Survey of Library Collection, Staffing Pattern and Services in Urban and Rural College Libraries, Nashik, Maharashtra: A Comparative Study

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Abstract

This paper examined the college library Resources in urban and rural area of Nashik district in the state of Maharashtra (India). The study looked at resources available in all aided general degree college libraries in terms of college libraries facilities, print and non- print resources and human, resources, ICT facilities, services available in the library. The research type used was descriptive survey. The finding revealed that college libraries of urban areas in study area have gone far ahead in respect of collection, staffing pattern, ICT infrastructure but most of the libraries in rural area have lack of basic infrastructures, ICT equipment, inadequate funds etc. Study concludes that the present status of college libraries in rural area not meeting the prescribed norms.

Keywords

Literacy, information and communication technology, University Libraries.
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INTRODUCTION

Colleges are considered as institutions of higher learning. Libraries in these institutions play an important role in supplementing the higher education and research. Libraries are otherwise known as 'information and knowledge repositories' and enable the students to build up an appropriate academic and professional career. It is therefore necessary to design and develop a quality library system in order to provide an effective teaching and learning environment (Joute 2014). The standard of teaching, learning and research at a college largely depends upon the quality of the service rendered by the library.

According to Rawat and Kumar (2002), "The objective of a college library is to supplement the instructions imparted in the classroom. It aims to function as an independent teaching agency, encouraging and promoting the use of books in the ways beyond those suggested or required by the classroom." One of the major objectives of college libraries is to ensure that their collections and services are designed to meet the objectives and information requirements of the parent institution. With the advancements in ICT, libraries are gearing up to make use of these technologies to provide the information quickly. The transition of the library into the college transformation hub has resulted in the reorganization of library spaces, staffing pattern, collections and services. The Nashik District is one of the thirty-six districts in Maharashtra state of India and has 15 blocks (Tehsil) and 1931 villages according to 2001 census report. The total area of Nashik district is 15530 sq. kilometers, which occupies 7.8 percent of the state total geographical area. The District has great mythological background. Lord Rama lived in Panchvati during his vanvas. The district has been the educational hub of North Maharashtra. It has well known for its educational facilities available primary to higher education level. There are two state run universities namely Yashwantrao Chavan Maharashtra Open University and the Maharashtra University of Health Sciences. Today the district houses a large number of private and governmental educational institutions offering higher education in Medicine, Engineering & Technology, Architecture, Pharmacy and Management among others.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The study was conducted to:

1) To know the general background of college libraries located in urban and rural area.
2) To review the nature and extent of collection of college libraries covering both urban and rural areas.
3) To compare the ICT facilities among the college libraries in the urban and rural areas.
4) To compare the services of the college libraries in the urban and rural areas.

LIMITATION OF THE STUDY

- The study considers only general degree aided college libraries in Nashik district although there are number of other private non-aided colleges and education institutions such as engineering, medicine, pharmacy, agricultural etc.
- The study covers only those colleges which are affiliated to Savitribai Phule Pune University.

METHODOLOGY

The study was a descriptive survey that involved collection of data through questionnaire for the purposes of describing the existing conditions (i.e., facilities, resources and services) in urban and rural college libraries. The target population for this study was made up of forty aided general degree college libraries in Nashik District, of which 14 colleges are located in urban area and 26 are located in rural area. For the study purpose, the urban areas used were Nashik and Malegaon town because both of the town having corporation, while other areas in which college are located of the district was selected as the rural counterparts. The instruments for data collection were questionnaire, interview and observation. Self-designed questionnaires were distributed to the respondents. Obtained data were collated and analysed using frequency counts and percentages.

