
Library Automation Software in Self Financing Engineering College Libraries : A Study

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Abstract

Library automation not only improves the image of the library services but also provides additional services to the users with the existing staff. It provides equal opportunities to all staff members for organizational learning, reengineering, and benchmarking. The present study demonstrates and elaborates the library automation software and its types used in self financing engineering college (SFEC) libraries in Tamil Nadu. A well structured questionnaire was distributed among library professionals in engineering colleges in Tamil Nadu to evaluate the library automation software

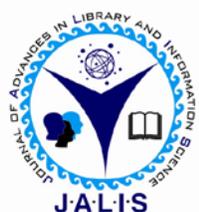
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Introduction

The term library automation was generally used in the past for house keeping operations of the library. Today it has expanded its scope and includes all those technologies which libraries and information centers use for collection, processing, storage, retrieval, dissemination, and transmission of all types of information at local, regional, national, and international level.

According to Daniel, library automation assured a great deal of importance in libraries in the mid-1960s. Since then, it has become a house hold word in librarianship. Library automation may be defined as the application of automatic and semi automatic data processing machines to perform functions such as acquisition, circulation cataloguing, reference service, and serial control. This is the reason for the librarian to urge for developing e-resources for the effective and efficient library service.

Software

Software is the program that runs the computer to produce the required results. It is, in fact, the most important component of the automation process. Someone said, “A computer without software is similar to a man without his brain, or a library with neither books nor librarians”. Therefore, on principle, the selection of software comes before hardware. When we talk about library software, we mean the software needed for library housekeeping routines and information retrieval services.

Hundreds of library packages have been developed and run successfully in advanced countries and there are many directories and other tools available that help librarians to select suitable software for their libraries. The situation in Tamil Nadu is quiet alright, and the government is taking enough measures to develop IT parks in various parts of Tamil Nadu.

Hardware

The application of computer and telecommunication technology has greatly influenced the teaching and research community to get access to information irrespective of space and cost factors. The networking of libraries has dramatically changed the old concept of libraries in new information storage and retrieval mechanism has now become very faster, easier and specifically the computer to manual card system. The application of computer and networking

technologies has improved the efficiency of library services.

Information communication technology is not only highly important for profit, but for individual academic institution to develop and promote technological improvement. Hence the call of the day is to care and share not only information sources, but also the infrastructure facilities and skilled manpower resources among the libraries.

ICT in Libraries

However, privatization, liberalization policies aimed at increasing competition in this strategic sector have increased the role of the private sector in providing ICT infrastructure. They have also hastened the adoption by many developing countries of new networking and telecommunication technologies, helped by their rapidly declining costs. Still, private telecommunication companies hesitate to provide infrastructure for rural and low-density areas and Governments still have a critical role to play in direct investment, creating and enabling environment or such interventions as setting up universal access funds by which companies can help Governments pay for community networks and public access points. Recent estimates suggest that 80 per cent of total ICT expenditures go to content, 15 per cent to software and application technologies and only 5 per cent to infrastructure. In recent years, the Asian and Pacific region have invested more heavily than other regions into this area, channelling close to 10 per cent of its expenditure in basic ICT infrastructure.

A major part of the functionality of the computer and communication technologies will be vitalized by the software and it will form a very significant part of the cost of total ICT solution. This in fact gives ample opportunity for the Third World to capitalize on the ICT trends. While the computers have grown from simple bio-medic or mono medic devices that understood only characters and numbers to Graphical User Interface based ones to totally multi media and virtual reality engines, the software has also kept pace with it. Starting from the era of scientific computation and simple data processing chores, it has matured, traversed the path of expert systems to that of emulating human performance to hear, talk and think and the very futuristic software that will give superhuman powers to the computer. The vital role that software innovation will play in the future will be the basis of our knowledge society. The software will enable the computer to grow from raw number crunching device with poor knowledge content to a

device that is superhuman in every aspect of qualitative and quantitative computing and perception.

Review of Literature

Furness and Graham (1996)¹ presented that libraries used a wealth of different software packages depending upon particular applications.

Moorthy and Karisidappa., (2001)² assessed the use of information technology infrastructure and the extent of use of electronic media in libraries in India. They reported that majority of libraries were using CDS/ISIS as library software with distant second. They also found that majority of libraries under survey had purchased the software while a few libraries reported to have developed the library automation software in-house.

