

## Features and Use of Library management software packages in the Libraries of Gauhati University (GU) and Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati (IITG)

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***Abstract** - The study has been carried out in the Gauhati University Library and IITG Guwahati .These two libraries are automated, Gauhati University Library is using SOUL2.0 and Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati (IITG) is using Libsys7 as their Library Management Software. The effectiveness of different features of the library management software( LMS) in the Gauhati University library and IITG are analysed with the help of score points given by the librarians .This paper also studies the challenges confronted by the library professionals towards effective use of LMS are highlighted through the study. Library automation is very important and it can be effectively applied only when all the required components are fulfilled. There are some hurdles which need to be overcome to achieve full-fledged automation. Gauhati University and IITG library are very efficient in utilising most of modules available in SOUL and Libsys7.Library professionals of each library trying their best for the maximum use of their LMS.*

**Keywords:** IITG Guwahati, Library Management Software, LMS, SOUL, Lybsis, Gauhati University Library, Library Automation

### **1. Introduction**

Library automation means not only entering and reading the data in to the computer, but also automation of different functional areas of library. Integrated library management software does all the housekeeping operations of a library which is repetitive in nature. The housekeeping operations include acquisition, cataloguing, circulation, serial control, reference and administrative work. Library management software also known as LMS is a system for a library. It helps the library to trace the library items like books that are ordered, invoice tracking and books borrowed and many more.

### **2. Scope**

This study focusses on the status of automation, usage and features of library management software packages used by Gauhati University and IITG.

### 3. Objectives of the Study

The researcher has set three objectives for the study. These are as follows:

- To know the automation scenario of the institutes under study.
- To know about the Library Management Software (LMS) used and determine the problems arising in its usage in the collegelibraries.
- To study and compare features of both SOUL2.0 and Libsys7 LMS used by Gauhati University and IITG.

### 4. Methodology:

The present study has been carried out by using survey method. Primary and secondary information sources are also used for research work. The survey consists of widely used 'Questionnaire method'. The opinions of librarians regarding library software are elicited using a structured questionnaire followed with interviews. Opinions on different issues pertaining to the library housekeeping operations were sought from the respondent libraries. Questionnaire has been designed keeping in mind the objectives of the study covering all aspects of the study. Moreover for data collection the researcher has also used the interview, onsite inspection & observation methods are also followed. The questionnaire also includes 28 attributes about software with responses made as Very Poor (Credit point-1), Poor (Credit point- 2), Average( Credit point-3) Good ( Credit point-4), Excellent (Credit point -5) The features and facilities of the three LMS packages being used by the institutes under study were compared by calculating the mean value of scores given by librarians/library staffs for each software package.

### 5. A brief introduction to Gauhati University and IITG:

- **Gauhati University:** The Gauhati University is a renowned state university which is located in Jalukbari, Guwahati. It was established in 1948. There are several colleges, institutes etc. Krishna KantaHandiqui library is the main library of Gauhati University established in 1948 serves to the vast number of its users.
- **Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati:** Indian Institute of Technology Guwahati, the sixth member of the IIT fraternity, was established in 1994. The academic program of IIT Guwahati started in 1995. The Library of the Institute was named after the renowned and much revered literary figure SahityarathiLakshminathBezbaroa on 5th December, 2014.

#### 5.1 Year of Establishment:

The following table gives the information regarding the year of establishment of the institutes as well as the libraries.

**Table1:Year of Establishment**

SINo	Name of the Institutions	Year of establishment	Name of the Library	Year of establishment
1	Gauhati University	1948	Krishna KantaHandiqui Library	1948
2	Indian Institute of Technology, Guwahati	1994	LakshminathBezbaroa Central Library.	1995

## 5.2 Status of Library Automation

The following table shows the status of automation in the Libraries. Those libraries which have automated all the housekeeping operations using certain library software packages are said to be fully automated and those libraries which have used only one or two modules of the library software are said to be partially automated.

**Table 2 Status of Library Automation**

Sl. No.	Name of the institutions	Fully Automated	Partially Automated	Software Used	Year of starting automaton
1.	GU	Yes	NA	SOUL 2.0	1995
2.	IITG	Yes	NA	LibSys 7 (web version)	1996

## 5.3: Areas of Automation

Under the study both SOUL and Libsys has all the modules available in it i.e. circulation, cataloguing, acquisition, serial control, OPAC, Web OPAC, and Administration. The following table shows the areas of automation done by the libraries under the study. Both the libraries of Gauhati University and IITG has done most of the areas automated expect for GU which has not cover the Web OPAC area.

