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Assessment of Library Operations and Automation Potential at One Integrated School in the Philippines

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Abstract **Original Research Article**

Despite rapid advances in technology that are reshaping how institutions function, Eusebio Lopez Memorial Integrated School still manages its library in old fashioned way. Right now, the library at Eusebio Lopez Memorial Integrated School still runs on a completely manual system. This setup slows things down, causes mistakes, and makes it harder for students and faculty to get the materials they need. This study takes a closer look at how the library is currently being managed and considers whether switching to an automated system would actually work for the school. To get a clear picture, the researchers talked to students, faculty, and library personnel, and also spent time observing how things are done. The information gathered showed several issues, especially in how books are organized, borrowed, and kept track of. These problems make it tough for the library to fully support the learning needs of the school. After reviewing everything, the study found that moving to automation wouldn't just be possible — it would make a big difference in how the library works and how it serves the school community.

Keywords: Automation, Digital Library System, Integrated library system, Library Management, Manual Library System.

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INTRODUCTION

Libraries are important in schools—they give students and faculty access to the tools and materials they need to learn and teach effectively. At Eusebio Lopez Memorial Integrated School, though, the library isn't living up to what it could offer, mainly because everything is still being done the old-fashioned way. This old system, which might have worked in the past, is now falling behind what modern schools really need. According to IFLA and UNESCO (2006), libraries are vital for learning, but when things are managed manually, it slows everything down and makes the work harder and less accurate.

Keeping track of books the old way—writing down book details, who borrowed them, and when they're due—takes up a lot of time. It's easy to make small mistakes too, like losing a record or mixing up information. For students and faculty who need quick and easy access to what they're looking for, this can be inconvenient. Matar (2015) mentions some of the same issues with manual systems—like disorganized records and slow management of resources. In schools, where times important and getting the right info quickly is crucial, these problems can really get in the way of students' success.

One big problem with not using automation is that you can't check if a book is available right away. That means students, faculty and the personnel end up spending time searching for books that may not even be there. As schools move more into the digital age, this kind of system just doesn't cut it anymore. That's why upgrading the system has become more of a necessity than a choice.

This study focuses on how the library at Eusebio Lopez Memorial Integrated School is currently managed and whether switching to an automated system would help. The researchers gathered information by talking to library personnel, students, and faculty, and by doing some surveys and just observing how things are done. The researchers focused at what's not working with the current system and how it affects things day to day. By digging into these issues, the study aims to show why moving to an automated system could really help. Other studies, like one by Lertworasirikul and Boonlua (2013), have found that automation helps make things more accurate, lets you access data in real time, and just makes everything run a lot more smoothly.

Moving to an automated library doesn't just fix problems—it also keeps up with how schools are changing around the world. A digital system would make it easier for students and faculty to search for books, borrow them, or put them on hold, all from

one platform. School Sheet (2025) points out that these kinds of systems encourage students to explore and learn more independently while also making the experience more enjoyable. On top of that, automated libraries can connect with other digital tools used in class, so students can access what they need without switching between systems.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

1. Evaluate Current Library Management Practices
2. Examine the Impact of Manual Systems on Academic Support
3. Investigate the Feasibility of Implementing an Automated Library System
4. Propose Recommendations for Improvement

MATERIALS AND METHODS

This research used a mix of both qualitative and quantitative methods to better understand how the library at Eusebio Lopez Memorial Integrated School is currently managed and to explore whether moving to an automated system would be possible. The researchers talked to students, faculty, and library personnel to learn more about how the current library system is working. To do this, the researchers handed out surveys, spoke with some of them in short interviews, and spent time just observing how things were done in the library. By collecting all this information in different ways, the researchers hoped to get a fuller and more honest view of what's working, what's not, and what might be possible if the system were to be automated.

A hybrid questionnaire was utilized as the primary survey tool. This instrument included both structured Likert-scale items and open-ended questions to capture numerical ratings and personal perspectives on the current manual library system and the possibility of transitioning to an automated setup.

