

## Difficulties in Use & Implication of Open Source Software in Academic Libraries of Gulbarga: A Study

Shoukat Ali

### Abstract

An attempt has been made to determine the present status Library Automation and use of ICT in Libraries. It was observed that Library Automation is still inadequate among the college Libraries of Gulbarga and need lot of awareness and worthiness of using ICT in Libraries for betterment of user oriented services. This paper presents the findings of a survey about the status and use of Open Source Software by the LIS professionals of different colleges. The subjects chosen for this study were "Difficulties in use & Implication of Open Source Software in Academic Libraries of Gulbarga: A Study" For evaluating the study questions and data collection, the questionnaire was distributed randomly. The result of this study are presented and discussed in this paper.

**Keywords:** Library automation; Open source software; Academic libraries.

### Introduction

#### *Information as a Resource*

Information technology is an area of fundamental importance to the economic development of a nation as it plays potential part in the development of the nation's industrial and commercial base. The importance of information technology has been recognized by the governments and industries of most of the developed countries. Like materials and energy, information is a basic resource and the critical questions about any resource also apply to information: who has it, who wants it, how can you get it, and at what terms? These questions are timeless; new information technologies are changing only the answers.

The main objective of a library is to preserve

information to facilitate future access and dissemination of knowledge.[1] Digital information is easy to create copy and disseminate but very hard to preserve. Digital information exists in a wide variety of proprietary formats in the absence of any international standard. Long lives of these resources are at risk due to constant threat from hackers and virus infection. This fluid and unsettled environment presents challenges for a library, especially in regard to the library's collection management decisions and access strategies.[2] Preservation of digital information through migration needs periodic transfer of digital

materials from one hardware/software configuration to another or from one generation of computer technology to a subsequent generation. But it requires huge fund and trained manpower.

#### *Open Source Software*

Open source defines method of software development, that harnesses the power of distributed peer review and transparency of progress. This technique helps to provide better quality software's having higher reliability, flexibility with lower cost, and an end to the traditional vendor lock-in. The source code and

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**Author's Affiliation:** \*Librarian, Deccan M Ed College, Gulbarga.

**Reprint's Request:** Shoukat Ali, Librarian, Deccan M Ed College, Gulbarga.

E-mail: Shoukat85ali@gmail.com

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rights that were normally reserved for copyright holders are now being provided under a free software license that permits developers / users to study, change, improve and at times also to distribute the software.[3]

In many of the libraries, the library scientists have collaborated with software engineers for developing customized software. Indian libraries are at present using indigenously developed software or standard packages distributed by UNESCO [4] and IRDC. Several commercial library software packages are available though they are somewhat expensive. The commercial packages developed in India which are used in a number of libraries are: LIBSYS, EASYLIB, SANJAY, MAITRAYEE, etc.[3] The latter two developed over CDS/ISIS Package freely distributed by UNESCO etc. The software packages which are more popular with libraries are: LIBSYS, MINISIS, CDS/ISIS, IV + V Package, and TECHLIB. Freely available softwares are E Grnathalya, SOUL, D Space, Greenstone etc.[4]

#### *Review of Literature*

Reviewing related literature helps researchers to limit their question and to clarify and define the concepts of the study a research question may be too broad to carry out or too vague to be put into concrete operation. A careful review of their literature can help researchers to revise their initial question so that it can be investigated. It also helps in clarifying the concepts into operational definitions.

Randomly we have selected the colleges from different streams of Gulbarga city, affiliated to Gulbarga University, Gulbarga and Karnataka Women's University, Bijapur and others the study starts with distribution of Questionnaire in to the Librarians by interacting them in their college libraries the results shows that very few college Librarians are aware about the Open Source Software and its uses it is very much essential that the Librarians and college Management should take a proper step in executing the ICT technologies for improvement of their Libraries



and services.

#### **Objectives of the Study**

1. To understand the awareness of Open Source Software.
2. To find out the purpose and utilization of the Open Source Software.
3. To find out status of Library and its automation
4. To find out the status of using ICT in Libraries.
5. To study the problems in adopting the Open Source Software.
6. To find out the qualified LIS professionals in Libraries.
7. To give proper suggestions for optimizing the Open Source Software.

