

Software Packages for Library Automation: A Case Study of Gujarat Vidyapith Library Automation Software SOUL 2.0

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Abstract: The primary point behind this analysis is to explore the most recent innovation and instruments utilized for Automation of Library and how it is material in housekeeping tasks of the library exercises. This paper presents idea of Library Automation, endeavors for Library Automations and its methodically authentic turn of events, why Library Automation fundamental? To discover the regions where LA (Library Automation) is appropriate, LA Software SOUL 2.0 integrated with The Gujarat Vidyapith Library, Gujarat Vidyapith library describes the name of the current automation packages accessible for libraries and being used on the lookout.

Keywords: Library Automation, Software for Library Automation, SOUL 2.0, Gujarat Vidyapith Library.

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I. INTRODUCTION

Library is a help association serving users to fulfill their data needs. In doing as such, it persistently endeavors to improve and offer better types of assistance. Automation in libraries is one such exertion. Relatively few years prior, libraries utilized card Catalogue, typewriters, and manually appointed due dates. Library Automation, a state-of-the-art technique to help libraries and library supporters to viably utilize library assets, is presently smoothed out due to PCs and programming. Mechanization is a course of involving the apparatuses for effectively working and saving the human power and time. The primary motivation behind library automation is to free the librarian and library staff and to permit them to offer all the more seriously to spread of information and Knowledge. Hence, automating a library is the interaction which rebuilds its capacities and reevaluates its administrations. By keeping a data set as the premise, automation unites new advancements of information storage and retrieval with traditional housekeeping tasks.

A. Library Automation

Automation, particularly in the realm of libraries, plays a transformative role in enhancing operational efficiency, resource accessibility, and user satisfaction. Library automation refers to the use of information and communication technologies (ICT) to manage library operations such as cataloging, circulation, acquisitions, and serials control. As libraries grapple with increasing volumes of information and the growing demand for rapid and

remote access, automation becomes essential for streamlining processes and minimizing human error. It enables real-time data retrieval, integrated resource discovery, and improved inventory management, thereby fostering a more user-centric environment. Furthermore, automation supports better data analytics and decision-making for collection development and user services. According to Thanuskodi (2012), automated systems not only reduce the workload of library staff but also enhance the accuracy and speed of services, making them indispensable in the digital age. Thus, embracing library automation is vital for libraries aiming to remain relevant, efficient, and aligned with the evolving expectations of modern users.

B. Selecting Automation Packages

An effective library automation system should be user-friendly and require minimal training, enabling both staff and users to navigate it with ease. The popularity of a software package often reflects its reliability and user community, making it a practical choice for libraries. Well-designed interfaces with logically arranged functions and comprehensive help messages enhance user experience and operational efficiency. Additionally, automation software should support multi-user and unlimited user access, offer multilingual and multimedia capabilities, and comply with internationally accepted standards such as MARC, AACR-2, Dublin Core, and Z39.50. Comprehensive training and ongoing support through email, discussion forums, and user manuals are vital to ensure successful implementation and long-term usability (Mittal, 2013).

C. Structure of Automated Library

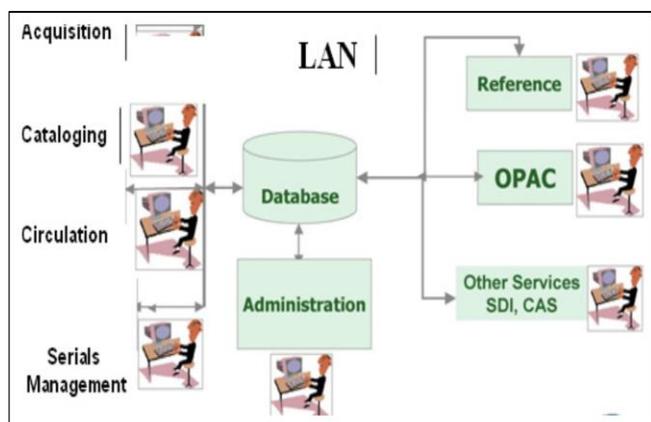


Fig 1 Structure of Automated Library

D. Modules

- Acquisition
- Cataloguing
- Circulation
- Serial Control
- Administration
- OPAC
- User Services - SDI, CAS

II. RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

The Research is based on the case study of Gujarat Vidyapith Library Automation software SOUL 2.0. While conducting a social science research the methodology to be followed should be ascertained. Therefore, for preparing a proposal for Gujarat Vidyapith library on SOUL 2.0 .it was really important to make a study on and an about the libraries those are already using SOUL 2.0 as a library management package. Thus, it should be a good proposal for the Gujarat Vidyapith Library install SOUL 2.0 for the benefit the employee and the users. For Research methodology used Interview technique by used of Survey method.

