

*Full Length Research Paper*

# Assessment of man power problem and computer literacy competence among degree college libraries in Shimoga City: A case study

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Accepted 17 December, 2012

The study explores the result of a survey conducted in 13 degree colleges of Shimoga City to identify the man power problems and level of computer literacy among library staff. The study also examines the use of internet, search engines and also identifies automated libraries, problems of implementing the library automation and factors of dissatisfaction among library staff. A questionnaire was distributed among the library staff to collect the desired data. A total of 40 questionnaires were distributed to the selected sample. The study reveals that 67% of the staffs are dissatisfied with their shortage of staff, 47% are dissatisfied with low budget and 40% are dissatisfied with the lack of latest technology. 88% of the library professionals are motivated by the authority and 80% have a proper training.

**Key words:** Manpower problem, computer literacy, library automation.

## INTRODUCTION

Libraries are now universally recognized as social institution, where knowledge or information is stored and provide effective service to the user community. The rapid growth of print and non-print literature and vast innovations in information and communication technologies have led to the expansion of libraries, information centers and system as well as development of their services (Lohar and Kumbar, 2005). College libraries are integral part of educational institutions; in fact they may be regarded as the hearts of modern institutions of higher education. The principal function of a Library is to educate the users. A well-equipped library is not only a storehouse of knowledge and experience but also a repository of world's culture-ancient, mediaeval and modern (Mezbah-ul-Islam et al., 2008).

College library represents one of the most important assets in support of the instructional programme of the college. The Library is a workshop for the entire college-students and teachers where library staffs are the conductors of this workshop. "Out of the many components

forming a library system, professional staff forms the most important and valuable resource" (Bajpal, 1999) because the quality of a library is judged by the service it renders not by some idle collection; and efficient library service is the result of some effective library staff. Thus, "if the supplier of the information commodity is passive, frustrated, disinterested and even non-existent, the information resource becomes meaningless. It is the library staff who can bring them together according to their tastes, interests and needs for each other thereby establishing harmonious relationship between them." Professional staff in academic libraries is expected to promote academic programmes of the institution and encourage the optimal use of library resources.

## Library personnel

Well-qualified, skilled and adequate number of library personnel is a must to provide consistent and efficient

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**Table 1.** Distribution of questionnaires.

Response	Respondents	Percentage (%)
Librarian	15	100
Library staff	25	100
Total	40	100

**Table 2.** Adequate number of information sources.

Response	No. of libraries	Percentage (%)
Adequate	13	100
Not-adequate	-	-
Total	13	100

library services. This implies that manpower strength is one of the important ingredients of a college library. According to Webster Dictionary "manpower is the number of people working or available for work or service in an organization or institution". It is the power in terms of the workers available to a particular group or required for a particular task. So we can say that library manpower is some certain number of people who are working or available for overall management of library functions with the power of professional skills. ALA policy committee (Gelfand, 1974) in 1983 approved two groups of skills viz. specialized skills and general skills. These are as follows:

### **Specialized skills**

- i) The analysis of the library and information needs of existing and potential users;
- ii) Selection, provision, and maintenance of the full range of library materials;
- iii) The identification, analysis and organization of information
- iv) The assessment, implementation and use of technology in the library;
- v) The exploitation of information resources;
- vi) User education in the library;
- vii) The selection and maintenance of special collection and services and
- viii) The selection and exploitation of non book media

### **General skills**

- i) The planning and development of policy, its implementation and assessment;
- ii) The management and financial control of all or part of an organization.
- iii) Interaction with clients and users;
- iv) Supervision, training and motivation of staff and; v) Contracts and communication with other individuals and groups pertinent to the work of the organization example, governing bodies, suppliers, members of other

professions etc.

It is intended that specialized skills should be performed by professionals, and non-professionals should take routine tasks and procedures including operations of various systems and equipment used in the library (Ganapatrao and Wanare, 2013). They should also be responsible for service under the supervision of professionals. Professionals should have basic knowledge of specialized skills and understanding of general skills and assist in their planning and supervision (Bangladesh Economic Review, 2007). This study is intended to assess the man power problems and level of computer literacy among library staff in degree college libraries in Shimoga City.

