



EVALUATION OF ICT SKILLS AND TRAINING NEEDS ANALYSIS OF COLLEGE LIBRARIANS IN KARNATAKA: A SAMPLE SURVEY

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ABSTRACT :

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) applications have transformed present libraries into digital libraries, electronic libraries and virtual libraries. As such, it has become essential for the college librarians to get expertise in ICT skills. In this regard, training is needed for these college librarians in ICT techniques. But, it is noted that every training programmes should be based on training needs or existing skills of librarian and expected skills in ICT. Hence, an attempt is made to analyze the training needs of college librarians in ICT in Karnataka. Questionnaire method was used to analyze the training needs and the details of the study are discussed in the paper.

KEYWORDS : Information and Communication Technology (ICT), ICT Skills and Training, librarians.

INTRODUCTION

The efficiency of any organization depends

directly on the capability, productivity and talent of its personnel and their motivation to work efficiently. Capability of a person depends on workers' ability to work and the type of education and training he got. Since training inputs may vary from on-the-job experience to off-the-job training, most of the organizations undertake some kind of training for their employees.

The technological developments in the information and knowledge dissemination compel the changes in the roles and responsibilities of the librarians. The Information and Communication Technologies (ICTs) have transformed the organizational structure, functions and services of the college libraries. Library professionals in the developed countries are now engaged in some exciting activities so as to remain effective in the midst of fast-moving technological changes. They are providing smart researching methodologies and information literacy skills to their students. They are using Web 2.0 technologies including blogs to give updates on resources as well as to interact with users and host collaborative discussions, connecting their readers on social networking sites such as MySpace or facebook. The RSS tools are used to subscribe new information services by the staff and students involved in creating online library-related resources, podcasts and videocasts for the audio tours of the library. As a result, libraries are now called 'Learning Resource Centers' and the school librarians as the 'Learning Resource Centre Managers'. Hence, it is essential for the librarians to learn newer skills so as to build new forms of libraries and also to teach the patrons the information searching skills in the technologically updated environment of the modern libraries.

Academic libraries including degree college libraries, being housed in tertiary institutions are no exception to the impact of technological advancements which has been an increase, changing the reader's habits in accessing and retrieving of information resources. In order to provide better client services, acquisition of new technology have been made in all library transaction models (operations, service, and communication). The application of new technologies extends to

acquisition, cataloging, collection development and circulation (including information sharing). Reference (especially e-reference), information literacy education, information retrieval (databases, including full-text, electronic publishing, and consortium agreements), library services promotion, institutional internal communication are not left out (Usoroh, et al, 2016). Thus, all library professionals, regardless of departmental affiliation, face an imperative need to upgrade their knowledge, improve their skills, and to adapt and broaden service models. They have no other option if they wish to maintain their role both in the profession and, by extension, in the vitality of the library as an institution (Junlin and Karen, 2010). Changes in libraries in recent years have resulted in the need for librarians to be re-trained and educated to face the new trends. These changes include the implementation of new technologies such as computer based cataloging, automated circulation systems, online access to machine-readable bibliographic databases, and the development and formalization of personnel policies and procedures. Dawha (2009) stated that because of the increasing variety of information formats and library services, there is need for continuous training and education of librarians.

It is summarized from the above discussion that, due to faster and continuous change in ICTs, there is need for regular training for the college librarians. To train the college librarians in the context of changing ICT, there is need to analyze training needs of librarians in ICT. The present paper analyzed the training needs of college librarians in ICT applications by assessing their skills in Karnataka state.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY:

The present study is made:

- + To assess the skills of college librarians in computer operating systems and general software like MS-Office;
- + To know whether college librarians are aware about the open sources;
- + To study the attitudes of college librarians on library automation; and
- + To analyze the training needs of college librarians in ICTs in Karnataka State.

Scope and Methodology:

The present study was begun with secondary literature on ICT skills required for librarians and training programmes. A sample survey of 320 college librarians to assess the ICT skills and training needs in ICT is made through questionnaires in Karnataka state. The collected primary data on the training needs of college librarians in ICT skills is analyzed and discussed as under:

Analysis, Interpretation and Discussion:

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) transformed present libraries into digital libraries, electronic libraries and virtual libraries. As such, now the libraries are mixed libraries which are gradually transforming with changing ICT applications. ICT applications especially internet has changing the structure and functions including activities of the college libraries as there is gradual shift of importance from printed libraries to e-libraries. Hence it is essential on the part of the college librarians to learn and gain expertise over ICT skills. In this regard, the primary data was collected from the college librarians on the Information and Communication Skills and analyzed, interpreted and discussed as under.

1. Expertise in Computer Operating Systems:

As discussed above, there are no computer systems in majority of the college libraries, but almost college librarians have expertise in ICT skills. The expertise of the college librarians in computer operating systems is as under.

