A Study of Academic Libraries of Particular Higher Educational Institutions in Madhya Pradesh (India)

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Abstract: This paper aims to understand the materials, services, and facilities offered by academic libraries in higher education to their patrons, identify the challenges they face in providing better services to patrons, and provide the best recommendations for the development and improvement of the libraries of particular higher educational institutions in Madhya Pradesh. To achieve the study's goals, information was gathered using a structured questionnaire composed of a number of questions, along with in-person interviews with librarians or those in charge of the libraries and trips to the chosen libraries. The librarians or those in charge of the libraries chosen for the study filled out questionnaires. The acquired data was analysed using both quantitative and qualitative methods, and a conclusion was reached with workable recommendations. The study finds that Madhya Pradesh's higher education institutions' libraries have good collections of library resources and offer their patrons services that are focused on their needs. The study is restricted to the academic libraries of a few specialised higher education institutions, including Central University and State University Colleges in Madhya Pradesh that are affiliated with the University Grants Commission (UGC). In this significantly changing environment, the study looks at the resources, services, and facilities that libraries offer to their patrons. The study is distinctive in that it is the first to compare academic libraries at higher educational institutions in eastern Indian states, particularly those resembling Madhya Pradesh where the literacy rate is still low. The present study is an attempt to fill this gap since all previous research has focused on how users use public and academic libraries' resources and services. Additionally, this research can help other academic libraries adopt new trends and technology-based services and provide some recommendations to provide better services for their users.

Keywords: Library Resources, Library Services, Academic Libraries, Higher Education, Madhya Pradesh.

1. Introduction

We are all aware of how important libraries are to the educational process. Similar to this, academic libraries at higher education institutions are crucial to research and learning in academia. Any library's goal is to satisfy its patrons' need for information. Similar to this, academic libraries also serve the similar function of satisfying the information needs of their users, who may be faculty members, post-graduate students, undergraduate students, or research scholars. Universities serve as the global icon for higher education. Through its library, the university's strength and standards are assessed. Along with faculty members and staff, undergraduate, postgraduate, and research students are served by the libraries of universities and colleges. The majority of university libraries' patrons are academicians, and they frequently require quick information. In order to ensure their greatest utilisation, the university library's materials must be developed appropriately and organised effectively. The major objective of libraries should be to meet the specific wants or requirements of their patrons, and in order to do so, they must be familiar with a range of library services.

2. Academic Library, Library Resources & Services

Academic Library:
Academic libraries are mainly of three types: school, college and university libraries. Colleges and universities are the places for higher education in our education system. The academic library has been described as the "heart" of the learning community, providing a place for students, research scholars, faculty and other staff to do their study or research and advance their knowledge. The librarians and library staff provide numerous services to these users, addressing their diverse needs, characteristics, and interests.

Library Resources:
Academic Libraries are the source of keeping and distributing the information through books, journals, maps, Thesis, Dissertation and other print & non-print resources that are used by students and faculties in their learning, teaching and research process. There are many types of Library resources i.e., human resources (strength of library officials, their qualifications and experiences), physical resources (library study space, chairs, tables, books and books selves, etc.), printed and e-resources are essentially necessary.

Library Services:
The concept of service can describe as intangible activity, which is not stored and does not result in ownership. It means that services are the activities that are provided to the consumer. It is intangible and does not result in the ownership of anything (investor words, np)**.** The list of services generally provided by libraries is such as (i) Current Awareness Service (CAS); (ii) Reference & Referral Service; (iii) Translation Service; (iv) Selective Dissemination of Information (SDI); (v) Reprographic or Xerox Service; (vi) Online Public Access Catalogue (OPAC); (vii) Indexing and Abstracting service; (viii) Online / Electronic Service and Inter-Library Loan Service etc..

