



# INTERNATIONAL JOURNAL OF TRENDS IN EMERGING RESEARCH AND DEVELOPMENT

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Volume 3; Issue 1; 2025; Page No. 172-175

Received: 17-10-2024  
Accepted: 28-11-2024

## To determine the different needs that public libraries, have in order to close the digital divide

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DOI: <https://doi.org/10.5281/zenodo.17264069>

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### Abstract

In the linked world of today, having internet connectivity has an impact on everything from job searching to health care to high-quality education. Regrettably, there is a disparity in access to this type of information, known as the "digital divide," which is more common in some areas and among members of specific groups, such as low-income and minority groups. The classic definition of the term "digital divide" is "the gap between those with and those without internet access." Such access is impacted by a person's possession of the necessary technology to connect to the internet, their capacity to obtain an internet connection, or a combination of the two. Under these circumstances, public libraries' function has changed from valuing the print works in their collections to assisting citizens into the digital world and building onramps into it. The digital divide, according to the United Nations Educational, Scientific, and Cultural Organization, is a phenomenon that arises from unequal access to and use of information and communication technologies, creating a knowledge gap between information "haves" and have-nots worldwide. In societies where computer proficiency opens the doors to economic success and personal advancement, entry to good careers and educational opportunities, full access to social networks, and opportunities for civic engagement, this dichotomy threatens to create an underclass of inform poor people who run the risk of further marginalization. In order to guarantee advantages in the digital age, public libraries provide three crucial components. Access, content, and infrastructure. People who do not have access to the internet and the World Wide Web through the use of information and communication technologies (ICTs) are becoming more and more disadvantaged in terms of their ability to obtain information in the digital era.

**Keywords:** Information, Educational, Scientific, Cultural Organization, Marginalization

### Introduction

A public library serves as a local information center and social institution that is established, maintained, and run by the public for the benefit of society. The public library's services are offered with the premise that everyone has equal access. By providing for the cultural, educational, recreational, and informational needs of the public, libraries support the advancement of society.

Public libraries are referred to as "a library for the people, by the people, and of the people." A person's ability to succeed in society is mostly dependent on their education. People thus acquired a desire for knowledge and information in order to contend with the rapidly changing social environment and to compete in the global

marketplace. The general population visits the public library to take advantage of its resources and services in order to satisfy their desire for knowledge and information.

### Important features of public library

1. Equality of access: This refers to the fact that it is available to everyone, regardless of age, caste, creed, sex, or religion.
2. Free services: There is no cost for anyone in the community to use a public library's services.
3. Local or national authorities are in charge of public libraries.
4. A public library's legal and financial foundation: its legality is a required social activity in support of a

societal desire. In a similar vein, the national and municipal governments' financial obligation guarantees the continuation and expansion of their services in addition to acknowledging social demands.

### Mission of the public library

1. Establishing and fostering early reading habits in youngsters.
2. Encouraging formal education at all levels as well as self-directed and individual learning.
3. Offering chances for individual creative growth.
4. Fostering children's and youths' creativity and imagination.
5. Fostering a respect for the arts, technological advancements, and cultural heritage.
6. Making every performing arts cultural expression accessible.
7. Promoting cultural variety and encouraging cross-cultural communication.
8. Encouragement of the oral heritage.
9. Ensuring citizens have access to a variety of community information.
10. Offering local businesses, associations, and interest groups sufficient information services.
11. Supporting the growth of computer literacy and information capabilities.
12. Encouraging and taking part in literacy programs and activities for all age groups, as well as starting them when needed.

### Significance of the study

With the formation of the Central University, many state private universities, and state government universities in the state, has witnessed the education industry grow astronomically during the post-Independence era. For the benefit of students studying library science, these institutions provide a range of degree programs, including bachelor's, master's, and doctoral degrees in library and information science. When numerous other prestigious institutions (NITs, IITs, IIMs, and AIMS) are operating in the state, the researcher would need to be aware of the growth and progress of the state's libraries. The report emphasizes the advantages that these institutions gain from having library science students. These organizations are crucial to the job market.

Every educational institution places a great deal of value on its library, thus the study will undoubtedly offer a foundation for the adoption and advancement of library automation as well as an overview of its current state. Additionally, this research will be beneficial because it will show how widely used library automation higher education institutions. It will assist librarians and administrators in understanding the significance of library automation. Researchers will benefit from knowing more about the state of academic libraries. Thus, we will cover library automation, its function in educational institutions, new technology in libraries, and ICT applications. We will also go over the importance of library automation to the growth of libraries in general.

