

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY FACILITIES IN HIGHER EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS IN TRICHY DISTRICT: A STUDY

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ABSTRACT

The author has undertaken a study to determine the Information and Communication Technology in the higher educational institutions libraries of Trichy. This study describe about the areas of automation, the availability of hardware facilities, and what are all the software used for automating the library transaction. This article finally conclude that in order to survey in this globalised environment, the college library professionals should acquire the professional skills and technological competencies which are very essential to the present day and how best these can be adopted to their libraries, to survive in this changing technological environment.

KEYWORDS: ICT Facility, Library Automation, House Keeping Softwares

INTRODUCTION

Library Automation in a simpler term defined as a process of mechanization of library operations which are of a routine and repetitive nature which usually covers all the housekeeping operations of the Library and Information center. It refers to the computerization or mechanization of all the library activities, such as acquisition, circulation, cataloguing, serials and OPAC in which all these functional modules share a common bibliographic database. Networking is the linkage of working procedures for the exchange of information resources. Library automation and networking is all about connections to other libraries and information centers, search engines, peer groups, databases and experts.

Library Automation

- Explosion of knowledge resulting in numerous specializations
- Inability of users to explore unlimited literature.
- Wastage of enormous precious time in handling routine operations
- Even the largest of the libraries cannot acquire and make available the entire published materials
- To facilitate easy, fast and reliable sharing of web resources

Library Networking

- Preparation of Union Catalogue
- Preparation of the cataloguing data
- Provision of Bibliographies

- Optimum utilization of rare collections
- Cooperative exchange and distribution of document
- Savings of both technical work and collections
- Reduction in the cost of Library Services

METHODOLOGY

The researcher has chosen descriptive research design and the method is normative survey and questionnaire technique. Primary and secondary sources of information were collected from books, journals, magazines, annual reports of the colleges and conferences, seminar volumes that were related to the study. This study is confined to the availability and Usage of ICT facilities like computer workstation, Server, Printer, scanner, CD Net Server etc in and around trichy area academic institutions. This study also focuses on the availability of e-resources and its fair use among academic institutions in selected college libraries in Trichy.

Objectives

- To know the status of ICT facilities in academic institutions in Trichy.
- To identify the usage of e-resources in academic institutions in and around Trichy.
- To know about the Library Automation status among academic institutions in Trichy
- To know about the Networking status among academic institutions in Trichy.

Sampling

Printed questionnaire were distributed in person to the 20 identified academic institutions in trichy. Out of 20 questionnaires distributed, only 15 librarians responded making the response rate as 75%. In order to give authenticity to the findings, statistical analysis was carried out.

Data Collection

Questionnaire method has been adopted for collection of data about the libraries. Each questionnaire consists of 18 questions, in which 2 questions on general information about the staff. The questionnaires were distributed directly to the Librarians of selective arts and science and engineering college libraries in Trichy. The required data was further supplemented by librarians.

Limitations

- The present study confined the availability of Information Communication Technology (ICT) infrastructure facilities only in selected arts and science and engineering college libraries in Trichy.
- The study does not cover other disciplinary colleges in Trichy.
- The study covers only librarian opinions of the selected academic institutions only in and around Trichy.

Analysis and Interpretation

Table 1: Distribution of Respondents by Gender

S.No	Gender	Total No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Male	9	60
2	Female	6	40
Total		15	100

The above table shows that Most (60%) of the respondents are male and remaining (40%) of respondents are female.

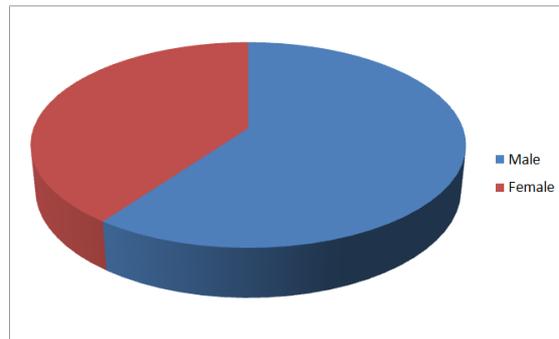


Figure 1: Distribution of Respondents by Gender

Table 2: Distribution of the Respondents by Age

S.No	Age (In Years)	Total No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	30-40	7	46.66
2	40-50	5	33.33
3	Above 50	3	20
Total		15	100

The Table 2 shows that Most (46.66%) of the respondents are fall under the age group of 30 to 40, one third of the respondents are fall under 40 to 50 group, and very few (20%) respondents are above 50 years.