3. Literature Review

Many studies have been done to get the basic idea and clarity about the concept and some of those are:
Khalid Mahmood, et al., (2021) This study was conducted to measure the quality of the college library services in the Punjab Province, Pakistan, using LibQUAL survey. Data were collected from 998 respondents consisting of the college faculty and the students. The study found that none of the service quality attributes and dimensions met the desired expectations of group users as well as individual users. Significant differences in library service quality based on users' gender, type and academic discipline were identified. This study is helpful for the Punjab Higher Education Commission (HEC), the college administrations, the college librarians at the local level and the other developing countries as well. It will guide them in future planning, contribute toward improved resource allocation and enhance purposeful utilization of resources. Currently, the college libraries are being used as places of sitting, reading newspapers, and completing home assignments. Most of the libraries do not have a professional librarian. There has been no significant increase in the funding of the college libraries in the last decade. The infrastructure of the college libraries is deplorable and greatly lacks the modern ICTs/technological tools. Despite the fast adoption of technologic tools by the users, most libraries, particularly the college libraries, have failed to keep pace with the technological revolution because of lack of funds, resources, and skilled staff. Scarcity of skilled professional library staff is also a major issue; currently there are approximately 500 vacant college librarian posts in the Punjab.

JeonghyunKim (2021) As technology and the stewardship of research data continue to improve, academic libraries have made progress in establishing themselves as hubs and leaders for research data services on campus. They have been called on to assure cross-campus collaboration and support to develop a united service to meet their community's needs. However, evidence as to how libraries play a crucial role in leadership, whether other stakeholders' involvement makes a difference, and if so, how that involvement makes a difference is not well-documented. The findings of this study add empirical evidence in supporting the value of library's leadership and stakeholder engagement in developing research data policy and services. The secondary analysis of the survey data found that libraries tend to offer more extensive services when they take primary responsibility for developing the policy and service. It also found that the more internal stakeholders involved in developing the policy and service, the higher level of service maturity the libraries offer. Partnership with external stakeholders leads to more comprehensive and deeper services.[59]

Wenting Cheng, et al., (2021) Spatial accessibility of libraries affects their usage. It is crucial to consider spatial accessibility's impacts on equity and inclusiveness of public libraries. A method is proposed to evaluate the equity of spatial accessibility to library resources and services across population groups. Spatial accessibility is measured in two ways: the closest-based and quantity-based measurements that respectively characterize the level of accessibility to the closest one and to diverse resources according to travel distance and travel time in road networks. Two approaches are applied for equity evaluation with socioeconomic and demographic

indicators of census tracts, including the minority population, non-adults, and population in poverty. The method is applied to examine the physical locations of public libraries in four major cities of the U.S with diverse population composition. Results show spatial inequity for socially disadvantaged populations in the cities of Washington DC, Baltimore, and Chicago. Inequity is more prominent for non-adults and minority populations in DC and Baltimore. The analysis helps identify the potential inequity for subpopulations and guide the decision-making in library services to improve equity and inclusion.[60]

Anna Cigarini, et al., /(2021) Can public libraries become hubs for citizen science? In line with the principles of citizen science, this question was answered collaboratively with librarians from the Barcelona Network of Public Libraries who performed two hands-on activities. One activity was a training course taken by 30 librarians from 24 different libraries which enabled them to envisage citizen science implementation at each library. The other activity consisted of co-creating a citizen social science project and involved 40 library users, seven librarians from three different cities, and professional scientists. The analysis considers the perspectives of both librarians and users, through participant observation, surveys, and a focus group to identify strengths and challenges. The overall results suggest that public libraries can offer leadership in the promotion of citizen science and contribute to the mission of public libraries to act as local community hubs. The main challenges identified were related to the complexity of collaboration, uncertainty regarding research co-creation, and participant retention strategies.[61]

Seungwon Yang and BoryungJu (2021) The public libraries in the Carolinas engaged with their communities using Twitter throughout the phases of Hurricane Florence in 2018. A total of 161 libraries in Carolinas were examined. The framework of crisis informatics, content analysis, and network analysis were applied to 738 Twitter posts from 17 libraries, which had Twitter presence, to understand interaction details between the libraries and communities that they serve. Findings include that the libraries shared a mixture of both disaster- and non-disaster-related information via their Twitter pages. The disaster-related tweets were mostly shared in the During (291 out of 349) and After (56 out of 349) phases. The number of general library-related tweets in the During phase dropped drastically compared to those in the Before or After phases. The libraries were also retweeting disaster-related tweets from various governmental agencies and NGOs to the community members in their social network. These findings indicate that the libraries switched their roles from a general services institution to an emergency information hub as the threat from the hurricane began affecting the communities. The knowledge gained from our study could be used to improve community resilience by further illuminating the role of public libraries as public infrastructures that host and facilitate the development of social capital during and after disaster events by becoming information and communication hubs.[62]

