STATUS OF ENGINEERING COLLEGE LIBRARIES IN VIDHARBHA REGION: A SURVEY

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This study aims to examine the present status of engineering college libraries in Vidarbha region. It also highlights the contribution of AICTE in the development of engineering college libraries in terms of space, library staff and library timing etc. and compares the AICTE norms with the present status of library space, library staff pattern, staff qualifications and library timing etc. There are three traditional universities namely Rashtrasant Tukdoji Maharaj Nagpur University, Sant Gadge Baba Amravati University and Gondwana University which are imparting higher education in this region. At present total, 87 engineering colleges are affiliated to these Universities. However, in the study the researcher has considered the libraries of 23 engineering colleges of Vidarbha region.

Keywords: Library Space; Library Staff Pattern; Staff Qualifications and Library Timing; AICTE norms.

INTRODUCTION

Library being the heart of the education system plays an important role in enhancing the excellence of institutions. As far as the importance of the library in technical education is concerned it can be appreciated properly only if we try to understand the changing concept of education. Library should be seen as a dynamic instrument of engineering education.

The present study is a survey of the present status of libraries in engineering colleges in Vidarbha region of Maharashtra state, made up of two divisions, viz., Nagpur division and Amravati Division spread over eleven (11) districts with a total population of over 23 million (21.3% of total population of Maharashtra).

OBJECTIVES

The objectives of the study are:

- To study the contribution of AICTE to the development of engineering college libraries in terms of norms and standards.

- To study the present status of engineering college libraries in Vidarbha region.

METHODOLOGY

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In order to achieve the objectives, a study of 26 of the 27 engineering colleges which were started in or before 2002 and approved by AICTE, was conducted. A questionnaire was used for collecting the data from the selected institutions. To achieve the first objective of the study the available literature was consulted. Similarly, for the second objective researcher has analyzed the received data through questionnaires from libraries and personal interview methods. Based on this analysis, the findings of the study are submitted in the form of conclusion and suggestions.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Norms and Standards of the All India Council for Technical Education (AICTE)

The AICTE was established in November 1945 as a national level Apex Advisory Body with its mission of developing and promoting quality technical education in the country. AICTE became a statutory body through an act of parliament 52, in 1987. The AICTE has taken efforts to maintain uniformity of standards in the technical education system in the country. With the certain changes in national educational policies to enhance higher technical education, several private non-governments unaided engineering institutes have been established in the country on self-financing basis. For this purpose, AICTE has laid down norms and standards for curriculum, physical and instructional facilities, staff pattern, staff qualification, quality instruction, assessment, and examinations as well as norms and standards for the library.

Norms and Standards of AICTE with Special Reference to the Library

AICTE has set up norms and standards for library development in terms of library space, reading room capacity, books and periodical, working hours, staff, digital library section as well as computer and furniture, etc. AICTE norms first framed in 1990, were subsequently amended in 2014.

Present Status of Engineering College Libraries in Vidarbha

Table 1: Engineering Colleges in Vidarbha Region

S. No.	College Status	Number of Colleges Established During the Period				Total
		Before- 1983	1983-1989	1990-1996	1997-2003	
1	Govt.	-	-	01	-	01
2	Govt. Aided	-	-	-	01	01
3	Govt. Autonomous	02	-	-	-	02
4	Un-Aided	-	09	04	05	18
5	University Dept.	01	-	-	-	01
	Total	**03**	**09**	**05**	**06**	**23**

Engineering education in Vidarbha started before 1983 with three major engineering institutions i.e. V.N.I.T, Nagpur, Govt. Autonomous College, Amravati and University Dept. Nagpur. And there are more than 23 engineering institutions including Government, Govt. aided, Govt. Autonomous, and University Dept. and Un-aided organization in Vidarbha region. After 1983 a large number of private colleges have been set up in the region and during the period from 1983 to 1989, nine unaided engineering colleges were started on a permanent non-grant basis by private organizations. Subsequently, 4 unaided colleges and 1 Government engineering college have been established during the period of 1990-1996, and 6 engineering colleges during 1997-2003 were started by various organizations. Details of engineering colleges are given in table 1.

