



ATTITUDE OF LIBRARY PROFESSIONALS TOWARDS ADOPTING NEW SKILLS AND PROFESSIONAL COMPETENCIES: A STUDY

Mr. Deepak Sharma*
Dr. P. S. Rajput**

ABSTRACT

Attitude of library professionals plays an important role in professional development of the organization and at the same time affects the organizations goals and targets. To ensure place in an organization and to provide users up-to-date information, it is necessary that professionals should continue learning new and latest skills. The present paper is an effort to understand the attitude of professionals towards adopting new skills and professional competencies.

Keywords : Attitude, behavior, competencies, open source, techniques, technology, and perception

1. Introduction :

Technology is changing at a very fast speed. Just look at the short span of last twenty years and you will notice that technology has changed tremendously. These technological developments have also effected the collection of libraries and role of librarians to a great extent. The technological tools like Internet, Kindle, and digital content are giving challenge to professionals to become technologically competent. Venkata¹ described that, "there is an urgent necessity to learn a great variety of professional competencies to accomplish the role of professional librarian in the constantly changing and challenging web environment". Professional competences enable librarians to respond effectively and efficiently to the constant development of new technologies. Cullen² on the opinion that, "academic librarians have shown themselves to be adopted at adjusting to these changes, and been proactive in advancing research, scholarship, and knowledge". In fact, professional librarians must take an active part in this development and offer new services to fulfill their roles as information providers. Wikipedia³ defines "competence as the ability of an individual to do a job properly. Competency is a set of defined behaviors that

provide a structured guide enabling the identification, evaluation and development of the behaviors in individual employees".

2. Review of Literature :

Maesaroh & Genoni⁴ investigated the continuing professional development practices in Indonesian academic libraries. They concluded that with the development of electronic resources for remote access, librarians have required skills to manage access through library website rather than through the traditional ways. Bhatti and Nadeem⁵ studied LIS professionals' prerequisite for developing training programs in University Libraries of Pakistan. The results obtained show that LIS professionals need training related to troubleshooting network technologies, endnote, data compression, Internet, social media such as Facebook, Blogger, Flickr, Twitter, and online databases. Olaniyan & Ojo⁶ conducted a study to examine how staff training and development could effect on the organizational progress. In the study it was suggested that to achieve the goals and objectives of an organization, training and retraining programs should be made compulsory and that organizations should arrange workshops, conferences, and seminars for staff training

*Research Scholar - Department of Library and Information Science, Mohanlal Sukhadia University, Udaipur, Rajasthan

**Assistant Professor - Department of Library and Information Science, Mohanlal Sukhadia University, Udaipur, Rajasthan

and development. Tyson⁷ stressed that with shaping of libraries, library staff should also be transformed to serve the present generation who need information anytime, anywhere. The skills of librarians should link to the technological infrastructure.

3. Objective of the Study:

The main objective of the study is to explore the attitude of library professionals towards adopting new skills and professional competencies.

The specific objectives of the study were:

- i) To explore and investigate the various competency skills of library and information professionals
- ii) To ascertain the attitude of library and information professionals for adopting new skills
- iii) To know the factors affecting behavior of library and information professionals
- iv) To know the competency level of ICT among library and information professionals
- v) To ascertain the specific factors that tends to promote positive attitude of professional towards adopting new skills

4. Methodology :

A structured online questionnaire was developed for the purpose of data collection and questionnaires were distributed personally among the professional librarians using Google drive. 57 professional librarians from different libraries filled the online questionnaire. The

data retrieved from the participants were analyzed using MS Excel 2007 and presented through tables and graphs.

5. Limitations and Scope of the study:

This study is an effort to get the information about attitude of library professionals towards adopting new skills and professional competencies. This study will help the library professionals, decision makers, senior management to get information about various factors affecting the attitude and behavior of librarians. It was tried to get responses from all type of librarians but due to various factors like lack of professional communication, unavailability of contact details, this study is limited to library professionals working in academic and research libraries only. The questionnaire made using Google doc and shared with professionals through social networks and different librarian groups.