LITERATURE REVIEW

Malhan & Thakar (1979) examine the status of sixteen degree college libraries in Himachal Pradesh regarding the staffs, library holding, journals subscription, budget etc. In 1980, Raina present the overall picture of degree college libraries of Kashmir and point out that the certain problematic factors requiring consideration and suggests certain measure to improve the standards of college libraries service in Kashmir. Kannappanavar and Mathad (2000) study found the present status of college libraries in Karnataka is far from satisfactorily owing to inadequate fund and staffs. Lohar and Kumbar (2005) study confirms that the present situation of the college libraries in Shimoga District do not meet the prescribed norms. Lohar and Papanna (2008) reported the present conditions of ten first grade college libraries in Chitradurga and Challakere town. Paratap and Joshi (2009) study on the status of twenty College of Education libraries in three selected district of Punjab state reveals that the staff strength in the libraries was insufficient and few libraries had computers in library. Rani (2008) in a study of minority Degree College with reference to NAAC standards concluded that every minority college library must be provided basic facilities like building, furniture, stacks etc. Das and Baruah (2010) conducted the study on college libraries of Dibrugarh district of Assam. Sharma and Singh (2011) estimate the performance of college libraries in Karnal (Haryana) in the context of library physical structure, collection, membership, finance, services, networking, and automated system and internet services. In a study of Kannappanavar & Manjunatha (2011) explore the status of resources and services provided to the users in 45 engineering college libraries in Karnataka state. Rajasekar, et.al. (2011) conducted the study on self-finance engineering college libraries to focus on the pros and cons of information management in the context of paradigm shift. Filson, & Agyekum (2014) present the results of an evaluative study of fourteen colleges of education in Ghana. The study revealed that libraries in Ghanaian colleges of education are so poor, both quantitatively and qualitatively, that much remains to be done to enhance their status. Ahmed, et.al (2012) traced the developments of college libraries of Nalbari district (Assam) after NAAC's evaluation.

DATA ANALYSIS AND DISCUSSIONS:

The outcome of the study has been presented in the following description and tables with their interpretation.

General Information

Table 1 provides the general information of the college libraries under study area. Among college surveyed in the urban areas, one college was established before 1950 and remaining in the period of 1951- 2000. On the contrary, by and large near about two-third (61.53%) colleges in rural area was established in the period of 1976-2000. The date of establishment of college is assumed to be the date of establishment of its library. Most of the urban and rural colleges offer UG/PG course in the subject of arts, commerce and science representing 92.85% and 80.76% respectively.

The main categorized of the users in the college libraries teachers (professors, lectures), students (UG/PG and research scholars) and administrative staffs. In Table 1, the result showed that more than two-third of the urban college libraries have highest numbers of faculty and students membership. In case of rural college libraries, nearly two-third (69.33%) college libraries have the membership in the range of 1000-5000.

Table 1: General Information

Sl. No.	Background Information	Urban College	Rural College	Total
Year of Establishment				
1	Before 1950	1 (7.14)	-	1
2	1950-1975	6 (42.85)	10 (38.46)	16
3	1976-2000	7 (50.00)	16 (61.53)	23
Course offered				
1	UG	1 (7.14)	5 (35.71)	6
2	UG & PG	13 (92.85)	21 (80.76)	34
Library Membership				
1	Below 1000	3 (21.42)	8 (30.76)	11
2	1000-5000	7 (50.00)	18 (69.23)	25
3	>5000	4 (28.57)	-	4

Note: Values in brackets ( ) are in percentage

Comparing the general background of the urban and rural areas, there is no significant difference is revealed relating to the course offered, membership in urban-rural college libraries.

Library Staffs

The library staffs in college library includes the librarian, assistant librarian, library assistant/clerk, non-professional staffs like attendants, peon.In all college libraries in urban area the positions of Librarian are filled but in rural college libraries the position of librarian is vacant in four college libraries. The qualification of librarian is given in table 2. It shows that all librarians from urban area except one librarian have post graduate degree in library science; six of them have doctoral degree i.e. M. Phil/ Ph.D. whilst 72.6% of their rural counterparts hold PG and doctoral degree in LIS. Further, two-third librarians in urban area have more than ten years' experience. By and large, more than half of librarians in rural area have the less than 10 years' experience. Hence, there is no significant difference is revealed relating to the LIS qualification and professional experience in rural-urban college libraries. A total of 64.27% libraries in urban areas have between 6-20 staff members whereas more than two-third (76.92%) libraries in rural areas have below 5 staff members.

