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EXPLORING THE SATISFACTION LEVEL OF SOFTWARE USAGE IN GULBARGA AND BELGAUM REGION'S ENGINEERING COLLEGE LIBRARIES IN KARNATAKA: A SURVEY

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Abstract :

The Visvesvaraya Technological University is having presently 198 colleges are affiliated in Karnataka; these large numbers of college were distributed in four regions, namely Bangalore region, Mysore region, Belgaum region and Gulbarga region for smooth administrative purpose. For this paper we have selected Gulbarga and Belgaum regions 34 engineering college libraries to explore the satisfaction level of software usage, and to find out their problems and suggestions. This study carries detailed enquiry into the experiences undergone by the engineering college libraries in the use of Integrated Library Software (ILS). It gives a status view of the software packages used by different libraries and opinions of the librarians about the performance of the software they have used and also opinions of users regarding computer based services provided by these college libraries. The data collected were analyzed qualitatively, and conclusions were drawn along with recommendations. The research is limited to automated libraries of Gulbarga and Belgaum region and focuses on the comparison of software and determining the opinion of librarians.

KEYWORDS:

Integrated library software, library automation, engineering colleges, Visvesvaraya Technological University, Gulbarga, Belgaum and Karnataka.

1.INTRODUCTION

Library automation was started in the 1960s in America1. Since then the trend of library automation has been spreading all over the world. Library automation, which started in India in late 70s in few special libraries, has the now reached most of the academic libraries7. In this age, there is a greater responsibility on the part of the library and information centers to provide the latest and timely information to their users to ease for improving the quality of education in the country1 and this cannot be done without each institution having an efficient library and information systems at its command.

The term library automation has become an umbrella term for many kinds of applications that are used within the library. Various library softwares are being developed for automation. When we talk about the library software, we mean the software needed for library house keeping routines and information retrieval services. It is also termed the "integrated library software" or "integrated library management software" 13 & 9.

According to Prytherch, automated software is used in a wide variety of tasks and contexts from circulation control, acquisitions, cataloging to the provision of web services and electronic databases 14. Automation is actually a combination of hardware and software. Both are necessary for the automating system. In the field of libraries, software becomes more important than hardware 12. General issues that can be considered with any type of software are, the capability to integrate multiple modules; the presence of all needed modules and essential features and strengths of each module; overall software capabilities (e.g. for multi-user access, Internet access, networking and expandability)5; compliance with the latest bibliographic standards (i.e. MARC, CCF and ISO 2709) and the information retrieval standard Z39.50 and some other issues such as installation, output etc.,; functionality (workflow among functional processes); capability for system expansion and

upgrading; its cost, maintenance, training, documentation, supplier's passed performance, credibility and overall suitability of the system11; flexible data structure, simple to learn and use, powerful data management, rapid and powerful searches, flexible report generation, importation of data from any source and reliable data security8 & 2.

This paper highlights on usability of integrated library software of Gulbarga and Belgaum region's engineering college libraries come under Visvesvaraya Technological University (VTU). Opinions were acquired from the whole

Vol.2 | Issue.7 | May. 2014

population. The data collected were analyzed quantitatively and qualitatively, and conclusions were drawn along with recommendations.

2. LITERATURE STUDY

The computers are deployed in libraries to increase the efficiency and effectiveness of their operations and services10. They have also provided management information for taking effective decision. Development and use of information and communication technology (ICT) enable the libraries not only to offer their clientele the appropriate information available within their libraries but also provide access to catalogues of other libraries, both local and outstations1. Library automation, which started in India in late 70s in few special libraries, has the now reached out to most of the academic libraries. In this age, there is a greater responsibility on the part of the library and information centers to provide the latest and timely information to their users to ease improvement in the quality of education in the country and this cannot be done without each institution having an efficient library and information systems at its command16.

Library automation systems are elaborately designed and crafted computer applications that require considerable programming skills together with an extensive knowledge of the functional needs of libraries and the exacting standards that are applied in such systems. Software technologies used in library automation systems include database management systems, client-server architectures, search engine technology, and, increasingly, software used in web-based applications 15.

3. OBJECTIVES

The objectives of this study of automated libraries in Gulbarga and Belgaum region were:

List the software packages used in the engineering college libraries of Gulbarga and Belgaum region; To explore the satisfaction level of the users with the software packages; To trace the problems faced by library staff regarding software use; Find out the librarians' opinion about most desired and needed features of the ILS; and To furnish some suggestions regarding their use and in-house modifications.

4. METHODOLOGY

This article is based on part of a questionnaire survey conducted for the doctoral studies at University of Mysore, Mysore. The study followed by questionnaire survey, interviews, document analysis and personnel communication. The opinion of librarians regarding library software was acquired using a semi-structured questionnaire. A list of the automated libraries of Gulbarga and Belgaum region was prepared with the help of experts, telephone communications with librarians. The following Table 1 gives the list of all engineering colleges taken for the proposed study.