III. SELECTION OF AREA

Gujarat Vidyapith Library is a central library with glorious history during independence struggle. It is located in main campus of Gujarat Vidyapith. It has collection of more than 6 lakhs books, volume sets, rare books and reference. Two more Libraries at Sadra and Randheja, Gandhinagar have separate buildings. In 12th Plan, construction of two more levels at Randheja is underway. Since its inception it has also served citizens of Ahmedabad and Gandhinagar, making it academic as well public library. A separate huge section Gandhi Bhavan has literature by and on Gandhiji. Library has been acquiring literatures published on Mahatma Gandhi's life and thought since its inception. This has

now been developed in to an independent Gandhian book. The collection contains materials written by Gandhiji, books and journals on Gandhiji's life, source materials on Gandhian thought, compiled works on Gandhian thought, translated literature and literature on Ghanaian constructive programmes. Library also maintains copyright section consisting of 120372 books. On an average library is serving to about 5000 to 6000 users every year. So, the area is selected for research.(Gujarat Vidyapith Library, 5th May 2025)

IV. OBJECTIVE

The aim of this work is to discuss about Gujarat vidyapith library automation work. How GVP library is using SOUL 2.0 library software.

- To get knowledge about the reason of adopting soul 2.0 library Software.
- To check the functionality and limitation of soul 2.0 software
- What kind of information services are provided to user through use of soul 2.0 software.
- Investigate whether employee efficiency has improved due to soul 2.0 library software.
- To find out which menus and modules are most used.

V. SOUL 2.0 LIBRARY SOFTWARE

Software for University Libraries (SOUL) is a state-of-the-art integrated library management system developed by the INFLIBNET Centre to meet the specific needs of college and university libraries across India. Designed to function in a client-server environment, SOUL is user-friendly and supports multilingual capabilities through UNICODE, making it suitable for all types of libraries, including academic and school libraries. The software complies with international standards like MARC21, AACR-2, MARCXML, NCIP 2.0, and SIP 2 protocols, enabling seamless cataloguing, electronic surveillance, and RFID integration. SOUL 2.0 supports a range of RDBMS platforms such as MySQL and MS-SQL, offers robust OPAC features, customizable report generation, support for digital resources, and tools for tasks like stock verification and book bank management. Its affordability and comprehensive support make it a reliable solution for library automation in India. (inflibnet, 5th May 2025)

➤ Modules of SOUL 2.0

The SOUL 2.0 consists of the following modules

- Acquisition
- Catalogue
- Circulation
- OPAC
- Serial Control
- Administration

Each module has further been divided into sub modules to cater to functional requirement of libraries. The Software for University Libraries (SOUL), developed by

INFLIBNET, is an integrated library management system that supports automation across all key library functions. The Acquisition Module streamlines processes like suggestions, ordering, payment, and budget control, with auto accessioning and comprehensive vendor management. The Catalogue Module allows for retrospective conversion and new cataloguing using MARC21 standards, Unicode support for multilingual data, copy cataloguing, barcode generation, and authority control. The Circulation Module handles memberships, transactions, ILL, overdue charges, stock verification, and is compliant with NCIP 2.0 and SIP2 for RFID and electronic surveillance. The OPAC Module offers powerful search tools (simple, Boolean, advanced), with web-based access and options to download records in various formats. The Serial Control Module, based on the KARDEX system, manages subscriptions, article indexing, e-journal cataloguing, and issue check-in. Lastly, the Administration Module provides system-level configuration, user rights management, master database control, and database backup. The latest version, SOUL 3.0, released in February 2021, adheres to international standards such as MARC21, AACR-2, Unicode, ISO-2709, and supports RFID applications for self-check-out and check-in, ensuring seamless, multilingual, and secure library operations. (inflibnet Centre, 2025)

