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# Status of ICT Use in School Libraries

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## Abstract

This study aims to assess the status of ICT implementation in school libraries and propose pedagogical implications based on the findings of this study. As a quantitative survey research, questionnaires were used to collect data from 20 selected school libraries. Likewise, simple statistical measurements were used for data framing and analysis. A structured questionnaire was applied to collect the data. The findings indicate that most schools have had only one computer and internet connectivity form less than three years. Libraries are not using smartphones and other devices to manage ICT-enabled services within the library, but findings show that teaching staff are aware and feel ease to use ICT-enabled services. From the responses, none of the library are adopting ICT enable circulation system even for issue and return. Along with the findings of the study, some recommendations were made for the further improvement of the status of ICT use in the school libraries. More importantly, it is recommended to include policy changes to maximize technology in the library system and conduct further in-depth studies related to the topic. Library authority should develop policy and organize in-service training and awarenesses programs to advance ICT and internet-integrated systems within academic institutions.

**Keywords:** School libraries, library automation, library management, information communication technology

## Introduction

Information and Communication Technology (ICT) is the combination of hardware and software related to information acquisition, processing, storage, and dissemination. The usage scope of ICT has been expanding in every aspect of life, including library services. Personal computers, laptops, notepads, and smartphones are commonly used devices of ICT. It is also an inseparable need for the teaching and learning process.

ICT systematizes the collection, organization, management, and dissemination of various information sources, including books, journals, newspapers, web-based collections, and so on. Libraries and information centers are widely transforming their services from manual systems to ICT-enabled management systems. So, the system or techniques they applied to provide ICT-enabled services and resources is the significant achievement for information services. Similarly, the library housekeeping operations are automated and digitized. The resources are managed in digital forms, and the circulation system is automated. Professional ICT skills are required to use ICT in libraries (Ismail & Affandy, 2013).

Library management, reading resources, and learning process are increasingly required for the use of ICT (Islam & Islam, 2007; Chinn & Fairlie, 2010; Wesselsand Mnkeni-Saurombe, 2012). Unless the ICT infrastructure is well managed in school libraries, they cannot contribute to the students' learning achievement (Paiva & Duarte, 2017). Teachers are less positive about using ICT in school education compared to higher education (Ayaz et al., 2017). Nevertheless, the knowledge and skill of ICT is a major factor resulting in a positive or negative attitude toward it (Kandel, 2014). The skill of ICT use for library management is prime important for librarians (Akintunde, 2004). Further, school libraries can potential playant role in enhancing learning achievement for children. Therefore, libraries need to setup with advanced technologies to provide techno-savvy services. Several smart devices are needed for this purpose.

The Ministry of Education, the policy formulation and execution body has instructed to establish as "one school, one library", but the school library standards is not determined yet. In this digital era, technology is a must to run libraries effectively for which it is essential to adopt ICT in school libraries. Therefore, the main objective of this study was to find out the status of ICT use in the school libraries and evaluate and point out their latest contribution and involvement in transferring the library services into an ICT-enabled system.

## Method

This study employed the quantitative research design using the descriptive statistical method. The data were collected using a set of questionnaires. Community school libraries of the Kathmandu District were taken as population, and 20 libraries from the community school of Kathmandu District were selected through a purposive sampling method. Before the start of this study, a pre-data collection visit was conducted to select relevant school libraries for the study. Data was collected through email and in-person visits. School librarians have provided the information. Some of them were even unfamiliar with email services. Researchers visited these places accordingly, as they provided time, distributed a questionnaire, and requested them to fill in it.

## Discussion and Findings

The data collected from the questionnaire and observation were presented and analyzed using simple mathematical tools.

**Table 1**

*Availability of the computers and other devices*

Number of the computers	School Libraries Number
1	9(45%)
2	5(25%)
3	3(15%)
4	1(5%)
5	1(5%)
6	1(5%)
Other devices	None

Most of the schools (9, 45%) have only one computer. Five schools (25%) have two computers, 3(15%) schools have three computers, and only 5% of schools have more than four computers in their library. The result indicates that most schools do not have sufficient computer devices to provide library services in a techno-savvy environment. Beside computers, other devices were not found being used to provide ICT enabled services in school libraries. (Table1)

**Table 2***Internet connectivity*

Internet Connection Date	Number of the Libraries
Below 3 years	12
Below 5 years	6
More than 5 years	2

The Internet is essential to provide the service on the web platform. This technology facilitates visualizing information and communication globally. Table 2 shows that most of the school libraries (12) connected to the Internet just three years ago. Six libraries provided their Internet facility 5 years ago, and two libraries 5 years ago. It shows that it is a very late involvement in Internet features; however, it is a very essential technology in this digital era. (Table 2)

**Table 3***Perception towards accessing library resources using technology*

Perceptions of library staff	Response
Easy	19 (95%)
Difficult	1 (5%)

Technology makes routine tasks more efficient and effective. Its scope in every sector shows that most of the respondents (95%) perceived that technology assists in easy access to library resources, whereas just one library staff is not in favor of using it. Therefore, it shows that ICT is most required in school libraries and respective authority need to focus on it. (Table3)

**Table4***ICT-enabled circulation systems*

Circulation system	Response
Circulation with ICT	1 (5%)
Circulation without ICT	19 (95%)

Automated modules of library, easily available in current digital era, facilitate patrons directly through the circulation section. But, the collected data shows that only one library provides the check-in and check-out services by enabling ICT with the circulation system. It shows that most of the school libraries did not provide ICT based services though they have kept computer devices. Computer devices are not productive, if they are not equipped with ICT applications and tools according to the requirements of the ICT-enabled library services. (Table4)

**Table 5***ICT use experiences*

Heading	Response from teaching staff	Response from non-teaching staff
Easy	15 (75%)	1 (5%)
Neutral	5 (25%)	-
Difficult	0 (0%)	19 (95%)

Regarding the use and experience of ICT-enabled services, teaching staff are eager to use modern technologies, but the non-teaching staff of the school does not seem eager to use those technologies. Teaching staff are found to be more updated with technology/ digital literacy skills. To effectively fulfill the standard set by the Nepal Government, “one school, one library”, teaching and non-teaching staff of the school must be aware of modern technology and digital literacy (Table 5).

### Conclusions

From the collected data, it was found that most of the schools have only one computer in their library, which is not properly being utilized to change library services into ICT enabled ones. On the other hand, most of the staff of school have smart devices in their hand (mobile phones), but none of them are practiced and obliged to use those technologies for library management and digitization.

Findings of the analysis helped to trace the following recommendations: the ICT with internet connectivity within the library can be more useful for all stakeholders, teachers, students, and school library managers. For this, the library infrastructures with the integration of modern ICT tools, techniques, and in-service training is required to motivate, raise awareness, and advance their skills. Moreover, further research is required to get an advanced and in-depth status, challenges, and future planning regarding the advancement of the school library system to sharpen the academic activities of the school. School Administration and authorities should develop and apply the library development and management policy to make school libraries more active, effective, and equipped with ICT.

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