

A Study of Ecological Sustainability with Special Reference to Green Library at Selected IIMS In India

Prashant Raj^{1,*}, Dhavalben D. Bhatt²

Abstract

In the modern world, sustainability has emerged as a major issue, and organizations from a variety of industries are being urged to implement eco-friendly procedures. Among these, educational establishments play a vital part in influencing the next generation and encouraging ecological consciousness. Renowned for their academic prowess, Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs) have come to understand the significance of incorporating sustainability into their operations and infrastructure. This essay examines the idea of sustainability in relation to green libraries at a few Indian IIMs. The study intends to demonstrate how IIMs are promoting environmental sustainability and an eco-conscious learning environment by looking at the layout, operations, and effects of these green libraries. While talking of the concept of green libraries developed by institutions like the IIMs these are not just in the league of tradition functions but are moving in the direction of environmental responsibility by minimizing the energy-use, reducing the carbon foot-prints and incorporating the renewable energy sources in the infrastructure. These public libraries are all already furnished with energy-saving lighting and air-conditioning as well as e-information terminals to reduce the use of papers. Moreover, in most such green library projects, there are adopted the aspects like LEED certification, sustainable architectural design, also green oriented knowledge spreading activities for students and staff members. Through promoting a culture of sustainability, the IIMs would not just allow India to achieve its environmental objectives, but would also set a trend worth emulating by other academic bodies. The metamorphosis of libraries into green nodes of sustainable knowledge indicates the larger commitment of higher education system towards sustainability.

Keywords: Eco-friendly infrastructure, ecological, energy efficiency, environmental sustainability, green library, library management, smart library technologies, sustainable practices, sustainability, waste

INTRODUCTION

Sustainability has become a major subject in global development in recent years, and organizations, corporations, and governments are being urged to implement policies that strike a balance between social, economic, and ecological factors. India must cope with several environmental issues, such as pollution and global warming. In the field of education, where educational establishments are actively incorporating environmental responsibility into their operations and courses [1], sustainable practices are especially noticeable. Libraries must raise awareness of the crucial information resources on environmental issues in addition to serving as data repositories. Libraries, which are sometimes seen as the scholarly hub of institutions of higher learning, are one of the many elements of educational institutions that are increasingly being planned and run with an emphasis on sustainability.

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We now need to take significant actions in response to climate change and global warming to protect the environment. Now a day, libraries play a crucial part in protecting the environment by conserving energy and creating spaces that are intended for their patrons [2]. The key to ensuring that water, materials, and resources are available is sustainability to protect mankind health and environment. There is no resource exploitation in the development of sustainability. Numerous groups have taken significant action to combat the trend of global warming, including library construction. Higher education institutions have a crucial role in fostering innovation to address global issues in fields that are important to society, including population trends, international development, healthcare, resource security, and environmental preservation. As a result, sustainability is important for higher education, specifically for Indian IIM libraries. As part of IIMs commitment to environmental stewardship, several IIMs have introduced initiatives to establish green libraries that integrate sustainable practices into library design, operations, and services [3]. An inventive solution to this problem is the "Green Library" concept, which places a strong emphasis on the utilization of eco-friendly infrastructure, energy efficiency, waste reduction, and the advancement of sustainable knowledge [4].

LITERATURE REVIEW

Sustainability in higher education has been emphasized through curricular integration, campus operations, and stakeholder engagement [5]. In India, sustainable practices in academic libraries are still developing. Rao [6] and Dube [7] identified major challenges such as limited budgets, insufficient awareness, and lack of standardized guidelines.

However, Indian institutions are gradually adapting. Kohli [8] argued that IIMs, with their influential educational ecosystem, are well-positioned to lead sustainable library practices. Studies by Chauhan and Mahajan [9], and Tiwari and Dubey [10], also emphasize the role of IIM libraries in promoting environmental responsibility.

Therefore, by evaluating the sustainable practices at a few IIMs, this study seeks to close this gap and offering insightful information for upcoming advancements in this field.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

With an emphasis on the green library movement [11] at a few Indian IIMs, this study seeks to analyze the idea of sustainability. This study is to explore the application of sustainability concepts to library resources, infrastructure, and spaces, as well as the advantages and difficulties of putting such efforts into practice. The study will evaluate the environmental impact, energy-efficient technology adoption, resource management strategies, and the function of these libraries in encouraging a sustainable culture among professors and students by carefully examining the green library models at a selected IIM.

SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

This study is focus on green libraries within the framework of IIMs not only adds to the expanding conversation about sustainable educational facilities, but it also demonstrates how these prestigious universities may set an example for environmental awareness. With lessons that may be extended to other academic institutions in India and elsewhere, the study also offers insightful information about the viability, scalability, and impact of green library practices in the Indian context. The study will ultimately highlight how libraries can be transforming sites for promoting sustainability in educational settings, which is in line with the worldwide objectives of responsible resource use and sustainable development.

SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This study's scope is centered on investigating sustainability practices at a few Indian Institutes of Management (IIMs), with a particular focus on the idea of green libraries. The selected IIMs with their establishment year are given as below: Table 1

Table 1. List of Selected IIMs.

S no.	Name of Institute	Establishment year
1	Indian Institute of Management, Ahmedabad	1961
2	Indian Institute of Management, Lucknow	1984
3	Indian Institute of Management, Shillong	2007
4	Indian Institute of Management, Tiruchirappalli	2011
5	Indian Institute of Management, Vishakhapatnam	2015
6	Indian Institute of Management, Sambalpur, Odisha	2015

The study only looked at a small sample of IIMs, which might not be representative of all IIMs. The results might not be fully applicable to all IIMs as a result. Depending on how open and cooperative the chosen IIMs are, accessing certain institutional reports or internal information may provide difficulties.

RESEARCH METHODS

The researcher employed a mixed-methods technique to gather both qualitative and quantitative data for this investigation. This made it possible to fully comprehend how green library practices were applied at the 06 (six) IIMs that were discovered. The methodology will make use of both primary and secondary data sources. The study combined primary data—such as questionnaires and site visits—with secondary data—such as websites, literature reviews, and institutional reports and records. IIMs were chosen using a purposive selection technique, guaranteeing that they are representative of India's top business schools. A judgmental sample technique is employed for primary data collecting to choose important informants, such as librarians, who have direct involvement in green library projects. Table 2 and Figure 1

ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Eco-Friendly Library

According to the response received from the libraries it shows that 50% of Libraries have own building, while rest of 50% library do not have separate library building. Table 3 Figure 2

Table 2. Own Building.

