

Full Length Research Paper

A critical study of the library facilities provided by the private engineering colleges in Kolkata

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Research study encompasses the library facilities provided by the engineering colleges to its stakeholders. To pursue this study, combination of methods was adopted step by step. The survey method was employed to collect the required data. A structured questionnaire was prepared and a sample study has been done for this purpose. Besides these, relevant data are collected from observation of the libraries, annual report of the libraries, etc. Quantitative data collected in this study were analyzed, using descriptive statistics. It also highlights the gaps between available library services and information demand of the users. Basically, the entire paper summarizes different areas associated with the library services, such as, the frequency of library use, type of library material used, standard of library documents, sources used for wanting required information, users' satisfaction, etc. Finally, it is concluded that the library and information science professionals are to make them relevant by reaching out to users.

Key words: Access to information, automated library, library facilities.

INTRODUCTION

In a traditional sense, a library is a large collection of books, and can refer to the place in which the collection is housed. Today, the term can refer to any collection, including digital sources, resources, and services. The collections can be of print, audio and visual materials in numerous formats, including maps and documents, microform (microfilm / microfiche), cassettes, videotapes, CD-ROM, DVDs, video games, e-journals, e-books, audio books and many other electronic resources (Wikipedia, 2011). Library as a storehouse of knowledge is indispensable to the success of any functional education (Onohwakpor, 2006). The core motto of the academic library is to provide services to support the educational, cultural, economic and technological endeavor of users of its parent institution.

Nowadays, libraries are more and more asked to justify

the resources spent on them, to justify even their very existence. In this mood, libraries must be accountable, responsive, and effective in presenting the value of their services to funding authorities whether they are public or private. According to Halder (2009), the container of information is not only the print materials but a huge amount of information born in digital format also. Technology alone cannot help to bring about the required changes. Attitudes, practices and policies need to be changed, if libraries in India want to benefit themselves and their community of users by the application of new technologies. The core objectives of LIS professionals are unchanged whereas the mode of services is changing to cope with paradigm shifts. In this context, it is essential to assess the library facilities provided by the academic libraries to their stakeholders.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The objectives of this study are to achieve a set of aims or targets through completion of this research. Here, the overall aim would be to satisfy the requirements of the objectives summarized as follows:

1. to assess existing library services of the engineering colleges in Kolkata.
2. to know the frequency of library use by the stakeholders of engineering college libraries in Kolkata.
3. to determine the type of library material used by the stakeholders regularly.
4. to examine the usefulness of library resources.
5. to observe the sources used by the users for finding their required information.
6. to know the user awareness about library resources and its access.
7. to determine the opinion of library users about the electronic resources.
8. to assess the usability of library services in the Internet era.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Bridges (2008) examines the differences in undergraduate library use, by academic discipline at Oregon State University (OSU). The results indicate that students from the Engineering College use the virtual library less than students from the Liberal Arts College. A number of studies on core journals in various subjects are available, but not a single attempt was made to develop a systematic study in the area of services, of engineering colleges. Saravanan (2002) emphasizes library is a social institution; and a college library, of which an engineering college library is one example, is a service component of its parent body, and since it is a non-profit organization, it must manage its finances in a judicious manner. At the same time, library services are increasingly expensive. The work highlighted the service orientation, impact of IT, financial support and budget of college library. Previous study shows the significant role of college libraries in preparation of dynamic future leaders by offering students lucrative services so that users can learn the process of how to enter methods of higher research oriented studies gradually. They realize to do so as professional library manpower is a great concern (Mezbah-ul-Islam et al., 2008). According to Kannappanavar (2011), in the era of information technology, computers and communication infrastructure are pre requisites, hence libraries are to be provided more funds and trained manpower to maintain and extend better service to the engineering college library users. Therefore, it is essential to measure the effectiveness of library facilities provided by the engineering colleges in the present era.

