

# MyLISA

No 8, July 2014

NEWS

Right  
to  
Access

**The common man has no direct stake in this movement, but whether he knows or not, he benefits indirectly by the OA Movement**

## Open Access Philosophical bases and Trends

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Libraries are as old as the civilizations that built universities. But Librarianship is a young profession, hardly two centuries old. Library and Information Science (LIS), too long a phrase for a profession's title, is even younger, trying hard to find a solid footing in an increasingly fragmented universe of digital information. LIS is younger than the world of printed knowledge which has given the status of a profession to the librarians but, older than the world of digital knowledge that has triggered a galloping growth of Information Science (IS) as a new discipline attracting a large number of people from diverse professional groups as practicing information managers. Spiraling growth of information in terabytes by seconds, and the complexity of capturing and managing this non-stop tidal wave to extract value out of it, is creating a vast new opportunities in both the industry and the academia. IS today is driven by two groups: (a) the IT group that is trying to redefine its core application competence in Information management; (b) the application domain groups, each evolving its own special information management needs and associated skill-sets.

The Library Science (LS) is the oldest among the domain groups to evolve a theoretical foundation for organizing information in the publications domain as recorded human knowledge and to master the art of managing it on an independent disciplinary scale. The society has recognized the LIS profession fairly well associated with the printed knowledge. The society is also well aware that well managed good libraries are important and e-libraries are the future in this domain. But it doesn't seem to know or believe that LIS profession has a legitimate and professional stake with the digital knowledge or information of all kinds.

The IT group's dominant position in the information management space on large and industrial scale accords a favorable position to this group as an emerging professional group in IS discipline. This is well reflected in the engineering schools today offering Information Science as independent graduate programs to support the manpower needs of the IT industry.

Here is the LIS profession's dilemma. While the dilemma appears for a switchover, it is intrinsically for articulation to assert its historic supremacy to be a natural stakeholder of the new IS profession. Should LIS continue with its print glory that is widely being transitioned to digital library paradigm, or expand its limited role in L-space beyond the library domain?

LIS as a practicing profession will become a subset of IS like GIS (Geological Information System), HIS (Health/Hospital Information System), Bio-informatics, etc. There may not be independent regular University Departments like LIS to teach these subsets. But, they all have as much growing importance. The transformation for LIS requires a strategy similar to what we call in our industrial parlance an M&A (Mergers & Acquisitions) strategy. LIS profession may need to merge its identity without shedding it. It will be a big challenge of the millennium to the professional leadership of LIS.

It is heartening to see MyLISA at thirteen growing vibrant. Its website and programs are reflective of its enthusiasm. I am happy that this teenager is quietly challenging the KALAs and ILAs to wake up. I fondly hope that this youthful spirit will accelerate and sustain beyond its aging. I wish MyLISA to spring new leadership to take forward the challenge of expanding the scope and space of LIS profession in IS discipline.

**N. V. Sathyanaarayana**

Chairman & Managing Director  
Informatics India Limited, Bangalore

# About MyLISA

Mysore Librarians and Information Scientists Association (MyLISA) is a professional association established in 2001 to provide a platform to share and exchange information among LIS Professionals working in and around Mysore. It has been since then very much active in professional development. MyLISA over the years has carved a niche for itself as one of the unique regional association in the field of library and information profession.

MyLISA was established to achieve the following objectives:

- To promote and develop high standards of librarianship and of library and information services in the Mysore region, and to secure greater co-operation between libraries.
- To present the profession of librarianship in Mysore region, and to promote the professional interests of members.
- To establish and maintain an Association for persons and organizations concerned with and interested in library and information work.
- To unite all persons interested and engaged in library, documentation and information profession by such means as conferences, seminars, meetings and symposia and to promote research.
- To create awareness and update the knowledge and skills among the professionals.
- Provide opportunities for enrichment of social and cultural interest of the members.
- To interface with other professional associations for mutual benefits.

## MyLISA Executive Committee for the Year 2013-15

### Officer Bearers:

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Dr. C.P. Ramasesh - Vice President  
Dr. N.S. Harinarayana - Secretary  
Mr. N. Naganna - Joint Secretary  
Mrs. Ambika Devi - Treasurer  
Dr. Vasantha Raju N. - Public Relation Officer

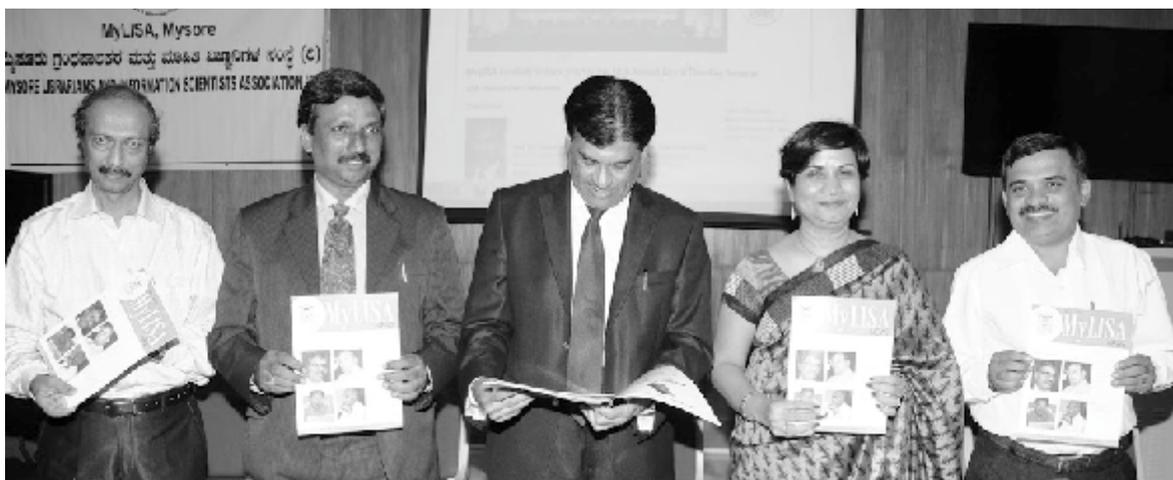
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Mr. Vijay Nag

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# Events @ Glance

Dr. N.S. Harinarayana, Secretary, MyLisa



**M**ylISA Annual Day has come again. So soon a year has passed by. When we look back, it gives a sense of satisfaction for what we could achieve. It is the time for MyLISA to cherish the progress made in the previous year, of course with out becoming complacent. Keeping in mind the space constraint, let me pen down summary of various activities of the year (starting from annual day of previous year to the current year's annual day) with my own impressions as the Secretary of the association.