Library having own building	No. of Libraries	Percentage (%)
Yes	3	50
No	3	50

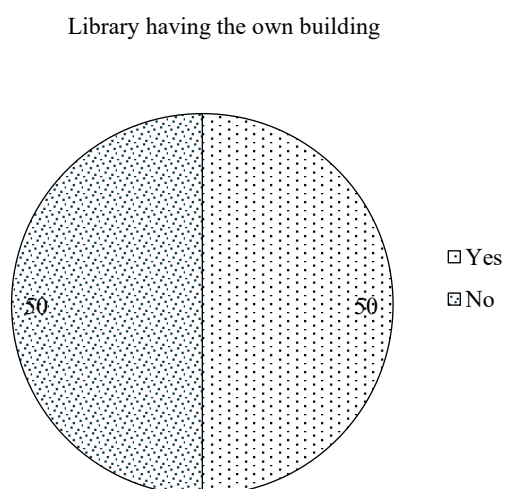
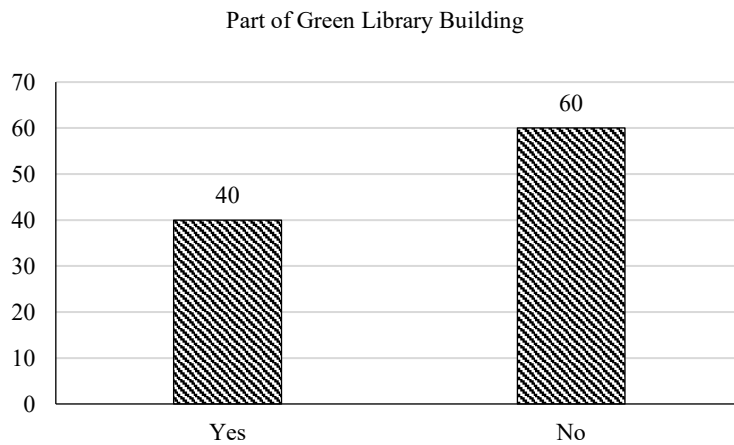


Figure 1. Library having the own building.

Table 3. Part of the Green Library.

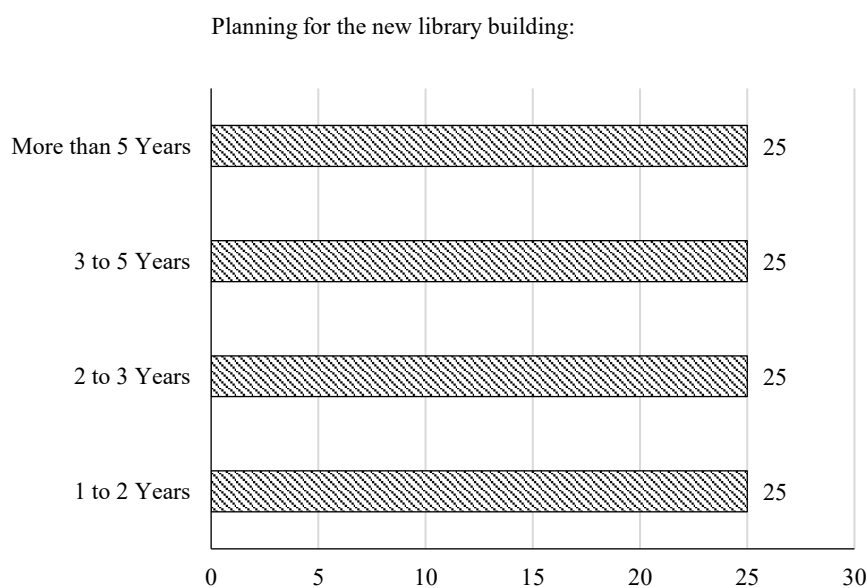
Part of green library	No. of Libraries	Percentage (%)
Yes	2	40
No	4	60
Total	6	100

**Figure 2.** Part of green library.

Out of six libraries, only two (40%) incorporate green library initiatives, while the majority (60%) do not. This indicates a need for greater adoption of sustainable practices in library infrastructure. Table 4 Figure 3

Table 4. Planning for the New Library Building.

Planning	No. of Libraries	Percentage (%)
1 to 2 Years	1	25
2 to 3 Years	1	25
3 to 5 Years	1	25
More than 5 Years	1	25

**Figure 3.** Planning for the new library building.

Library expansion plans are evenly distributed, with each timeline category—ranging from 1 to over 5 years—accounting for 25% of the total. This suggests a balanced but gradual approach to new library infrastructure development. Table 5 and Figure 4

Among the libraries evaluated, 50% used LEED certification, and 50% used IGBC, while other certifications like MAGZTER, CEU, and GBCI were not utilized. This highlights a preference for globally recognized green building standards in library assessment. Table 6 and Figure 5

Table 5. Certification used for the evaluation of building.

Certification	No. of Libraries	Percentage (%)
LEED	1	50
MAGZTER	0	0
IGBC	1	50
CEU	0	0
GBCI	0	0
Total	2	100

Certification used for the evaluation of building

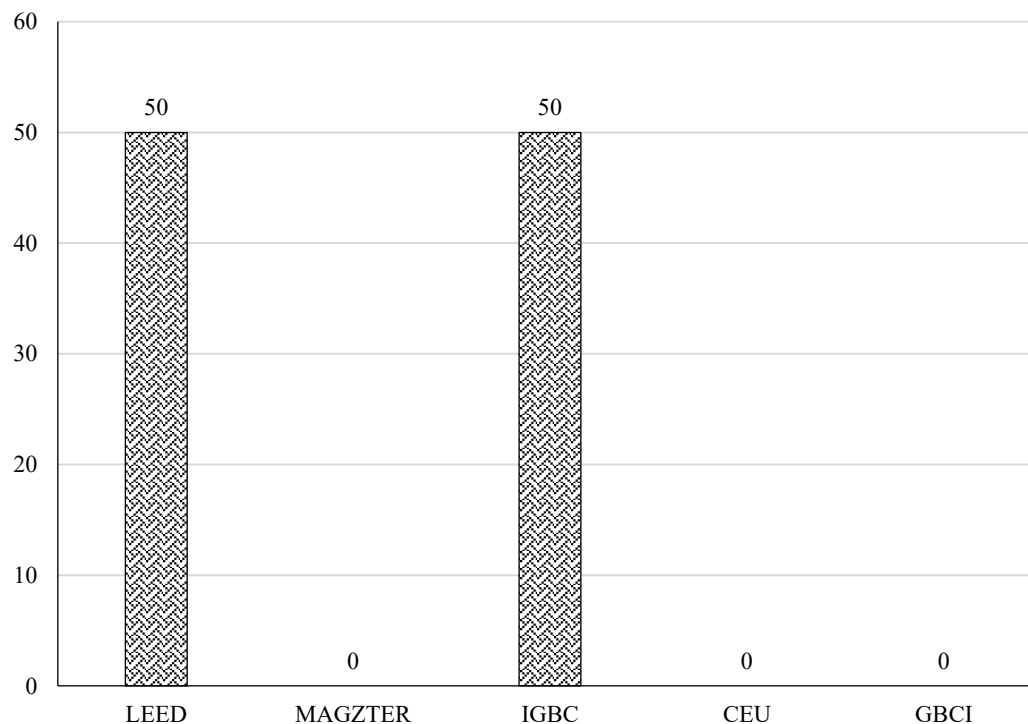


Figure 4. Certification used for the evaluation of building.

Table 6. Green initiative taken for the design aspects of library building to make eco-friendly.