SCOPE

This research work comprises critical investigation of private engineering college libraries in Kolkata. Libraries of government colleges and universities are excluded from this study. The present study deals with the users of three private engineering college libraries, such as, Narula Institute of Technology, MCKV Institute of Engineering and Pailan College of Management and Technology as a sample. Selection of sample colleges is made on the basis of its establishment, owner and popularity in Kolkata randomly.

METHODOLOGY

To achieve the objectives of the research a combination of methods is adopted step by step. The survey method was employed to collect the required data. A structured questionnaire was prepared for this purpose and in order to enhance the validity and reliability of the questionnaire, experts in the field of Library Science, Psychology and Statistics were consulted and requested to review the questionnaire critically. Questionnaire was revised based on the suggestions given by the experts. The study covers three engineering college libraries as a sample study: Narula Institute of Technology, MCKV Institute of Engineering and Pailan College of Management and Technology. In the view of stratified sampling method, a total of 630 structured questionnaires were distributed to collect the primary data. Till the end of the data collection, 480 questionnaires were received. Besides these, relevant data are collected from observation of the libraries, annual report of the libraries, etc. Quantitative data collected in this study were analyzed, using descriptive statistics. Therefore, results are presented in systematic way duly keeping in view the objective of the study.

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION

The structured questionnaires were distributed among the selected group of 630 respondents, out of which 205 respondents were from Narula Institute of Technology, 215 respondents were from MCKV Institute of Engineering and 210 respondents were from Pailan College of Management and Technology. 480 questionnaires were received. Among them 155 respondents were from Narula Institute of Technology, 175 respondents were from MCKV Institute of Engineering and 150 respondents were from Pailan College of Management and Technology (Table 1).

Frequency of library use

Present survey indicates that all students and faculties do make use of the library, but not as much as was expected. Finding indicates that most of the users almost daily use the library but, over thirty two percent of the respondents use the library 'once in a month' and 'rarely'.

Table 2 shows 29.03% users of Narula Institute of Technology use library daily, 32.57% users of MCKV

Table 1. Distribution of questionnaire.

Name of the college	Questionnaire distributed	Questionnaire received
Narula Institute of Technology	205	155
MCKV Institute of Engineering	215	175
Pailan College of Management and Technology	210	150

Table 2. Frequency of library use.

Frequency	Narula Institute of Technology		MCKV Institute of Engineering		Pailan College of Management and Technology	
	Total number of responses	%	Total number of responses	%	Total number of responses	%
Almost daily	45	29.03	57	32.57	36	24.00
Several times in a week	31	20.00	40	22.85	33	22.00
Once in a week	29	18.72	28	16.00	25	16.67
Once in a month	32	20.64	30	17.14	35	23.33
Rarely	18	11.61	20	11.44	21	14.00

Institute of Engineering use library daily, 24.00% users of Pailan College of Management and Technology use library daily; and side by side 20.00% users of Narula Institute of Technology, 22.85% users of MCKV Institute of Engineering and 22.00% users of Pailan College of Management and Technology use library several times in a week. 18.72% users of Narula Institute of Technology, 16.00% users of MCKV Institute of Engineering and 16.67% users of Pailan College of Management and Technology use library once in a week and so on.

Types of library materials used

There are different kinds of resources available in the library. Respondents were given a range of items to rate as to how important certain materials are useful to them. Users were asked to rate: textbooks, reference books, journals, CD-ROM, newspaper, project reports, etc.

Table 3 displays 33.54% users use textbook in Narula Institute of Technology, 33.71% users use textbook in MCKV Institute of Engineering, 32.66% users use textbook in Pailan College of Management and Technology. 21.93% users use reference book in Narula Institute of Technology, 22.28% users use reference book in MCKV Institute of Engineering, 20.00% users use reference book in Pailan College of Management and Technology, 15.48% users use journal in Narula Institute of Technology, 18.85% users use journal in MCKV Institute of Engineering, 17.33% users use journal in Pailan College of Management and Technology. 09.04% users use CD-ROM in Narula Institute of Technology, 10.29% users use CD-ROM in MCKV Institute of Engineering, 12.66% users use CD-ROM in Pailan College of Management and

Technology and so on.