When MyLISA was started in 2001, there was an apprehension about its sustenance for a long time. It has completed already 13 years. Now it is in its teens. It has almost completed its play age. Now is the time for its physical and mental growth. We believe that the growth that what MyLISA achieves during this period will define the adolescent life it will have in future. It is with this sense of responsibility the new executive committee took over the charge on May 29, 2013.

As its first activity, a one day workshop on 'Publish or Perish' was organized on July 20, 2013. I don't hesitate to state that the workshop witnessed an astounding success. More than 150 researchers participated representing almost all subject areas from the university campus and outside. For the first time, faculty members from other disciplines participated in MyLISA's function in such a large numbers. There was an overwhelming demand for organizing such academic events more. This resulted in starting of a workshop series called 'Publish or Perish'. We were able to conduct the following two more workshops during the year under this series:

- One Day Workshop on 'Literature Review' on November 30, 2013 at Mysore University Library, University of Mysore, Mysore.
- One Day Workshop on 'Questionnaire Design & Analysis' on June 29, 2014 at St. Philomena's College, Mysore

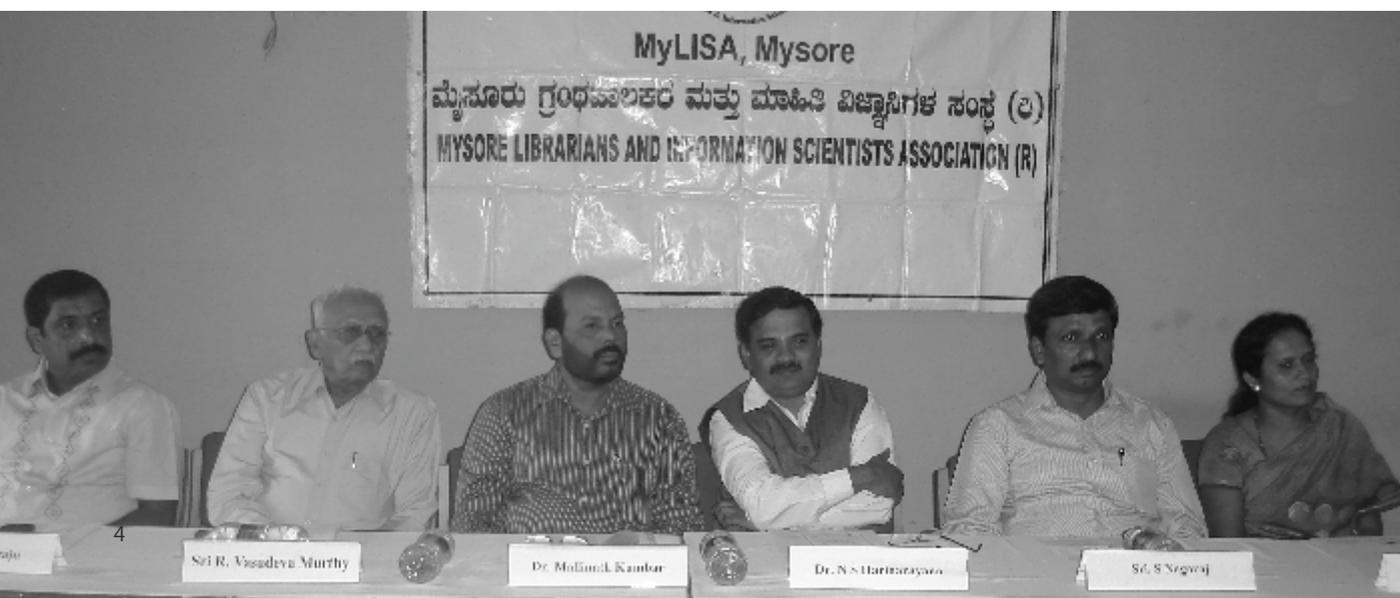
The Annual Day Event was celebrated on July 20 2013. Prof. K.S. Rangappa, Vice-Chancellor, University of Mysore, Mysore released the 'MyLISA News'. Retired librarians Sri H.Y. Mahakoteshwar from CFTRI, Sri Siddalingaswamy from JSS College, Smt. Ambica Devi from Department of Archeology, Smt. Savithri G from SJCE College, Smt. Uma Devi from JSS Women's College, were felicitated by the Chief Guest Prof. K.S. Rangappa on the occasion. Prof. Shalini R. Urs presided over the function.

One of the tasks that the new committee had was to increase the number of life-membership. We are happy to announce that we have doubled the life-membership within a year. We have now more than 150 life members. It is a record of a sort that the new committee could attract more than 75 professionals to MyLISA within one year, which was more that what was done for the past 12 years collectively. The list is given at the end of this edition of News.

MyLISA believes in working together. It has associated itself academically in organizing the following programmes in collaboration with other institutes in Mysore. I take this opportunity to thank the collaborating institutes.

- Librarians' Day on August 12, 2013 at Amrita School of Arts and Sciences, Amrita Vishwa Vidyapeetham, Mysore campus.
- Seminar on Computerization of School Libraries on November 18, 2013 at Pramati Hillview Academy.
- Workshop on 'Softskills for LIS Professionals' on April 28, 2014 at Centre for Proficiency Development and Placement Services, University of Mysore, Manasagangotri, Mysore.

Another proud success story this year was MyLISA OPENS (Orientation Programme for Enthusiasts in NET/SLET examinations) conducted at Mahajana's College, Mysore. It was a training programme for those who appeared UGC NET and KSLET





examinations. The programme was conducted between September 2013 and December 2013 on every available holiday during the period. More than 75 teaching hours were spent. Of the 56 candidates participated, 22 of them cleared the SLET exam and 2 participants cleared all India UGC NET exam. This is the record taking the pass percentage from Mysore in previous years. The crown in the jewel of the success of this program is that Smt. M. Veena of Mahajana's College, who attended the training programme, scored the highest marks and shared the first place with another girl in the Karnataka SLET examination. MyLISA congratulates Smt.Veena for her achievement.

A much attended and appreciated workshop was conducted on 'Stock Verification and Loss of Book in Libraries' on May 29, 2014. The purpose of the workshop was to address the issues related stock verification, a regular event in libraries. In addition the workshop aimed to throw some light on decision making issues related to loss of books, mutilated books and weeding out of books from stock. There were 94 participants from various parts of Karnataka and neighboring states.