### **Objectives of the study**

The survey of librarian and library staff in degree college libraries in Shimoga City have been undertaken with the following objectives:

- i) To identify the present status of college libraries in Shimoga City
- ii) To determine manpower needs in libraries
- iii) To identify the level of computer literacy among the librarians and library staff.
- iv) To identify the areas of work automated / being automated in the libraries.
- v) To know the ability of library staff regarding IT skills and library management.
- vi) To identify the problems faced by the library staff in libraries.
- vii) To provide suggestions as remedial measures for upgrading the status of library personnel

### **MATERIALS AND METHODS**

Literature searching has been undertaken for conceptual development of library manpower needs, procedure of their development, library administration, level of computer literacy, etc. and data have been collected using a structured questionnaire. Personal interviews, field visit, etc. are also undertaken for data collection. The study covered a total of 13 degree college libraries in Shimoga City, which are of undergraduate level to determine the status and needs of library professionals.

### **ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSION**

The collected data have been analyzed and presented in the form of the following Tables (1 to 16) and Figures (1 to 2). Table 1 shows the distribution of questionnaires to 13 college libraries in Shimoga City. 40 questionnaires were distributed to library professionals and all 40 questionnaires were retrieved from the 13 colleges. Table 2 shows that all of the college libraries have adequate number of information sources in all the departments. Table 3 reveals that out of 13 college libraries, 1 college

**Table 3.** Financial source of the libraries.

Name of the founding agencies	No. of colleges	Percentage (%)
Central government	01	7.6
State government	04	30.7
UGC	07	53.8
Other sources	09	69.2

**Table 4.** Staff requirement for libraries.

Opinion	No. of colleges	Percentage of 13 colleges	No. of staff required	No. of colleges	Percentage of 07 colleges
Required	07	54	02	04	57
Not required	06	46	03	-	-
Total	13	100	04	02	29
			05	-	-
			06	-	-
			07	-	-
			07 and more	01	14
			Total	07	100

**Table 5.** Services provided by the libraries.

Services	No. of Colleges	Percentage (%)
Reference services	13	100
CAS	13	100
News paper clipping	11	84.6
Reprographic services	10	77
Inter library loan	02	15
SDI	-	-
OPAC	10	77

**Table 6.** Awareness of training programmes.

Nature of training programmes	Respondents	Percentage (%)
Refresher courses	12	30
Orientation courses	14	35
Workshops	26	65
Seminars/Conferences / Symposia	26	65
Short-term courses from DRTC/ INSDOC / Others	06	15

library received grants from central government, followed by the 4 college libraries which have received grants from the state government. There are 7(54%) and 9(69.2%) of the college libraries which received grants from UGC and other sources respectively.

Here, an attempt was made to seek information on adequacy of library staff. In Table 4, among 13 libraries only 7 (54%) of the libraries are satisfied with the strength of the staff, whereas 46% of the respondents feel staff's requirement is not needed. Table 5 depicts that all the 13 college libraries are providing reference services and

current awareness services. 11 college libraries provide news paper clipping services and 10 college libraries provide reprographic service; which means 10 libraries are providing OPAC services. Table 6 shows the awareness of training programmes of the library professionals. Out of 40 library staff including librarians, the majority of the library professionals 26 (65%) were attending workshops and Seminars / Conferences / Symposia. But some professionals were attending the short term courses from DRTC/ INSDOC / Others. So majority of the library professionals are aware of the

**Table 7.** Knowledge about different skills.

<b>Skills</b>	<b>No. of respondents</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Presentation skills	14	35
Counseling skills	09	22.5
Employment and career guidance	09	22.5
Teaching skills	14	35
Computer skills	33	82.5

**Table 8.** Awareness about computer.

<b>Response</b>	<b>Respondents</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Aware	40	100
Not aware	-	-
Total	40	100

**Table 9.** Internet service provided by the libraries.

<b>Internet service</b>	<b>Respondents</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Providing	10	77
Not providing	03	23
Total	13	100

**Table 10.** Library automation.

<b>Response</b>	<b>Respondents</b>	<b>Percentage (%)</b>
Automated	09	70
Not automated	04	30
Total	13	100

training programmes.