6. Analysis of Results and Findings

6.1 Qualifications of respondents

Table 1 shows that out of 57 respondents, 8 have PhD as their highest degree, 9 have M. Phil, 11 are NET qualified, and 25 respondents have Master's Degree in Library Science. Only 1 respondent has a Bachelor's degree in Library Science as highest degree. 3 respondents have not mentioned their qualification. Majority of the respondents have at least a Master's degree in Library Science.

Table 1: Qualifications of respondents

Qualifications	Respondents	
Doctorate of Philosophy	8	(14.04%)
Master of Philosophy	9	(15.79%)
UGC-NET	11	(19.30%)
Master of Library and Information Science	25	(43.86%)
Bachelor of Library and Information Science	1	(1.75%)
Not mentioned	3	(5.25%)

6.2 How do you keep yourself updated?

Table 2 shows that 43 respondents (the highest value) mentioned that they keep themselves updated by attending seminars, conference and workshops. In one of the similar studies, Ernst¹⁵ revealed that attending a conference is a professionally rewarding experience and

it enables participants to socialize with colleagues from other institutions and also to converse with other researchers. 41 respondents told that they updated themselves through social media, followed by 28 respondents mentioning that they updated themselves through training programs. 18 respondents updated

themselves by attending specialized courses and 6 respondents have chosen others option.

Table 2: How do you keep yourself updated ?

Options	Responses
Through social media	41 (71.93%)
By attending seminars/conferences/workshops	43 (75.44%)
By attending specialized course	18 (31.58%)
By attending training programs	28 (49.12%)
By attending training programs	06 (10.53%)

6.3 Do you think by attending workshops/training programs, you are getting real time knowledge?

Table 3 indicates that 40 respondents said that they are getting real time knowledge from workshops and other training programs. Hankins, Melgoza, Seeger and

Wan¹⁶ discovered that conference attendance enables the participants to share research findings, discuss emerging trends in the discipline, interact with experts in the fields, develop publishing and presentation opportunities and build networks.

Table 3: Do you think by attending workshops/training programs, you are getting real time knowledge?

Options	Responses
Yes	40 (70.18%)
No	4 (7.01%)
Up to some extent	10 (17.54%)
Other	3 (5.27 %)

6.4 Do you possess any computer qualification?

Table 4 shows that 40 respondents have computer qualifications. 14 have no computer qualification and 3

respondents have not replied to this question. It is indicative that majority of librarians possess computer qualifications to get expertise on information technology which is essential for today's world.

Table 4: Do you possess any computer qualification?

Options	Responses
Yes	40 (70.18%)
No	4(7.01%)
No Reply	3(5.27 %)