Fable 1. List of Eng	ineering colleg	ges under t	he study
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	I. BELAGAUM REGION
1.	Anjuman Engineering College
2.	B.V.Bhoomaraddi College of Engineering And
	Technology
3.	Basaveshwar Enginering College
4.	BLDEAS College of Engineering
5.	Govt. Engineering College, Haveri
6.	Hirasugar Institute of Technology
7.	KLE College of Eng. And Technology
8.	KLE Institute of Tech.
9.	KLE Society College of Engineering And
	Technology
10.	KLS Gogte Institute of Technology
11.	Malik Sandal Institute of Art And Architecture
12.	Maratha Mandals Engineering College
13.	Rural Engineering College, Hulkoti
14.	S G Balekundri Inst. of Tech.
15.	S.T.J. Institute of Technology
16	SDM College of Engineering And Technology

16. SDM Conege of Engineering And Technology

17. SECAB Institute of Engineering

And Technology

Vol.2 | Issue.7 | May. 2014

1.	Smt. Kamala And Sri Venkappa M.
	Agadi College of Engineering And Technology
2.	Sri Tontadaraya College of Engineering
3.	Vishwanatha Rao Deshpande Rural Institute of
	Technology
	I. GULBARGA REGION
1.	Appa Institute of Engineering & Technology
2.	Basava Kalyan Engineering College
3.	Bellary Engineering College
4.	Govt. Engineering College, Huvinahadagali
5.	Govt. Engineering College, Raichur
6.	Guru Nanak Dev Engineering College
7.	KBN College of Engineering
8.	KCT Engineering College
9.	Navodaya Institute of Technology
10.	PDA College of Engineering
11.	Proudadevaraya Institute of Technology
12.	Rao Bahaddur Y. Mahabaleshwarappa
	Engineering College
13.	Rural Engineering College
14.	SLN College of Engineering

Presently in Karnataka state there are 159 engineering colleges, out of which the study reveals only 34 engineering college libraries, which are comes under the Gulbarga and Belgaum region. In the present study totally thirty four numbers of questionnaires were distributed randomly, out of which 22 were received duly filled in, with all the relevant information requested. The analysis was based on the responses received from the users. In this manner, a list of 22 automated libraries in the region was prepared. To obtain the most comprehensive view of librarians' opinion, the whole population of the 22 automated libraries of Gulbarga and Belgaum region was surveyed. A five-point scale was used to measure the opinions of the respondent librarians. The principle researcher personally visited 22 college libraries for data collection, while data were collected from five libraries through telephone conversations. Two library provided data through e-mail. Due to the personnel visits and contact by the researchers the response rate was excellent, with 64.70 percent of libraries providing information out of 34 libraries in the region.

4. ANALYSIS OF DATA

4.1 Distribution of different library software used in Gulbarga and Belgaum Region

According to the survey results, 10 types of library software were being used by the 22 automated libraries of Gulbarga and Belgaum region. Table 2 presents their names and ranking according to their frequency of the software. These packages were categorized as local (19), foreign (1) and in-house developed software (2). Nineteen (86.36 percent) libraries were using local software, i.e. EasyLib, LiMS, Libsoft, SOUL, NewGenLib, ie-Lib, E-Granthalaya and Netlib. Only one (4.55 percent) libraries were using open source foreign software, i.e. KOHA and two (9.09 percent) libraries were using software packages developed in-house.

Vol.2 | Issue.7 | May. 2014

Sl. No.	Name of Software	Frequency	Percentage
1	EasyLib	7	31.82
2	LiMS	4	18.18
3	Libsoft	2	9.09
4	In-House	2	9.09
5	SOUL	2	9.09
6	NewGenLib	1	4.55
7	ie-Lib	1	4.55
8	E-Grantalaya	1	4.55
9	КОНА	1	4.55
10	Netlib	1	4.55
	Total	22	100.00

Table 2
Distribution of different library software used in engineering college
Libraries of Gulbarga and Belgaum Region

4.2 Opinions on the usage and performance of library software

Opinion among the respondents, the different areas of usage and performance of Library software, i.e. Administrative, Catalogue, Circulation, OPAC, Acquisition and Serials Control modules were sought and the responses were weighted based on the Scale for usage, like 5 = 30 (High usage), 4 = 25 (Good use), 3 = 20 (Fair use), 2 = 15 (Average-use) and 1 = 10 (Least usage). Scale for performance, 5 = 30 (excellent), 4 = 25 (very good), 3 = 20 (good), 2 = 15 (average) and 1 = 10 (below average) and calculated scales are equally distributed in order to calculate weights, further these weights were subjected to cluster (C1, C2, C3, C4) analysis (Ward's method with Interval Squared Euclidian method) and a Dendogram has been drawn and depicted in the following Dendograms.