Table 2: Library Staffs

Sr. No.	Library Staffs	Urban College	Rural College	Total
Position				
1	Librarian	14 (10.2)	22 (18.18)	36
2	Assistant Librarian	6 (4.35)	4 (3.30)	10
3	Library assistant, clerk	24 (17.39)	17 (14.04)	41
4	Non-professional Staffs	94 (68.11)	78 (64.46)	172
5	Total	138 (100)	121 (100)	259
Educational Level				
1	B. Lib. I. Sc + P.G.	1 (7.14)	3 (11.53)	4
2	M. Lib. I. Sc (NET/SET)	7 (50.00)	14 (53.84)	21
3	M. Lib. I. Sc with M. Phil.	4 (28.57)	4 (15.38)	8
4	M. Lib. I. Sc with Ph. D.	2 (14.28)	1 (3.84)	3
Length of Service (Years)				
1	1-10	5 (35.71)	14 (53.84)	19
2	11-20	6 (42.85)	3 (11.53)	9
3	21-30	3 (21.42)	3 (11.53)	6
4	Above 30	-	2 (7.69)	2
Library Staff Strength				
1	>5	4 (28.57)	25 (96.15)	26
2	6-10	6 (42.85)	4 (15.38)	10
3	11-20	3 (21.42)	2 (7.69)	5

Note: Values in brackets ( ) are in percentage

From the above table, it could be observed that there are more staffs (138) in the urban college libraries

than the rural college libraries (121) despite the fact that there was more rural college than urban college in the sample. The reason for this may be attributed to its size, and students/staff population, and course conducted at college level in urban as well as rural areas.

Library Collection

Table 3: Library Collection

Sr. No.	Collection	Urban College	Rural College	Total
Books				
1	<25000	7 (50.00)	19 (73.07)	26
2	26000-50000	1 (7.14)	6 (23.07)	7
3	50000-75000	-	1 (3.84)	1
4	75000-100000	3 (21.42)	-	3
5	Above 100000	3 (21.42)	-	3
Journals				
1	<25	-	7 (26.92)	7
2	26-50	5 (35.71)	9 (34.61)	14
3	51-100	4 (28.57)	10 (38.46)	14
4	>100	5 (35.71)	-	5
A V Collection				
1	Yes	14 (100)	18 (69.23)	32
2	No	-	8 (30.76)	8

Note: Values in brackets ( ) are in percentage

Library collection is a sum of total library materials that make up the holdings of a library. The data are presented in the Table 3. The comparison shows that half of the libraries in urban area and two-third (73%) libraries in rural areas have less than 25000 books in its collection. However, comparatively, about a quarter (21.42%) of libraries in urban area has a collection of up to 100000 books and another quarter (21.42%) has more than one lakh books, meaning that about 50 percent of libraries in urban area have rich collection. Further, journals subscriptions demonstrate similar variations. Comparatively, two third (64.28%) of the libraries in urban areas have subscribed journals in the range of 50-100 and fewer than 100 titles. Similarly, nearly three quarter (73.07%) libraries in rural areas have subscribed journals in the range of fewer than 25 and 50 journals. In line with the general trend, urban college libraries have the most journal subscriptions. In the ICT era, library also provides facilities of audio-visuals collection like CDs, DVDs etc. Data indicate all fourteen libraries in urban area have audio - visual resources and more than half of the libraries in rural area have audio - visual resources in its collection.

From the above table, it can be seen that rural college libraries has less information resourced than their urban counterparts in the forms of printed documents and non-printed document.

ICT infrastructure

ICT infrastructure is usually considered with respect to hardware, software, and telecommunication facility. Table 4 presents the ICT infrastructures available in the library. Data shows that all urban college libraries admitted that they computers and libraries had basic ICT facilities like printer, CD-ROM drive, UPS and barcode reader and photocopier and like others. On the contrary, only 84.61% rural college libraries indicated that they had computer system in the libraries and most of the libraries had other ICT facilities.

Table 4:ICT Infrastructure

Sr. No.	ICT infrastructure	Urban College	Rural College	Total
1	Computers	14 (100)	22 (84.61)	36
2	Printer	13 (92.85)	20 (76.92)	33
3	Barcode reader	10 (71.42)	15 (57.69)	25
4	LAN facility	5 (35.71)	-	5
5	Scanner	11 (78.57)	11 (42.30)	22
6	Photocopier	12 (85.71)	13 (46.15)	23
7	CD ROM/DVD drivers	13 (92.85)	22 (84.61)	35
8	UPS	13 (92.85)	11 (42.30)	24

Note: Values in brackets ( ) are in percentage

In comparison to, less than half the respondent libraries of rural areas did not have ICT facilities including printer, scanner, barcode reader, etc. None of the library in rural have LAN facilitates. Therefore, libraries of urban areas in study area have gone far ahead in respect of ICT infrastructure.