6.5 Have you tried using any of the open source software's Library Management software in your library?

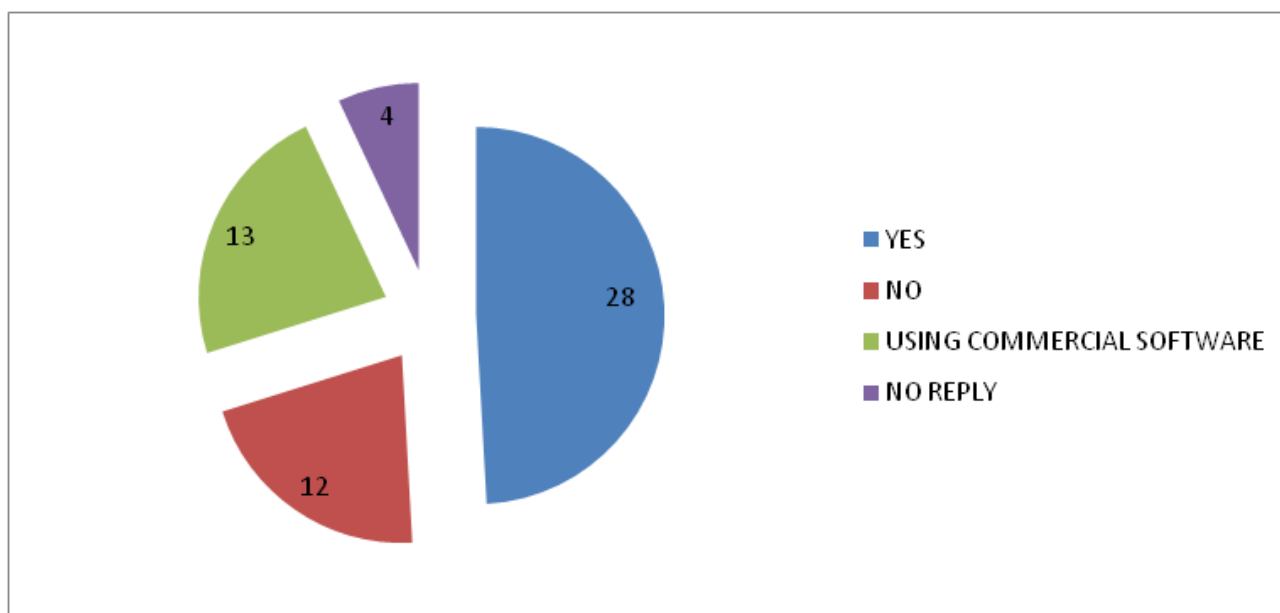
As shown in Table 5, 28 respondents have mentioned that they are using open source software based library management software in their libraries. 12

respondents said no while 13 mentioned that they are using commercial software for library automation. 4 respondents have not replied to this question. This information is very encouraging that librarians have started using open source based library management software, which is indicative that librarians have become technologically competent.

Table 5: Use of Open source LMS software in Library

Options	Responses
Yes	28 (49.12%)
No	12 (21.06%)
Using Commercial Software	13 (22.81%)
No Reply	4 (7.02 %)

Figure 1: Use of Open source LMS software in Library

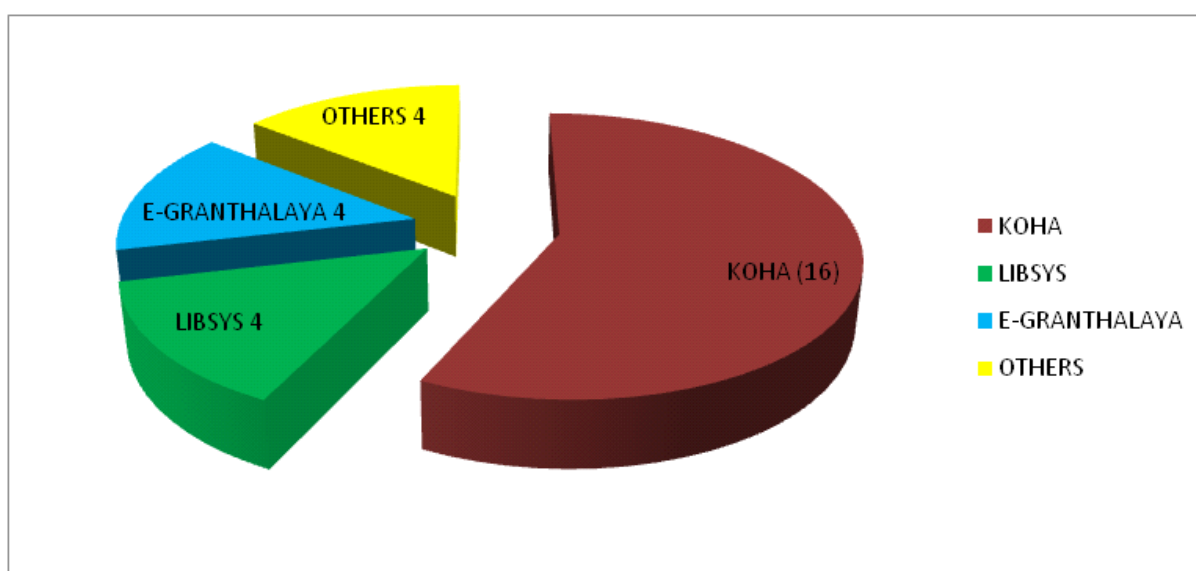


6.6 Those who choose Yes for previous question, please mention name of software

Out of 28 respondents who said yes to previous

question, 16 are using KOHA software for library automation. 4 respondents are using E-Granthalaya and 4 are using Libsys commercial software for library automation. 4 respondents are using other software.