Table 7 shows that 82.5% of the staff have computer skills, 35% of the staff have presentation skills and 35% of the staff have teaching skills. 9(22.5%) staff have skills in counseling and employment and carrier guidance. It shows that, 40 librarians say that they have knowledge on computer and light knowledge on use of computer (Table 8). Table 9 depicts that out of 13 college libraries, 10 college libraries provide internet service to the users, but the remaining 3 college libraries are not providing internet facilities and are not automated also.

Table 10 reveals that out of 13 colleges, 9 college libraries are automated and only 4 colleges are not automated. Table 11 reveals that majority of the library staff (25) are highly competent in online database and e-mail services, 24 have CD-ROM and internet search, 19 staffs have used PC softwares and less than 14 staffs have competence in web publishing/JAVA, and so on. There are 18, 14 and 12 staff who expresse that they are competent in online catalogue, PC software, video conferencing/teleconferencing. Table 12 shows the

problems of implementing library automation. Majority of the libraries 6(40%) have financial problem, lack sufficient staff and IT training facilities, and 5 (33.3%) staff say that they have over work load and lack IT knowledge. Table 13 shows the frequency of using intent for various purposes by the staff. Among the purposes more than 40% use internet daily for searching for course related materials, career information and for reading news papers. Those that visit websites to get knowledge is 13 (32.5%), 12 (30%) of librarians use mail for sending/receiving e-mails, against 12 (30%) librarians who say that they use internet once in a month to search for course related materials. Using internet for other purposes varies among them and the number also varies ranging from 20 to 3%.

Figure 1 shows the staff that use search engines. Majority 29 (72.5%) of the staff are using google search engine and 70 and 42.5% of the staff are using yahoo and rediff search engine respectively. The remaining 25% and more than 22% of the staffs are using Alta-vista and Hot-mail search engines for their works.

Table 14 shows that 67% of the highest staff are dissatisfied with the shortage of staff in their library, whereas 47 and 40% of the staff are dissatisfied with low budget and lack of latest technology. 26.6 and 20% are dissatisfied with the training facilities and inspiration from authority and library collection respectively.

Table 15 represents the relationship of library professionals. 16 staff rated library authority as excellent and good, 16 staff expressed their opinion regarding their relationship in section-in-charge as excellent and 14 staff said that they have good relationship in section- in - charge. 11 and 12 staff say their relationship with colleagues and users is excellent and whereas 15 and 18 staff said that they have good relationship with their colleagues and users. As against this the limited staff 6 and 3 said that they are cooperative with colleagues and users.

Figure 2 represents that majority (88%) of the library professionals get motivation from the authority and 80% of the staff get a proper training from the authority. But 28% of the staff say that they have not had equal treatment from the authority. 88 say that the authority cooperate with and motivate them to work; likewise 76% say that they have opportunity to develop themselves. As against these numbers, 28, 24, 20 and 12% say that the authority is not cooperating with them in treating them

**Table 11.** Experience of using internet facilities.

Activity	Level of literacy			
	Highly competent	Competent	Not competent	Not known
Internet search	24	10	06	-
Online catalogue	19	18	03	-
Online database	25	9	04	02
CD ROMs/DVDs	24	11	05	-
PC software	19	14	05	02
e-mail service	25	10	05	-
Web publishing /JAVA	14	12	1 0	04
Working knowledge of LAN/MAN/WAN	11	04	1 9	06
Video conferencing/tele conferencing	10	12	13	05
Operating multimedia system	04	08	17	11

**Table 12.** Problems of implementing library automation.

Problems	Respondents	Percentage (%)
Financial problem	06	40
Over work load	05	33.3
Lack of IT knowledge	05	33.3
Lack of interact in learning IT	-	-
Higher authority is not interested in sending library staff to upgrade their IT skill	-	-
Lack of sufficient staff in the library	06	40
Lack of IT training facility	06	40
Staff are not co-operating	-	-