Green initiative taken for the design aspects of library building to make eco-friendly	No. of Libraries	Percentage
Natural Ventilation System	4	66.67
Climatic control	3	50.00
Interior (Ergonomically)	5	83.33
Soundproof control	4	66.67

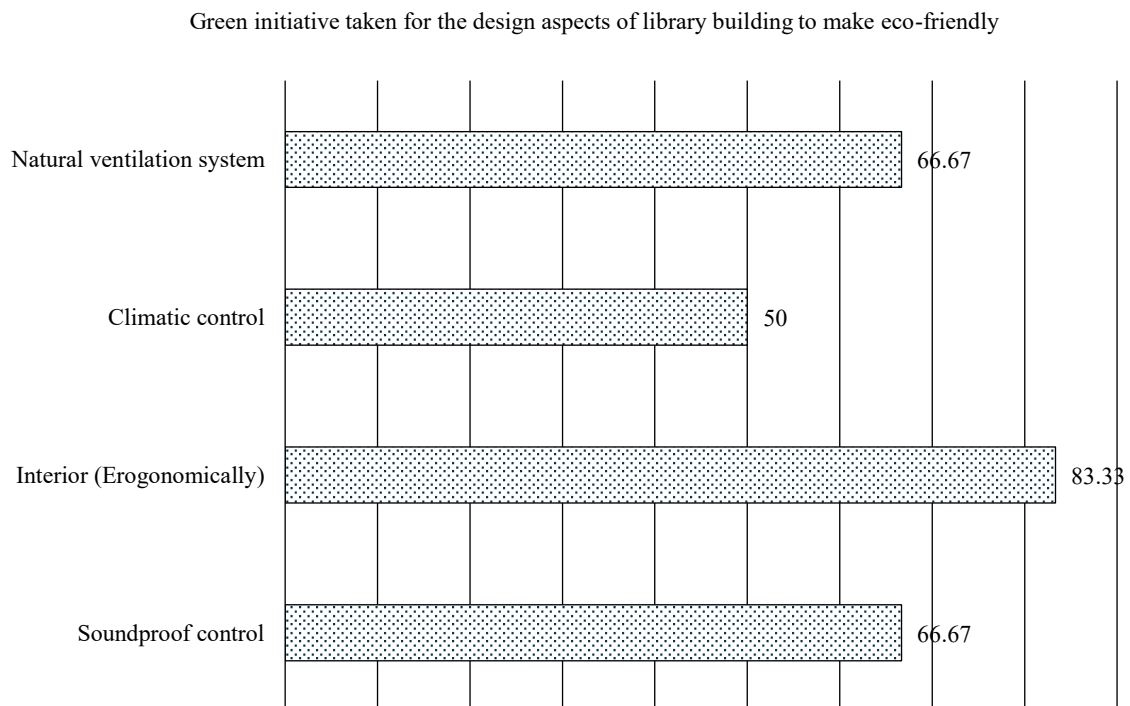


Figure 5. Green initiative taken for the design aspects of library building to make eco-friendly.

The most common green initiative is ergonomic interior design (83.33%), followed by natural ventilation and soundproof control (66.67% each). Climatic control is implemented in 50% of libraries, indicating a focus on sustainability with varied adoption levels across design aspects Table 7 and Figure 6

All libraries (100%) have a well-planned plumbing system, while 83.33% focus on wastewater reuse and 66.67% implement water flow control and site water recapturing. Other sustainable measures, such as efficient plant watering (50%) and drought-tolerant landscaping (33.33%), show varied adoption levels for water efficiency. Table 8 and Figure 7

Table 7. Criteria followed for the water efficiency.

Criteria followed for the water efficiency	No. of Libraries	Percentage (%)
Automatic water nozzle	2	33.33
Efficient Plant watering system	3	50.00
Drought tolerant garden for landscaping	2	33.33
Well planned plumbing system	6	100.00
Waste water reuse	5	83.33
Recapturing of site water	4	66.67
Root zone structure for wastewater treatment	1	16.67
Standard maintenance of outflow free plumbing arrangement	2	33.33
Utilization of bore-well water for the washroom flushing	2	33.33
Use of water flow control equipment	4	66.67
Use of sprinklers	3	50.00
Water treatment plant	3	50.00
Dry landscaping	2	33.33

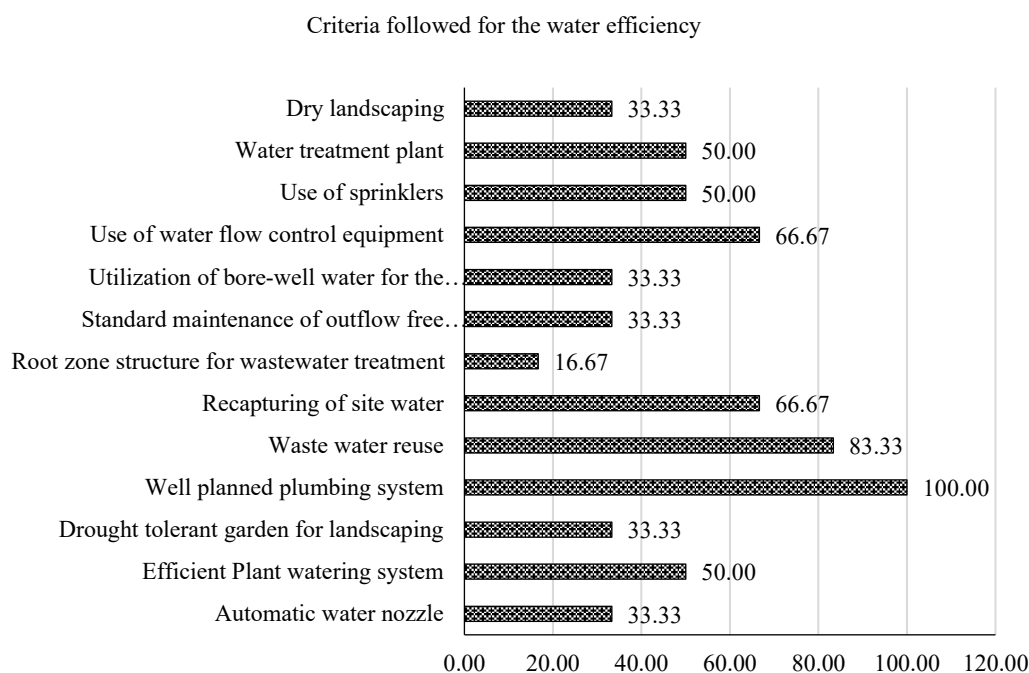


Figure 6. Criteria followed for the water efficiency.

Table 8. Criteria followed for the electrical energy efficiency.

Criteria followed for the electrical energy efficiency	No. of Libraries	Percentage (%)
Efficient electrical technology	2	33.33
Keep away from unnecessary exterior lighting	2	33.33
On-site energy generation	3	50.00
Regular maintenance of electrical system	2	33.33
Using day lighting system	3	50.00
Using natural daylight	1	16.67
Bi-level switching	1	16.67
Automated monitoring of electrical system	1	16.67
Integrating energy saving design arrangement for natural cooling/heating	1	16.67
Mixed mode arrangement for cooling/lighting	1	16.67
Utilizing capacitor panel for stable voltage supply	1	16.67
Using energy efficient equipment	1	16.67
Using energy saving bulbs (Compact fluorescent light/LED lights)	1	16.67
Using green wall for thermal comfort	1	16.67
Using innovative cooling and ventilation technique	1	16.67
Wall or window pergola for shading and thermal comfort	1	16.67
Photocell use sensor for automatic lighting	0	0.00
Sharing of façade through net for thermal comfort	0	0.00
Using dimmer occupancy sensor	0	0.00
Using very low ozone-depleting refrigerants	0	0.00

While on-site energy generation and daylight utilization (50%) are prioritized, key energy-efficient measures like automated monitoring, bi-level switching, and innovative cooling techniques remain underutilized (16.67%). Notably, advanced technologies like photocell sensors, occupancy dimmers, and low ozone-depleting refrigerants are entirely absent, highlighting opportunities for further sustainability improvements Table 9 Figure 8

