

Survey on Koha usage in India

Arunadevi S Lingam^{1*}, Dakshata A. Dukare²

¹Librarian, ²Junior Librarian, ¹Oriental College of Pharmacy, Mumbai, ²Bombay Hospital, Mumbai, Maharashtra, India

*Corresponding Author: Arunadevi S Lingam

Email: arunaslingam@gmail.com

Abstract

This paper represents Koha as one of the first ILSs developed as open source software and has been continuously developed by a growing community of developers across the globe. This can be useful from small libraries to large libraries. This paper includes issues and affairs related to implementation, budget, working on different modules of Koha such as Administration, Acquisition, circulation, cataloguing, serials, Patrons, Tools, and Reports etc. With successful execution of the Survey on Koha Usage in India, it recommends KOHA as most worthwhile open source library software which shall be useful in developing an integrated library system for academic libraries.

Keywords: Open Source Software, Integrated Library Management.

Introduction

Free software are accessible free of expense with source code. As per Free Software Foundation "Free programming" signifies programming that regards clients' opportunity and network. The clients have the opportunity to run, duplicate, appropriate, study, change and improve the product. An incorporated library framework (ILS), otherwise called a Library Management System (LMS). Koha is an Integrated Library System (ILS) that is uninhibitedly accessible to the general population. It is utilized to robotize library capacities from looking at books in and making library cards to progressively managerial assignments, for example, measurable work and setting up branch libraries. It is an incredible framework which, when joined with the ground-breaking search and ordering motor, Zebra, can rapidly recover MARC records from a database with countless records. There is in excess of 500 libraries including academic, open and unique libraries that utilization Koha as their ILS.

Koha was one of the first ILSs developed as open source software and has been continuously developed by a growing community of developers across the globe. It currently ranks among the most widely implemented ILSs in the world, finding use in all types of libraries. The work on Koha started in September 6, 1999 by Catipo Communications following a request from Harowhenua Library Trust, New Zealand. Harowhenua Library Trust implemented Koha in January 1, 2000 and the Trust released Koha under the most popular and flexible GNU General Public License for deriving support from the global community and ensuring future development of the system. The same year Koha was deployed in St. Joseph's College, Devagiri in the Indian state of Kerala. This is considered to be the first Koha installation in India. Thereafter, there have been a number of Koha installations in India and the group of active Koha users in India is growing.

Koha is derived from 'Mayori' language which means "gift". It is used to delegate a contribution that is presented for an event or cause.

Objective

The main objectives of study are as follows:

1. To find out the justifications for the adoption of open source software
2. To find out the satisfaction level of selected libraries in using Koha
3. To suggest ways of improving the use of Koha software by librarians and users in the future

Scope of the Study

Koha is the first open source and broad featured ILS licensed under GNU Public License. From the recent study it is found Koha is boon for Indian libraries. In India many universities and other academic institutions at national level had adopted Koha for library automation. The present study had covered Indian academic libraries.

Data analysis of koha usage in India

Koha is a working programming task utilizing wilful exertion of programmers and library professionals. Library professionals are end users of Koha and their involvement is very necessary in various stages of the software development. Koha user community is a growing one and the project offer variety of non developer roles for library professionals.

Methodology

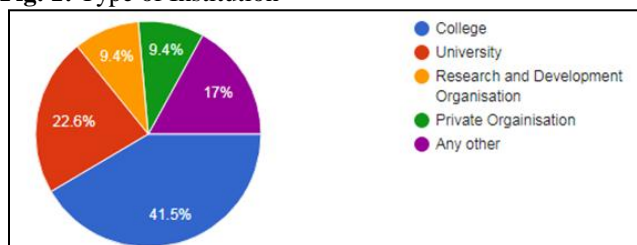
1. Surveying the need for library automation status of Academic colleges.
2. Finding out the requirements for better performance of library services.
3. Identifying the components/modules in which Koha has to be initiated effectively.
4. Installation of software is undertaken i.e. Koha
5. Implementing Koha to exploit each module features.
6. Testing the performance/usability problems of newly implemented Koha in real settings/situations and finding out the potential error/bugs if any.
7. Rectifying the errors/bugs, if found any to facilitate better outcome of the system.

8. Observations and suggestions are to be noted down to include in the conclusion.

Analysis and Results

Entire questionnaire categorized into three segments for the convenience of analysis. They are Usage of Library Software in different sectors, The Problems encountered during usage of Koha and Suggestions by Koha users. The Questionnaire is made in Google form and sent to Indian Library Online Study Circle (ILOSc) group, TISS Group and Bombay Science Library Association (BOSLA) members. I have collected total 53 responses for my study.

Fig. 1: Type of Institution

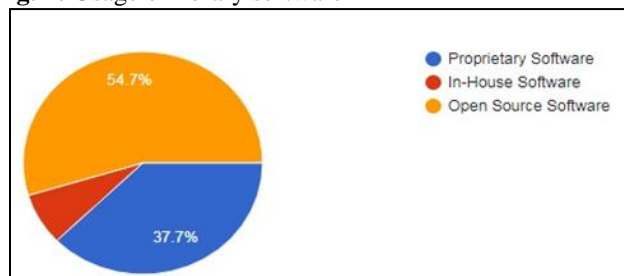


Usage of Library Software

Library software is used in academic and other research organisations. In this survey (41.5%) of libraries are from college, (22.6%) of libraries are from university, (9.4%) of libraries from Private Organisation, (9.4%)

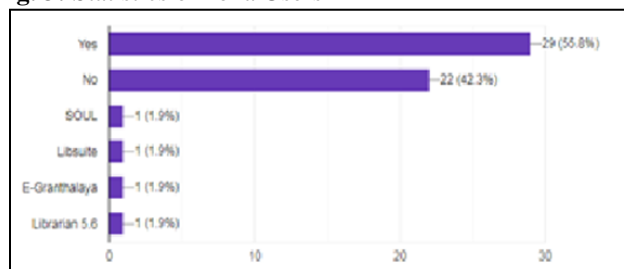
Research and Development Organisation and (17%) libraries from other sectors.