Figure 2: Name of Open source LMS software used in Library



6.7 Have you tried to use any of the open source software's Digital Library software in your library?

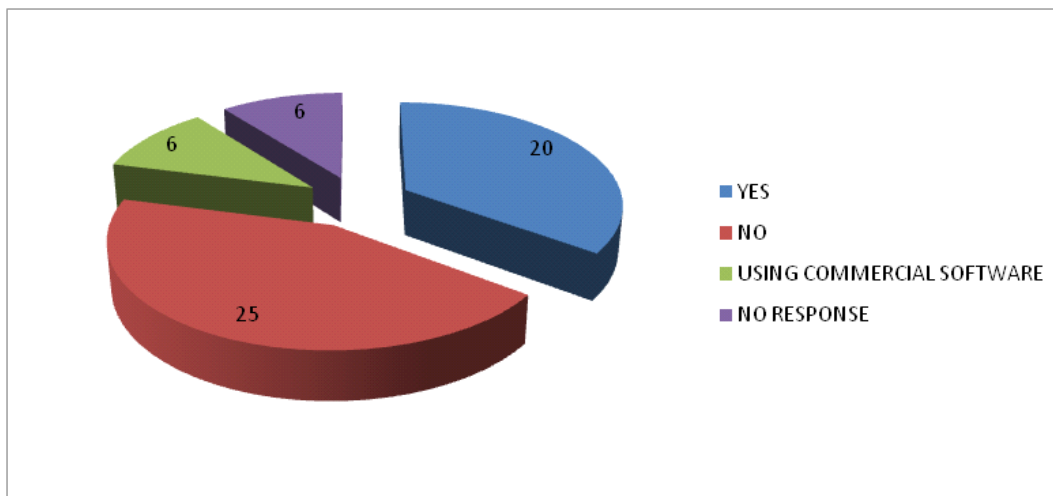
20 respondents have mentioned that they are using open source software based digital library software in their libraries. 25 respondents said no and 6 mentioned

that they are using commercial software for digital library. 6 respondents have not replied to this question. This is indicative that librarians are slowly moving towards digital library software.

Table 6: Use of the open source software's Digital Library software in your library?

Options	Responses
Yes	20 (35.09%)
No	25 (43.86 %)
Using Commercial Software	6(10.53 %)
No Response	6(10.53 %)

Figure 3: Use of the open source software's Digital Library software in your library?