In collaboration with Prof. K.S. Deshpande Endowment Lecture Committee, an endowment lecture on 'Digitization of Manuscript' by renowned scholar Prof. M.A. Lakshmitatachar, Director, Samskrithi Foundation, was organized on May 5, 2014. It was well attended function and attracted the coverage in many news papers of the city.

In addition to above MyLISA started a new initiative called 'Email alert' through which the

members of MyLISA were alerted and given information about special days/weeks observed globally/nationally. The email alerts were sent on 'Librarians day'(August 12), 'Software Freedom Day' (September 13), 'Open Access Week' (October 22 to 26), and 'Social Media Week' (February 17-21).

An essay competition for students on any one of the topics was invited. The topics were – 'K.S. Deshapande: The Man and the Librarian'; 'Public Libraries of India in Prospect'; and 'Do libraries wither away?' The winners of the competition are Ms. Syamili, Research Scholar, Department of Library and Information Science, Pondicherry University, Pondicherry for the First Place and Ms. Rekha Mulimani, Student, Department of Library and Information Science, University of Mysore, Mysore for the Second.

MyLISA also could arrange two lectures whose details are given below.

- Brain storming lectures on 'Do Books Wither Away?' on February 28, 2014 at Mysore University Library, Mysore. Prof. Anantharamu, Retd. Professor of Kannada and Dr. Niranjana Vanalli, Director, CPDPS, University of Mysore, Mysore expressed their views on the subject.
- Lecture on 'Open Access: The Philosophy and Trends' by Sri L.J. Haravu, Retd. Librarian, ICRISAT, Hyderabad on October 26, 2013 at SBRR Mahajana First Grade College, Mysore.

MyLISA has raised the bar for itself. We hope to do much better next time. Ideas from any corner will be gratefully accepted. Come and join hands with MyLISA.

**Cover Article**



# **OPEN Access**

Philosophical bases and Trends

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By 'open access' to literature, we mean its free availability on the public internet, permitting any users to read, download, copy, distribute, print, search, or link to the full texts of these articles, crawl them for indexing, pass them as data to software, or use them for any other lawful purpose, without financial, legal, or technical barriers other than those inseparable from gaining access to the internet itself.

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**By L. J. Haravu**

The author is UNESCO Expert on implementation of technology based library services in South East Asia and Arab Countries. He is a renowned author and his book "Library Automation: Design Principles And Practice" is used as text book.



**T**he Open Access (OA) movement is now at least two decades old. We could safely say that the movement has matured. Its adoption and impact has varied from region to region; there have no doubt been teething problems, as well as scepticism among institutions, governments and individuals.

What this paper hopes to do is to view OA from the broad ideals, causes and principles that have driven the many social, cultural, religious, spiritual, political and scientific movements that the world has seen. The importance for the world of OA, technologies and spinoff's that the movement has spawned, Barriers to OA, the role of librarians and information professionals, not only in supporting this movement, but in extending it through proactive actions and activities. Finally, the paper attempts to look at the possible future of the movement.

### **The OA Movement**

All movements are born out of one or more fundamental causes which somehow attract hundreds or thousands of people. Causes of social movements fall into a wide spectrum starting from something widely seen as evil to causes that were seen as restrictive of human freedom and aspirations at the other end. All movements have had one or a few protagonists who inspire the rest. Sometimes these movements generate violence. The wider the population that a movement attracts, and wider the number of categories of stake holders that it attracts, the greater the impact of the movement. For instance, the movement that was started in India two years ago by Anna Hazare against corruption was a strong movement involving thousands of supporters all over the country and abroad. All categories of users: common people, businessmen, industrialists,

bureaucrats, politicians had a stake in the movement. Another characteristic of movements is that it has by-products. India has had many social movements; we are all familiar with the Freedom movement. The Swadeshi movement was a by-product of the freedom movement. Movements, not only produce by-products, they also bring in reforms and legislation, improvements in governance and in the management of resources and people. For instance, the anti-corruption movement has in a way strengthened the Right to Information and the need for a strong Lokpal bill. In a way, the movement has also brought about a nascent effort at cleansing the legislatures and Parliament of convicted members. Recently when the government wanted to amend the RTI, there was a spontaneous reaction against diluting the RTI and the government had to postpone the amendment. Unfortunately movements have also been created and misused by evil geniuses; I am sure you will recognize the evil geniuses behind terrorist movements.

Librarians in India have also seen some movements. For instance in the 1950's and 1960's in India to a great extent, and elsewhere to a lesser extent, there were movements in the areas of classification and indexing, thesaurus building. For a few years, library schools and librarian's emphasized these subjects as if these were the most important. Some librarian's in India thought they were riding the giddy heights of greatness if they were involved in developing depth classification schedules. Users of libraries couldn't care less and sooner than later such librarians were brought down to earth. Nowadays, we see movement in library automation, open source software adoption, and development of institutional archives.

A characteristic of movements is that the larger the stake holder categories the more enduring the movement; contrarily, movements which involve only one category of stake holder are generally short lived.

Another important characteristic of movements is that they generally speaking are born in

democratic and/or democratically minded societies. We do not hear of any strong movements, for instance in China. The one small movement many years ago in the famous Tien-an-men incident was ruthlessly put down. The Arab Spring that is talked of was also triggered mainly by those who valued democratic principles.

All movements, according to me, have a life cycle. They start, grow, expand, decay and then become extinct because the reasons to sustain the movement become irrelevant.

The Open access movement today is of interest mainly to scholarly communities all over the world. In this sense the OA movement is a movement of elites for elites. The stake holders of the OA movement are scholars, librarians, funding agencies, government, and international bodies. The common man has no direct stake in this movement, but whether he knows or not, he benefits indirectly by the OA movement.

### Causes

The main causes behind the OA movement were:

- Publish or Perish syndrome. Since the 1970's, in the scholarly world, an academician's worth is measured in terms of the number of papers they

write. Also where the papers are published. An author who publishes in a highly respected journal like Nature or Physical Review is considered to be of a higher class than others. These papers and their findings are used in new experiments; new hypotheses are formed; new results either illuminate or expand older findings. These papers are cited and used by other scholars contributed to the innovation or research engine leading to new research or findings, and more papers.

- New fields of research opened up; new communities evolved, needing their own communication channels. For instance, nobody had heard of Nano science 10 years ago. Today it is a major field of research and contributes to many areas of applied knowledge.

