THE TECHNIQUES AND METHODS ADOPTED IN THE MEDICAL COLLEGE LIBRARIES LOCATED IN THE DISTRICTS OF SOUTHERN KARNATAKA PLATEAU- A STUDY

Dr. Abu Waris
Lecturer, University of Dammam, Dammam, (Kingdom of Saudi Arabia)

Dr. M. VasanthaKumar
Asst.Professor, University of Dammam, Dammam, (Kingdom of Saudi Arabia)

ABSTRACT

Though the country like India is developing in all areas of development, it has numerous problems, including finance, food, education, medical services etc. Being the second largest population having in the world, the Government of India has taken the initiative to render the medical education/services to the needy peoples across the county either directly or through Governments of the respective state. In this direction, more number of government and private institutions have started from past two decades in Karnataka state also. An analytical study has been conducted to evaluate the library services, based upon the techniques and methods adopted in the medical college libraries located in the districts of southern Karnataka plateau. The outcome of the study is satisfactory but there is a need for improvement in several functional areas of the library, such as adaptation of new tools & techniques, training for the librarians, status of manpower, access to resources, marketing and user orientation services of the library.

Keywords: Medical Libraries, Techniques, Library tools, Services.

INTRODUCTION

Where ever we found the medical institutions, it always deals with two components, i.e. teaching training and research, care and cure. In this direction, some of the medical institutions existing in India are up to the standards, remaining institutions yet to reach to the
point of achievement, of course, these medical institutions established in the country have to cope up to the world’s standards is becoming inevitable in the globalization context as collaborative educational programmes are coming up from developed countries. The objective of a health science library is to assist medical professionals in enhancing and updating their knowledge and skills, and to provide them information regarding new innovations, views, theories and latest treatment for better patient-care, medical education, and research. The primary role of a medical library is to collect and organize recorded information in medicine and allied subjects to meet the clientele's needs (P. Srinivasulu, & Reddy, V. P., 2010).

Soudbakhsh and Farzin (2006) opined that medical library and information centers are witnessing major revolution in their activities and services and this has caused the librarians to feel that in addition to their traditional activities, they need to achieve modern knowledge and skills. Farahi and Gandhi (2011) analyzed in their study depicting that self-study, formal education, informal education, education through colleagues, training at work place, attending IT programmes, and workshops were the prominent modes of acquiring IT skills by library professionals. Self-study is the most popular mode of learning and updating their knowledge and skills of IT among medical librarians from India. It is followed by methods such as ‘Training at work place’ ‘Attending workshops/seminars’, ‘Formal Education’, and so on. This finding is in accordance with the finding reported by Babu et. al., as well Sampath Kumar and Biradar (2010) have also of the same opinion. Dhanavandan et. al., (2012) in their study Access and Awareness of ICT resources and services in medical college libraries in Puducherry found that most of the faculties have visited the library for usage of internet to get access to the electronic resources through Google. It was of the opinion of the respondents that too much information retrieved while searching the information, is the main barrier for them to access desired information on electronic resources and they preferred to have text books, for which they need orientation on search strategies for the desired outcomes. Rehman et. al. (1997) emphasized that both health professionals & health science librarians have to have communication skills to become a successful librarian.

Srinivasulu and PullaReddy (2010) in A survey of medical college libraries in Andhra Pradesh reveal that most of the medical college libraries (81.82 %) are not automated. The survey also indicates that a considerable percentage of librarians (36.36 %) do not have training in computer applications. The minimum staff members as per the norms of Medical Council of India in the library should be 12 members including professionals and non-professionals. The average number of staff working in medical college libraries at present is 10.95 members. The average number of professional staff members working in medical college libraries at present is 4.2 members. As per the norms of Medical Council of India, it should be 8 members.

In the state of Karnataka, currently there are 45 medical colleges existing as per the Medical Council of India, out of which 22 (19 + 3 newly started, one during 2012 another two in 2013) medical colleges coming under the region of southern Karnataka plateau. An analytical study has been conducted to know the status of the libraries, tools and techniques and methods adopted for medical college libraries located in the districts of southern Karnataka plateau. In this study, all the 19 medical libraries have been chosen for the study except newly started 3 libraries, data collection done during 2011. The outcome of the survey is being presented briefly.
OBJECTIVES

1. To know the real position of the medical colleges established in Karnataka.
2. To find out the position of actual infrastructure of the established medical colleges in the concerned area.
3. To identify the difficulties of library services.
4. To know the position of using modern techniques applied by the library.
5. To locate the actual position of fund expenditure made by the libraries on conventional and non-conventional reading materials.
7. Availability of automated related equipment and their use.
8. To know about the different other documentation services provided by the libraries.
9. To trace out the steps taken for maintenance of standard of the medical Colleges.