Table 2: Working Hours of the Libraries

S. No.	Working Hours	Number of colleges having status					Total	Percentage
		Govt.	GA	Un- aided	GAT	UD		
1	Upto7-Hours	-	-	01	01	-	02	8.70%
2	8-9 Hours	01	01	08	-	01	11	47.83 %
3	10-11 Hours	-	-	03	-	-	03	13.04%
4	12-Hours	-	-	05	-	-	05	21.74%
5	More than 12-Hours	-	-	01	01	-	02	8.70%
	Total	**01**	**01**	**18**	**02**	**01**	**23**	**100%**

Note: UD- University Dept. GA-Govt. Aided, GAT- Govt. Auto.

The data on working hours of the libraries is presented in table 2. The results show that 16 (69.57%) college libraries have not fulfilled the AICTE norms, two college libraries are open up to 7 hours per day, 11(47.83%) college libraries are kept open for 8-9 hours per day, and three college libraries are open for 10-11 hours a day. It means that only 07 (30.43%) libraries are working as per the norms and standard. Besides this, 5 libraries are open for 12 hours in a day and 2 libraries are open for more than 12 hours.

Table 3: Allocation of Space for Library Building

S. No.	Space in Sq. Mt.	Number of Colleges having status					Total	Percentage
		Govt.	Govt. Aided	Un-Aided	Govt. Auto.	University Dept.		
1	Less Than 400	01	01	03	-	-	05	21.74%
2	400-600	-	-	03	-	-	03	13.04%
3	600-800	-	-	01	-	-	01	4.35%
4	More than 800	-	-	11	02	01	14	60.87%
Total		**01**	**01**	**18**	**02**	**01**	**23**	**100%**

Table 3 presents data on allocation of space (in square meters) for library buildings of colleges. From the table it may be observed that Government., Govt. aided and three un-aided college libraries are operating in an area which is less than 400 Sq. Mt. Whereas, three libraries have space in the range between 400 to 600 Sq. Mt. One library has space between 600 to 800 Sq. Mt. In addition to this there are 14 libraries, which have been set up subsequently with an area of more than 800 Sq. Mt. (11 un-aided libraries, 02 Govt. Autonomous and 1 University Dept. library).

Table 4: Deficiencies in Total Areas of Library

S. No.	Deficiencies in Percentage	Number of Colleges having Deficiencies in Total Areas	Percentage
1	1 to 20	04	17.39 %
2	20 to 40	01	4.35%
3	Not Deficiency	18	78.26%
	Total	**23**	**100 %**

Table 4 shows the insufficiency in a total area of the library. The expected area of the library as per the AICTE norms and standard is 400 sq. meters. Table 4 reveals that eighteen (78.26%) libraries in Vidarbha region do not meet the prescribed norms and standard of AICTE; four libraries have deficiency in the range between 1 to 20 % and one college library has a deficiency in the range of between 20 to 40 %.

In order to provide a reasonable level of services to the users, sufficient staff should be available in the library and AICTE has suggested staffing formula through its norms and standards. Table 5 indicates the present status of designated post of library personnel in engineering college libraries in this region.

Table 5: Designation-wise Availability of Library Personnel

S. No.	Designation	Number of Colleges having Status					Total	Percentage
		Govt.	Govt. Aided	Un-Aided	Govt. Auto.	University Dept.		
1	Librarian	01	01	18	02	01	23	100 %
2	Assistant Librarian	01	-	13	02	01	17	73.91 %
3	Library Assistant	01	-	14	01	01	17	73.91 %
4	Library Attendant	-	01	17	02	01	21	91.30%
5	Library Clerk	-	01	13	02	01	17	73.91 %
6	Peon	-	-	10	02	01	13	56.52 %

It is seen that all colleges have a librarian. However, only 17 (73. 91%) college libraries have filled the posts of Assistant Librarian; 17 libraries have recruited Library Assistant. In the remaining 6 colleges including one Govt.-aided, one Govt.-autonomous, and 4 un-aided colleges this post is not filled up. It is also observed that 21 college libraries have a Library Attendant. Seventeen libraries have recruited clerks and thirteen libraries have appointed peons for the library.

In the AICTE norms, the post of Library Attendant, Library Clerk, Peon and others are not recommended, even though in the majority of the college libraries have these posts.