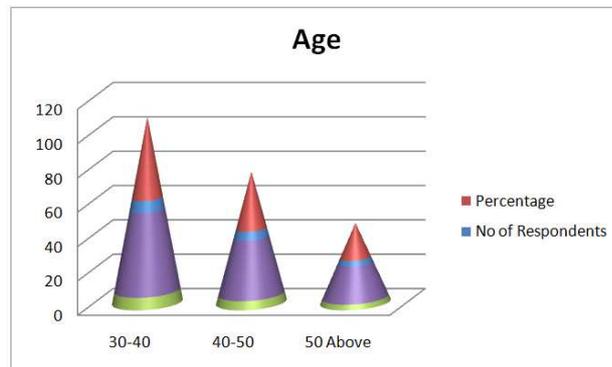


Figure 2: Distribution of the Respondents by Age

Table 3: Distribution of the Respondents by Location of College

S. No	Location	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Rural	5	33.33
2	Semi-Urban	2	13.33
3	Urban	8	53.33
Total		15	100

The Table 3 shows that Most of the respondents (53.33%) are from urban colleges, one third of the respondents (33.33%) are working in rural colleges and very few (13.33%) are from semi-urban colleges.

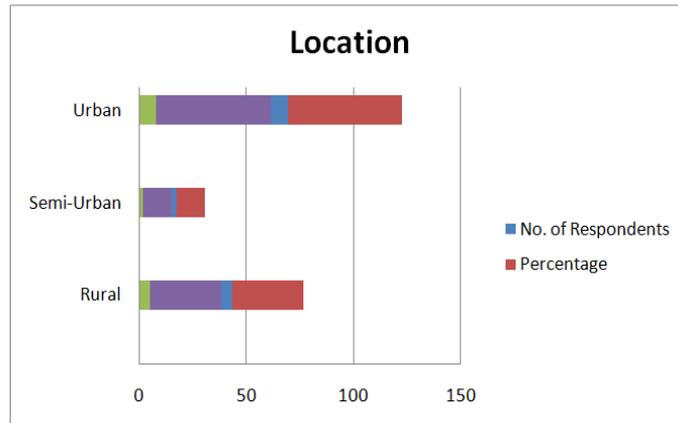


Figure 3: Distribution of the Respondents by Location of College

Table 4: Distribution of the Respondents by Status of College

S. No	Status of College	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Government College	3	20
2	Government Aided	6	40
3	Self-Financing	6	40
Total		15	100

The table 4 show that most of the colleges (40%) are comes under government-aided and self-financing category, whereas meager percentages (20%) of the colleges are government colleges.

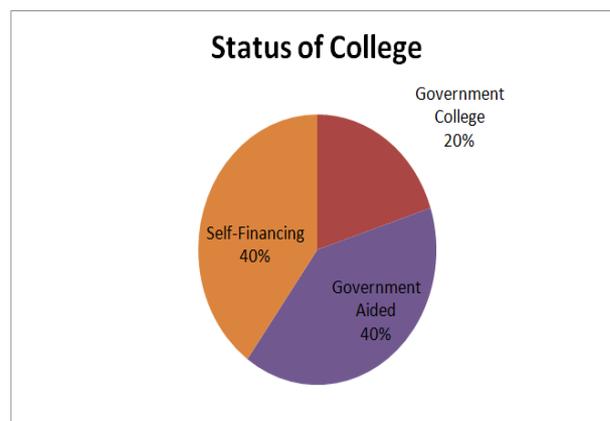


Figure 4: Distribution of the Respondents by Status of College

Table 5: Distribution of the Respondents by ICT Skills

S. No	Ict Skills	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	High	5	33.33
2	Medium	9	60
3	Low	1	6.66
	Total	15	100

The table 5 shows that Most of the (60%) respondents are having medium ICT skills, less than 34 % of respondents only having high level ICT skills and remaining meager percentage (6.66%) are having low level ICT skills.