Usefulness of library materials

Another important issue investigated was regarding reliability and usefulness of library materials in users' point of view. Respondents were asked to express their opinion about relevancy of library materials available in the library.

Table 4 expresses measures of usefulness of library materials. Maximum numbers of the users are relying on textbook for their syllabus and day to day requirements. Nearly about 25% users confidently said that available reference books are useful to them. Journal articles are nascent and pinpointed items those are used to prepare seminar presentations, project reports, etc. and average eighteen per cent respondents opined that the subscribed journals are relevant to them. Only the trend to reading newspapers at the library is so limited.

Sources used for finding required information

To assess the sources used for finding required information, respondents were asked to comments on the best reliable source, from which they will be able to know the required documents.

Table 5 reveals 30.96% users of Narula Institute of Technology use online library catalogue for finding required information. 29.14% users of MCKV Institute of Engineering use online library catalogue for finding required information, 26.00% users of Pailan College of Management and Technology use online library

Table 3. Types of library material used.

Types of library material	Narula Institute of Technology		MCKV Institute of Engineering		Pailan College of Management and Technology	
	Total number of responses	%	Total number of responses	%	Total number of responses	%
Textbook	52	33.54	59	33.71	49	32.66
Reference book	34	21.93	39	22.28	30	20.00
Journal	24	15.48	33	18.85	26	17.33
CD-ROM	14	09.04	18	10.29	19	12.66
Newspaper	19	12.26	16	09.15	18	12.00
Project	12	07.75	10	05.72	08	05.35

Table 4. Usefulness of library materials.

Usefulness of library materials	Narula Institute of Technology		MCKV Institute of Engineering		Pailan College of Management and Technology	
	Total number of responses	%	Total number of responses	%	Total number of responses	%
Textbook	45	29.03	52	29.71	42	28.00
Reference book	39	25.16	42	24.00	37	24.66
Journal	26	16.77	32	18.29	29	19.35
CD-ROM	21	13.54	20	11.43	23	15.33
Newspaper	16	10.34	18	10.29	13	08.66
Project	08	05.16	11	06.28	06	04.00

catalogue for finding required information. 32.93% users of Narula Institute of Technology use online library catalogue for finding required information. 33.14% users of MCKV Institute of Engineering use online library catalogue for finding required information and 32.00% users of Pailan College of Management and Technology consulting librarian and library staff for finding required information.

How respondents learned to use the library

Responsibility of the library is to ensure that the maximum use of its information resources and services benefit its users, hence the necessity for user education programmes. According to Ranganathan (1988), one of the mottos of every library is to provide right information, to right user at the right time. In this regard, Ranganathan suggested providing personal service to guide users. The present study finds out various sources, from where users are educated to use library properly.

Table 6 reveals 02.58% of users in Narula Institute of Technology learned to use the library resources using Trial and Error method, 02.29% of users in MCKV Institute of Engineering learned to use the library resources using Trial and Error method and 10.66% of users in Pailan College of Management and Technology

learned to use the library resources using Trial and Error method. Moreover, average 45% users said that they learned to use the library from librarian.

Evaluation of electronic resources

Nowadays, every library intends to collect, organize electronic resources to meet the user's demand. National Knowledge Commission, India (2006) also suggested promoting Information Communication Technology (ICT) applications in all libraries. To know the reason behind using electronic resources, respondents were asked a set of questions.

Table 7 states respondents' opinion about electronic resources. 25.80% respondents of NIT, 25.14% respondents of MCKV and 28.00% respondents of PCMT feel that electronic resources are used to access current up-to-date information. 22.58% respondents of NIT, 28.00% respondents of MCKV and 24.00% respondents of PCMT feel that electronic resources are used for easier access to information. 23.87% respondents of NIT, 18.29% respondents of MCKV and 21.34% respondents of PCMT feel that electronic resources are used for faster access to information. 27.75% respondents of NIT, 28.57% respondents of MCKV and 26.66% respondents of PCMT feel that electronic resources are used to

Table 5. Sources used for finding required information.