- Rapid increases in scholarly communication and publication of specialized journals in new sub-fields.

- Subscriptions to scholarly journals outgrew inflation by as much as 200 to 250% in the last 25 years. Average subscription prices of many peer-reviewed journals in the science and technology fields today are as high as Rs. 30000 to Rs. 40000 per year. This has made it difficult for libraries to subscribe to them. Many libraries in developing countries had no budgets for journals at all. Libraries in universities and research organizations became seriously deprived of materials that researchers needed. In turn, scholars found the library to be less and less useful.

- There was a monopoly of publishers that produced highly respected peer-reviewed journals. These publishers had strong editorial policies, excellent production facilities, and marketing operations. Scholars vied with each other to write papers for these journals. The cost of production of these journals grew with costs of paper, printing, marketing and distribution. Many journals had colour images, graphs, etc., pushing up the costs of production. Therefore the publishers periodically increased the subscription prices.



- Journal publishers neither pay authors nor reviewers; some of them ask authors to pay page charges. After considerable hard work, research outputs as papers were not available widely. This situation obviously defeated the purpose of research and development. There was considerable delay between the submission of a paper and its appearance in print.

- Digitization and Internet. When these became common, research papers began to be available online, but there were restrictions to access. Only subscribers had access, mostly read-only access. Online databases allowed access to abstracts but access to the papers themselves was expensive. To really benefit from research findings access to full papers was vital.

- Clever publishers resorted to offering Consortia subscriptions. With this a group of institutions were allowed online access but with many limitations built into such access. Many institutions felt that they were paying far more than what they got.

- Funding organizations began to be concerned that if research outputs are not widely available, then the impact of research will be limited. For instance, medical research findings will not reach practitioners and developers of new findings, new drugs, new diagnostic methods. There would also be avoidable duplication of costly research effort.

- Scholars all over the world, more so in the developing world, felt deprived of access to literature because of the above reasons. Informal groups discussed the situation and came up with ideas of increasing access to literature in different ways.

- Some highly specialized groups, e.g., in High Energy Physics developed their own ways of avoiding the publishing and accessibility crisis.

- Copyright issues disallowed wide access to literature. There was need to overcome barriers that copyright law had.

An important fact is that the crisis mentioned above was felt across the board both in the

developed and developing world. The need was also felt by all categories of stake holders. That is why OA became a wide movement.

### **Models and definitions**

Looking at the various causes and the number of stake holders concerned with the situations mentioned earlier, the movement which we today know as OA was formally launched in 3 international meetings in 2002-03, in Budapest, Bethesda and Berlin. The definition of OA and methods to implement OA were developed.

The first meeting in 2002 adopted the following definition of Open Access: "By 'open access' to literature, we mean its free availability on the public internet, permitting any users to read, download, copy, distribute, print, search, or link to the full texts of these articles, crawl them for indexing, pass them as data to software, or use them for any other lawful purpose, without financial, legal, or technical barriers other than those inseparable from gaining access to the internet itself. The only constraint on reproduction and distribution, and the only role for copyright in this domain, should be to give authors control over the integrity of their work and the right to be properly acknowledged and cited."

The Bethesda and Berlin meetings added some more qualifiers to the definition of open access: "for a work to be open access, users must be able to "copy, use, distribute, transmit and display the work publicly and to make and distribute derivative works, in any digital medium for any responsible purpose, subject to proper attribution of authorship." By attribution is meant acknowledgement as credit to the original author appearing in the cited paper. Such acknowledgement must appear in all papers that cite (or use the original paper's results). When an The attribution that an author receives for his work is recognition of the worth of the work.

However, open access materials could be put in the public domain under two major licensing systems: GNU License and Creative Common Licensing. The Creative Common License respects copyright law

but allows users of original creations thus licensed to use/reuse creations (e.g., videos, photographs, papers in specified ways.)

## Implementations

The following methods of OA are in vogue:

Open access journals (OAJs). These may be published by traditional publishers or by learned societies or by special organizations, e.g., Public Library of Science (PLOS) which publishes only open access journals. All these are freely hosted on the Internet. Publishers of OAJs also face the same difficulties of costs of operations but since they are primarily Internet-based, they avoid distribution costs. However, some do charge authors' fees for publication of articles, usually paid for by employers. Some seek advertising revenue to meet costs, membership fees, or funding from donors. The Directory of Open Access Journals (DOAJ) is a searchable resource of peer-reviewed OAJs. Some OAJs have both print as well as online versions.

Self-archiving. Authors make a copy of their papers available for hosting in an Institutional Repository (a searchable database) using open source software such as Dspace. Many commercial publishers now allow self-archiving both as pre-prints (before peer review) and also as post-print - after peer-review. These are archived in institutional repositories.

## Technology and spinoffs

The adoption of OA for scholarly literature brought out ideas for the following types of open access:

- Open Educational Resources
- Open Textbooks under the Creative Commons Licensing
- Open Theses
- Open Courseware
- Open source films/movies

## New technology and standards developed to support OA initiatives:

- Archiving software, e.g., Dspace, E-prints, GDSL. These used to develop and host Institutional Archives (IA)
- Protocols, e.g., OAI-PMH which all IA software follow for interoperability
- Metasearch engines like OAIster which can search multiple IAs. OAIster harvests metadata and links to full text from many IAs compatible with the OAI-PMH protocol.
- Some library automation software allows harvesting of metadata and full text from IA's.
- Text mining software that allows discovery of inter-relationships between a set of papers that are retrieved in searches of IA's

### Role of Librarians

- Not many authors and senior managements of Institutions/universities know about OA and OAJs and the advantages of OA. Librarians can play an important role in educating such people. Ideally, librarians should organize presentation on the advantages of OA and demonstration of Institutional Archives in the areas of interest of their users.
- Institutional managements could be sensitized to the role that OAs and how these have the potential to increase visibility of the institution for potential donors, research partners.
- Information dissemination services hitherto based on traditional sources should be expanded to include links to IA metadata and full text.
- Librarians can let their users know of impact factors of content in OAJ's vis-a-vis non-OAJ sources.
- Librarians can also help in influencing managements in adopting OA mandates for their institutions.
- Librarians can take an active role in building the IAs for their institution.
- Librarians can proactively scour OAJs and IAs to alert their users about valuable information that users may access freely.
- Librarians should take the help of specialists to evaluate new OAJs from the point of the quality of their editorial boards, their peer-review system and citation practices.