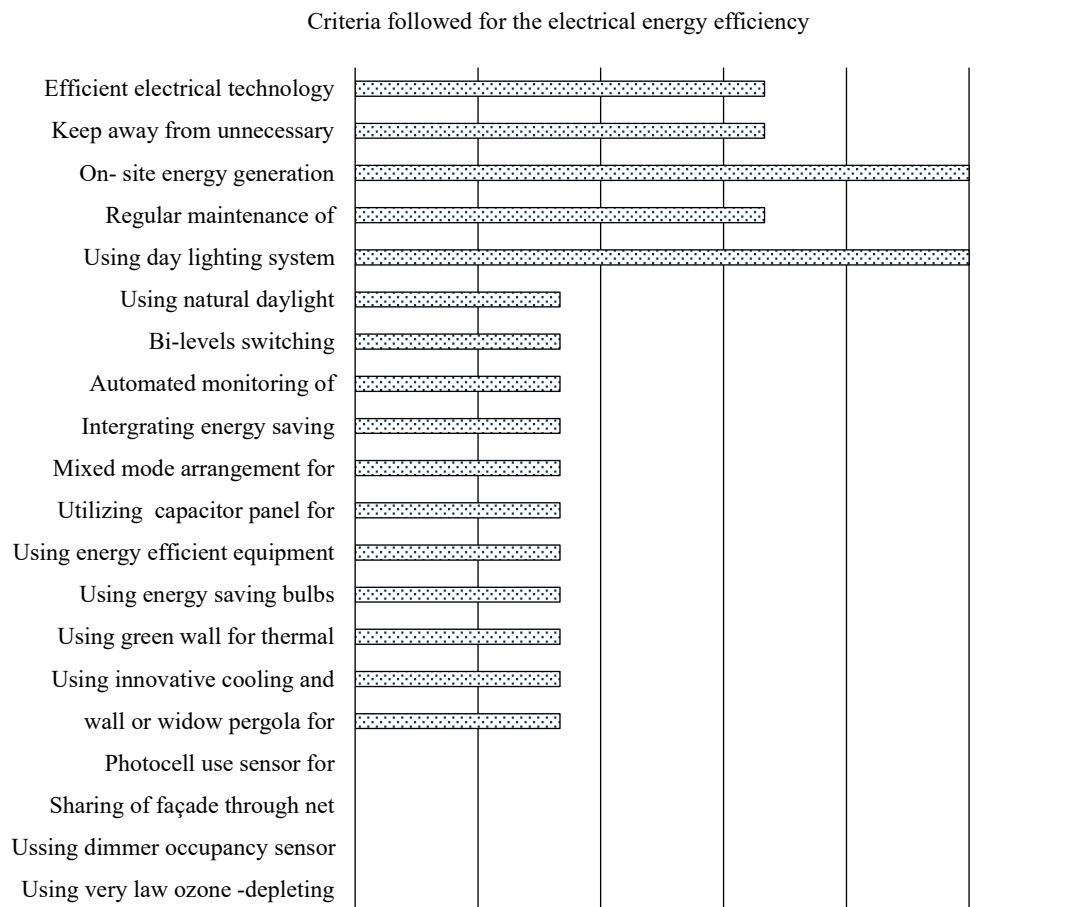


Figure 7. Criteria followed for the electrical energy efficiency.

Table 9. Type of on-site energy generation mechanism using.

Type of on-site energy generation mechanism using	No. of Libraries	Percentage (%)
Wind/Airpower	0	0.00
Solar Panel	5	83.33
Biomass/Biogas	0	0.00
Hydro Panel	1	16.67
Total	6	100

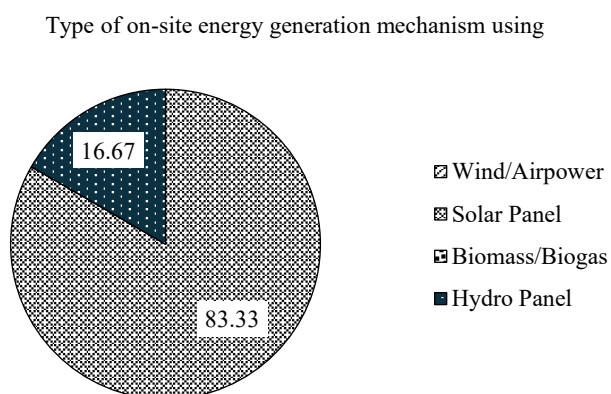


Figure 8. Type of on-site energy generation mechanism using.

Solar panels are the most widely used on-site energy generation method (83.33%), while hydro panels are adopted by only 16.67% of libraries. Other renewable energy sources like wind, biomass, and biogas remain completely untapped, indicating potential areas for diversification in sustainable energy solutions Table 10 and Figure 9

The most common book discarding practices are weeding-out (83.33%) and donating books to other libraries (66.67%), ensuring resource redistribution. However, no libraries opt for selling discarded books, missing an opportunity for cost recovery or extended accessibility Table 11 and Figure 10

All libraries (100%) practice double-sided printing to reduce paper consumption, while half (50%) minimize unnecessary margins. However, only 33.33% promote a paperless environment, and alternative reuse methods (16.67%) are limited, indicating room for stronger sustainability initiatives Table 12 Figure 11

Table 10. Policy is adopted in the library for discard of books.

Policy is adopted in the library for discard of books	No. of Libraries	Percentage (%)
Donate books to other library	4	66.67
Weeding-out books	5	83.33
Sale of books to its user for minimal charges	0	0.00
Sale of books to store or another library	0	0.00

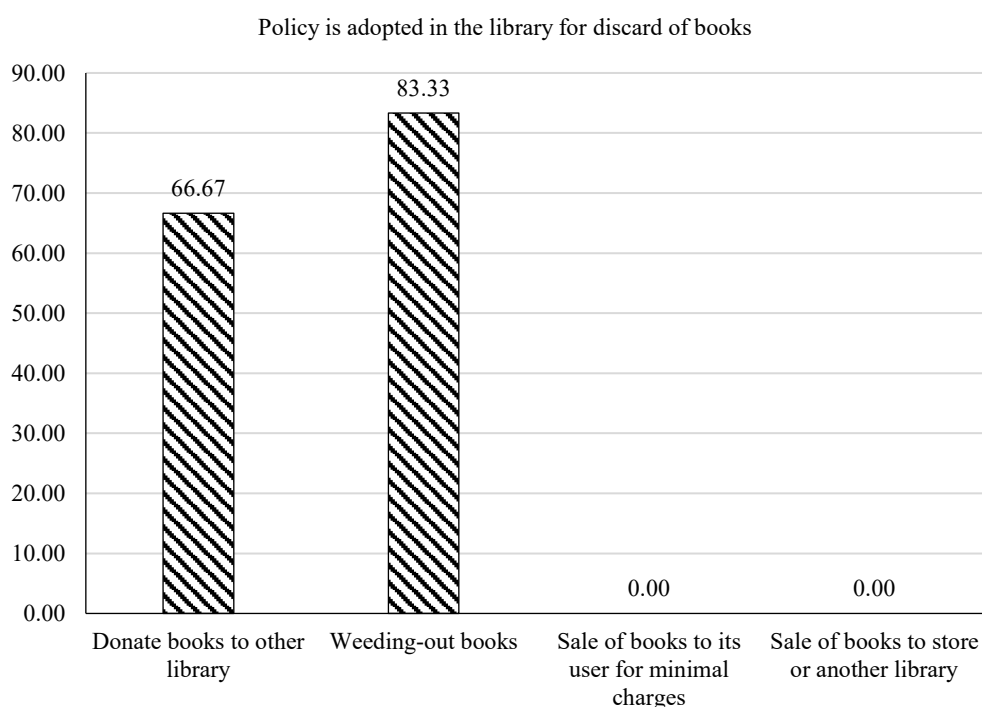


Figure 9. Policy is adopted in the library for discard of books.