Devika P. Madalli and Amit Tiwari (2021) A maturity model represents a pre-planned evolution path for a class of objects composed as discrete stages or levels. Thereby, the maturity model is an effective tool to assess the current capabilities and the future needs of an organization, process, or group. This study had two phases. The first phase identified the core literature on maturity models for library services and management. The second evaluated the specifications of the maturity models employed or derived for library services and management. A total of 12 maturity models were selected for the study. The selected models were reviewed based on 18 parameters, out of which nine were adopted from the literature study, and the authors identified nine others. These parameters were classified based on descriptive, structural, and administrative attributes of the models. The parameters help to identify the most appropriate maturity model for implementing it in a library or information center. Results show that several domain-specific free and commercial maturity models can improve the library and information services. Library and information professionals should utilize the opportunity available in user training and community support for maturity models to foster information services.[63]

Jindal, Khan and Roy (2020) conducted a comparative study of deemed university libraries of Delhi: NCR (National Capital Region); the user awareness study of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) enabled information services facilitated by the university libraries and found that all the university libraries under study have good infrastructure, staff and other library resources but a large number of users not being aware of the services. The authors recommended that there is a need to hold frequent awareness activities. Viz. User orientation education programmes, seminars, conferences, and study circles. It will increase the awareness of the users about the services, their advantages and usage of the library resources & services.

Pandey (2020) conducted a study to determine the library resources and services providing by the central and state universities of Bihar by the study of their library websites. He found that most of the resources and services are easily available on library website portals. It is observed that in this digital era library websites are also playing an important role to providing information resources and services to their users and others.

Mahipal and Verma (2018) studied the Information Seeking Behaviour Pattern among the Agricultural Students of Indira Gandhi Agricultural University, Raipur, to know the information-seeking patterns of the Under Graduate Students, Post Graduate Students and Ph.D.

Scholars in Agriculture of various Agricultural College Libraries of Indira Gandhi Agricultural University (IGKV) in Raipur, Chhattisgarh. The study identified various modes of literature search, the purpose of visit, type of information gathered, frequency of library visit and time spent in the library.

Kona, Chagari and Rudraksha (2017) studied on use of library resources and services in selected deemed university libraries in Andhra Pradesh, and they concluded that all the deemed universities have separate individual library buildings and their libraries are maintained well both electronic and print information resources and services for academic and research purpose. In their study, it was found that the majority of users were satisfied with library resources and services of deemed universities libraries in Andhra Pradesh (India).

Pandey, Madhav (2017) A study Role of agricultural libraries in the development of Chhattisgarh Agriculture in the digital era to know the how to play library automation an essential role to quick retrieval and dissemination of information. Most of the libraries in Chhattisgarh are partially automated, and libraries were using Koha, Soul and various commercial software.

4. Suggestions

As was already said, all libraries urgently require permanent employees and skilled library professionals to manage housekeeping tasks and services more effectively. All of the chosen libraries must modify their infrastructure to be accessible to the library's physically impaired patrons and extend their library buildings. More funding is required for the SRAP College Library to restore the existing structure and extend their library space. It should also expand its document collection. All of the libraries have a good collection of documents pertaining to their users, as was already said, but they still need to expand it. All libraries should implement additional technological services, such as web OPAC, RFID, and self-check-in/check-out systems. Last but not least, only the MGCU library is partially open on Sunday, while all other selected academic libraries are closed. However, as most academic users and working professionals can only access the library's resources & services on these holidays, they should be open on these days. Therefore, plans should be established so that libraries are open on Sundays and on major holidays.

5. Conclusion

In light of the findings from the five- to six-month study, it can be said that all of the aforementioned libraries are well established, maintained, and in good working order, but they could all use additional updating. Slowly but surely, these carefully chosen libraries will soon surpass all others in Madhya Pradesh as the best institutions for study. There are separate, individual library buildings at each of the chosen institutions or colleges. With the exception of SRAP university or college libraries, all of the chosen libraries—MGCU, MS, and LND—offer electronic and printed information resources and services for academic and research needs. This survey also reveals that while all libraries organise and provide traditional library resources & services well, ICT-based services are inadequate.

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