## Barriers to the Open Source Movement

- Concern about the business model of OAJ publishers. Some OA journals have begun to charge page charges; some are finding it difficult to sustain their operations without increased donor funding. Donor fatigue and resistance to continued funding without concrete evidence of how the funds have benefitted stake holders is a phenomenon that has been observed in the funding of research projects.
- Authors are not always convinced that publishing their papers in an OAJ is better than doing so in established scholarly journals for visibility and in their professional interest.
- Some OAJs appear to be fake and indulge in editorial and financial practices which are contrary to the ideal of good research publishing practices.
- Controversial results of studies about the effectiveness of publishing in OAJs vis a vis established scientific/academic press.

## The Future

- The OA movement is still a young one. The implementations of self-archiving, building of many more IAs will no-doubt take place in the years to come.
- Newer OAJs will also begin appearing.
- Newer and improved tools for effective search, harvesting and text mining will no doubt be developed.

## The Distant Future

All movements follow an inverse parabolic curve. There is a modest beginning, a steady growth, a levelling and then a decline. I am not trying to be a doomsday prophet, but I do not discount that in the long run, of say 50 years, the OA movement may become less and less relevant when new methods of access which at the moment look distant may be developed. We have seen how new technologies have changed the way we communicate and interact with each other in multiple modes with new fangled devices.

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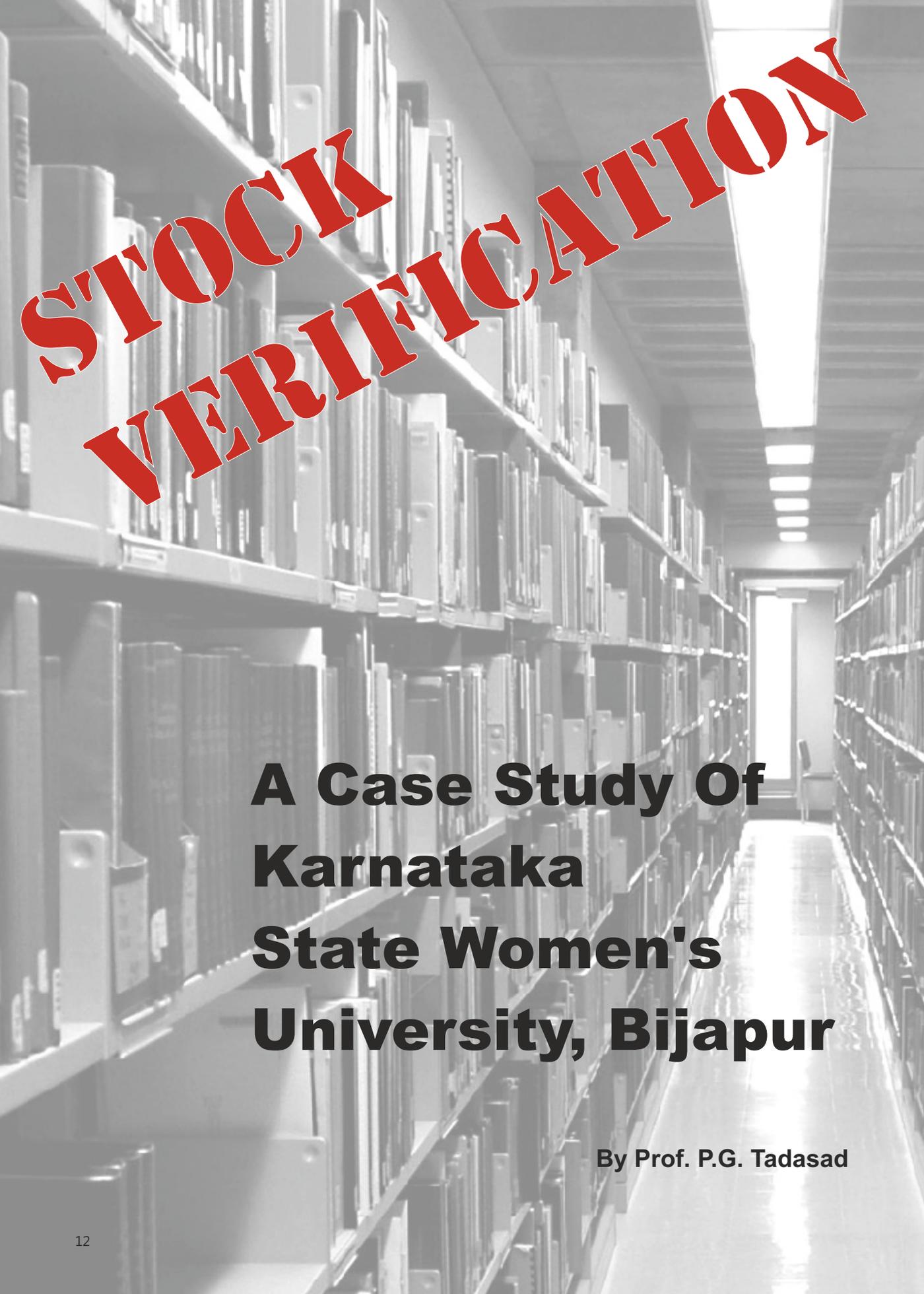
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# **STOCK VERIFICATION**

## **A Case Study Of Karnataka State Women's University, Bijapur**

**By Prof. P.G. Tadasad**

Prof P.G. Tadasad is currently working as Professor in Library & Information Science and also holds the position of Chairman of the Department, at Karnataka State Women's University, Bijapur.

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**K**arnataka State Women's University established in the year 2003 at Bijapur started offering 6 P G programmes from the academic year 2004-05 to provide higher education to women. The University library also started functioning from the very inception of the University and started developing its collection. By the end of August 2008 it had a collection of more than 50000 books to cater to the needs of 15 programmes being offered in the campus, but no stock verification was conducted till then, inviting objections from the audit. The University was compelled to submit audit compliance report and library was no exception. It is not that the University library had not conducted any stock verification. In fact an attempt was made in 2007, but unfortunately it did not meet the logical end and the whole process was stopped. As such no compliance report was submitted. During this period the guards of the University library also changed with the additional responsibility falling on the Chairman of the Department of Library and Information Science of the University.

The serious necessity of conducting the stock verification was felt during September 2008 when the then Finance Officer issued an ultimatum to all the concerned to submit audit compliance reports. It was at this time, during one of the meeting of the library staff it was decided to go ahead with stock verification process. An attempt is made in this paper to bring out the salient features of the stock verification and the problems faced.