Table No. 1. Expertise in Computer Operating Systems

Particulars	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Excellent	68	21.25
Very Good	82	25.62
Satisfactory	73	22.81
Poor/ No Knowledge	97	30.31
Total	320	100

The expertise of college librarians in computer operating systems revealed that, 68 (21.25%) of the college librarians have excellent knowledge and expertise in computer operating systems, 82 (25.62%) have very good knowledge and expertise in computer operating systems, 73 (22.81%) have satisfactory expertise in computer operating systems and 97 (30.31%) of the college librarians have poor or no knowledge about the computer operating systems.

2. Expertise in MS-Office:

Like the expertise in computer operating systems, it is essential that the college librarians must be experts in MS Office. The collected primary data on the expertise in MS-Office is disclosed as under.

Table No. 2. Expertise in MS Office

Particulars	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Excellent	82	25.62
Very Good	76	23.75
Satisfactory	65	20.31
Poor/ No Knowledge	97	30.31
Total	320	100

The expertise of college librarians in MS Office revealed that, 82 (25.62%) of the college libraries have excellent knowledge, 76 (23.75%) have very good knowledge, 65 (20.31%) have satisfactory knowledge and 97 (30.31%) of the college librarians have no knowledge about MS Office.

3. Nature of Internet Connectivity at Colleges:

It is essential on the part of the college librarians to know about the nature of internet connectivity at their college libraries and the collected primary data in this respect is tabulated as under.

Table No. 3. Nature of Internet Connectivity at Colleges

Particulars	Number of Respondents	Percentage
BSNL Data One/ Broadband	206	64.37
Dial Up	--	--
Wi-Fi	--	--
Leased Line	--	--
No Internet/ Not Aware	114	35.62
Total	320	100

It is highlighted from the above table that, 206 (64.37%) of the college librarians have expressed that there is BSNL Data One or broadband internet connection at their colleges or college libraries, whereas 114 (35.62%) are not aware about the same.

4. Use of Internet Browsers to Browse Internet:

Many of the browsers are used to browse internet and they include Internet Explorer, Mozilla Firefox, Google Chrome, Safari, Opera, etc. To assess the knowledge of the college librarians, it was asked to the respondents about their knowledge on different browsers and the collected information is presented in the following table.

Table No. 4. Use of Internet Browsers to Browse Internet

Particulars	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Internet Explorer	223	69.69
Mozilla Firefox	136	42.50
Google Chrome	223	69.69
Opera	46	14.37
Other	35	10.94
Not Aware/ Don't Use Internet	97	30.31
Total	320	100

It is observed from the above table that, many of the college librarians are using many of the web browsers to user internet. Particularly, 223 (69.69%) are using internet explorer, 136 (42.50%) are using Mozilla Firefox, 223 (69.69%) are using Google Chrome, 46 (14.37%) are using Opera Browser, 35 (10.94%) are using other browsers and 97 (30.31%) are not aware or not using internet. It shows that majority of the college librarians have good knowledge about different web browsers.

5. Library Automation Software Used:

In Karnataka, many of the college libraries are not automated as there is poor infrastructure with reference to ICT techniques. Still, few of the college libraries have automated their collection by converting them into OPAC and even few of the operations such as circulation services are partly automated in a few of the college libraries. For all these issues, the library automation software is needed. The information collected on the library automation software used in college libraries is as under.

Table No. 5. Library Automation Software Used

Particulars	Number of Respondents	Percentage
LibSys	--	--
SOUL	18	5.62
e-Granthalaya	65	20.31
Koha	08	2.50
Any Other	06	1.87
Not Automated	223	69.69
Total	320	100

Above table made it clear that, though majority of the college libraries, that is 223 (69.69%) of the libraries are not automated, 18 (5.62%) of the college librarians have expressed that their libraries are using Software of University Libraries (SOUL), 65 (20.31%) of the college librarians have stated that they are using e-Granthalaya, 08 (2.50%) have mentioned that their libraries are using Koha and 06 (1.87%) are using other library automation software.

6. Expertise on Installation, Maintenance and Use of Library Automation Software:

When the knowledge of college librarians is analyzed in terms of library automation software is analyzed, it is noted that majority of the librarians are unaware about installation and maintenance of library

automation software and they are aware about only use of such software. In this regard, the primary data was collected on the expertise on installation, maintenance and use of library automation software by the college librarians and tabulated as under.

Table No. 6. Expertise on Installation, Maintenance and Use of Library Automation Software

Particulars	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Excellent	23	7.19
Very Good	28	8.75
Satisfactory	39	12.19
Poor/ No Knowledge	07	2.18
Not Applicable	223	69.69
Total	320	100

The expertise of the college librarians on installation, maintenance and use of library automation software in their college libraries revealed that, of all the college librarians surveyed, 23 (7.19%) have excellent knowledge, 28 (8.75%) have very good knowledge, 39 (12.19%) have satisfactory knowledge, 07 (2.18%) of the college librarians have no knowledge or poor knowledge and it is not applicable to 223 (69.69%) of the college librarians as they have not automated their college libraries.