DATA COLLECTION PROCEDURE

To collect data for this study on library management at Eusebio Lopez Memorial Integrated School, we took a careful, step-by-step approach. First, the researchers handed out surveys to students, faculty, and library personnel to get their feedback on how the current manual system is working and how satisfied they are with it. Researchers also sat down for some informal interviews with library personnel and regular users to hear about their experiences and thoughts on the manual system. On top of that, the researchers spent time observing the library in action, looking for any obvious inefficiencies or problems in the daily operations. We also looked at borrowing logs and other documents to get a better understanding of how things are being managed. By combining all this information — surveys, interviews, observations, and document reviews — we were able to get a clear picture of how the system works right now and where improvements might be needed, which helped us figure out if automation would be a good option.

DATA ANALYSIS AND VALIDATION

We wanted to get a clear view of how the library is being run, so we used a mix of different methods for this study. We went through the survey responses and looked at things like the average scores to get a sense of how satisfied people were and how the system was working. We also talked to people through interviews and observed how things were going in the library, focusing on problems like record-keeping issues, delays in getting resources, and other challenges. To make sure the information was consistent, we compared the survey results with what we learned in the interviews and observations.

ETHICAL CONSIDERATIONS

Prior to data collection, informed consent was obtained from all participants. Confidentiality was ensured by anonymizing responses and securing personal data. Participants were assured that their involvement in the study was voluntary and that they could withdraw at any time without any repercussions.

By using both qualitative and quantitative methods, we were able to get a full picture of how the library is run and how automation might work. This way, we made sure the findings reflect both what users experience and the library's actual operations.

RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

To understand the current roles of respondents, researchers collected data on their positions. The results are summarized in **Table 1.**

Table 1.0 Summary of Evaluators during the Initial Testing and User Acceptance Testing

Evaluators Classification	Number of Evaluators
A. Sample Population Group	
A.1. Library Personnel	1
A.2. Students	10
A.3. Faculty	5
Total	**16**

Most respondents 10 identified as students, followed by the faculty 5, and 1 personnel.

Table 2.0 Current Library Management Practices

Library Management Practices	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
1. The manual process of borrowing books is slow and inefficient.	4.50	Strongly Agree
2. Returning books manually often causes delays and inconvenience.	4.13	Agree
3. Organizing and updating the catalog manually is difficult and time-consuming.	4.06	Agree
4. Searching for materials takes longer because of the manual system.	4.31	Strongly Agree
5. The availability of needed books is affected by slow manual processes.	4.06	Agree
TOTAL	**4.21**	**Strongly Agree**

Table 2.0 reflects the perceptions respondents regarding the manual and slow aspects of current library practices. Result indicates a dissatisfaction with these manual processes with a 4.21 total mean average.

Table 3.0 Impact of Manual System on Academic Support

Impact of Manual System on Academic Support	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
1. Manual systems slow down access to academic resources needed for studies.	4.38	Strongly Agree
2. Manual processes cause delays in getting required books or materials.	4.44	Strongly Agree
3. Manual handling of library records causes confusion or errors in resource availability.	4.25	Strongly Agree
4. Slow library processes impact my ability to complete academic tasks on time.	4.50	Strongly Agree
5. Manual systems make it hard to get timely updates on new academic materials.	4.13	Agree
TOTAL	**4.34**	**Strongly Agree**

Table 3.0 shows the result in terms of how manual library systems affect academic support. The agree and the strongly agree interpretation indicates dissatisfaction with the impact of manual system on academic support.