#### **Preparations:**

The issue was discussed at length among the library staff who were on temporary service since inception of the university. The reasons for not completing the first attempt of stock verification were analyzed in depth and it was resolved to place this issue before the library advisory committee for approval and adopt a suitable modus operandi.

Accordingly, the issue was placed before the Library Advisory Committee and the Syndicate and their approval was taken.

When the stock verification process was initiated the issue seemed not so simple but a complex one due to following reasons

Thousands of books were unreturned and the library was functioning from two campuses – City campus and Torvi campus. The P G classes were running and that any decision to close the library operations for many days would have direct impact on the P G students. Above all there was an acute shortage of staff in the library to take up the assignment and complete it as early as possible. Lastly, the financial issue – the University was not in a position to spend huge amount on commercial agencies to undertake the process.

Circulars were issued to the user community with a request to return the books to enable the University library to take up the work. Letters and reminders were sent to the outsiders and other borrowers who had left the campus for various reasons. Several personal visits were also made to the houses of the book borrowers who had left the campus. The result was: nearly 70% of the unreturned books were either got returned or fine was collected for the lost books. An atmosphere was created on the campus regarding the necessity and importance of conducting the stock verification. The students, teaching and non-teaching staff also played an important role in helping the library to get the unreturned books from the off-campus users.

It was also decided to use the services of the P G students of Library and information Science along with the faculty of the department to complete the assignment in fewer working days with a minimum financial burden on the University.

A notice was sent well in advance to all the



departments with an information that the library operations will be closed for users for the stipulated days soliciting their cooperation. 38 students studying in M L I Sc I/III Semester, 18 students of C Lib Sci, 24 library staff and 5 faculty members (permanent and guest faculty) of the department were involved in the process. Groups were formed of three to four students with one Class IV employee and one non-teaching staff in each group. They were given training as to the procedure to be adopted for stock verification.

**Actual Work done:**

On the announced date the library closed its services for the users. However, the circulation desk was kept open to enable the users to return the books. First it was decided to verify the stock of the city campus. Later, books handed over to binding section were verified. After that, the collection of the Torvi campus was verified and later the books returned to the circulation desk after the commencement of stock verification was verified. In spite of all the efforts made by the library there were few users who had not returned

the books. Hence it was presumed that, 'the books are not lost and are with the borrowers'. Hence these were considered as verified and the accession numbers were recorded on the loose sheet.

The groups so formed were allotted the stacks. Each group went to the stacks and rearranged the books on the shelves systematically. The work was distributed among the group members as mentioned below.

Member 1: Take out the book from the shelf and hand it over to the second member.

Member 2: Read the accession number written on the verso of the title page and write SV-9 on the title page with pencil.

Member 3: Write the number properly in a loose sheet with a pen.

Member 4: Replace the book back on the shelf.

The loose sheet had a 10 X 10 worksheet with a provision for 100 numbers to be written. After 100 numbers were written on the sheet, it was handed over to the data entry operator. The numbers were

fed into the computer using MS-Excel. Each worksheet was given unique number for identification. The actual physical verification of 47643 books was carried out for 5 days only from 5th November 2008 to 9th November. After the physical verification was completed it was presumed that 534 titles might be missing. But once the accession numbers were fed into the computer, and the numbers were sorted out in an ascending order, it was noticed that 1800 books were found missing. After an initial investigation it was noticed that more than 700 accession numbers were duplicates. Hence manual worksheets were compared with the computer generated worksheets to find out the mistakes. Surprisingly no such discrepancies were found. Hence it was decided to verify the stock of 52736 again during July 2009 using only the library staff. All the initial preparations were made without affecting the library services and it was done during the vacations/holidays as such closure of library services did not affect the users. The actual stock verification was carried out for 21 days using the same procedure adopted during the earlier attempt and later the library services were opened for the users.

Later it was noticed that books accessioned during a particular period have been stamped with two accession numbers due to technical problems with accession number stamping machine. It was rather a difficult situation to solve immediately as the library had re-started the services to the users. In the mean time provision of library services were extended to all the four campuses and the strength of the book collection was increased to 60940. Hence an alternative strategy was worked out to find the books stamped with two accession numbers without affecting the normal services to the users. Whenever books were returned, they were checked for such errors and if found were corrected using the data from the OPAC. Secondly each rack was searched between September 2010 and June 2011 for such books and necessary corrections were made.

### **Data Analysis and further action ...**

Again the accession numbers were fed into the computer, the numbers were sorted out in an ascending order. 453 accession numbers were found missing including already written off books. Such accession numbers were removed from the list and a report of the missing titles was generated and using the report efforts were made to trace the book in different sections (binding, technical, completely damaged collection etc) for nearly three months to show evidence to the effect that necessary measures were taken before considering these to declare 'lost and hence may be written off'.

A final list of 451 books missing in the shelves was prepared for more analysis of data with regard to subject, author, language and cost of the books. It was found that a majority of missing books were Indian publications belonged to subjects like Education, Sociology, Economics, Kannada, Women' Studies written in Kannada languages costing between Rs. 150 –Rs. 275. Further the books circulated statistics were also given due emphasis. In all 216000 books were circulated during the period and as such all the 451 books were eligible for considering them to be written-off in the context of Govt of India, Ministry of Finance, General Financial Rules 2005 Section Number 194 (ii) 5 books may be written off for every 1000 circulated ones.

Considering all these factors a list of 451 missing books was prepared for considering them to be written-off and was placed before the Library Advisory Committee for recommending the Syndicate to write – off these books. Accordingly the Syndicate approved to write-off the books. Later a separate ledger was created entitled 'Books written off' and on the approval of the Vice Chancellor, the signature of the Registrar was obtained on the ledger. An audit compliance report was submitted to the audit circle.

Thus ended the long saga of stock verification.

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## Engaging library: users on Social Media Is it really beneficial ?

By Prof. Mohamed Minhaj



**W**ith around 1.3 billion monthly active Facebook users and around 500 million tweets sent per day (Source : <http://blog.digitalinsights.in>), can we still say that social media is fad or destructive ? Social media has transformed from a casual platform for communication to a key channel for business.

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It has changed "Where" and "How" we do business, it has changed the way we teach and learn, it has made protests and politics more digital and social. It has in some way or other impacted on almost every facet of our life. India being young and tech savvy country, has witnessed social media users growing at light speed. Our country trails only the United States in active Facebook users, with around 114 million (Source : <http://www.forbes.com>).