**Table 13.** Frequency of using Internet services for various purposes.

Purpose	Frequency		
	Daily	Weekly	Monthly
Search for course related material	16 (40)	07 (17.5)	12 (30)
Visit website to get the knowledge to their facilities	13 (32.5)	10 (25)	11 (27.5)
Searching subject database	06 (15)	07 (17.5)	04 (10)
Searching catalogue of libraries	05 (12.5)	05 (12.5)	-
Accessing E-documents	03 (7.5)	03 (7.5)	03 (7.5)
For sending/receiving e-mails	12 (30)	10 (25)	07 (17.5)
Tele-conferencing	03 (7.5)	-	-
Online learning	04 (10)	-	02 (5)
Career information	16 (40)	16 (40)	-
Down loading programmes /files/images	09 (22.5)	09 (22.5)	02 (5)
View movies/pictures	03 (7.5)	-	07 (17.5)
Listening music	-	-	04 (10)
Enjoyment/fun/flay games	-	-	06 (15)
Looking for advertisement	11 (27.5)	07 (17.5)	04 (10)
Chatting	0 4 (10)	04 (10)	04 (10)
Reading news paper	16 (40)	06 (15)	05 (12.5)

equally, developing their intelligence, going for training and motivating them.

Table 16 shows that the majority of the staff (70%)

joined this professional to earn money, 45% say that they joined because it is their best job; 37.5 and 45% say that they joined because it is a scholarly and service oriented

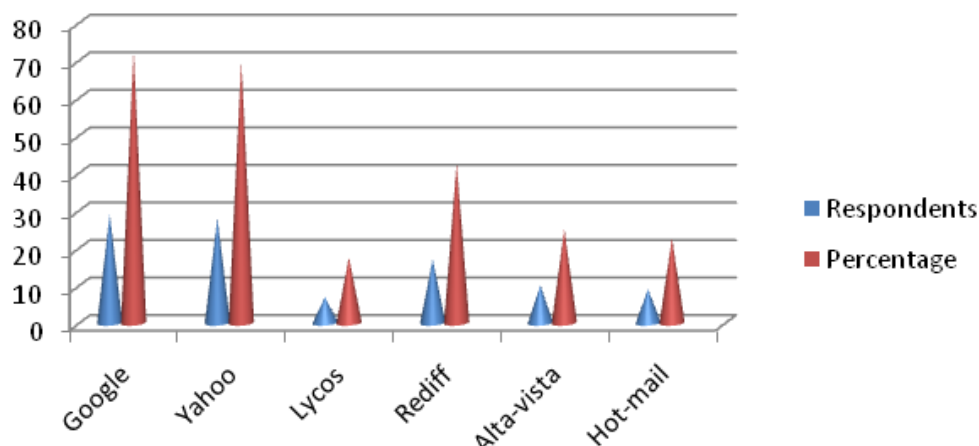


Figure 1. Staff's familiarity with search engines.

Table 14. Opinion on factors of dissatisfaction.

Factors	Respondents	Percentage (%)
Shortage of staff	10	67
Low budget	08	47
Cooperation from staff	-	-
Promotion policy	-	-
Training facility	04	26.6
Inspiration from authority	03	20
Library collection	03	20
Conventional way of thinking	-	-
Lack of latest technology	06	40
Lack of recognition and praise	-	-
Salary	-	-
Working condition	-	-

Table 15. Staff's opinion regarding their relationship with library professionals.

Factors	Excellent	Good	Moderate	Cooperative
Authority	16	16	0	08
Section-in-charge	16	14	04	06
Colleagues	11	15	08	06
Users	12	18	07	03

job.

## FINDINGS, SUGGESTIONS AND CONCLUSION

Suggestions are made by the findings of the study with conclusion given.

### Findings

i) 100% of the libraries have sufficient sources in all the

subjects.