Table 4.0 Feasibility of Implementing an Automated Library System

Implementing an Automated Library System	Mean	Verbal Interpretation
1. An automated system will make borrowing and returning books faster and easier.	4.12	Agree
2. Automation will improve the accuracy of the library catalog and records.	4.43	Strongly Agree
3. An automated system will help users find materials more quickly and efficiently.	4.38	Strongly Agree
4. Automation will reduce errors and confusion in managing library resources.	4.25	Strongly Agree

5. Implementing automation will enhance academic support for students and faculty.	4.18	Agree
TOTAL	**4.27**	**Strongly Agree**

Table 4.0 shows that in terms of implementing an Automated Library System the responses from 16 participants—including students, faculty, and library personnel—indicate a strong and hopeful attitude toward implementing an automated library system. Respondents believe that automation will significantly improve library operations by making the borrowing and returning process faster and easier. They also expect that automation will enhance the accuracy of the catalog and record-keeping, reducing errors and confusion caused by manual processes. Additionally, users anticipate that finding and accessing materials will become quicker and more efficient, leading to a better overall experience. Importantly, respondents feel confident that automation will strengthen academic support by providing timely access to resources and improving communication between the library and its users.

Table 5.0 Recommendations for Improvement

Recommendations for Improvement	**Mean**	**Verbal Interpretation**
1. The library should implement an automated system to improve efficiency.	4.69	Strongly Agree
2. Training sessions should be provided to staff and users on new systems.	4.81	Strongly Agree
3. The library should improve the speed and accuracy of book lending and return processes.	4.63	Strongly Agree
4. More computers and digital resources should be made available for users.	4.75	Strongly Agree
5. Regular updates and maintenance of library resources should be ensured.	4.81	Strongly Agree
TOTAL	**4.74**	**Strongly Agree**

Table 5.0 shows that all mean scores are above 4.63, indicating a clear consensus that implementing an automated system would significantly enhance operational efficiency. Respondents also emphasize the importance of providing training sessions for both staff and users to ensure smooth adoption of new technologies. Improving the speed and accuracy of the book lending and return processes is viewed as essential for better service delivery. Additionally, there is strong support for increasing the availability of computers and digital resources, which are critical for modern academic work. Finally, regular updates and maintenance of library resources are considered necessary to maintain the quality and reliability of the services.

The analysis showed that the current manual system at the integrated school is quite inefficient, with many respondents noting delays when borrowing and tracking resources. The absence of real-time tracking and digital search features leads to frequent errors in cataloging and borrowing. Library personnel said the manual process takes up too much time, making it tough to focus on other important tasks. Most people the researchers talked to support moving to an automated system, thinking it would make things run smoother, help track resources more easily, and reduce errors. The feasibility study showed that while setting up the system does have some upfront costs, they're manageable, and the savings over time from being more efficient could be quite substantial.

CONCLUSION

The study shows that the manual system used in the integrated school library is slowing down how well the library works. Mistakes in keeping records, delays in finding materials, and poor handling of resources are common problems that keep getting in the way for both students, faculty and library personnel. These problems aren't just minor inconveniences—they're holding the library back from doing what it's really meant to do: support learning in an effective and reliable way. Doing everything by hand just makes simple tasks more complicated, and errors keep slipping through no matter how careful people are. It's not efficient, and it's starting to hold things back.

Switching to an automated system isn't just a modern convenience—it's something the library genuinely needs at this point. It would make daily operations smoother; help keep records accurate and allow students and teachers to find what they need without all the usual delays. With better tracking and organization, the library staff can spend less time fixing errors and more time helping people use the library as a learning resource.

Adopting automation will also bring the integrated school in line with how libraries around the world are evolving. Schools everywhere are turning to technology to make learning better, and switching to an automated system would show that one integrated school is keeping up with the times. Nowadays, having quick and reliable access to information isn't just nice to have—it's essential.

RECOMMENDATION

1. Immediate adoption of an automated library system

   The sooner the integrated school implements an automated system, the quicker it can fix ongoing problems like slow processes and errors. Early adoption means smoother operations and quicker benefits for everyone using the school library.

2. Personnel training on the new system

   New systems can be tricky at first, so it's important to train all library staff well. When everyone is knowledgeable about the system, it makes the transition easier and helps avoid human error or mistakes.

3. Personnel training on the new system

   Once the system is implemented, it should be maintained. In that way, you can notice any problems early and keep things running smoothly.

4. Collaboration with educational technology providers

Working with the right technology partners means that the integrated school won't have to figure everything out alone. They can help fix issues, offer advice, and bring in new ideas as needed.

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