Social Media has something to offer to everyone, Libraries are no exception. The purpose of any Library is to educate, inform and enrich the lives of its users and social media provides librarians a new medium to achieve this. Several studies have revealed enormous benefits that Social media has offered to the libraries. Social Media gives an opportunity to non-library users to know the activities of the library from their social media friends who are members of the library, it facilitates promoting what the library has to offer, it helps improving the library facilities and collections by getting feedback from the users, it

also helps in studying the behaviour and needs of the library users.

Many libraries are reaping the benefits that social media has to offer. Therefore, "Should we be present on Social Media platforms ?" or "It is really going to help in achieving the objectives of the library" are not the questions that librarians have today, instead they are contemplating on "Which is the right social media platform for libraries ?", "How to make the presence on social media effective?", "How to measure the effectiveness of the social media engagements ?" etc. Although there are no standard answers to these questions, based on the exploratory study of few libraries from both India and abroad, key strategies that have proven to be drivers of successful social media engagement with library users have been enumerated:

#### 1. Where to start?

Facebook and YouTube are the most widely used platforms to engage the library community. LinkedIn has also been used by some university

libraries primarily to engage the faculty. Some libraries are also leveraging twitter to send regular updates to the library users. In most libraries, the entry into the realm of social media has been through Facebook pages. Therefore libraries that are taciturn on social media network could catch up with other peers by putting up their Facebook pages.

## 2. How to make the presence felt on social media ?

In most success stories pertaining to adoption of social media by libraries, the key success factor has been continuous engagement with all the stakeholders of the library. Libraries that have put up their presence on social networks but are not vibrant and do not engage their audience on a continuous basis have not been successful in leveraging the true potential of social media. Like in most other domains, retaining the interest of the library users requires posting a mix of serious and fun stuff. Besides the formal or domain specific content, some light content that would help people get a virtual but closer experience of the library does help in retaining the interest of the users. Messages related to prominent visitors of the library or stories related to a foreigner perusing a regional book, book reviews by students etc., are some items that normally help in attracting the attention of younger members of the library. These posts indirectly help in promoting the services offered by the library.

## 3. How can we measure social media engagements ?

The number of likes, number of followers and number of impressions although generally indicate the traffic and the activity of the social media, they are not accurate metrics to understand the success or failure of the social media initiatives. Hence a detailed examination of the social media usage data is needed to uncover the context of usage like the referral portals, date and time when the traffic is high or low, whether the liking or disliking is by a new user or existing user etc. These inputs aid in understanding the user behaviour, facilitates continuous improvement and gives a direction to take the initiative forward. Most social media portals provide a mechanism by which

librarians can get these inputs. For example, Facebook provides this in the form of "Insights" which are accessible to the administrators of the page. Additionally there are many software applications which are referred as Social Network Analysis(SNA) tools that helps in understanding the finer details of social media engagements.

4. OK, we have social media presence and we are also trying to continuously engage our audience, what next?

To continuously get the benefits of social media, two important aspects that need consideration by librarians are (i) Keeping themselves updated with the emerging trends, so that that they are relevant in the rapidly changing social media bandwagon. For example, with the support of Hashtags in almost all the social media platforms, it is pertinent that libraries adapt this to capitalise the advantages of cross-platform mining of data and ensure that this helps in making their social media presence trenchant. (ii) Considering the large amount of data that is being generated, disseminated and consumed on social media, it is very important that libraries frame appropriate policies which can govern "What" "When" and "How" library staff should post the data on social networks. These policies instead of being considered hindrance in the social media activities of the library should become a mechanism to ensure the privacy of library users and to control the misuse of rich information resources of the library.

Similar to Digital Libraries and e-Books, the growth of Social Media has turned out to be both a threat and an opportunity for the LIS professionals. The major challenge that the LIS professionals are facing today is converting non-library users into library-users and converting user into patrons. Across the globe many libraries have adopted social media as a channel to communicate and engage with their audience and many studies have shown that the viral nature of social media has given impetus to the use of libraries. Therefore if librarians think that time is not ripe for entering the social media bandwagon, they might actually miss the bus.

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# **Communication Skills**

## Need of the Hour for the LIS Professionals

**By Dr. K.P. Vijaykumar**

The Author is currently Head of Department of Library and Information Science & holds the position of Hon. Director, Centre for Information Literacy Studies, University of Kerala.

**A** cursory survey of job announcements in the field of Library and Information would reveal that most of them underpin the need for interpersonal communication skills. This is because these skills are considered to be so vital in today's library environment. With the changing times, the face of not only the corporate world but that of the services professions is also changing. The need-of-the-hour is to have state-of-the-art professionals who are agile enough to meet the growing demands of the profession.

The term 'communication skills' encompasses the set of skills that enables a person to convey information so that it is received and well understood. It is the ability of an individual to effectively communicate with clients, colleagues, subordinates, and supervisors in a professional manner at the work place and at home. In other words, it is the art or technique of persuasion through the use of oral, written and body language.

To have an understanding of the elements of communication skills, one needs to understand that communication is one of those words that is most hyped in contemporary culture. It includes a large number of experiences, actions, events and also a variety of happening and meanings, as well as the effective use of technologies. The platform for communication cannot be reduced to library and information centres only. This includes not only formal and informal meetings (especially in the library context), seminars, workshops, trade fairs, etc, but also the various communication media such as newspapers, periodicals, radio, TV, and the ubiquitous social media. The skills also include the capacity to deal effectively with other communication professionals like advertisers, journalists and camera crew so as to enable to build up a positive image of the Library in the society at large.

The skill sets of communication to be possessed by LIS professionals can be summarized under the following categories:

**Intra-personal communication skills:** This implies individual reflection, contemplation and

meditation. One example of this is transcendental mediation. This type of communication encompasses not only communicating with the divine in the form of prayers but the reflection and introspection including the analysis of the events that have taken place in the day or the previous day and how you have reacted to them. This will go a long way in self-correction.

**Interpersonal communication skills:** This is direct, face-to-face communication that occurs between two persons. It is essentially a dialogue or a conversation between two or more people. It is personal, direct, as well as intimate and permits maximum interaction through words and gestures. Body language plays a major role in this type of communication. Always, display some enthusiasm and patience while dealing with the clients, however small their requirement be. Never try to be sarcastic or cynical while dealing with users.