➤ *Gujarat Vidyapith & Gujarat Vidyapith Library*

Gujarat Vidyapith, founded by Mahatma Gandhi on 18th October 1920, emerged as a pioneering institution rooted in Gandhian philosophy and values. Recognized as a *Deemed University* since 1963, it is funded by the University Grants Commission (UGC) for offering diverse higher education programs. Originally established as Rashtriya Vidyapith, it was a part of the Non-Cooperation Movement aiming to promote national education based on self-reliance, truth, and non-violence. Gandhi remained its lifelong *Kulpati* (Chancellor), shaping the institution's educational ethos to create individuals of character, cultural grounding, and national commitment (Gujarat Vidyapith, n.d.).

The university follows an integrated educational model ranging from Nursery to Doctorate level, where the medium of instruction is primarily the mother tongue. Emphasis is laid on values such as truth, non-violence, dignity of labor, religious equality, and village-centric education. The curriculum includes community work, manual labor, hand spinning, khadi wearing, and experiential learning, thereby preparing socially responsible individuals. Teachers and students alike commit to truth, self-reliance, religious tolerance, and Gandhian ideals as part of their academic and personal journey (Gujarat Vidyapith, n.d.).

The Central Library of Gujarat Vidyapith has been an integral part of the institution since its inception in 1920. It is one of the richest repositories of books, periodicals, and manuscripts in Gujarat and serves not only students and faculty but also the general public, with membership available at a nominal fee. In the academic year 2016–17, the library had 1,619 active members (Gujarat Vidyapith, n.d.).

Located at the main campus, the library holds a collection of over six lakh items, including rare books, multivolume sets, and reference materials. It has two branch libraries at Sadra and Randheja in Gandhinagar, with infrastructural expansion underway as part of the Twelfth Plan.

Functioning under the governance of a Library Committee, which includes the Vice-Chancellor, Registrar, faculty members, subject experts, and professional librarians, the Central Library plays both academic and public roles. A distinctive section, Gandhi Bhavan, has been curated to preserve and promote Gandhian thought. It includes writings by and on Mahatma Gandhi, translated works, constructive program literature, and a dedicated photo gallery, making it a unique intellectual and historical resource.

Architecturally, the library building features a composite R.C.C. frame structure with high ceilings exceeding five meters on each floor, allowing ample natural light and maintaining a cool interior. Spread across 6,670 sq. meters, the three-floor facility can accommodate over 350 readers at a time. Solar panels installed on the roof contribute to sustainable energy use. The library is operated by a team of technically proficient staff, ensuring smooth functioning and modern library services (Gujarat Vidyapith, n.d.).

➤ *Library Collection*

The library houses a vast collection comprising:

- Books: 6,54,212 volumes
- PhD Theses: 448
- M.Phil Dissertations: 1,256
- Master's Projects: 8,116
- Journals: 216 active subscriptions
- Rare Materials: 691 manuscripts, 25 microfiches, 39 films, 269 video cassettes, 1,911 slides, 32 linguaphone records, 162 photographs, 181 taped cassettes, and 1,271 CDs/DVDs

➤ *Acquisition of Documents*

Library acquisitions follow Government of Gujarat (GoG) guidelines and include both domestic and international sources. Suggestions are actively collected from faculty, students, and general members. New arrivals are shared with stakeholders via email notifications. The library also archives newsletters, house journals, and annual reports of various organizations.

➤ *Reference Collections*

The reference section features over 25,000 volumes, including:

- Dictionaries
- Directories
- Encyclopedias
- Yearbooks
- Almanacs

- Bibliographies
- Manuals and Geographical Sources

Archival access to major English (e.g., *The Hindu*, *Times of India*) and vernacular newspapers (e.g., *Gujarat Samachar*, *Sandesh*) is also available. Soft PDF access to journals like *Kumar* and *Forbes Quarterly* is facilitated. A dedicated collection of PhD/M.Phil theses and exam preparatory materials (UGC-NET, UPSC, GPSC) is available.