Fig. 2: Usage of library software



In the survey it is found that (54.7%) of people are using Open Source Software, (37.7%) of people are using Proprietary software and the remaining are using In-housing software.

Fig. 3: Statistics of koha Users



Koha Users

In different sectors like academic and research organisations survey conducted all over India, it is found that (55.8%) librarians are said ‘Yes’ i.e. they are users of Koha and (42.3%) are said No that means they are using other than Koha LMS.

Justification for the adoption of open source software

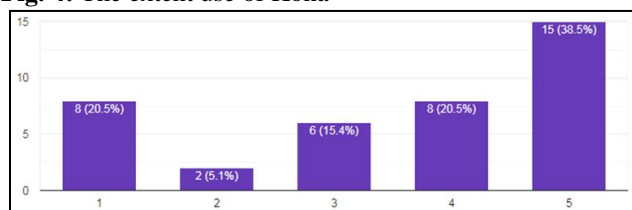
Koha is used by different librarians they have justified by following comments:

1. Flexibility, scalability and continuous support
2. International standard and easy to understand
3. Can customise as per our need
4. Free of cost, User friendly and it’s Web-based
5. Save Money, No interdependence and Opportunity to involve, interact in development process and bring self satisfaction.
6. It is boon for developing countries like India

The extent use of Koha integrated software in your library

The extent use of Koha integrated software is different in different sectors like college, university depending upon their use in their library. I have given 1-minimum to 5-maximum (20.5%) librarians rated – 1, (5.1%) librarians rated – 2, (15.4%) librarians rated – 3, (20.5%) librarians rated – 4 and (38.5%) librarians are rated -5 as shown in Fig. 4

Fig. 4: The extent use of Koha



Problems encountered with the use of open source software in your library

There are different problems encountered by library staff in different sectors. They are as follows:

1. No Problems
2. Books renewal
3. Migration from old data to Koha
4. Technically unskilled

Fig. 5: Problems encountered with the use of open source software in your library

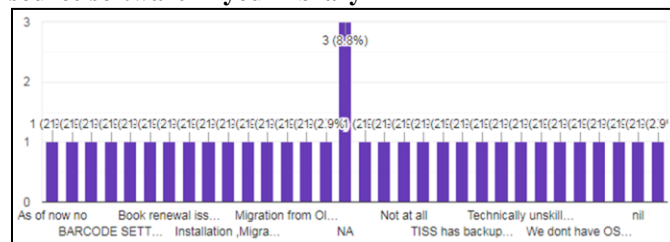
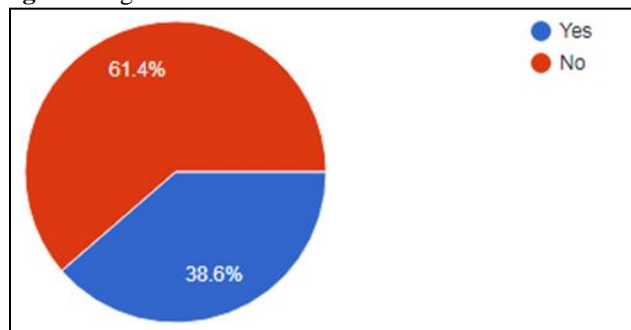


Fig. 6: Usage of Koha modules**Modules used by Librarians in Koha**

Koha is used different libraries from small libraries to large one. They can modify as per their requirement. In the graph it is shown that (38.6%) of libraries use all modules whereas (61.4%) of libraries are using for Circulation and maintenance of Libraries to serve their organisation.

Suggestions received by Librarians:

I have received suggestions from different librarians in India. They are:

1. It should be implemented widely in India as it is free also it gives almost complete solution to Library Management through Automation
2. Koha should have an Mobile App.
3. We want to switch to OSS like Koha and we are looking forward in the near future for the same.
4. Open Source but, implementation requires time and manpower
5. Awareness workshop should be conducted for LIS Professional
6. KOHA is user friendly software, some technical error should be sort out in anticipation
7. Few things can be made simpler like generating barcode labels, library cards etc
8. There is need to do customization of KOHA, specifically Acquisition module with respect to work flow in Indian libraries.
9. Koha is able to satisfy most of demands raised by the library. It is up to date, up to mark and has quality to sustain in market.

Conclusion

Koha software is an extremely handy that is relatively easy to operate or modify and it is cost effective. There is a compelling need for all organizations, including academic institutes to create a pack of software that includes free and source alternatives. Gradual and stable progress is visible in Koha project in terms of quality of source code, number of bugs fixed, developers, vendors, participating libraries, and active users. "It is really important that librarians are

actively involved and don't just leave development to the developers and vendors (Ransom 2014)." We have to promote and encourage the participation of LIS professionals in Open Source software communities for the long term benefits.

Source of Funding

None.

Conflict of Interest

None.

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