Table 11. Policy has been developed for the paper consumption in the library.

Policy has been developed for the paper consumption in the library	No. of Libraries	Percentage (%)
Paperless Environment	2	33.33
Printing on both sides of paper	6	100.00
Avoid unnecessary margins for printing	3	50.00
Use again (other than printing on both sides)	1	16.67

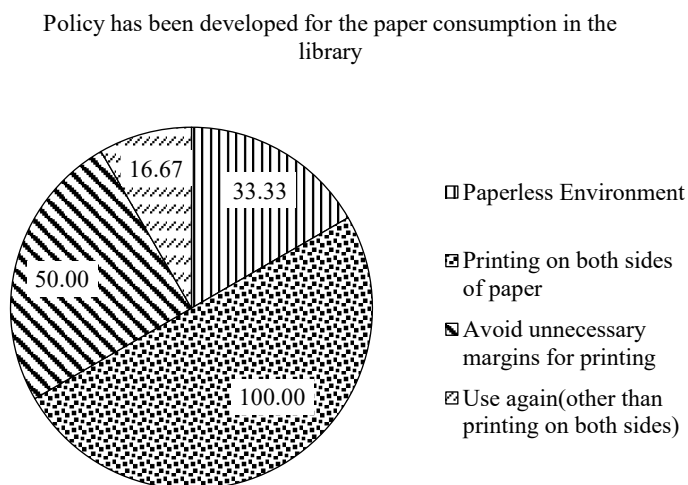


Figure 10. Policy has been developed for the paper consumption in the library.

Table 12. Policy is adopted in the library for waste management of e-waste.

Policy is adopted in the library for waste management of e-waste	No. of Libraries	Percentage (%)
Donate computers to NGO's	2	33.33
Hand over to the organization/agency for recycler who knows proper disposal system	2	33.33
Creation of specified junctions for collection of e-waste	1	16.67
Purchase of electronic products from company's which have after sales service for the disposal of product with taking back policy	1	16.67
Hand over to the Stores (Not under the purview of Library)	1	16.67
Executional of any recycling project or program	0	0.00

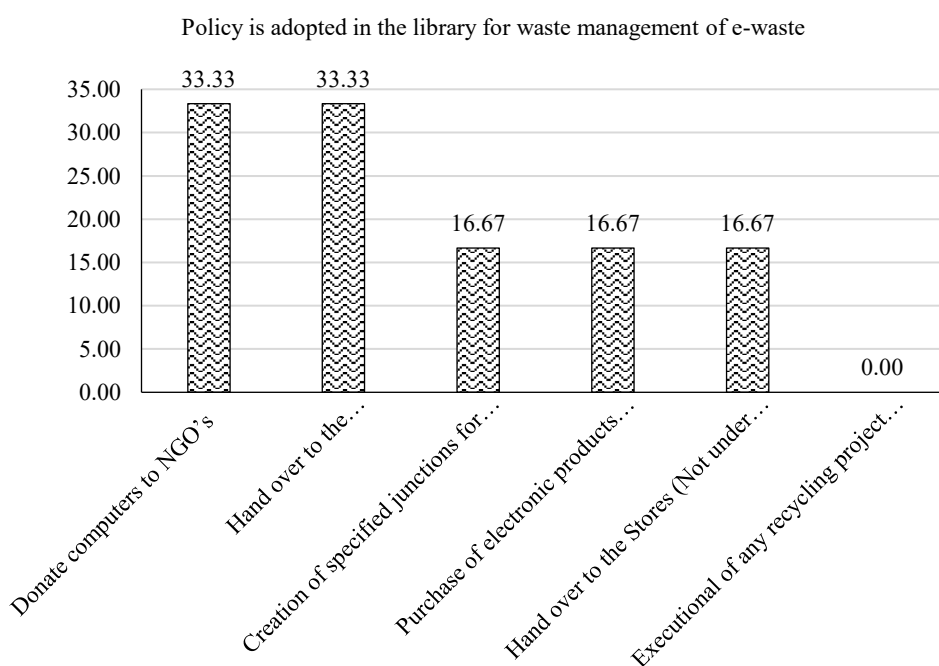


Figure 11. Policy is adopted in the library for waste management of e-waste.

Libraries primarily manage e-waste by donating computers to NGOs and handing them over to certified recyclers (33.33% each). However, limited adoption of collection points (16.67%) and take-back policies suggests a need for more structured and comprehensive e-waste management strategies Table 13 Figure 12

Energy audits are conducted in 66.67% of libraries, highlighting a focus on energy efficiency, while sound level and water/waste audits are entirely absent. This indicates a need for a more holistic environmental audit approach to ensure comprehensive sustainability assessment Table 14 and Figure 13

Table 13. Environmental audit conducted in the library.

Environmental audit conducted in the library	No. of Libraries	Percentage (%)
Energy Audit	4	66.67
Sound Level Audit	0	0.00
Water and Waste Audit	0	0.00

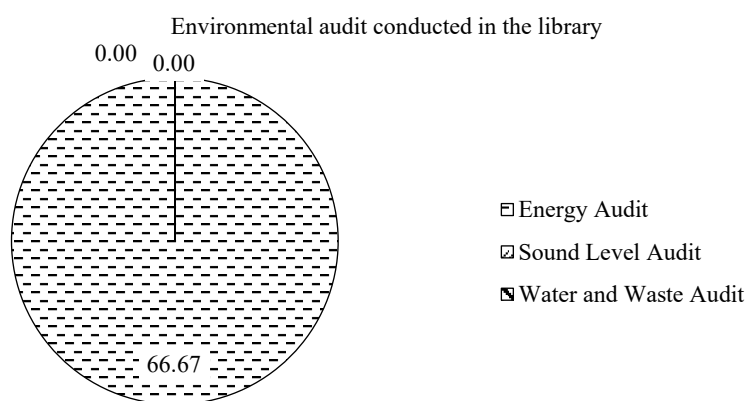


Figure 12. Environmental audit conducted in the library.

Table 14. Strategies are insisted upon for efficient operation and maintenance of building.

Strategies are insisted upon for efficient operation and maintenance of building	No. of Libraries	Percentage (%)
Regular maintenance of building	6	100.00
User awareness program to minimize damage to property	3	50.00
Purchase of standardized and quality material for repair	3	50.00

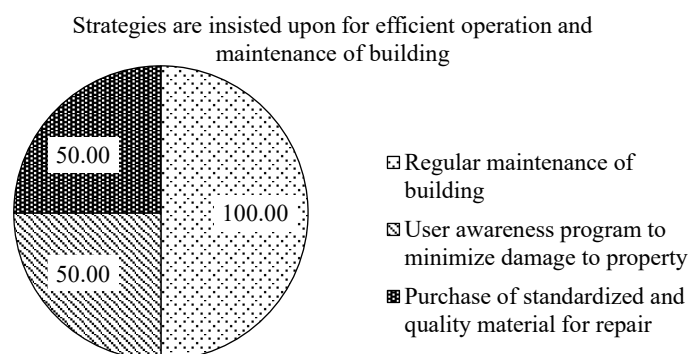


Figure 13. Strategies are insisted upon for efficient operation and maintenance of building.