**Interpersonal communications may be:**  
**Focused Interactions:** This primarily results from an actual interaction between two persons. This implies that the two persons involved are completely aware of the communication happening between them. Reference interview is a typical example. Never be casual in such circumstances.

**Unfocused interactions:** This occurs when one simply meets, observes or listens to persons with whom one is not conversing. This usually occurs at the corridors of the library, outside the library premises like pavements, cafeteria, streets etc. Never forget to acknowledge the presence of the persons, at least by gestures, if you know them. Just imagine how you feel like (elated) when somebody with whom you have a nodding acquaintance greets you. This will go long way in creating a positive image of the professionals in the minds of the users.

**Non verbal communication skills:** This includes aspects such as body language, gestures, facial expressions, eye contact, etc. These skills assume more significance in a formal context like

presentations in user education sessions and seminars/conferences. Written communication also assumes significance in this context.

**Mass communication skills:** This is generally identified with the established media like books, the press, cinema, television, radio, etc which enable the transmission of messages to a larger audience. Herein comes the advent of e-mails and the social media which have started to play a major role in reaching out to the users. LIS professionals can effectively make use of these channels in making the presence of the libraries felt by the customers without incurring expense on the part of the library.

The discussion of the communication skills would be incomplete without a brief description at least of the soft skills since they play a major role in a service environment. Soft skills otherwise referred to as people skills (some people term it as world skills) are a cluster of skills that influence how we

interact with one another. It is the ability to relate and connect people. It is the cluster of personality traits, social graces, communication, language, personal habits, friendliness, and optimism that characterize relationships with other people. Specifically soft skills include communication, language skills, etiquette, listening skills, negotiation etc. Soft skills essential for LIS professionals include:

- Communications skills
- Listening skills
- Interpersonal skills
- Customer service
- Public relations
- Leadership skills
- Negotiating skills
- Writing skills
- Project management skills, and
- Presentation skills

The list is only partial. These skills play a major role in enhancing the acceptability of the profession. No matter what the different types of communication skills are, communicating is an ever-continuing process that goes on all the time. Remember the helical model of communication developed by Dance (1967) who compared human beings in communication with switchboard centres in the transmission of electricity. The professionals should bear in mind that the sharpening of communication skills and soft skills is as important to human life as is day-to-day existence.



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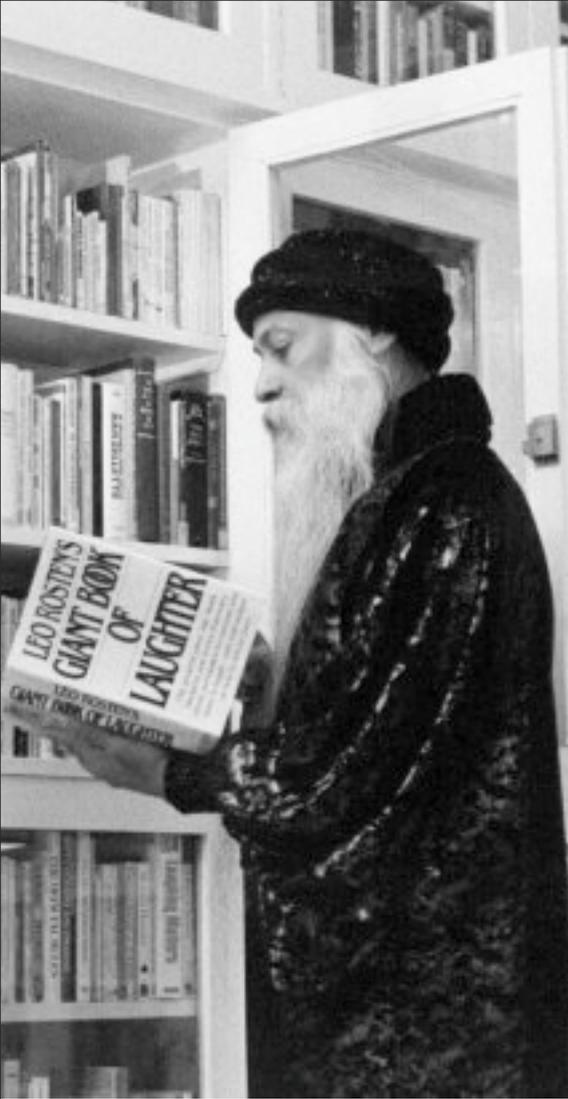
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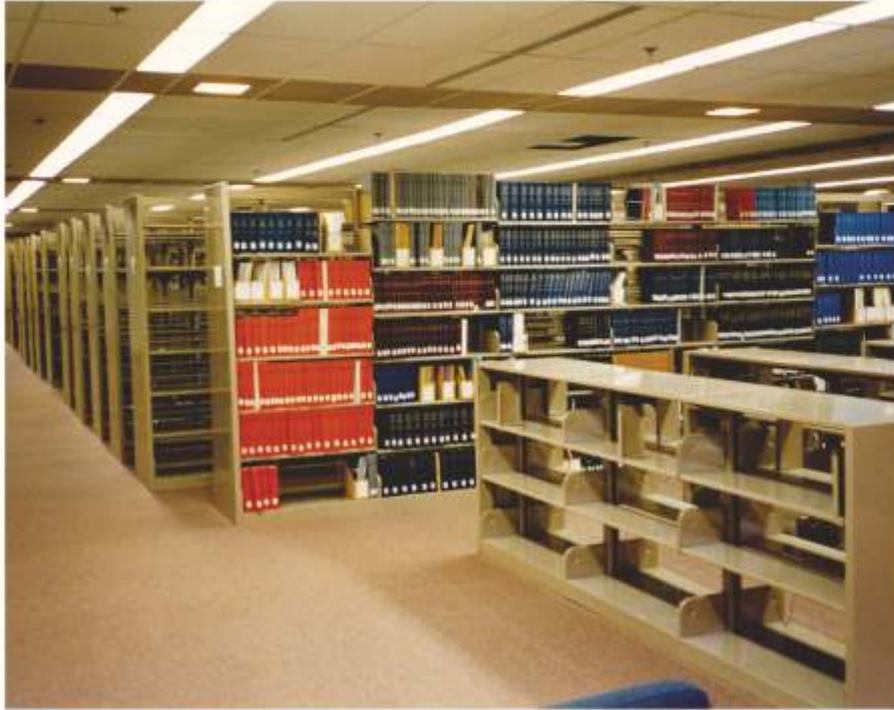
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