**Table 3: Areas of Automation**

Sl. No.	Inst.	Circulation	Acquisition	Cataloguing	Serial control	OPAC	Web OPAC
1.	GU	Done	Done	Done	Done	Done	NA
2.	IITG	Done	Done	Done	Done	Done	Done

## 5.4 Features and Facilities of Library Software: Librarian's perspective

The researcher has tried to evaluate the library software packages being used by the institutes under study on the basis of availability of features and facilities. Since each of the LMS packages offer the core library management features in different flavours and under different names, the researcher has tried to evaluate them on the basis of core functionalities of the software. The features and facilities of the LMS packages being used by the institutes under study were compared by calculating the total credit value of scores given by librarians/library staffs for each software package. A total of 28 main common features and facilities were rated by each institute library. The sum of scores in all these aspects should indicate the overall best software package in terms of features and facilities. The scores thus calculated (Table 5.10) indicate that SOUL 2.0 stands out as the most feature rich software compared to Libsys.

**Table 4: Features and Facilities of Library Software packages**

SI No	Features and facilities of the software	GU SOUL 2.0	IITG LibSys 7	Score
1	User friendly	5	5	5
2	Price affordability	5	4	5
3	Training provision	5	4	5

4	Maintenance & support	5	4	5
5	Import/export of records in standard format MARC/CCF/ISO2709	5	4	5
6	Ease of installation	5	4	5
7	Searching facilities	5	5	5
8	Support to UNICODE	5	5	5
9	Backup facility	5	5	5
10	Network facility	5	5	5
11	Provision for internet connectivity	5	5	5
12	Budget management	5	4	5
13	SDI & CAS	5	5	5
14	Web OPAC	5	5	5
15	Notification to users regarding Updation of software	5	5	5
16	Support to bar coding/RFID	5	5	5
17	Support to Surveillance System	5	5	5
18	Support multiple platforms windows, Linux	5	5	5
19	Support to stock verification	5	4	5
20	Provision of keeping all sorts of reports	5	4	5
21	Addition/Deletion of records	5	4	5
22	Transaction statistics	5	5	5
23	Data import-export	5	5	5
24	Secured user management	5	5	5
25	Remote login	5	5	5
26	Stress Resistance	5	4	5
27	Portability	5	4	5
28	software used by your library has made the level of resource delivery and resource use:	5	5	5
	Total	140	129	140

**5.5: Problems encountering in the use and Upkeep of LMS**

Table 5.5 shows that the librarians mostly have encountered problems in using the Serial Control module of the LMS. Some of the other problems faced by the librarians of Gauhati University and IITG are as follows:

**Table.5 Problems in maintenance of LMS**

Sl. No.	Problems	GU	IITG
1	Competent Staff	Yes	No
2	Authority Control	Yes	Yes
3	Budget	Yes	No
5	Lack of In house Training	Yes	Yes
6	Price of LMS	No	No

## 6: Summary and Findings:

The researcher has carried out the study with the intent to understand the use of Library Software Packages in the Libraries of Institutes of higher learning in Assam.

### Objective 1: To know the automation scenario of Gauhati University and IITG.

The researcher has found that both Gauhati University and IITG libraries are fully automated. Between surveyed libraries Circulation, Cataloguing, OPAC modules are practiced by these two libraries i.e. these modules are 100% in use . Web OPAC is offered by only IITG not GU library. GU is the first institution under the study to start automation in 1995 followed by IITG in 1996. It is seen that 100% surveyed Libraries have used Barcode technology and only IITG has started RFID technology using libsys smart recently in IITG Library.

### Objective 3: To know about the Library Management Software (LMS) used and determine the problems arising in Gauhati University Library and IITG library.

Both Gauhati University Library and IITG library is using LMS , GU is using SOUL 2.0 and IITG is using Libsys7. Some of the problems like Authority control and Lack of in house training is common for both the library. Therefore Provision of regular in-service training should be made mandatory for both the Institutes.

### Objective 2: To study the features of different library software packages used by the Institutes of Higher Learning.

The features and facilities of the three LMS packages being used by the institutes under study were compared by calculating the main score value given by the librarians/library staffs for each software package. A total of 28 main common features and facilities were rated by each institute library. The sum of scores in all these aspects should indicate the overall best software package in terms of features and facilities. The scores thus calculated (Table 5.10) (fig 5.4) indicate that SOUL 2.0 stands out as the most feature rich software followed by Libsys.

## 7. Conclusion:

The library professional should attempt to make the best use of the LMS packages in their libraries. The integrated library systems SOUL and LIBSYS perform the functions adequately with minor limitations. It is important for modern library to use all the modules available in the LMS, however it is observed that due to various reasons some LMS modules are not used. Moreover a sound knowledge for the Library Management software is also another important requirement. Ultimately, with the help of specialized staff with

appropriate knowledge and skills in programming knowledge and willingness of the authority of any institution can increase the usage of Library Management software.

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