User's perception on library automation: A survey

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Abstract

We all know that use of ICT spread over in the information age. Libraries are atomizing their housekeeping operations. The paper aims to highlight user's perceptions on library automation. It does not include aspects like how to do automation, what software is used for the automation etc. The objective of the study is to find out user's awareness about library automation. Impact of automation of library housekeeping activities on a usage of the library and academic work of users. Find out pros and cons of library automation and to get users suggestions for further improvement. Data have been collected from the 100 users of academic library with the help of web based questionnaire. It is analysed with the help of tables and diagrams. It is found from analysis of the data that users are aware of the automated system of a library, and they are satisfied with the quick service of the library after automation. The conclusion drawn is users are habituated with the automated library sources and services like webopac and due book reminder. They are aware of the different library automation software. They said that with the automation their working capacity is increase and they will complete their task in less time.

Keywords: ICT, Academic Library, Computerization.

Introduction

This is an information age; libraries are expected to use ICT to provide information to their users. Computerized library housekeeping operation is proved an important move toward ICT. Different library automation software comes into existence when libraries are thinking to computerize their activities. The main aim of the library is to provide access to proper information, at right time to the right users. And it becomes possible after automation of library housekeeping operation. Automation provides library users quick Information so that it save the time of a user.

One more reason for computerizing library sources and services is the information explosion. Growing demand of users for the information and shrinking financial resources unable libraries to obtain all the information material, so that a resource sharing is required. Automation allows other libraries or users to access their available resources from OPAC or WEBOPAC.

Today it is not required to study how to do automation and what is the software used to automate library because this concept is old and many research paper have been published that.

The aim of this research is to find out user's perception of an automated library, and it impacts on their academic work and their satisfaction level for the automated library. Take the suggestion from users for further improvement.

The meaning of automation

The word "automation" had derived from word "auto mode" means something which has a power of spontaneous motion on self-movement. The term automation was first introduced by D. S. Harden in 1936, who was then with general Motors Company in U.S. He used the term automation to mean automatic handling of parts between progressive production processes.

In simple terms, automation means an application of computer and use of computer-based operations of a various routine task performed by a human being.

Definition

According to Webster's Third New International Dictionary of English Languages, automation is, "the techniques of making an apparatus, a process or a system operate automatically". In other words, it is the machinery that mathematically manipulates information storing, selects, presents, and records input data or internally generated data. Mechanization of library housekeeping operations predominantly by computers is known as library automation. (Gove, 1986).

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)

According to McGraw Hill Encyclopedia of Science and Technology.

It defines automation as "a coined word having no precise generally accepted technical meaning but widely used to imply the concept, development, or use of highly automatic machinery or control systems". (McGraw, 1982).

Review of literature

Some papers have been reviewed for more understanding the concept of automation.

Moorthy, Lakshmana in the article, "Library Automation in India" started from the introduction of the

computer, its increasing use, and said that in 1990 computer industry has attained maturity. It also explains development of library automation software in India. CDS/ISIS software package is introduced first in India. And NISSAT organized many library training programs after introducing CDS/ISIS in library activities. Other industries like BHEL, SAIL, ICRISAT, INSDOC, NIC, DESIDOC and INFLIBNET also developed different library packages. The paper includes how library automation activities developed in India, Library packages available in India, its different features of this software. At last papers describe the benefit of library automation.

Saffad, William in the article, "Library Automation: An overview" said that it has been from 1960 technology have been used. Computerisation of activities in different areas has been taken place. Overview of computerizing library housekeeping functions in included in this paper. The article states the current status of computer application in six areas that are circulation control, cataloguing, cataloguing maintenance and production, reference service, acquisition and serial control.

Schonberg, Michael Con Cotta in the article, " Automation and academic library structure" stated that over the years libraries has debated that is there any place of computers in the library, they realize today that for immediate practical advantage computer and ICT is necessary. First libraries use a computer for replacement of catalogue card. It states that structural aspect of libraries is double, firstly libraries have an internal structure of their own, secondly, they are part of a larger, external structure of libraries, sometimes connected through formal networks, or they may belong to the structure of an academic mother institution.

The paper deals specifically and exclusively with certain problems of structural differentiation in relation to automation and to the new information technology. It explains structure of academic library before automation which includes organizational structure, Library structure, automation and organizational structure and service structure.