All libraries (100%) prioritize regular building maintenance, ensuring structural upkeep, while only half (50%) emphasize user awareness and quality repair materials. Expanding user engagement and standardized material use could further enhance long-term efficiency and sustainability Table 15 Figure 14

Libraries widely adopt digital initiatives like institutional repositories, e-archives, and digital libraries (66.67%) to promote sustainable information dissemination. However, expert advice on sustainability (16.67%) and green literature awareness (33.33%) are less emphasized, indicating opportunities for further environmental advocacy Table 16 and Figure 15.

CONVERSION INTO GREEN LIBRARY

A strong commitment to sustainability is evident, with 83.33% of libraries planning to transition into green libraries. However, one library (16.67%) has no such plans, highlighting the need for further advocacy and support to achieve full green adoption. Table 17 and Figure 16.

Table 15. Green initiative for the dissemination of information.

Green initiative for the dissemination of information	No. of Libraries	Percentage (%)
Blog/Website	3	50.00
Institutional Repository	4	66.67
Paperless environment (e-archiving, e- resources etc.)	4	66.67
Lib Guides in e-format	3	50.00
Expert advice about sustainability	1	16.67
Digital Library/E-Print/E-Book	4	66.67
Information literacy on green literature	2	33.33

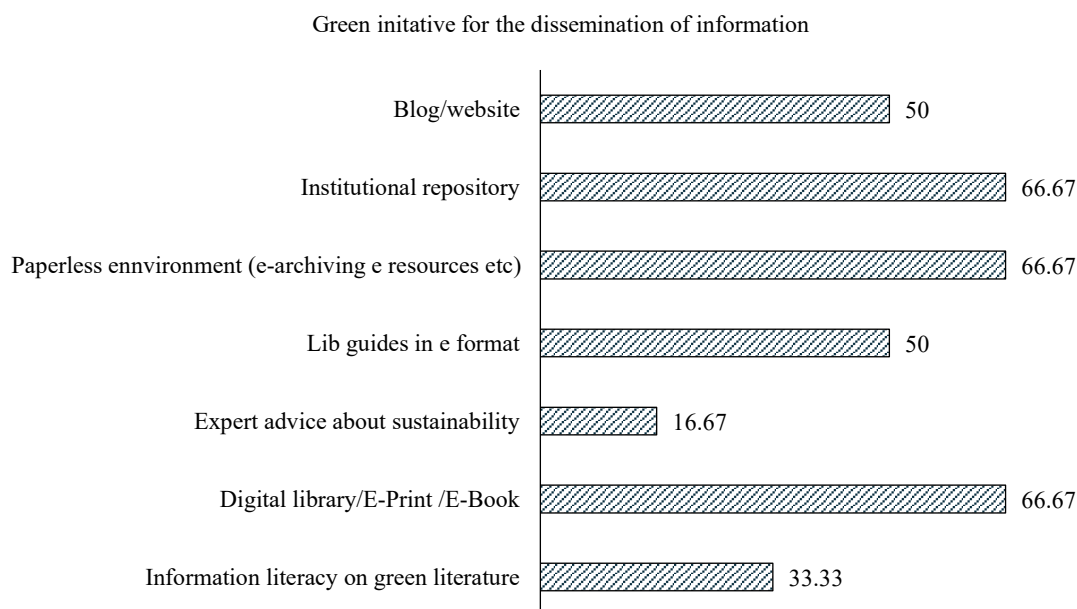


Figure 14. Green initiative for the dissemination of information.

Table 16. Future plan to convert the library into green library.

Future plan to convert the library into green library	No. of Libraries	Percentage (%)
Yes	5	83.33
No	1	16.67
Total	6	100

Future plan to convert the library into green library

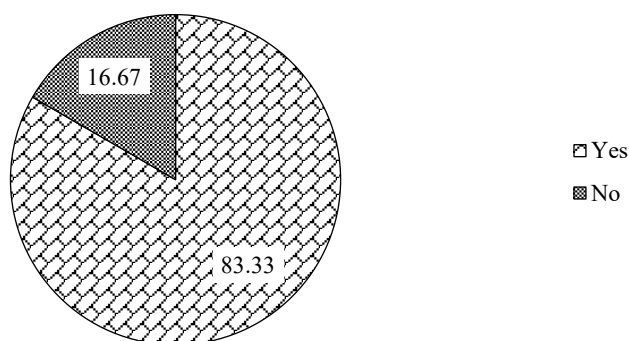


Figure 15. Future plan to convert the library into green library.

Table 17. Factors affecting to convert the library into green library.

Factors affecting to convert the library into green library	No. of Libraries	Percentage (%)
Financial Limitations	1	16.67
Lack of awareness about the green library	1	16.67
Lack of support from management	0	0.00
Inadequate Staff	0	0.00

Factors affecting to convert the library into green library

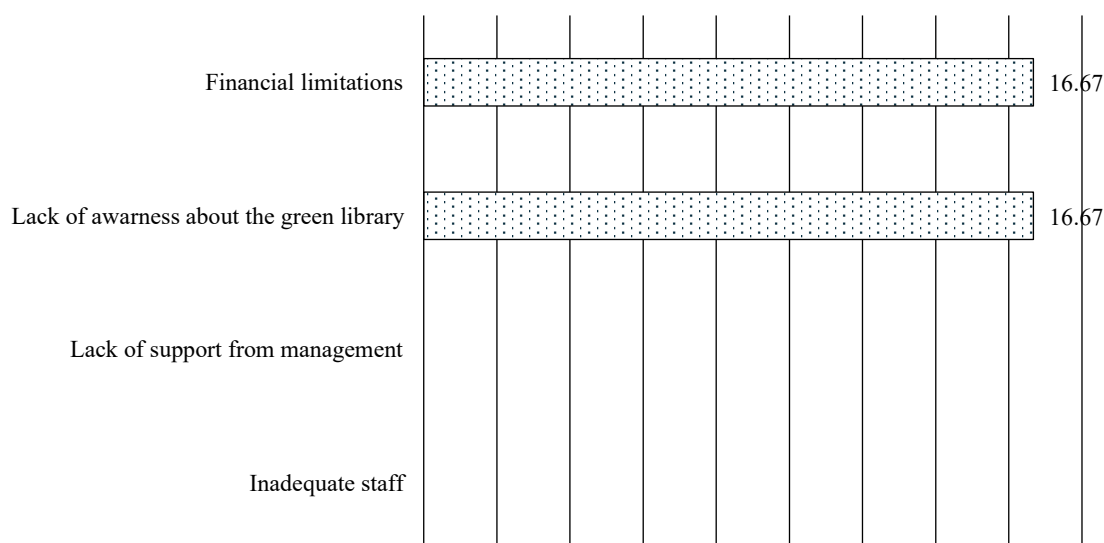


Figure 16. Future plan to convert the library into green library.