Table 6: Deficiencies regarding the Availability of Post in Libraries

S. No.	Designation	No. of Colleges having Deficiencies in the Post	Percentage
1	Librarian	-	-
2	Assistant Librarian	06	26.09%
3	Library Assistant	06	26.09%

In table 5 and table 6 the information regarding the designation-wise availability of post and its deficiencies is highlighted respectively. However, it would be interesting to see how many persons are being appointed on all these posts in various categories of colleges. The information collected through a questionnaire in this regards is highlighted in table 7.

Table 7: Status of Staff in Engineering Colleges Libraries

S. No	Designation	Number of Posts	Number of Colleges having Status					Total
			Govt.	GA	Un-Aided	GAT	UD	
1	Assistant Librarian	One	01	-	08	02	01	12
		Two and more than two	-	-	05	-	-	05
2	Library Assistant	Less than four	01	-	12	-	01	14
		Four and more than four	-	-	02	01	-	03
3	Library Attendant	One	-	01	04	-	-	05
		Two	-	-	04	02	01	07
		Three and more than three	-	-	09	01	-	10
4	Library Clerk	One	-	01	06	01	01	09
		Two	-	-	04	-	-	04
		Three and more than three	-	-	03	01	-	04
5	Peon	One	-	-	03	02	01	06
		Two	-	-	05	-	-	05
		Three and more than three	-	-	02	-	-	02

Note: UD- University Dept. GA-Govt. aided, GAT- Govt. Auto.

Table 7 presents the designation-wise number of posts available in the libraries in various institutions. From the table it is confirmed that one Government, two Government Autonomous college libraries, one University department and thirteen un-aided college libraries have fulfilled the norms and standard of AICTE for the post of Assistant Librarian. Out of five unaided college libraries two libraries have appointed two Assistant Librarians. Regarding the post of Library Assistant, one Government aided college and four Un-aided college libraries do not meet the AICTE norms. In addition to this, out of 18 unaided colleges, 04 colleges have not appointed any person to the post of Library Assistant; whereas in the remaining 12 unaided colleges and one Government and university department the post of Library Assistant is filled-up, but its number is less than 4, which is again less than the number prescribed by AICTE (ACTE recommends 4 Library Assistants in each college).

Table 8: Deficiencies in Total Number of Staff in Library

S. No.	Deficiencies in Percentage	Number of Colleges having Deficiencies in Library Staff	Percentage
1	1 to 20	05	21.74%
2	20 to 40	03	13.04 %
3	40 to 60	07	30.44 %
4	60 to 80	04	17.38 %
5	80 to 100	02	8.70 %
6	Not Deficiency	02	8.70 %
Total		**23**	**100%**

From table 8, it is quite clear that only two college libraries fulfill AICTE norms for library staff.

Table 9: Educational Qualification of Librarian

S. No.	Librarian's Qualification	Number of Colleges					Total	Percentage
		Govt.	GA	Un-Aided	GAT	UD		
1	BLISc	01	-	-	01	-	02	8.70%
2	MLISc		01	14	-	01	16	69.57%
3	MPhil In Library Science	-	-	04	-	-	04	17.38%
4	PhD In Library Science	-	-	-	01	-	01	4.35%
Total		**01**	**01**	**11**	**01**	**01**	**23**	**100**

Note: UD-University Dept. GA-Govt. aided, GAT- Govt. Auto.

Table 9 depicts that out of 23 librarians 19 college librarians have a post graduate degree in library science, while 4 of them are having M.Phil and only 1 is having Ph.D. degree and 2 librarians were having only bachelor's degree in the subject.

OBSERVATIONS

AICTE has set up norms and standards for the development of the library in terms of library space, reading room capacity, books, and periodical, e-journals, working hours, library staff, digital library section, the number of computers and library furniture etc. It has framed first norms, standards and guidelines for technical institutions including libraries in 1990 which is subsequently amended till date.

Library Staff

After carefully going through all the norms of AICTE published from 1990 to 2013- 14, it is observed that the norms published from 2010-11 onwards do not make any mention of staff strength. However, in the very first norm published in 1990, the provision was made that every college library must have one Librarian, two Assistant Librarians, four Library Assistants and two Library Attendants. In 1999, one post of Assistant Librarian and two posts of Library Attendant were dropped. Moreover, in the norms published in 2004-05 and 2006-07 only one post of Librarian is mentioned. According to these norms, the researcher has presented the present status of designated post of library personnel in various college libraries of Vidarbha region. From

this study, it is found that 21 engineering college libraries did not appoint adequate staff as per the AICTE norms and standards. There are only 2 college libraries that have appointed library staff as per the prescribed norms and standard of AICTE. Regarding the post of Librarian, it is observed that 100 % college authorities have shown their interest in recruiting to the post of Librarian.