Priorities of Sources	Narula Institute of Technology		MCKV Institute of Engineering		Pailan College of Management and Technology	
	Total number of responses	%	Total number of responses	%	Total number of responses	%
Online library catalogue	48	30.96	51	29.14	39	26.00
Consulting librarian and library staff	51	32.93	58	33.14	48	32.00
Browsing all the document collection at racks	11	07.09	14	08.00	15	10.00
Interpersonal communication	15	09.67	19	10.87	19	12.66
Through faculty members	30	19.35	33	18.85	29	19.34

Table 6. How respondents learned to use the library.

Response	Narula Institute of Technology		MCKV Institute of Engineering		Pailan College of Management and Technology	
	Total number of responses	%	Total number of responses	%	Total number of responses	%
Trial and error method	04	02.58	04	02.29	16	10.66
Guidance from other students	24	15.48	34	19.42	26	17.35
User education from librarian	45	29.03	49	28.00	42	28.00
Self-taught	16	10.32	18	10.29	18	12.00
Guidance from faculty	12	07.74	15	08.58	19	12.66
Guidance from computing Staff	07	04.53	11	06.28	11	07.33
OPAC	35	22.58	30	17.14	00	00.00
Guidance from technicians	06	03.87	08	04.57	06	04.00
Courses offered by college	02	01.29	04	02.29	03	02.00
Other	04	02.58	02	01.14	09	06.00

Table 7. Feelings about electronic resources.

Response	Narula Institute of Technology		MCKV Institute of Engineering		Pailan College of Management and Technology	
	Total number of responses	%	Total number of responses	%	Total number of responses	%
Access to current up-to-date information	40	25.80	44	25.14	42	28.00
Easier access to information	35	22.58	49	28.00	36	24.00
Faster access to information	37	23.87	32	18.29	32	21.34
Access to a wider range of Information	43	27.75	50	28.57	40	26.66

access a wider range of information.

Internet vs library facilities

We are living in Internet era, where majority of people are using internet for any types of information here and there. Halder (2009) pointed out one common question, "Is there a need for Libraries and Librarians in the electronic age?" In this circumstance, respondents were asked

whether or not Internet can be substituted for traditional Library services.

Table 8 reveals that most of the respondents of NIT (56.12%), MCKV (37.42%) and PCMT (53.33%) opine that Internet can never replace traditional library facilities.

Conclusion

Modern library can refer to any collection, including print

Table 8. Internet vs library facilities.

Response	Narula Institute of Technology		MCKV Institute of Engineering		Pailan College of Management and Technology	
	Total number of responses	%	Total number of responses	%	Total number of responses	%
Yes	56	36.12	49	28.00	59	39.33
No	87	56.12	118	37.42	80	53.33
No Opinion	12	07.76	08	04.58	11	07.34

materials, digital resources, and institutional repository and services rendered to satisfy user's demand in present day context. It provides the services by means of various activities towards the satisfaction of potential users. Study reveals that stakeholders of engineering college libraries are using library frequently to meet their requirement. As they are academic libraries, users intend to use textbooks regularly for reading purpose. Basically, Librarian and other library professionals are satisfying the users' demand to make bridge between sources of information and its users. It is also a reality that the users learned to use the library resources from library staff. At least one user education programme is needed in a year for users to know how to use library resources. According to the respondents of the study electronic resources are nascent, updated and easy to access. But, most of the respondents believed that internet could not be substituted for traditional library facilities. Library administrators need to be proactive to cope with the paradigm shift and increase the usability of library. Apart from that, present survey also revealed that the usability of electronic resources among user is in high gear. More focus should be established to electronic and online resources that provide rapid access to the users round the clock access and save a lot of storage space. Resource sharing among same kind of institutions maybe helpful to its stakeholders. Finally, library and Information science professionals are to make them relevant by reaching out to users.

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