#### *Scope of the Study*

The locale of the study was the college Libraries these are Deccan B.Ed College, Jai Hind B Ed College, Deccan B.Ed College for Women, Aryan B Ed College, Nutana Vidyalaya Degree College, National Degree College, North Karnataka Degree College of Arts & Commerce, YKD Polytechnic, Deccan PU College of Arts & Science Etc of Gulbarga City.

#### **Methodology**

The present study is based on the survey method. The questionnaire and observation methods have been used to collect data for the study. In order to gather data, a structured questionnaire was designed and distributed

**Table 1: Library and the Facility Provided for Library Automation**

SL NO	COLLEGE	LIBRARY	COMPUTER	INTERNET	Budget for Library Automation	Awareness of OSS	LIBRARY S/W
1	Deccan B Ed College	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Local Made
2	Deccan B Ed College for Women	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Local made
3	Y K D Polytechnic	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Nil
4	National Degree College	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Local Made
5	Nutana Vidyalaya Degree College	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	EasyLib
6	Jai Hind B Ed College	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Nil
7	Deccan P U College	Yes	Yes	Nil	No	No	Nil
8	North Karnataka Degree College	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	No	Nil

among librarians to collect all exhaustive information regarding ICT infrastructure & its use in library operations and services. Responses obtained from the Librarians of different Libraries were analyzed in the light of the criteria (a) Availability of ICT hardware; (b) Availability of software; (c) Development of library databases and electronic resources and (d) having the state of ICT activities as per the criteria and finally they were selected for the study.[5] All the selected libraries have been surveyed in detail to study the development of ICT infrastructure, and its utilization OSS in library activities

### Results of the study

Table 1 contains the Library and the Facility Provided for Library Automation

The table 1 shows that majority of the College Libraries do not have separate budget for Library Automation and the some of them are using the Local made Library software for their Circulation purpose. Many of the libraries having the computer and internet facilities but they are unable to install and use the Open Source Software.

Based on the study the Difficulties in Use & Implication of Open Source Software in libraries in may be divided into Four Categories, namely:

(i) Financial, (ii) Technical (iii) Cultural and (iv) Others.[6]

The (i) *Financial* problem is mainly due to

- Rising software prices
- Frequent software/hardware obsolescence
- Impart training to existing library personnel to handle digital resources
- Lack of support form the college management

(ii) *Technical* problem is related to the lack of expertise on

- Collecting and maintaining digital resources
- Developing the automated library services
- Finding scholarly information from "hidden Web"
- Librarians are not having the computer knowledge.
- Lack of awareness
- Inappropriate operating systems
- Lack of internet speed and file formats.

(iii) *Cultural* may be considered as hindrance

- No full time computer professional in the



libraries

- (b) Lack of coordination between computer professionals within and outside of the Organization.
- (c) Lack of interest to keep track with the ever changing information seeking behavior of Users.
- (d) Lack of interest to add values to their services
- (e) Lack of interest to interact with users.
- (f) Lack of interest to utilize physical space of the library.

#### (iv) Other Deficiencies

- (a) Majority of the college libraries do not have proper facilities to meet the needs of their users.
- (b) Their collections are not up-to-date, budgets are their very inadequate and limited, and a large number of them are single libraries.
- (c) In many colleges, there is neither a library hall nor a sufficient big room, not to think of a separate building for the library. Any unused room, quite often somewhere out of sight, would be considered adequate to house a few shelves of books.
- (d) And in most college libraries there is complete darkness even during the day time, as the windows are closed out of a fear that the books may be stolen.[7]

#### Suggestions

- More Facility should be provided to Access internet.
- Provision for undergone the ICT training to the Librarian.
- Regular training & awareness program

should be conduct to the Library Staff.

- More Emphasis should be given to Library Automation.
- The Library staff should be qualified and aware of the ICT
- Provide strong ICT infrastructure to the Library by the concerned authority.
- Adoption Hardware & broad band Internet to the Library.
- Awareness about the worthiness of Open Source Software for Libraries.
- There should be separate Budget for Library Automation.

#### Conclusion

The College libraries have a significant role top lay in higher education. Implementing ICT into Libraries should make a huge impact on the way the users approaches and the way they use the Library services by providing the appropriate training to the Library staff the Library and the users will be beneficial because ICT proved to be easier, and cost effective. Educational authorities should take steps to improve their Library staff, and should pay more attention for Library resources. Librarians should keep updated their knowledge by participating in Conferences, Workshops and get involved in forums, Groups, Consortia, online portals and other new technologies.

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