METHODOLOGY

This study uses primary and secondary data of the concerning subject. The data has been obtained from librarians through questionnaires. Suitable statistical tools and techniques are being used for data analysis.

DATA ANALYSIS

Among 19 medical colleges taken for the study, 7 (36.84%) are government and 12 (63.15%) are private institutions and most of the institutions offering both UG & PG programmes, some of the colleges offering super specialty and PG diploma courses also.

LIBRARY PERSONNEL

- Few librarians - 2 (10.52%) have Ph.D/M.Phil. Degree;
- All most all librarians - 15 (78.94%) have M.LISc Degree;
- Remaining 2 librarians (10.52%) has B.LISc Degree;
- In only one library (5.26%) has more than 10 professionals are working;
- All most all libraries - 18 (94.73%) have less than 10 professionals are working, the range in between 6 – 7, 5 – 6 and so on;
- Some libraries - 5 (26.31%) have IT staff;
- Most of the libraries - 14 (73.68%) doesn’t have any IT staff;
- Some of the libraries - 8 (42.10%) are having more than 02 semi-professional staffs;
- Some librarians - 7 (36.84%) are getting Government scale of pay;
- Most of the librarians - 12 (63.15%) are getting consolidated pay/State Government scale of pay.

Physical Facilities

- As far as library building is concerned, 7 (36.84%) libraries have independent library building and rest of the 12 (63.15%) attached to the main college building;
- All the 19 medical college libraries possess adequate number of furniture’s as per requirements of the users.
TYPE OF ACCESS

- All most all libraries-16 (84.21%) follow the open access system;
- Few libraries-3 (15.78%) have closed access system.

LIBRARY USAGE

- More than 10 faculty members visit the library per day in 18 (94.73%) libraries, and remaining one (5.26%) has less than 10 faculties;
- Average more than 30 students visit the library in all the 19 libraries.

LIBRARY COLLECTION

- Most of the libraries are procuring text books & reference books throughout the year according to users need / MCI standards;
- Four (21.05%) libraries have more than 14,000, further four (21.05%) more libraries have around 10,000 textbooks respectively, five (26.31%) libraries have more than 6,000 and remaining six (31.57%) libraries have less than 6,000 text books in their collection;
- Five (26.31%) libraries have more than 8,000 reference books followed by two (10.52%) libraries having more than 6,000 and remaining 12 (63.15%) libraries have less than 3,000 reference books;
- Some libraries-7 (36.84%) have exclusive collection of NLM & WHO reading materials and rest of 12 (63.15%) libraries did not provided the data separately;
- Some libraries-8 (42.10%) subscribes more than 50 foreign print journals and remaining 11 libraries (57.89%) have less than 50;
- Most of the libraries-12 (63.15%) subscribes more than 50 Indian print journals and remaining 7 libraries (36.84%) have less than 50;
- Two (10.52%) libraries have more than 9,000 back volumes of journals followed by four (21.05%) around 6,000, six (31.57%) libraries have more than 3,000 and remaining 7 (36.84%) libraries have less than 2,000 back volumes of journals;
- Most of the libraries-15 (78.94%) are having Audio-Visual materials.

TECHNICAL PROCESSING

- All the libraries are using AACR-2 scheme for cataloguing the documents;
- All most all libraries-16 (84.21%) are using Dewey decimal classification and remaining 3 libraries (15.78%) using NLM classification which is a specialized classification in the field of biomedical sciences.

LIBRARY SERVICES

- All most all libraries-16 (84.21%) are providing reference and information services;
- Some libraries are providing referral service;
- Some libraries-9 (47.37%) are providing inter-library loan facility to their users;
- All libraries-19 (100%) are providing circulation service;
- All most all libraries-18 (94.73%) have photocopy facility for the library users;
Some libraries-7 (36.84%) have Microfilm facility, rest of them (63.15%) are not having such facility;
Some libraries-7 (36.84%) are providing current awareness service through Content of Journals.

Web based information services

- Majority of libraries-11 (57.89%) have OPAC facility to locate the reading materials;
- Majority of libraries-12 (63.15%) are providing access to MEDLARS/MEDLINE service to their users;
- All most all libraries are conducting orientation programmes to the fresher’s in addition to spot guidance being given regularly.

LIBRARY BUDGET

- All the government medical college libraries are receiving the funds from Government of Karnataka; the private medical colleges have been met out by their managements.

Books

- The quantum of budget allocated in each financial year has more than 10 lakhs for 12 (63.15%) libraries, remaining 7 (36.84%) have received less than 10 lakhs.

Journals

- The quantum of budget allocated in each financial year has more than 12 lakhs for 12 (63.15%) libraries, remaining 7 (36.84%) have received less than 12 lakhs.
- Thus, majority of the libraries have received more than 10 and 12 lakhs respectively towards books and journals procurement.
- As far as the electronic resources including non-book materials are concerned, the allocation of budget has not been specified separately in their data.