Singh, (2001) identified the Indian Institutes of Technology (IITs) have been recognized all over the world as centres of excellence in learning, training and research in the fields of engineering and technology. This paper describes the present state of computerization in six IIT libraries. The different aspects covered are hardware, software, applications, databases, CD-ROMs, online search services, networking and marketing of products and services. Future plans have also been covered where available. The data was gathered through questionnaires. In addition, annual reports and other primary documents of the libraries were used.

Rai, Namrata (2011) discussed the progress of library management software and to trace out the characteristics and trends of software with special reference to packages that provide either web interface for some of their modules or total web-based solutions for all management modules. The paper also seeks to compare services and facilities and technologies incorporated in library automation packages.

Breeding, Marshall (2011) looked at the development of library technology, focusing on library automation, integrated library systems (ILS), and the use of open source software. Additional topics discussed include the competition between supports of ILS and proprietary library services vendors, the decreases in library finance, and litigation between library service companies over the violation of antitrust laws.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of library automation software is to facilitate access to details of electronic information, print material. Library services to ensure that the information needs of the user community are met, regardless of their location. It enables libraries to deliver valuable information that already exists within library walls electronically to patrons. To create new digital resources locally, and to integrate local digital resources with remote ones. The number of people accessing digital collections through the WWW also shows explosive rates of growth. Finally, internationalization is making a “global information environment” a reality.

Objectives

1. To assess the library automation software facilities available in the SFEC libraries.
2. To identify library application software packages.
3. To assess the value and importance of library application software packages.
4. To compare the software packages used by the SFEC libraries.

Methodology

This study analyse the status of library automation software facilities available in the libraries of self engineering colleges in Tamil Nadu. Nearly 200 questionnaires were distributed among the library professionals of the engineering Colleges libraries in Tamil Nadu. Nearly 140 responses were received. The relevant data are collected from the librarians of the concerned institutions by employing mailed questionnaire method. The respondents have properly answered the queries posed by the researcher. After completion of answering, they returned the questionnaires to the researcher.. The general data interpretation is done with the application of percentage analysis, analysis of variance.

Analysis and Interpretations

Distribution of Questionnaires of SFEC Libraries
Table 1 Questionnaire distributed among Sample Institutions

Sl.No.	Questionnaire Distributed	Questionnaire Received	%
1	200	140 (70.00)	60 (30.00)

As per the above Tale 1, the 200 questionnaires were distributed to the various self financing engineering college libraries in Tamil Nadu.140 respondents are replied out of 200 libraries. But, rest of the 60 (30%) libraries from the self financing engineering colleges in Tamil Nadu are not replied.

Minority Status of Institutions

The self financing engineering colleges in Tamil Nadu are classified under three categories by the government, such as non-minority institutions, religious minority institutions and linguistic minority institutions. The non minority institutions denote the institutions which have non-minority status. The Religious minority indicates the institutions which were categorized as religious minority institutions by the Tamil Nadu state government and it includes Christian and Muslim minorities. The Linguistic Minority Institutions refers to the institutions which were categorized as linguistic minority by the Tamil Nadu state government based on the language such as Telugu, Malayalam, etc.

Table 2 Questionnaires received among SFEC Libraries

Status of Minority	No. of Received	%
Non- Minority	97	69.29
Religious Minority	21	15.00
Linguistic Minority	22	15.71
Total	140	100

Table 2 indicates the questionnaires received the among the various self financing engineering colleges in Tamil Nadu with the status of minority. 97 libraries (69.29%) of the non-minority of the institutions are replied the questionnaires and 21 libraries (15.00%) are responding from the religious minority status institutions and 22 library (15.71) of the institutions are also replied.

Year of Establishment of SFE Colleges based on the Minority Status

The frequency of year of establishment in the Self financing Engineering Colleges in Tamil Nadu has on the minority status been presented in Table 3.

Table 3 shows the year of establishment of various self financing engineering colleges in Tamil Nadu with the status of minority. In total there are 97 non minority status, 21 religious minority and 22 linguistic minority status self financing engineering

colleges in Tamil Nadu. Among the 97 non minority status colleges, 38.10% of the institutions have been established after 2001. Out of the 21 religious minority institutions, 47.62% of the institutions were started during the year 1996-2000 and 4 institutions

after the year 2001. Out of the 22 linguistic minority institutions 50% of the institutions have been established after 2001. It is also evident from the discussion that more than 70% of the institutions were established after the year of 1996.