Bansode, Sadanand Y and Periera, Shamin in the article, "A survey of library automation in college libraries in Goa State, India" said that we live in the information age, and libraries are using ICT more than it was using it before. The objective of the study is to find out how many libraries have undertaken automation, which areas are automated, whether sufficient staff is available to carry out automation and the barriers to automation faced by libraries. Survey is done using structured questionnaire. 83.7% libraries responded in the survey. Analysis has been done with the help of charts. It is concluded that status of library automation in the college of Goa is similar to that of college libraries throughout India. Librarians and college staff must initiate automation in order to provide effective and efficient service.

The status of automation in the colleges of Goa is similar to that of college libraries throughout India. Libraries, librarians, and college administrations must initiate automation in order to provide effective and efficient services to users. Library professionals must upgrade their skills in order to meet the growing expectations of users from libraries.

Objective of the study
1. To find out user's awareness about library automation.
2. To find out the impact of automation of library housekeeping activities on a usage of the library and academic work of users.
3. To find out pros and cons of library automation.
4. To get uses suggestions for further improvement.

Research Methodology
To find out user's perception regarding Library automation, a web-based questionnaire has been prepared and sends to the library members through E-mail. Data have been collected from 100 users out of that we are getting 80 responses. Data have been presented in tables and analysed with the help of graphical presentation.
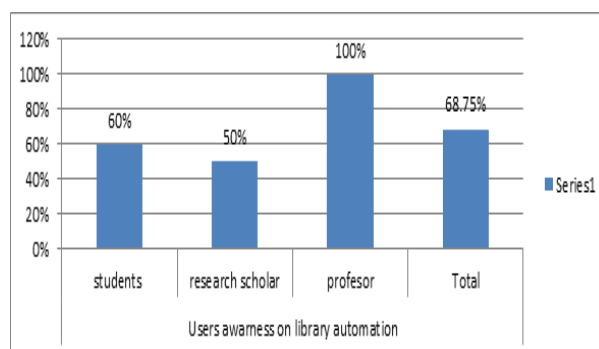
Data analysis:

Table 1:

Response Received		
Total number of users	**Response received**	**Not received**
100	80	20

Out of 100 questionnaires 80 are received back.

Table 2: To find out user's awareness about automated library

Users awareness on library automation			
Students	**Research Scholar**	**Professor**	**Total**
60%	50%	100%	68.75%

Fig. 1

Out of 50 students 40 are aware with the library automation i.e. 60% users knows about that, 50%
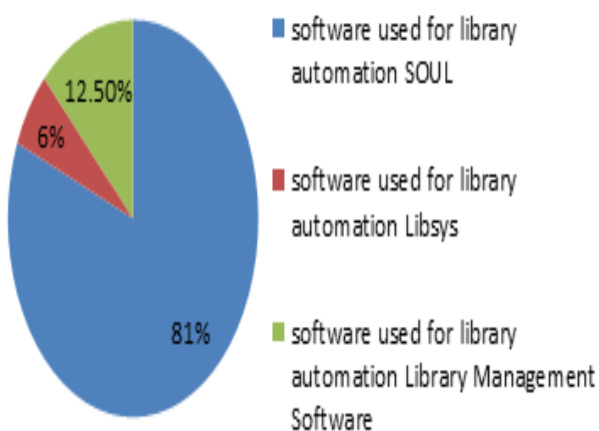
research scholar and 100% professors are aware with the library automation.

When it is asked them whether they do know which software their library is using theirs responses is as below:

Table 3

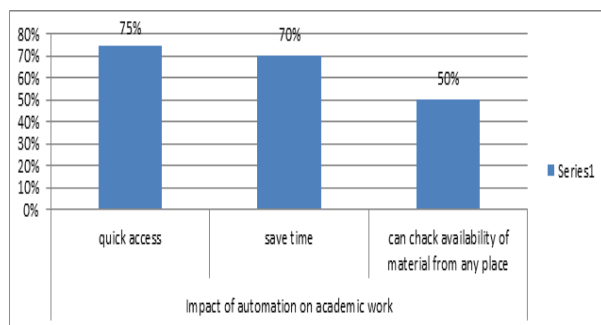| software used for library automation		
SOUL	**Libsys**	**Library Management Software**
81%	6%	12.50%

81% users responded that their library is using SOUL software, 6% says for Libsys and 12.5% users responded for the other LMS software.