ICT INFRASTRUCTURE

- All the 19 libraries (100%) are providing Internet service;
- Some libraries-7 (36.84%) are using more than 10 computers in their LAN, and rest of 12 libraries (63.15%) are having less than 10 computers in LAN connection;
- Some of the libraries-7 (36.84%) have digital library unit.

Internet Bandwidth Speed

- Few libraries-2 (10.52%) are using 64 kbps;
- Few libraries-2 (10.52%) are using 256 Kbps;
- Few libraries-3 (15.78%) are using 512 kbps;
- Majority of libraries-8 (42.10%) are using 2 mbps;
- Some libraries-4 (21.05%) are using 10 mbps.
Internet Service Provider

- Most of the libraries-16 (84.21%) are using BSNL Broadband Internet connection and remaining 3 libraries (15.78%) are using other networks.

Server

- Few libraries-3 (15.78%) are using proxy server;
- Some libraries-4 (21.05%) are using mail server;
- Some libraries-4 (21.05%) are using web server and remaining 8 (42.10%) libraries did not provide the information.

MEDICAL COUNCIL OF INDIA (MCI) STANDARD

MCI specifically indicates the provisions for Central Library (air-conditioned) getting 150 admissions annually:
- Physical space of 2400 Sq.m with 300 seating arrangements. Provision for Staff reading room for 30 persons, rooms for librarian and other staff, journal room, room for copying facilities, air-conditioned computer room for minimum 40 nodes with good ICT infrastructure to access Medlar and Internet facility. There shall also be provision for e-library, Video and Cassette room (desirable).
- Text and reference books should be not less than 12000. In a new medical college the total number of books should be proportionately divided on yearly basis in five years. The number of copies of textbooks in each subject of undergraduate teaching shall be ten.
- The number of journals shall be 100 out of which one-third shall be foreign journals and subscribed on continuous basis.
- There is also provision for departmental library in each of the department.

IMPORTANT FINDINGS WITH REMARKS

The survey indicates that all most all medical colleges are getting 100 or 150 admissions annually.

Physical facilities: The physical facilities are the main component of any library. The study reveals that (63.15%) of Central library's are attached to the main college building. As per the Medical Council of India, “there shall be an air-conditioned central library (2400 sq.m.) with seating arrangements for at least 300 (both inside & outside) students for reading and good lighting and ventilation and space for stacking and display of books and journals. There shall be provision for reading room for 30 persons, rooms for librarian and other staff, journal room, room for copying facilities, computer room for minimum 40 nodes with good ICT’s, e-library etc.,

Hence, the authorities concerned should take necessary steps to provide necessary accommodation along with adequate number of furniture’s library equipments as per the norms stated above. Library must be willing to invest in State-of-the-art technologies within the capabilities of IT support”, there should be provision for Information Access (in-house
and remote) with 24/7 service, it also should be served as an information hub, learning commons.

**Library Staff:** It is found in the study that all most all libraries (94.73%) have less than 10 professionals are working in between 6-7, 5-6 and so on. Only (36.84%) staffs are getting Government scale of pay and (63.15%) are getting consolidated pay.

As per the norms of Medical Council of India, the professional library staffs should be 8 members but in the survey it reflects the deficiencies of professional staffs, steps should be taken for improvement of the staffs with good pay scales. Training in computer applications is most essential for the medical librarian, the librarians should be given training particularly in ICT applications and access to resources as National Medical Library, New Delhi did earlier because he/she should be familiar with the emerging library Technologies and knows the available resources. Library must be willing to invest in training of staff and users so that they make use of these technologies effectively.

**Library collection:** Study highlighted that four (21.05%) libraries have more than 14,000 and similarly the another four (21.05%) libraries have 10,000 around textbooks, five (26.31%) libraries have more than 6,000 and remaining six (31.57%) libraries have less than 6,000 text books respectively.

Five (26.31%) libraries have more than 8,000 reference books followed by two (10.52%) libraries having more than 6,000 and remaining 12 (63.15%) libraries have less than 3,000 reference books. The (36.84%) libraries have exclusive collection of NLM & WHO reading materials but (63.15%) libraries did not specify the information.

As per MCI norms, each medical college library should have not less than 10,000 text and reference books. The study reveals that most of the libraries are having text and reference books according to norms except very few. The exclusive collection of NLM & WHO is a special significance of medical libraries; let remaining libraries are also to be acquired such collection here afterwards. All the libraries should possess the number of copies of textbooks in each subject of undergraduate according to MCI of ten.