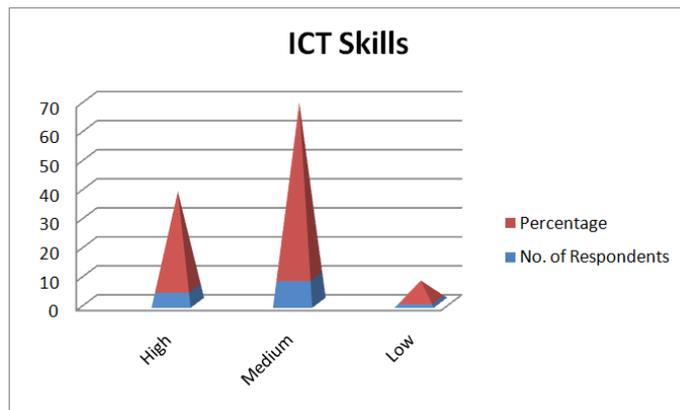


Figure 5: Distribution of the Respondents by ICT Skills

Table 6: Distribution of the Respondents by Hardware

S. No	Hardware	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Computer	14	16.47
2	Server	12	14.11
3	Laptop	2	2.35
4	Printer	14	16.47
5	Scanner	12	14.11
6	Television	4	4.70
7	Fax	1	1.17
8	Photocopy Machine	12	14.11
9	Telephone	10	11.76
10	Video Conferencing Equipment	2	2.35
11	CCTV	2	2.35
	Total	85	100

The table 6 shows that most of the libraries are equipped with computers, servers, printers, scanners and other important peripherals. Very less percentage of libraries is having video conferencing equipment and also equipped with CCTV.

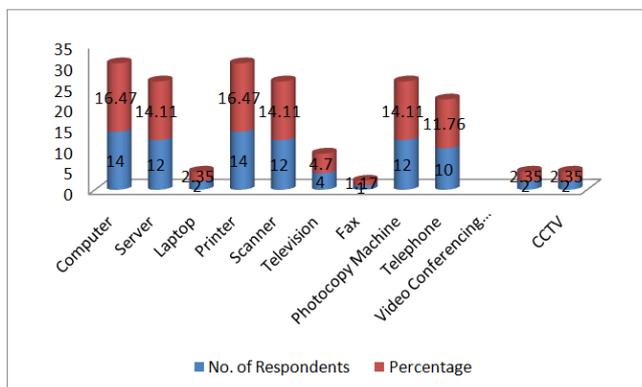


Figure 6: Distribution of the Respondents by Hardware

Table 7: Distribution of Respondents by Software

S. No	Software	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	In-House	4	19.4
2	Commercial Software	8	38.09
3	Open Source Software	7	33.33
4	Not Available	2	9.52
Total		21	100

It is inferred from table 7 that most of the (38.09%) libraries using commercial software for automating library transactions followed by open source soft ware’s (33.33%).

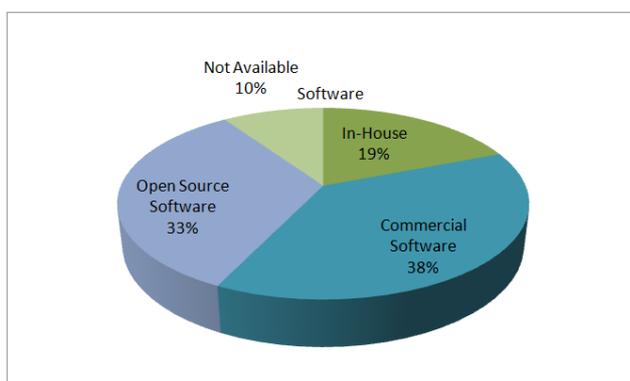


Figure 7: Distribution of Respondents by Software

Table 8: Distribution of the Respondents by Areas of Automation

S. No	Areas of Automation	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Circulation	12	18.18
2	Acquisition	12	18.18
3	Automated Catalogue	13	19.96
4	Serial Control	9	13.69
5	OPAC	12	18.18
6	Web-OPAC	8	12.12
Total		60	100

It is revealed from above table that major housekeeping operations such as circulation, acquisition and OPAC are equally given weight age in areas of automation led by automated catalogue, whereas meager weight age was given to serial control area in almost all the libraries.