➤ *Gandhian Section*

A unique asset is the Gandhi Bhavan—a hall entirely devoted to literature *by and on Mahatma Gandhi*. This includes:

- Gandhiji's writings
- Secondary literature
- Constructive program materials
- Rare translated works
- A photographic archive documenting Gandhiji's life and ideology

➤ *Copyright Section*

Approximately 1,200 books are added annually under the copyright law. The Copyright Section holds 1,20,372 books, with 45,000 digitized in collaboration with C-DAC.

➤ *Digital and Virtual Access*

Gujarat Vidyapith is actively engaged with INFLIBNET, contributing to Shodhganga with 84 uploaded theses. The library provides online access to e-resources including Emerald, Springer Link, ISID, and JCCC via UGC INFONET.

➤ *Automation and IT Facilities*

Library automation uses SOUL (Software for University Libraries), with full OPAC accessibility. The library includes:

- 18 Computers for student and faculty use
- 15 PCs for LIS students
- 32 systems for internal library operations
- 4 scanners, 8 printers, and a multi-function printer with reduction and extension features
- Internet access is powered by ERNET India, providing seamless connectivity across departments.

➤ *Library Outreach*

Serving 5,000–6,000 users annually, the library supports not only Gujarat Vidyapith's students and faculty but also the general public, maintaining its role as a community-centric institution.

VI. DISCUSSIONS OF RESULTS AND IMPLEMENTATIONS OF THE STUDY

- With the data collection form Librarian, Library Staff and IT Staff of Library who are dealing with Soul 2.0 Library Automation Software. It is learnt that the library of Gujarat Vidyapith has really a great collection of

Books, M.Phil PhD, Thesis, Manuscripts, and Gandhian Books. The Librarian has the vision and view for making their Library rich with the valuable assets of the Library Materials.

- The study reveals that the first database was Sybase and Library staff was working on it. In 2004 that data converted to Soul. As referenced before complete database of all library records are accessible in library software Soul. The retrieval of books data is accessible through OPAC & Web OPAC.
- After changes in Soul Software, it had been converted from Soul 1.0 to Soul 2.0. Gujarat Vidyapith Library is using all the modules of Soul 2.0 nowadays. In begin Data Entry had done in Soul by trainee and Library Staff. Inlibnet had transferred all the data in Soul. As well training given to Library Staff Members by Inlibnet. Some data transferred by Library Staff Members & IT Staff.
- Gujarat Vidyapith Library had designed some Reports and given to Inlibnet for Customized and Inlibnet had customized some of Reports in Soul like Issue/Return & Purchased. Total 12 Client connected with Soul Main Server.
- Two Additional Libraries at Sadra and Radheja, Gandhinagar have Separate Structures. Both Libraries have remotely access Soul 2.0 by Gujarat Vidyapith Library. Gujarat Vidyapith Library has created database of New Arrival Books in Soul 2.0. With the help of this Users can easily get the information of new arrival. All kind of Reports are generated by staff members in Soul 2.0.
- Binding of Journals & Periodicals of Back Volumes procedure has done by Serial Control Module of Soul 2.0. As a part of Course Curriculum of B.Lisc & M.Lisc Students are Studying Soul 2.0 Library Software in Gujarat Vidyapith.
- For General Users and Gujarat Vidyapith Students, each year Gujarat Vidyapith Library arranged User Orientation Programs. In This Program they provide guidance of how to operate Soul 2.0 and how to search with different parameters. As well library Staff giving Guidance to Access when any query accrued by Users or Students.

VII. CONCLUSION

The Gujarat Vidyapith Library plays an important role in supporting both education and community. With its large collection of books, theses, and other resources, it helps students and staff in their learning while also preserving important history and culture. The library uses modern technology like automation and digital archives to stay updated, and it also shares its resources with the public. By following Gandhiji's values, the library continues to provide knowledge and promote values like simplicity and self-reliance for everyone.

SUGGESTION FOR FURTHER STUDY

Upcoming Researches may do study on New Version of Soul 3.0 which has released in Feb 2021 as Library

Automation software. To study of how new version of Soul 3.0 is working and new added Features and modules which can smooth library function.

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