Library Automation

Table 5 shows the number of urban and rural college libraries replying to the question that are automated (computerized) and those that are not. The study revealed that 85.71% libraries in urban area responding were automated while 80.76% libraries in rural area have automated system in the libraries.

Of these 12 libraries in urban area, 64.28% completed and 21.42% partial automated system. On the contrary, six (23.07%) libraries in rural area have completed automated and equal numbers have partial automated and rest of the libraries have initiated automation of library operation.

Table 5: Library Automation

Sr. No.	Library Services	Urban College	Rural College	Total
Library Automation				
1	Automated	12 (85.71)	21 (80.76)	33
2	Non-Automated	2 (14.28)	5 (19.23)	7
Automation Status				
1	Completed	9 (64.28)	6 (23.07)	15
2	Partial	3 (21.42)	6 (23.07)	9
3	Initiated	-	9 (34.61)	9

Note: Values in brackets ( ) are in percentage

Library Services

The ultimate objective of library is to provide maximum services to its users. Table 3 reveals that the various types of services like lending service, reference service, Internet, reprographic service etc provided by the college libraries. The analysis revealed that all libraries in urban area have provide lending and reference service and equal numbers of libraries provides ILL, newspaper clipping, new arrival and almost two-thirds libraries provides internet, NLIST, document delivery and photocopy services and among others. Likewise, all libraries in rural areas providing lending services, 69.23 % of libraries provide reference services. However, the provision of other services like internet access, OPAC, NLIST database, photocopy services are available in a few libraries in rural area.

Table 6: Library Services

Sr. No.	Library Services	Urban College	Rural College	Total
1	Lending service	14 (100)	26 (100)	40
2	Reference service	14 (100)	18 (69.23)	32
3	Document Delivery	9 (64.28)	7 (26.92)	16
4	Inter Library Loan	14 (100)	26 (100)	40
5	Internet Service	11 (78.57)	18 (69.23)	29
6	OPAC	8 (57.14)	17 (65.38)	25
7	N-LIST access	11 (78.57)	15 (57.69)	26
8	CD ROM Searching	7 (50.00)	18 (69.23)	25
9	CAS/SDI	6 (42.85)	8 (30.76)	14
10	Photocopy service	10 (71.42)	13 (50.00)	23
11	New arrivals	14 (100)	16 (61.53)	30
12	Newspaper Clipping	14 (100)	21 (80.76)	25

Note: Values in brackets ( ) are in percentage

From the result, it could be observed traditional library services such as lending, reference, new arrivals; newspaper clipping service was found to be the only service that is commonly being rendered in both urban and rural area college libraries. However, ICT services such as internet, CD-ROM, OPAC, N-LIST database are absent in most of rural area libraries within study sample because low internet connectivity, constant electricity power failure etc.

CONCLUSION

The primary goal of the research study was to identify the differences in infrastructural facilities and service render by the libraries among urban and rural college libraries and results show that urban

college libraries were providing more facilities in comparison to rural area. The result shows that majority of college libraries in urban area have rich collection whereas about third quarter of college libraries in rural area have less than 25000 books in its collection. The subscription to periodicals in majority of urban college libraries is equal to 100 periodicals but two-third of libraries in rural area is subscribing less than 50 journals. It is satisfying to note that, almost all libraries in urban area have computers, printers and ICT equipment. On the contrary, a majority of rural area college libraries don't have basic ICT equipment. Further, few libraries have in urban area have LAN facilities and none of the libraries in rural area have such facility. All libraries in both areas have provided lending service and other services. It is good to note that a majority of libraries in rural area have Internet facility and half of them provide access to NLIST.

In comparison to urban areas, the findings revealed that college libraries in rural area face many constraints such as inadequate funds, provision of ICT facilities, internet connectivity, and shortage of manpower, irregular electric supply. In rural area, there are some cases where ICT equipment was supplied but no technical support available after breakdown of systems. Though the finding of the study does not claim to tell the complete story of libraries in college in urban and rural in Maharashtra state; rather it attempts to provide a description of forty general degree college libraries in Nashik district at a particular time. As the scope of the study is restricted to forty college libraries, it is important to acknowledge that the findings may not apply to college libraries in other areas (including rural areas) or to other higher education institutions. Nevertheless, we contend that we have opened a window on the difficulties facing rural areas college libraries in Nashik district of Maharashtra State.

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