The researcher has studied 23 libraries. However, for the posting of Assistant Librarian, the result of this survey shows that 17 (73.91 %.) libraries have filled-up this post. Out of these 17 college libraries, 5 libraries have appointed two Assistant Librarians as per norms and standard. In the 6 (26.09%) college libraries the post of Assistant Librarians is lying vacant. Regarding the posts of Library Assistant only 3 libraries have fulfilled the norms and standard, whereas, in 14 colleges they are having less than four posts of Library Assistant. Remaining 6 colleges do not have this post. From the study, it is also found that some colleges have recruited other posts like Library Attendant, Library clerk, and Peon, which are not being recommended in norms. It is further observed that 22 colleges are having Library Attendant and 17 having the post of Library Clerk, moreover, 13 colleges filled up the post of Peon in their libraries, even not mentioned in the norms.

As far as the qualification of Librarian is concerned it revealed that only 2 persons are not having Master degree in Library and Information Science. Out of 23, sixteen college Librarians completed the Master degree in Library and Information Science and 5 librarians acquired the

degree beyond the Master degree in Library and Information Science. Out of these 4 are having M. Phil and one Librarian is possessed Ph.D. in Library Science.

Library Space

It is observed that in the AICTE norm 2010-11 one room of 400 sq. Mts. of space is made mandatory for library and further the provision is also made of 50 sq. mts. reading room extra per 60 students, when intake crosses 420. However, in the norms of 2004-05 and 2006-07 one room of 400 sq. mts. was made mandatory. It further reveals that in the very first norm published in 1990, only 250 sq. mts. areas for the first 500 students and 0.275 sq. mts. for every additional student was made mandatory. Moreover, in the norm 1999, it was given that the library should have a carpet area of 400 sq. mts. for 240 admitted students.

Regarding the allocation of space for library, it has been found that only 5 (21.74%) libraries are running in an area less than 400 sq.mt. These libraries are not fulfilling the norms of AICTE.

Library Hours

As per the AICTE norms and standards for opening hours of the library, college libraries remain open for 12 hours per day. From the study, it is revealed that 7 (30.44%) libraries are working as per the AICTE norms and standard i.e. they are open for 12 hours or more than 12 hours per day for extending services to its users. The remaining 16 (69.56%) college libraries are not working as per the AICTE norms and standard.

CONCLUSION

On the basis of above observations following conclusions may be drawn:

- AICTE has amended its norms and standard from 1990 to till date i.e. 2013-14. These norms vary; when AICTE publishes new norms, they do not make any reference to previous norms. Due to these changes users of these norms are confused.

- Staffing pattern suggested in the norms is very old, which is not sufficient to fulfill the present needs of libraries as well as their users. Engineering college libraries in Vidarbha did not appoint adequate staff (Excluding Librarian) as per the AICTE norms and standards-2006-07. Therefore, Libraries are unable to provide efficient and better services to their users.

- Due to the variation of norms, some persons have been appointed by few libraries to the posts of Library Attendant, Library clerk, and Peon but it is not recommended in the norms published in the year 2006-07. In general, it can be pointed out from the study that due to the inadequate library staffs, libraries are unable to work as per the AICTE norms and standard.

SUGGESTIONS

The following points should be considered for incorporating in the norms and standard for the development of libraries in the technical institutes of Vidarbha region.

Regarding the staffing pattern of library, the researcher has taken reviews of two committees - the report of Working Group on Libraries of National Knowledge Commission (NKC) (2007) and also the report of Subcommittee on Staffing in Universities and College Libraries in Maharashtra constituted by Honorable Chancellor of Maharashtra University in 2009. On the basis of recommendations of these committees and considering today's requirements, the library should have at least one Librarian one Assistant Librarian, three Library Assistants, one Technical Assistant, three Library Attendants, one Peon and one Sweeper.

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