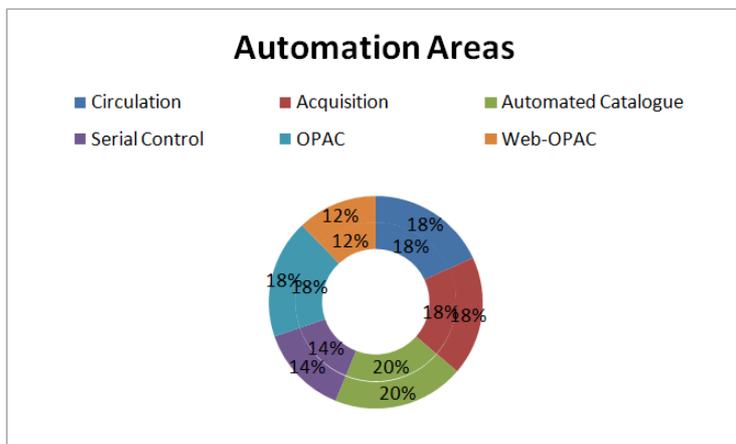


Figure 8: Distribution of the Respondents by Areas of Automation

Table 9: Distribution of the Respondents by Library Service

S. No	Library Service	No. of Respondents	Percentage
1	Manual Service	14	31.81
2	Computerized Service	15	34.09
3	Web Based Service	15	34.09
Total		44	100

It is revealed the above table information that most of the libraries are providing computerized as well as web based services to their patron in the modern world.

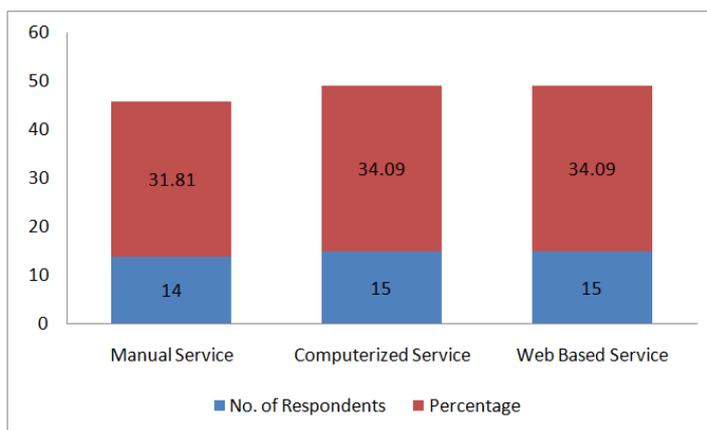


Figure 9: Distribution of the Respondents by Library Service

Findings

- Most (60%) of the respondents are male and belongs to 30-40 age groups.
- Most (54%) of the respondents are working in Urban areas.
- Most (66.66%) of the respondents are from Government-aided and self-financing colleges.

- Majority (60%) of the respondents are having medium level of ICT skills.
- Most of (39%) the respondents are using commercial software, followed by open source (33%) software.
- Very few colleges (9%) are not having Library automation package for transaction.
- Most of the Libraries are automated the Circulation, Acquisition and OPAC area.
- Most of the Libraries are providing computerized and web based services for their patrons.

Problems arise during Library Automation and Networking task:

- Lack of effective networking and communication technology
- Lack of uninterrupted power supply
- Less effective implementation of proposed networks
- Information Infrastructure is not up to date
- Lack of trained manpower.

CONCLUSIONS

The application of ICTs is increasing day by day in academic libraries. The usage of commercial as well as open source software is increased exponentially. E-Resource usage also increasing day by day due to the state of art ICT facility, web based services increased due to the service rendered by skilled library professionals. Information and communication technology plays a vital role to bridge the gap between traditional and modern libraries.

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