to cover up advances of disciplines. Strategic planning for acquisition, use of Information management’s techniques, use of new technologies and regular updating. New technologies library provides several new materials, media and mode of storing and communicating the information. A reduction in the time needed for routine operations can be utilized to give customized services to the users. The process of library automation has a short history in our country. It needs proper planning and active implementation. Library Automation reduces the drudgery of repeated manual efforts in library routine. By use of library automation collection, Storage, Administration, Processing, Preservation and communication etc.
Meaning of Automation

Library automation refers to the use of computer to automate the typical procedures of libraries such as cataloging and circulation. "Library automation system" is a synonym for "Integrated library system". Automation is used to reduce the amount of staff time devoted to repetitive (and often less challenging) activities that must be done in any properly functioning library. It is to be remembering that, various library operations are automated.

Automation is technology of automatic working in which the handling method, the process and design of professional material are integrated. This is the effort to achieve an automatic and self-regulating chain of processes. Library automation, stated in single term, is the application of computers and utilization of computer based product and services in the performance of different library operations and functions in provision of various services and production of output products. Our country is very much behind in computer application in library operations and services. The reasons could be many; however, the situation is changing fast. Conditions are turning to be favorable and also the government is laying great emphasis on modernization, which covers libraries as well. Above all library 76 professionals are getting motivated and showing keenness to get trained to take up computer based work.

Objectives of Library Automation

Library automation is using information, communication and networking technologies in library activities that previously were done manually. This includes the automation of library circulation and cataloging systems. Automating a library offers significant benefits to library users as well as library staff. Many libraries have adopted automation so they can offer more effective services.

- To maintain bibliographical records of all the materials, in a computerized form.
- To provide bibliographical details through a single enumerative access point of holdings of a library.
- To reduce the repetition in the technical processes of housekeeping operations.
- To provide access to information at a faster rate
- To share the resources through library networking
- To implement new IT processes to provide high quality information.
- To improve control over collection;
- To have an effective control over the entire operation;
- To improve the existing services;
- To avoid duplication of work;
- To use the services of the existing staff effectively.

Development of Library Automation

- 1930s Punch card for circulation (IBM)
- 1950 Info & Docu. Center America
• 1961 Invention of IC by Rober Noyce (Intel) and Jack Kerby (Texas)
• 1961 KWIC H. P. Luhan IBM
• 1965 Indian Science Abstract: author index by INSDOC
• 1966 MARC I and in 1968 it was converted in MARC II by Henrietta Avram
• 1970s Many library networks establish in India

Need of Library Automation

• More time to work with the library users
• Increased operational efficiencies of the library staff
• Improve the quality, speed, accuracy and effectiveness of services
• Facilitate wider access to information for their clients
• Smooth the progress of wider dissemination of information products and services
• Better access to the collection
• Allows easy sharing of resources sharing with other libraries
• More interface with the library users with other information resources
• Better facilities for the users as other libraries are also automating
• Enhances consistency in the collection, streamlines circulation
• Time saving of clerical and repetitive tasks
• Ease of maintenances of statistics and over dues
• Report to the management

Implementing Library Automation

It is yet to take off in college libraries in India. Library automation refers to the use of computers in the routine and important services of a library. Automation of a library has mainly two components, viz. computerization and networking. Computerization will help a library to modernize its in-house operations while networking will allow it to access other libraries for the exchange of information.

Automated Library Services

Information services are provided to assist people and enable them in solving their problems and decision making. Modern libraries and information providing a variety of documentation and information services to support research and development, marketing and trade, management and all other programs related to the development of institution.

The following automated services are:

• Current awareness Service (CAS)
• Online Search Service
• Printed Indexes
• Selective Dissemination of Information (SDI)
• Inter Library Loan
• Stock Verification
• Reference services

The Following are the Areas where Computer are being used at Present.

• Online public access catalogue
• Circulation
• Acquisition
• Serial control
• Intranet
• Internet
• CD-ROM services

Advantages of Library Automation

• Easily searching of information
• It is a time saving system
• Speedily communication on information
• Avoid duplication in the library work
• Automation also facilitates generation of a number of reports for better decision making in the effective management of the library.
• 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.
• Improved productivity/efficiency.
• Improves services and quality of output
• Provides services and needs that cannot be done by a manual system
Disadvantages of Library Automation

Library automation brings great changes in the functioning of the library and proving effective and efficient library services. But in spite of these great advantages, there are many barriers which occur at the time of implementing the automation in libraries.

- It is time consuming. Planning, selecting and implementing an automated system require a significant, long term commitment of staff time.
- An automated system must be maintained on a regular basis. Having the automated system networked to a library’s local area network (LAN ) adds more demands on the media specialist’s or information professional’s time.
- It is costly. Startup costs, software, hardware, network cabling, wiring and furniture; ongoing expenses such as supplies for printers and barcode labels.
- Annual maintenance and technical support ; and conversion of a library’s shelf list into a machine –readable format ( i.e., MARC ) may be more than many small libraries can afford
- The demands of the automated system may not leave staff adequate time to provide new services or to work with students, teachers and other clients.
- Access to the automated system is unavailable during system downtime. This will hamper user access to the collection, especially if the card catalogue or the shelf list no longer exists in the library.
- Fear of adverse impact on employment
- Apprehension that the technology could be too expensive
- The library staff has to undergo extensive training.
- New knowledge and skills are needed.
- Lack of support from the management, may be owing to budget constraints.
- The need to convert data into machine readable form.

Awareness of the benefits and pitfalls of library automation will help you better prepare for the changes in your work duties. Library automation, like any technology, is costly in terms of time and money, and frustration and anguish are typical symptoms of techno stress.

CONCLUSIONS

Academic achievement of a student is closely related to his/her ability to find, evaluate and use the required information according to the curriculum needs. Library automation is the process which needs proper planning, timely implementation and periodical evaluation. The librarian with the administrators has to set the priorities after analyzing the current status and future requirements. Selection of the suitable integrated library management package according to the
needs of the users and the library is important. Automation systems play a pivotal role in libraries, both in terms of delivering services to clients and their impact on how libraries are managed. Consequently, one of the key areas affecting libraries in the future will be an increasing focus on automation systems, which necessitate changes to the way libraries organize themselves. Library automation at all levels needs good co-ordination between librarians and computer services professionals. An automated academic library with a variety of resources and user oriented services can lead them to the goals. Library automation invites pragmatic approach. Here, those institutions which freed their visions from the traditional shackles of financial insecurities and fears of making proper decisions can only set the pace of journey to excellence.

REFERENCES