The majority of libraries (83.33%) are planning to transition into green libraries, demonstrating a proactive approach to sustainability. However, the 16.67% that have no such plans indicate a need for further encouragement and support for eco-friendly initiatives. Table 18 and Figure 17.

Table 18. Effort to try for converting the library into green library.

Effort to try for converting the library into green library	No. of Libraries	Percentage (%)
Yes	5	83.33
No	1	16.67
Total	6	100

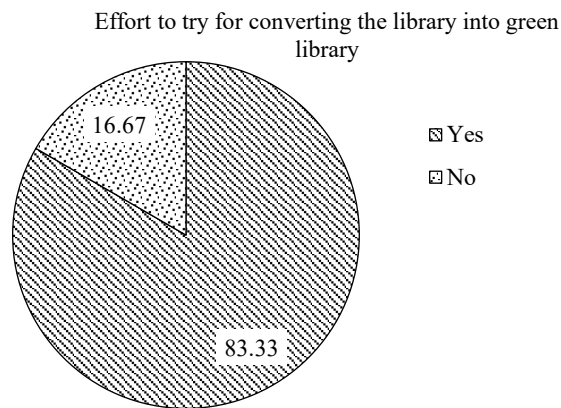


Figure 17. Effort to try for converting the library into green library.

Most libraries (83.33%) are actively working towards becoming green libraries, reflecting strong sustainability efforts. However, one library (16.67%) has yet to take such steps, indicating a need for greater awareness and motivation. Table 19 and Figure 18.

Table 19. If yes, problems faced to convert the library into green library.

Problems faced to convert the library into green library	No. of Libraries	Percentage (%)
Architectural	2	33.33
Financial	4	66.67
Technical	3	50.00
Attitude of management	2	33.33
Attitude of library staff	0	0.00
Time	1	16.67

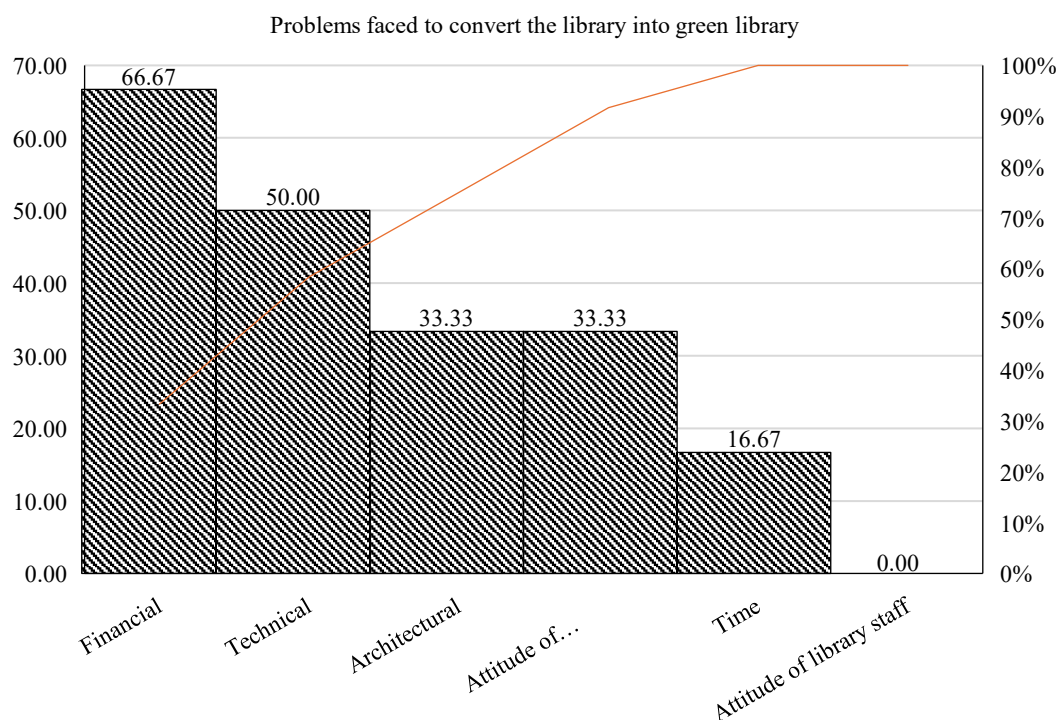


Figure 18. Problems faced to convert the library into green library.

Financial constraints (66.67%) and technical challenges (50%) are the most common barriers to converting libraries into green spaces. Architectural limitations and management attitudes (33.33% each) also pose challenges, while staff attitude is not a hindrance, indicating willingness but limited resources. Table 20 and Figure 19.

The majority of libraries (83.33%) have established policies for transitioning into green libraries, showing a strong commitment to sustainability. However, one library (16.67%) lacks such a policy, indicating the need for broader policy adoption and strategic planning. Table 21 and Figure 20.

Table 20. Developed policy for making library into green library.

Developed policy for making library into green library	No. of Libraries	Percentage (%)
Yes	5	83.33
No	1	16.67
Total	6	100

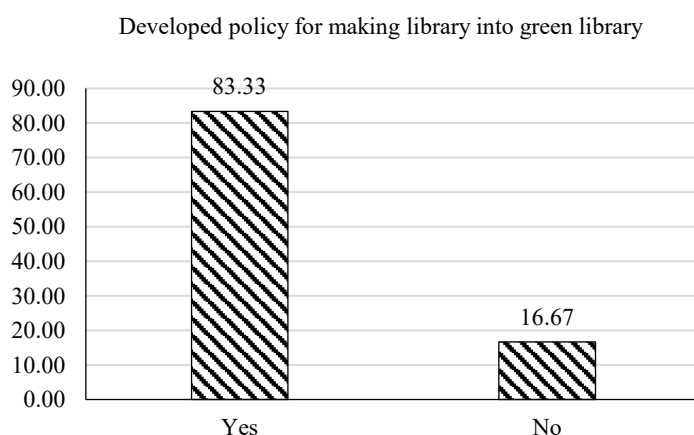


Figure 19. Developed policy for making library into green library.

Table 21. The green measures followed show positive effect on.

The green measures followed show positive effect on	No. of Libraries	Percentage (%)
Library Staff	5	83.33
Local environment	6	100.00
Users	5	83.33
Economy	5	83.33

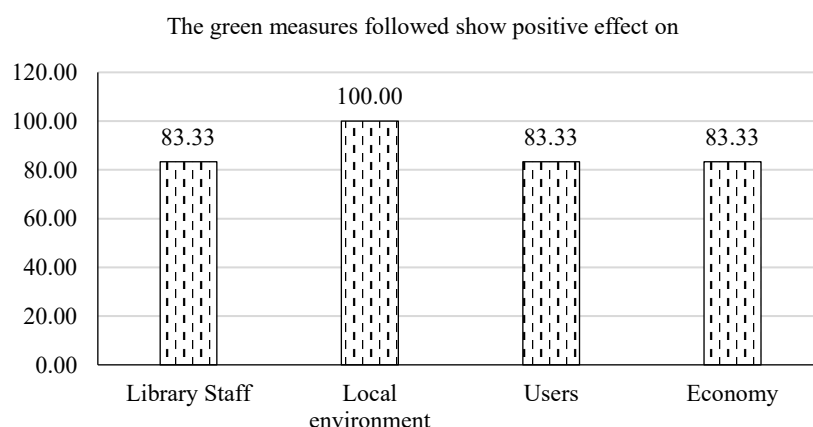


Figure 20. The green measures followed show positive effect on.