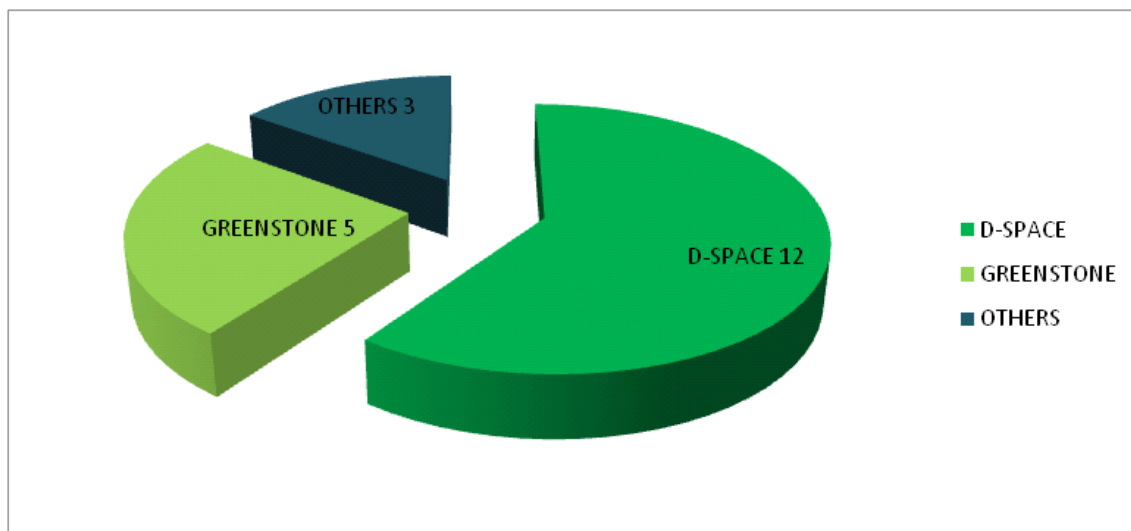


6.8 Those who choose Yes for previous question, please mention name of software.

Out of 20 respondents who said yes to previous

question, 12 are using D-Space for digital library. 5 respondents are using Greenstone and 4 respondents are using other software. This figure is indicative that D-Space is widely used software.

Figure 4: Name of open-source software used for Digital Library



7. Findings and Suggestions :

The different views and feedback provided by librarians have provided the authors some practical and feasible recommendations:

- Majority of the library professionals are trying to keep updated themselves by attending seminars/conference/workshops.
- Social media is an important tool for promotion of information products and services.
- Most of the librarians are using open-source software for library management. Open-source digital library software is not used much and there exists a need for training and awareness.
- Librarians should try to get into any course of computer science/information technology for getting expertise on computer applications.
- LIS professionals should attend training programs particularly on open-source technology for getting expertise.
- Different social networking tools should be used by professionals for promotion of library.

8. Conclusion :

Attitude of professionals is most important if they want to get access to new and latest information and technology skills. This study has brought some excellent facts to light like professionals have positive attitude and majority of them have computer qualification. They have started using open source software for library automation. At the same time this study also indicates that most of the libraries don't have digital library software. Majority of librarians are providing only traditional services to users. There is a need to get training on newly developed services and resources which will enable professionals to offer these services to users. Moreover, it is the duty of library professionals to come forward and try to learn the new skills and competencies for serving the users in a better way.

9. References :

1. Venkata Ramana, P. The changing role of librarian in a challenging dynamic web environment. In 4th International CALIBER 2006: Dynamic Interoperable Web based Information Systems, 2-4 February 2006, Gulbarga, Karnataka. 2006. pp. 170-78.
2. [http://ir.inflibnet.ac.in/bitstream/1944/562/1/18\(cal%2006\).pdf](http://ir.inflibnet.ac.in/bitstream/1944/562/1/18(cal%2006).pdf) (Accessed on 30 November 2016)
3. Cullen, J. Catalyzing innovation and knowledge sharing: Librarian 2.0.: Business Information Review, 2008, 25(4), 253-58.
4. Competence: Human resource, Wikipedia: The Free Encyclopedia. Wikimedia foundation, Inc. 2010. [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Competence_\(human_resources\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Competence_(human_resources)) (Accessed on 26 October 2016).
5. Maesaroh, I. & Genoni, P. Education and continuing professional development for Indonesian academic librarians: a survey. Library Management, 2009, 30(8/9), 524 - 38.
6. Bhatti, R. & Nadeem, M. Assessing training needs of LIS professionals: A prerequisite for developing training programs in university libraries of Pakistan. Chinese Librarianship: An International Electronic Journal, 2014, 37. <http://www.iclc.us/cliej/c137BN.pdf> (Accessed on 26 October 2016).
7. Olaniyan, D.A. & Ojo, L. B., Staff training and development: A vital tool for organizational effectiveness. European Journal of Scientific Research, 2008, 24, 326-31.
8. Tyson, Lisa. Convergence or collision? When IT and library skills
9. meet. <http://conferences.alia.org.au/online2007/Presentations/30Jan.B3.convergence.or.colli-sion.pdf> (Accessed on 26 October 2016).