Fig. 2

Table 4: To find out impact of automation of library housekeeping activities on usage of library and academic work of users

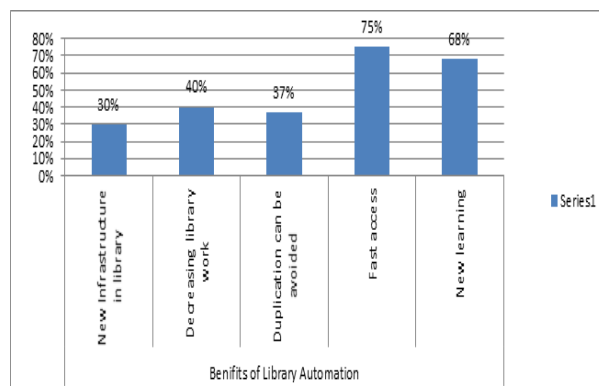| Impact of automation on academic work		
Quick access	**Save time**	**Can check availability of material from any place**
75%	70%	50%

Fig. 3

75% users says that due to automation they can access quickly their required information, 70% responded that it is time saving process, and 50% users says that due to OPAC or WEBOPAC facility they can access information from any place.

When benefit and disadvantage are asked to the users regarding library automation their responses are:

Table 5: To find out benefits and disadvantage of library automation

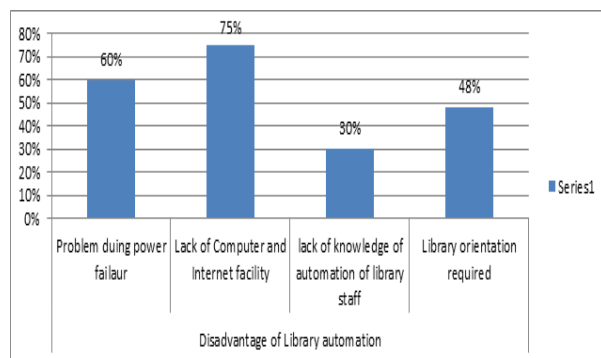| Benefits of Library Automation				
New Infrastructure in library	**Decreasing library work**	**Duplication can be avoided**	**Fast access**	**New learning**
30%	40%	37%	75%	68%

Fig. 4

30% respondent said that library get new infrastructure facility due to automation as libraries have to accommodate computers for access library collection. 40% users said that lengthy work of library is decreases. 37% responded said that due to automation duplication of the work or the library collection can also decrease. 75% responded that they can access information quickly and 68% is responding that new technology give them new learning.

Disadvantage of Library Automation:

Table 6

Disadvantage of Library automation			
Problem during power failure	**Lack of Computer and Internet facility**	**lack of knowledge of automation of library staff**	**Library orientation required**
60%	75%	30%	48%

Fig. 5

60% users said that due to the habituated to find material on computer it is difficult when there is power failure, 75% said that lack of computer available in library, 30% said that lack of knowledge of library automation in staff and 48% said that they need library orientation to understand new technology.

Objective 4: To get uses suggestions for further improvement
When asking for the further suggestion to the users regarding automation. Their responses are as below:
- More computers should be there in the library.
- Better internet facility required to access webopac or uses other search engines.
- Standby power supply facility should be there.
- Library orientation required at a specific interval to know the usage of the facility.
- Properly skilled staff should require explaining automation procedure.
- Library should also digitize their material for online access to information.

Findings and Suggestions
It is found from analysis of the data that users are aware of the automated system of a library, and they are satisfied with the quick service of the library after automation so that they are getting information quickly and it helps them to complete their task quickly.

Suggestions drawn from users are now libraries have to move further after automation they have to start digitizing their material.

Conclusion
The conclusion drawn from the collected data is those Maximum users are aware of the library automation systems. They are now habituated with the automated library sources and services like webopac and due book reminder. They are aware of the different library automation software. They said that with the automation their working capacity is increase and they will complete their task in less time. Some demerits they found that library staff should be trained, the power supply should be improved, need a more high-quality

computer with internet facility etc. But overall library automation has a positive impact on users.

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