### Objectives of the study

1. To assess the infrastructure and current state of public

libraries.

2. To research how public libraries can help close the digital gap.
3. To determine the different needs that public libraries have in order to close the digital divide.

### Review of literature

According to Overbey, T. A. *et al.* (2017) <sup>[3]</sup>, public libraries and higher education institutions have partnered to create two effective STEM (science, technology, engineering, and mathematics) programs in Ohio's urban areas. Ohio State University Science Cafe in Columbus catered to primary school pupils, while Cleveland's Mean Green Science Machine catered to high school kids. According to the study's findings, the majority of students recognized the value of STEM courses for their future professional advancement. Suggestions were offered to enhance the children's quality.

A study by Sheikh, M. M. (2017) <sup>[4]</sup> evaluated national projects to close the digital divide and government efforts to give access to digital information. His research showed that the main obstacle to bridging the divide in rural society is people's attitudes, or their underestimation of the importance of communication technologies, which makes them very indifferent to ICT advances. Additionally, it was discovered that the government's ICT project was wrecked because it lacked funding, and he recommended that promoting telecommunications infrastructure is a crucial first step in closing the digital gap.

The book collections of two public libraries in Cape Town, South Africa, are assessed by Skarzynski & Nassimbeni (2016) <sup>[5]</sup>. The benefits of leisure reading were assessed using a questionnaire approach, which also covered the areas of information and comprehension, abilities, attitudes or values, enjoyment, creativity, and advancement. The learning objectives put forth by the UK's Museums, Libraries, and Archives Council served as the foundation for the questionnaire. According to the study's findings, a significant portion of respondents cited the advantages of reading.

In the Keralan district of Thrissur, public libraries affiliated with local self-government organizations were evaluated by Meera, K. (2016) <sup>[6]</sup>. To collect information from users, libraries, and elected officials, a survey method using a questionnaire was employed. The outcome demonstrates that the main issue facing libraries is a lack of funding. Only one library in the country and one in the city have computer systems. The libraries employed software and a computerized cataloguing system that were built locally.

The adoption of library and information policy library acts, the creation of an efficient administrative framework, and the allocation of enough resources for library services were all covered by Mishra, B. B. *et al.* (2016) <sup>[7]</sup>. The study recommended that the various types of public libraries be given computers and library software packages at reduced prices, along with the funding to put this idea into practice.

### Research Methodology

While any studies is performed, it's miles on any detailed populace. Population manner every and each entity which is to be protected under the examine or the result of the studies is supposed for those. Population of a observe may be the

folks, organizations, items, events, and many others. Inside the gift look at, there are three classes of population i.e. special libraries, their customers and their library staff. General populations of unique libraries are 20, of Delhi/NCR.

The first questionnaire (For Library staff) was disbursed amongst seventy six (seventy six) respondents together with library experts, IT specialists and non-experts. Library staff in the level of peon and attendant turned into excluded. Out of the seventy six, most effective sixty (62) respondents has returned crammed in questionnaires. Some other set of questionnaire (for library customers) have been allotted to 1750 library users, out of those 1114 customers have responded the same with the reaction rate of 64%. Observation of the libraries have been also done o recognize numerous components associated with IT programs in libraries. Gathered records have been tabulated and coded the use of MS excel. Further, the statistics were analyzed the use of SPSS and MS excel software program.

Present observe has followed Descriptive-analytical method i.e. survey approach. Questionnaire approach turned into selected as the tool for survey. For carrying out this examine, units of the established questionnaires had been organized and distributed for collecting the data. Earlier than dispensing the questionnaires, a pilot observe became performed to test the validity of the questionnaire. At the bases of the result of this look at, a few amendment and correction were made in the questionnaires. Consequently, together the questionnaire have been accordingly pre-examined and finally structured maintaining in vision of targets off the have a look at.

## Data Analysis and Interpretation

**Table 1:** Computer Skills

Computer Skills	Mean	Std Dev	Rank
Basic Computer Skill (MS Office)	4.485	0.138	1
Working with computer software	4.227	0.149	2
Installation and customization of software	4.227	0.153	3
Computer Networking	4.178	0.132	4
Graphic skills	4.066	0.144	5
Working with Computer Hardware	2.856	0.139	6
Web Page development (HTML, XML etc.)	2.620	0.132	7
Computer security	2.316	0.122	8

The results of an analysis of computer proficiency among the various categories of library workers. The statistic shows that IT professionals have greater levels of computer proficiency than librarian professionals and non-professionals in a variety of areas. However, when it comes to computer software, installation and customization, web page construction, and computer security, there are not many notable differences in the computer skills between IT experts and library professionals. However, compared to IT professionals, library professionals have lower levels of technological abilities in the areas of fundamental computer skills (mean 4.485), visual skills, computer networking (mean 4.178), and computer hardware (mean 2.856). Highest std Dev of installation and customization of software (0.153).