7. ICT Based Services Provided by Library:

Few of the college libraries are providing library services based on ICT and the list of services provided by the college librarians are disclosed in the following table.

Table No. 7. ICT Based Services Provided by Library

Particulars	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Internet Search	133	41.56
e-Communication	62	19.37
Social Networking	21	6.56
e-Resources	82	25.62
Information Search	82	25.62
Any Other	23	7.19
None/ No Computers in Library	187	58.44
Total	320	100

Above table made it clear that, many of the college librarians are providing more and more ICT based services to their users in college libraries. Specifically, as expressed by all the college librarians surveyed, 133 (41.56%) are providing internet search service, 62 (19.37%) are allowing users for e-communication such as electronic mail, 21 (6.56%) are allowing their users to search social networking sites, 82 (25.62%) are providing services related to e-resources, 82 (25.62%) are providing information search services, 23 (7.19%) are providing other types of services based on internet and 187 (58.44%) are not providing any of such services as there are no computers in their libraries.

8. Knowledge about Open Sources:

Open sources are the electronic resources that are available for free from the web. There are e-prints and archives collection from different publishers and institutional repositories of different research development and learned organizations and institutions. They provide different e-books, e-research papers and

journal articles free for academic and research use. In this regard, it was asked to the respondents that whether they are aware about the open sources and the collected primary data is disclosed as under.

Table No. 8. Knowledge about Open Sources

Particulars	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	132	41.25
No	188	58.75
Total	320	100

Surprisingly, it is noted that, only 132 (41.25%) of the total college librarians are aware about open sources, whereas the remaining 188 (58.75%) are not aware about open sources. Though open sources are free and provide valuable information, still it is noted that majority of the college librarians are not aware about the same.

8. Open Sources Used in Library:

Like subscribed e-resources, many of the college librarians are using open sources for providing college library services. In this regard, the open sources used by the college librarians to provide information services to the users are disclosed as under.

Table No. 8. Open Sources Used in Library

Particulars	Number of Respondents	Percentage
e-prints & archives	42	13.12
e-books & e-journals	77	24.06
Institutional Repositories	13	4.06
None/ Not Applicable	188	58.75
Total	320	100

On the open sources used in the library to provide services, 42 (13.12%) have mentioned that they are using e-prints and archives, 77 (24.06%) are using e-books and e-journals to provide library services, 13 (4.06%) are using institutional repositories and it is not applicable to 188 (58.75%) of the respondents as they are not using open sources in providing information services to users.

9. Awareness on Consortia:

Many of the consortia are providing e-resources to different libraries and of which many are also sponsored from national level higher education agencies such as UGC, AICTE, etc. In this regard, it is essential to know whether the college librarians are aware about different types of consortia and the collected primary data is presented in the following table.

Table No. 9. Awareness on Consortia

Particulars	Number of Respondents	Percentage
e-ShodhSindhu	53	16.56
FOR SAA	--	--
Helinet	11	3.44
Any Other	--	--
None	256	80.00
Total	320	100

Surprisingly, it is revealed that only 53 (16.56%) of the college librarians are aware about the UGC

sponsored e-ShodhSindhu, 11 (3.44%) are aware about Helinet (Health Science Consortium) and 256 (80.00%) are not at all aware about any type of library consortia.

10. Subscribed to Library Consortium:

It was asked to the college librarians that whether their college libraries are subscribed to library consortia and the collected information is tabulated as under.

Table No. 10. Subscribed to Library Consortium

Particulars	Number of Respondents	Percentage
Yes	--	--
No	320	100
Total	320	100

Surprisingly, it is highlighted from the above table that, all the college libraries covered under the study are not subscribed to any of library consortia.

SUGGESTIONS FROM THE STUDY:

Following suggestions are made from the present study:

- ✦ It is suggested to college authorities to adopt ICT infrastructure to college libraries so as to provide modern information services to users.
- ✦ It is suggested to college librarians to get training in ICT so as to gain basic knowledge about computer operating systems, MS-Office, etc and library automation software.
- ✦ There is need to analyze training needs of all the college librarians in ICT applications and organize a specialized training programme for them so as to automate their college libraries in Karnataka.

CONCLUSION:

ICT is changing entire society and college libraries are not exception to the same. It is highlighted that college libraries are most affected due to change and transformation in ICT. Hence, the college librarians and college authorities have to realize the same and provide ICT infrastructure at their college libraries. The ICT infrastructure here means providing computers, internet connectivity, subscription to e-books and e-journals, subscription to library consortia, etc. To support these technological applications, there is need for technical professionals in college libraries. It is also suggested to the college librarians to gain knowledge and expertise in ICT applications to libraries. For this purpose, based on the training needs of college librarians in ICT, a specialized training programme should be designed to impart ICT skills to college librarians.

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