Figure 1. Usage of Library Software Module (Usage and Performance)



Different clusters among the respondents are given rating for usage and performance of software modules in the above figure 1 as shown. Fourth cluster (C4) parameters: catalogue and circulation modules stand independent against usage rating among the respondents. More number of parameters was clustered in third (C3) group which signifies the usage of

integrated library software modules among the respondent librarians.

4.3 Types of problems experienced during the usage of software

Table 4.34 shows that, 18 (81.82%) librarians are facing problems in data transfer, there are 16 (72.73%) librarians

Vol.2 | Issue.7 | May. 2014

who are facing problems during data input. Similarly 15 (68.18%) librarians are facing problems in information retrieval. 13 (59.09%) librarians are facing problems on data conversion, followed by 12 (54.55%) librarians who are facing problems in printing output, the remaining 11 (50%) librarians are facing problems while printing of the catalogue card. 19 (86.36%) librarians have experienced problems in barcode scanner interface with barcode labels while there are 18 (81.82%) librarians who are facing problems during the retrieval (not matching data). Similarly 17 (77.27%) librarians are facing problems in adjustment of loan periods for different categories of users like for staff and the student community; whereas 16 (72.73%) librarians are facing problems in calculating of over-due fine. 15 (68.18%) librarians are facing problems in renewal of books. Only 11 (50%) librarians are facing problems in reservation of books against books borrowed.

Sl. No.	Type of problems	No. of libraries	Percentage n=22
1	Data transfer	18	81.82
2	Data input	16	72.73
3	Information retrieval	15	68.18
4	Data conversion	13	59.09
5	Printing out put	12	54.55
6	Printing catalogue card	11	50.00
7	Problems in barcode scanner interface with barcode labels	19	86.36
8	Problems in retrieval of not matching data	18	81.82
9	Problems in adjustment of loan periods for different users	17	77.27
10	Problems in calculation of over due fine	16	72.73
11	Problems in renewal of books	15	68.18
12	Problems in reservation of books against Barrowed books	11	50.00

 Table 3

 Types of problems experienced during the usage of software

Note: Figures given in parentheses indicated percentages in respective problems

4.3 Suggestions to improve library software packages

Librarians using local software packages have recommended many improvements (Table 5). Sixteen of them recommended that the software package should be web-compatible and should be updated according to the library's needs. Thirteen librarians recommended that searching modules should be improved; customization according to the library's needs should be allowed and graphical user interfaces provided; five librarians recommended that catalog cards should be printed and the package should be error-free. Three librarians suggested that data entry sheets should have more fields and that a serials control module should be provided, two librarians feels that online help should be available and the package should be MARC-based, while other suggestions (frequency = 1) were that automatic overdue reminder should be sent to users via e-mail, the software should inform if the user is defaulter, the reports should be improved, Boolean search should be provided, should be included, SDI and CAS should be provided and data security should be enhanced, Should be provide printing facility of catalog cards and compatible with different operating systems, Circulation module should be up-to-dated and handle large collections, software should provide article alert service and allow online acquisition, including budget control and also, provide enough field length.

Librarians using in-house software packages also recommended many improvements. (frequency = 2) librarians suggested that the software package should be updated regularly; recommended that the searching module should be updated, that a serials control module should be provided and that the package should be web compatible. Other recommendations were from the respondents of the software users. Whereas the table five will depicted the detailed opinions of the librarians on improvement for their library software

Librarians using foreign open source software packages also recommended some improvements. Librarians using KOHA recommended (frequency = 1) that it should be error free and provide all library modules and software package should not allow duplication of accession numbers, while other recommendations were that it should be multilingual, there should be a relational database, print catalog cards and compatible with different operating systems should be provided, it should be compatible with different operating systems, and that the circulation module should be updated it should be handle large collections, software should provide article alert service and allow online acquisition, including budget control and

Vol.2 | Issue.7 | May. 2014

	Suggestions given by the norarians using local, loreign	and m-nouse sor	ιναις μαςκαξ	205
CLN-	Second and		Frequencies	5
51.190.	Suggestions	Local	Foreign	In-house
1	Should be compatible with any browser	16		2
2	Should be updated according to the library needs	9		2
3	Searching module should be improved	13		2
4	Should allow customization according to the library needs	15		2
5	Should provide graphical user interface	11		2
6	Catalog card should be printed	4		2
7	Should be error free	5	1	2
8	Data entry sheet should have more fields (MARC Compatible)	3		2
9	Serials control module should be provided	2		2
10	Online help should be available	2		2
11	Should be MARC based	2		2
12	Automatic overdue reminder to the users through e-mail	2		2
13	Should inform, if the user is defaulter	5		2
14	Reports should be improved	6		2
15	Boolean search should be provided	2		2
16	Acquisition & budgeting should be included	5		2
17	SDI and CAS should be provided	4		2
18	Data security should be enhanced	7		2
19	Should provide all library modules	6	1	2
20	Should not allow duplication of accession numbers	2		2