Mean score for computer skills at the library (4.485), broken down by staff category. Based on the aforementioned

analysis, it was determined that employees in the chosen libraries have good to excellent skills in using computer software, installing and configuring software (4.227), PC networking (4.178), and graphics (4.066), but average to poor skills in using computer hardware, creating websites, and maintaining personal computers. In comparison to library professionals and non-specialists, IT specialists have higher levels of PC proficiency. In libraries, non-specialists have the lowest level of computer aptitude.

## Abilities of library team of workers in library precise data generation applications

The degree of library staff members' IT proficiency was also assessed using a 5-factor scale, with the results based mostly on the mean of the responses, as shown in table 5.2. The level of capabilities for searching for information online and digitalization is found to be above three, which is a good stage. However, the mean of abilities on the remaining IT programs is found to be below 4.0, indicating that the library staffs IT program proficiency is either poor or average.

**Table 2:** Library specific it applications

Library specific IT applications	Mean	Std Dev	Rank
Information search through Internet	4.097	0.141	1
Digitization	4.016	0.131	2
Database management	2.952	0.15	3
Managing E-Resources	2.806	0.141	4
Open Source software/Open access	2.758	0.131	5
Building Digital library/Institutional repository	2.71	0.129	6
Communal media	2.629	0.14	7
Bar Code Technology	2.532	0.121	8
RFID Technology	2.306	0.112	9

The results of an analysis of skills on several library-specific IT applications among the various categories of library workers. The chart shows that IT professionals have greater levels of ability on several IT applications than library professionals do, including digitization, database management, e-resource management, and internet information search. The level of expertise among library professionals and IT experts is quite similar for the remaining IT applications used in libraries. In comparison to IT experts and library professionals, non-professionals have the lowest skill levels across all IT applications.

Importance of computer skills: On a five-point scale, the respondent's perception of the significance of computer literacy among library staff members was recorded. By determining the mean of the responses for each talent, the same was analysed. Table displays the same experiment's outcome. According to the analysis, the mean relevance of all computer abilities is found to be between 4.254 and 4.416, indicating that respondents believe these skills are crucial for library employees. This table reveals that the relevance of fundamental computer knowledge, software expertise, software installation and modification expertise, and networking expertise is rated higher because the mean is above 4. The importance of the remaining skills is rated lower than that of these skills. Table 5.3 lists computer abilities according to how library staff members rank them, from most important to least important.

**Table 3:** Importance of Computer Skills

Computer Skills	Mean	Std Dev	Rank
Basic Computer Skill (MS Office)	4.417	0.125	1
Working with computer software	4.342	0.154	2
Installation and customization of software	4.193	0.142	3
Computer Networking	4.122	0.144	4
Computer security	4.913	0.138	5
Web Page development (HTML, XML etc.)	4.594	0.120	6
Graphic skills	4.424	0.121	7
Working with Computer Hardware	4.255	0.110	8

### Importance of skills in library specific IT application

The value of library staff members' IT application skills was also evaluated based on respondents' perceptions, which is shown in table 3. The table below lists library-specific IT abilities in the order that respondents said were most important to least significant for library staff: highly important to least important. Except for social networking and RFID technology knowledge, it has been determined that respondents consider all of the listed IT abilities to be of utmost relevance for library workers.

### Conclusion

ICT is having a profound impact on training via opening the whole international of knowledge and allowing coaching and gaining knowledge of to take vicinity past the traditional barriers. The exponential growth and development of internet and using on-line communiqué offer rookies with an interactive mode in a hit way. Time, distance and languages were constantly been hurdles for the formal training machine. After the emergence of statistics era, the technological solutions like, traits in information, communication and computing technologies have made powerful tools to a huge area of the population. Email, cell, video conferencing, satellite TV for PC applications, internet, intranet and www and so on commenced changing the existence forms of present day populace. Journal, route substances & patent are different of essential source of facts that are now obtainable in an electronic form. Using ICT in academic libraries motivated increasing number of freshmen in numerous better education establishments and research publications in journals and books. Imparting enough monetary assistance and technical steerage and support to use ICT will help the instructional libraries to render required exceptional and timely offerings to the library users.

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