Hence, the managements of these colleges should take necessary steps to improve their collections irrespective of any forms to comply the norms of Medical Council of India and users need. E-books and e-journals are supplementing and complementing the print collection in hybrid model libraries. In most of the cases it will strengthen the collection as well as satisfies the regulations up to some extent in several areas. All the 19 libraries have reported that they are using e-books, e-journals, online and off line databases through HELINET (Health Science Libraries Network) consortium formed by Rajiv Gandhi University of Health Sciences (RGUHS), Bangalore, Karnataka. All the 19 libraries are members of the consortium. Collection (print, & electronics, all formats) is the most integral part of any library, it always deals with teaching and learning, training, research, care and cure concept, the concept of outreach program is also adding in addition to these concepts.

**Budget:** It is understood that seven (36.84%) libraries have received less than 10 and 12 lakhs respectively for procurement of books and journals annually. There is no indication of separate budget for electronic resources, ICT applications and non-book materials.

As the finance is one of the prerequisite for any organization, adequate budgetary provisions should be made available for collection development (print and electronics), library services, procurement of ICT tools and maintenance, extension activities etc. The
managements (both government and private) of respective colleges should take appropriate steps for allocation and proper utilization of recurring and non-recurring funds in a fiscal year.

**ICT provisions:** Study reveals that all the libraries (100%) are providing Internet service. Most of the libraries are using BSNL broadband network but Bandwidth is too less in almost 50% of the libraries except four (21.05%) libraries using 10 mbps. Seven libraries (36.84%) are using more than 10 computers in their LAN, and rest of 12 libraries (63.15%) is less than 10 computers. Only seven (36.84%) libraries are having digital library.

Medical council of India has made mandatory regulation to have air-conditioned computer room for minimum 40 nodes with good ICT infrastructure to access Medlar and Internet facility. There shall also be provision for e-library. Study reveals that whatever the ICT infrastructure available in most of the libraries is inadequate. Number of nodes available in LAN also less when compare to 40. No explanation on specific applications that the libraries have implemented to manage the resources, integrated library systems, library services platforms (apart from HELINET), repository platforms, or electronic resource management systems.

Apart from HELINET resources, MEDLINE and popular Open access resources what are all other resources made available to the users such as students, faculties, clinicians, para medical staffs are also not known. Status of automation, computer training for library staffs in computer applications is also not been specified. Hence, the authorities concerned, in both government and private medical colleges, should take the necessary steps to provide training to the library staff in library automation. The library staff members should be deputed to attend refresher courses, workshops, seminars and conferences relating to computer applications in libraries.

The MCI is also point out Audio-visual service and Microfiche facility. In case of audio-visual services, it almost integrated with Internet services. The provision of Microfiche facility is shifted to digital preservation of electronic library services, thus these services may not be visualizes in earlier forms.

**Library services:** The outcome of the study point out that sixteen (84.21%) libraries are providing reference and information services, some libraries are providing referral service, nine (47.37%) libraries are providing inter-library loan facility, only seven (36.84%) libraries are providing current awareness service through Content of Journals, twelve (63.15%) libraries are providing MEDLARS/MEDLINE service. Average more than 30 students visit the library in all the 19 libraries.

The MCI is stress upon that every medical library should provide the satisfactory services to the user community on modern lines, it need not to be quoted every services in its regulation. As for as Library Users Services are concerned (84.21%) libraries are providing reference service, (36.84%) CAS, some libraries providing referral service, it understood that they need to concentrate on these issues seriously as these are all basic services. MEDLARS/MEDLINE service is the specialized service of every biomedical library; only twelve (63.15%) libraries are providing such service means remaining libraries are not satisfying the needs of biomedical users. MCI has to look into the matter about this issue particularly which is the primary one during the inspection. More than 30 students’ average visit the library in all the 19 libraries, it once again reflects the poor response. No specific data from the respondents of the usage of library materials particularly on books and journals or Internet usage duration their stay in the library. The librarians concerned need to marketing
their services properly, update their collections from time to time, orientation should be made effectively, and fresh initiatives like updated computerized services including provision of Wi-Fi, availability of popular databases like clinics, evidence-based medicine, providing thousands of open access online e-books, e-journals, resources of NLM, WHO publications, CME’s, clinical materials, online videos contents, IndMed databases, free.com etc., services should be introduced to attract the users. Information Literacy education (ILE) is to be conducted in each of the library for optimum utilization of the resources.

CONCLUSION

I hope, the situation and infrastructure may be enhanced by this time in all the medical institutions where ever we found deficiencies and of course an affiliated University of RGUHS and Medical Council of India will be monitoring them from time to time, even if some lagging, the respective managements have to be concentrated on these issues seriously as the situation is different from earlier days where the global competition is coming up more and more from developed countries. Collaborative courses are also appearing in every discipline now-a-days.

REFERENCES