Table 5	
Suggestions given by the librarians using local, foreign and in-house software packag	ges

5. GENERAL RECOMMENDATIONS

Should be multilingual

Should be a relational database

Should handle large collections

Should allow online acquisition

Should include budget control

Should provide article alert service

Should provide enough field length

Should provide print catalog cards

Circulation module should be up-dated

Should be compatible with different operating systems

The survey has revealed that librarians in Gulbarga and Belgaum region face many problems in using software packages and they themselves propose the following improvements to fulfill their local needs:

Librarians should conduct a survey of different automated libraries to exchange experiences before selecting software for their library.

Standard library software should be chosen from the available choices, which will facilitate the exchange of data among libraries through computer networking and can be helpful for future resource sharing.

A group of automated libraries should be formed not only at the local level, but also at provincial and national levels.

To assure the greatest degree of user satisfaction and effective services, library staff members' and users' opinions should be considered in selecting foreign or local software, or developing software in-house.

Software providers/vendors, especially those who are providing software free of cost, should also provide proper software training and online help, and should establish online user groups to facilitate librarians and software users to share their problems and solutions with each other.

Seminars/workshops should be conducted to find out the librarians' experiences and views about different library software. Library schools and professional associations can play a vital role in this regard.

The concept of the consortium and its benefits should be introduced to librarians through seminars and workshops. Foreign software that is providing the best services and the highest user satisfaction but very high in cost should be available on low price for developing countries like India.

The checklist developed for this study should be used for software evaluation before selecting it for a library.

Vol.2 | Issue.7 | May. 2014

6. CONCLUSION

The findings of the study reveal that a wide variety of software is being used by the engineering college libraries of Gulbarga and Belgaum region. Most of the libraries purchased or developed software without any exchange of experience with each other and this has a knock-on effect in the development of library networks and software compatibility. The opinions of most of the library staff members were not taken into account in selecting or developing in-house software. No standard tool or directory was available for the selection and evaluation of the software, nor was there any comprehensive literature written and published in Indian scenario discussing the technical and practical aspects of library software and the problems being faced by librarians.

Most libraries were dissatisfied with the performance of their software and most of the software providers were not providing training or online help. There was no coordination among libraries, even among those that are using the same software. Libraries using foreign software were more satisfied than the other two categories of in-house and locally developed software. However, not all libraries can afford to purchase standard foreign software due to its high cost. Librarians find it difficult to enter the bibliographical details of their entire collections into the software and no concept of shared cataloging was found. Furthermore, no platform was available through which libraries could co-ordinate or share their problems regarding automation and software aspects.

However, if the lessons and learned and the recommendations and suggestions which Gulbarga and Belgaum region librarians took the opportunity to express during the survey are implemented and this requires the cooperation of all the libraries then the situation can be steadily improved not only for the region of Gulbarga and Belgaum, but also for the rest of India and indeed elsewhere.

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Vol.2 | Issue.7 | May. 2014

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2	B.V.Bhoomaraddi College of Engineering and Technology	1947	www.bybonline.edu	principal b	vbcet@vsnlnet	0836-237812	0836-23149	15		
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13	Rural Engineering College, Hulkoti	1990	www.rechulkoti.edu.ir	admin @rec	hulkoti eda in	08372-28909	08372-38943	7		
13	S G Balekundri Inst. of Technology	2007	www.sgbitbelgauer.or	sabitbelaat	m 7 smal com	0831-2472590	0851-247256	20	2.521	
14	S.T.J. Institute of Technology	1990	www.stiit.net			08373-266343	08373-26642	7	-	
12	SDM College of Engineering & Technology	1979	www.ideniesticulion.org	cot.sdm ZR	mail com	0836-244746	0836-246430	58 19.1	www.sdmectTibrary.ac.in	
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19	Sn. B.V.V. S's Basaveshwar Engineering College	1963	www.becbgk.edu	principal 24	beclogk edia	06354-23406	08354-2342	94	www.becbgk.edu kbrary.ht	
20	Vishwanatha Rao Deshpande Rural Institute of Technology	2004	www.wdnit.org	grudupidy	ahoo.com	08284-220861	08294-22081	3 www.sident.	ore library she	75.6×5
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29	KCT Engineering College	2001	www.ket.co.in	ketengg gr	ediffinail com	08472-25802	08473-2580	20		
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Sri Tontadarya College of Engineering	1997	www.tcegadag.com	and the and the second s	08172-236913	08372-232446	
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