Table.3 Year of Establishment of SFE Colleges in Tamil Nadu–Status of Minority

Status of Minority	1981-85	1986-90	1991-95	1996-2000	After 2001	Total
Non-Minority	9 (9.28)	4 (4.12)	17 (17.50)	30 (31.05)	37 (38.10)	97 (100)
Religious Minority	4 (19.04)	-	3 (14.30)	10 (47.62)	4 (19.04)	21 (100)
Linguistic Minority	-	1 (4.54)	3 (13.63)	7 (31.80)	11 (50.00)	22 (100)
Total	13 (9.29)	5 (3.57)	23 (16.43)	47 (33.57)	52 (37.14)	140

(Figures in parentheses denote percentage)

Table 4. Library Automation Software Used by the SFEC Libraries in Tamil Nadu

Status	Auotlib	Nirmal	Libasoft	Libsys	Libs I-net	Winsoft	Delplus	Slim++	Winisis	Libsuit	In house Prepared	No Software	Total
Non-Minority	19 (19.58)	8 (8.24)	22 (22.68)	8 (8.24)	3 (3.09)	5 (5.15)	5 (5.15)	4 (4.12)	4 (4.12)	2 (2.06)	10 (10.30)	7 (7.21)	97
Religious Minority	9 (40.90)	1 (4.54)	4 (18.18)	1 (4.54)	1 (4.54)		2 (9.09)				3 (13.63)		21
Linguistics Minority	6 (27.27)	1 (4.54)	6 (27.27)						2 (9.09)		7 (11.54)		22
Total	34 (24.28)	10 (7.14)	32 (22.85)	9 (6.42)	4 (2.85)	5 (3.60)	7 (5.00)	4 (2.86)	6 (4.28)	2 (1.42)	20 (14.28)	7 (5.00)	140

(Figures in parentheses denote percentage)

A study of data in table 4 indicates the status wise availability of library automation software facilities in the self financing engineering colleges in Tamil Nadu. Out of 97 non-minority institute libraries 22 institutions (22.68) are using the Libasoft But 7 (7.21) institutes are not using the automation software in their libraries. It could be noted that 40.90 percent of the religious minority status college libraries have Autolib software 27.7 percent of the linguistic minority status college libraries have Libasoft and Autolib software.

It could be seen clearly from the above discussion that the non minority institutions have mainly Libasoft library software and others have it in low proportion.

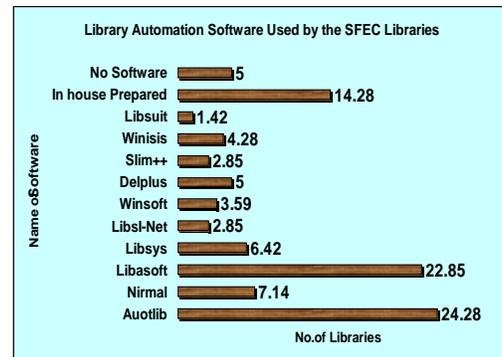


Figure 1. Library Automation Software used by SFEC in Tamil Nadu

ANOVA (Two Way) test for Library Automation Software Vs Institutions

ANOVA Summery Result

ANOVA						
Source of Variation	SS	df	MS	F	P-value	F crit
Rows	316.7222	2	158.3611	22.63118	4.58E-06	3.443361
Columns	440.8889	11	40.08081	5.727896	0.000258	2.258517
Error	153.9444	22	6.997475			
Total	911.5556	35				

ANOVA two way model is applied for further discussion. At one point the computed anova value is 22.63 which is greater than its tabulated value at 5 percent level of significance. Hence variation with respect to library application software used in the libraries is statistically identified as not significant. At another point, the computed anova value is 5.27 which is greater than its tabulated value at 5 percent level of significance. Hence, it is found that the variation in the library application software in the libraries of self financing engineering colleges in Tamil Nadu is significant. A similar result has been observed with respect to duration of library application software in the library network of the selected self financing engineering colleges.

Conclusion

Among the self financing engineering college libraries in Tamil Nadu, 95 per cent of the colleges use the library automation software in their libraries. In the case of different commercial library softwares the Autolib takes the first position and Libasoft the second and In house prepared software the third position in the utilization of the library automation software. But in the case of status of minority wise analysis, the religious minority and linguistic minority institution libraries are fully equipped with library application software in Tamil Nadu.

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