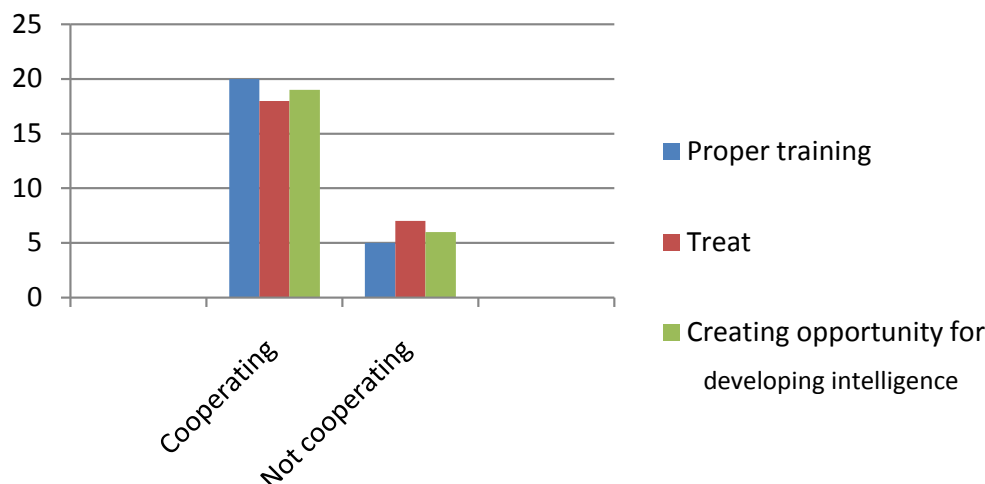
ii) 53.8% of the college libraries receive grants from the UGC and 69.2% of the colleges receive grants from other sources.

iii) 46% of the colleges are having adequate staff but 54% of the colleges have inadequate library staff.

iv) 65% of the library professionals are attending different training programs.

v) 82.5% of the library staff have computer skills and 35% of the library staff have presentation and teaching skills.

vi) 77% of the colleges provide internet services, 23% of



**Figure 2.** Staff's opinion regarding co-operation development by the authority.

**Table 16.** Factors motivating library staff.

Factors	Respondents	Percentage (%)
Salary	28	70
Best job	18	45
Scholarly job	15	37.5
Service oriented job	18	45

the colleges are not providing.

vii) 70% of the colleges are automated in their libraries, 30% of the colleges are not automated.

viii) 60% of the library staffs are highly competent in internet search, online database, e-mail services. 47.5% of the library staff is not competent in working knowledge of LAN/MAN/WAN and 27.5% do not know the operating multimedia system.

ix) 40% of the libraries expressed that financial problem, lack of sufficient staff, lack of IT training facilities are problems of implementing the library automation and 33% mention over work load and lack of IT knowledge.

x) 40% of the staff are using internet daily for searching for course related materials, career information and reading of news papers.

xi) 72.5% of the staffs are familiar with Google search engine and 70% use Yahoo search engine.

xii) 67% of the staffs are dissatisfied with their shortage of staff, 47% are for low budget and 40% are dissatisfied with the lack of latest technology.

xiii) 40% of the staff have excellent co-operation from the authority and section-in-charge.

xiv) 88% of the library professionals are motivated by the authority and 80% get a proper training.

### Suggestions

i) These libraries have no fully IT trained manpower.

Hence the authority should provide or create an opportunity for their staff to attend the different training programs.

ii) The primary factor was inadequate funds. The authority or funding agencies should provide the fund to develop their libraries, particularly lab.

iii) More libraries agreed that they lack latest technology. Hence they require the latest technology in their libraries to provide library services.

iv) Encouragement should be provided by the authority for them to work efficiently and effectively.

v) Many libraries had no latest collections and adequate staff. So the authority should take steps to recruit library professionals and get collections.

vi) To improve the standard of work of the college libraries in terms of computerization they need to have computer technology or IT applications.

vii) Co-operation is necessary between the authority and other library professionals to do the work in the library and to create good environment.

viii) Library should provide internet services to their users to search for information.

ix) Library professionals should give guidance to the user about the catalogue services and OPAC services. It helps to search and retrieve information.

x) Library professionals should update their knowledge regarding IT technology and LAN/WAN/MAN.

xi) Libraries should provide photocopying service and news paper clipping services to the users in need.

### Conclusion

To face the coming challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, academic libraries will need to acquire more perspectives and new competences. They must do more than to gain the knowledge; they must learn to act to apply that knowledge in different situations with the expertise to

face. Majority of the librarians in college libraries, except few are not aware of ICT and not yet started utilizing application of information technology even in the house-keeping functions of the library due to inadequate finance and manpower. It is observed from the above that majority of the libraries are in need of library professionals and even existed staff are not computer literate. For the effective work of these libraries, an effective manpower is essentially needed and it is felt that these academic libraries have to adopt the tools of information technology in order to provide and improve access to library and information services.

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