Green measures have a universally positive impact on the local environment (100%) while significantly benefiting library staff, users, and the economy (83.33% each). This highlights the broad advantages of sustainable practices, promoting well-being, efficiency, and cost-effectiveness. Table 22 and Figure 21.

E-RESOURCE PURCHASE

Half of the libraries (50%) have purchased 26 to 50 databases, while the rest have acquired more, with 16.67% holding over 100. The absence of libraries with fewer than 25 databases suggests a strong commitment to digital resources and research support. Table 23 and Figure 22.

All libraries unanimously recognize the benefits of green libraries, with strong agreement on environmental (83.33%) and economic (66.67%) advantages. Additionally, reducing carbon footprint, energy consumption, and hazardous waste (50% strongly agree, 50% agree) highlights a collective commitment to sustainability and social responsibility.

Table 22. No. of Database purchased.

No. of Database purchased	No. of Libraries	Percentage (%)
1 to 25	0	0.00
26 to 50	3	50.00
51 to 75	1	16.67
76 to 100	1	16.67
100 above	1	16.67
Total	6	100

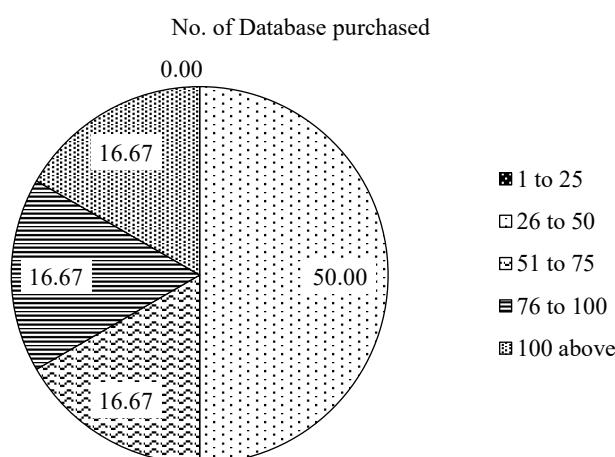


Figure 21. No. of Database purchased.

Table 23. Green library will help to get benefits.

Green library will help to get following benefits	Strongly agree	Agree	Partially agree	Disagree	Total
Reducing carbon footprint	3 (50)	3 (50)	0 (0)	0 (0)	6 (100)
Reducing energy consumption	3 (50)	3 (50)	0 (0)	0 (0)	6 (100)
Minimize hazardous waste	3 (50)	3 (50)	0 (0)	0 (0)	6 (100)
Improve public image in society	2 (33.33)	4 (66.67)	0 (0)	0 (0)	6 (100)
Social benefits	3 (50)	3 (50)	0 (0)	0 (0)	6 (100)
Economic benefit	4 (66.67)	2 (33.33)	0 (0)	0 (0)	6 (100)
Environmental benefit	5 (83.33)	1 (16.67)	0 (0)	0 (0)	6 (100)

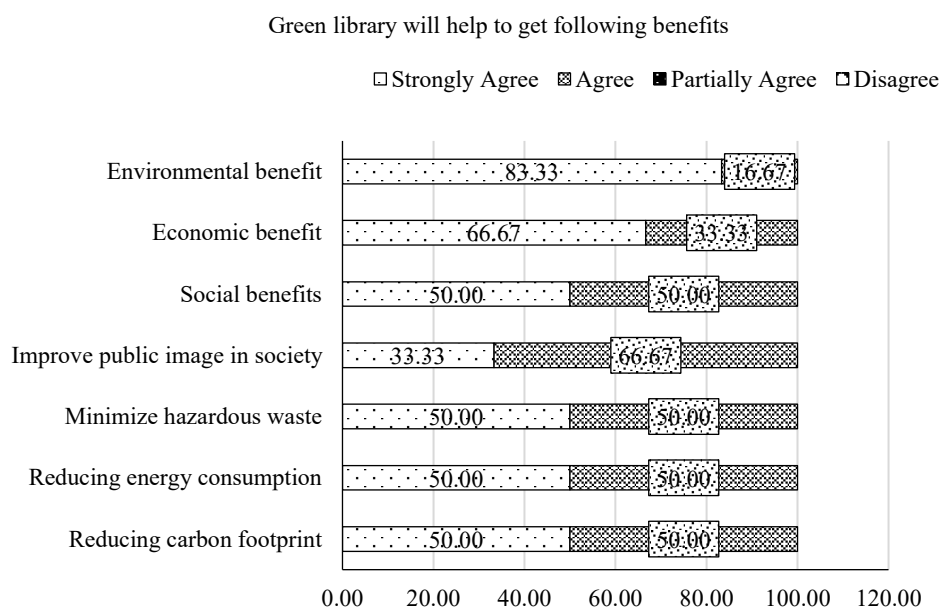


Figure 22. Green library will help to get benefits.

FINDINGS AND SUGGESTIONS

Library infrastructure & expansion: Half (50%) of the libraries have their own buildings. Expansion plans are evenly distributed across various timelines (1 to over 5 years), indicating a gradual approach to infrastructure development. New libraries should prioritize constructing independent, energy-efficient buildings with green design principles.

Green initiatives & certifications: Only 40% of libraries incorporate green initiatives, with LEED (50%) and IGBC (50%) being the primary certifications. Advanced sustainability technologies like photocell sensors and automated monitoring remain underutilized. Future libraries should pursue green certifications and integrate advanced energy-efficient technologies.

Energy & water efficiency: Solar panels (83.33%) are the dominant on-site energy source, while other renewables like wind and biomass remain untapped. All libraries have well-planned plumbing, but wastewater reuse (83.33%) and water flow control (66.67%) show varied adoption. New libraries should diversify renewable energy sources and prioritize comprehensive water conservation strategies.

Waste & digital resource management: Libraries manage book discarding through weeding (83.33%) and donations (66.67%), but none opt for selling. E-waste recycling and donations are limited (33.33% each). Libraries are committed to digital resources, with half purchasing 26-50 databases. Future libraries should develop structured waste management policies, explore selling discarded books, and promote a paperless environment.

Community engagement & sustainability commitment: Most libraries (83.33%) plan to transition into green libraries, but 16.67% lack such plans. Green measures benefit the local environment (100%) and positively impact staff, users, and the economy (83.33%). Libraries should enhance sustainability awareness programs and establish funding strategies to overcome financial and technical challenges.

Declaration of Interest

The authors declare that there is no conflict of interest regarding the publication of this article. This research was conducted independently and is not influenced by any personal, financial, institutional, or commercial relationships. All data presented were collected and analyzed in accordance with academic standards and ethical research practices.

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CONCLUSION

The findings highlight a growing awareness and implementation of green initiatives in libraries, though adoption rates vary across different sustainability aspects. While there is strong commitment toward transitioning into green libraries, financial and technical barriers remain significant challenges. By incorporating renewable energy diversification, advanced sustainability technologies, and comprehensive waste management strategies, libraries can further enhance their environmental impact. New libraries should integrate sustainable infrastructure from inception, ensuring long-term ecological and economic benefits. With strategic planning and policy implementation, libraries can become exemplary models of sustainability, fostering environmental responsibility within their communities.

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