



A Study on the Application Level and the Difficulties of the Use of Information Technology at Academic Libraries of Kerman in Iran

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The present research has been planned to determine the level of IT application, investigate the problems and difficulties resulted from lack of IT usage and also the statue of librarian training courses related to IT in Kerman academic libraries. The survey has covered seventeen libraries belonging to Shahid Bahonar University, Kerman Medical University and Islamic Azad University. Two kinds of questionnaires were distributed to libraries – one for librarians and the other for library staff. The findings of the survey have been analyzed using SPSS software. Results show that the level of application of information technology in Kerman academic libraries is acceptable but they should improve their status to match with ever increasing demand for better librarian services at universities; the most important problem and serious difficulty is the lack of educated librarians, which needs a suitable investment and planning; and although about 70% of librarians in Kerman academic libraries have participated in related training courses, the most serious difficulty in using information technology is still the lack of uneducated librarians. Based on research findings, some suggestions are here indicated as follow: Recruitment of multi-skillful librarians familiar with information technologies related to mechanism of work in academic libraries; Planning and designing ongoing courses of information technology and related skills; Promotion and introduction of various academic library services through compiling and publishing manuals and guides; Equipping academic libraries with more information technology facilities; Considering a special budget for development of information technology infrastructure; Overcoming telecommunication barriers and shortcomings to better use of information technology fruits; and Mechanization of all academic library departments to provide information services more optimally and speedily. This research studies rate of using information technologies in Iran as a developing country. Hopefully, uncovering and understanding some unknowns based on such investigations can help to address digital divide within universities and countries governing them.

Keywords Academic libraries, Information technology, Internet, Librarians, Kerman, Iran