

Investigate the issues in applying the Machine Readable Cataloguing Standard for the library automation in University Libraries in Sri Lanka.

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Machine Readable Catalogue (MARC) is not a kind of catalogue and is a method of cataloguing based on computer or machine. In 1960, Computers had been used for cataloguing purposes. MARC I, MARC II, UNIMARC and MARC 21 are some of the catalogue standards were introduced in later. 15 University Libraries and two other higher Educational Institution libraries used Open Source and Commercial Library software for automation. The objective was to investigate the issues and loopholes in applying MARC standards for automation in university libraries in Sri Lanka. The Survey design was the method of the study and the sample of the study was Simple Random Sample, 5 University Libraries were selected. A structured questionnaire delivered for 5 for University Librarians. 15 for Senior Assistant Librarians, 10 for Assistant Librarians, 5 for those engaged in the catalogue using MARC and 25 Library Assistants for obtaining primary data. In addition, discussions, interviews, observation and searching Online Public Access Catalogues were applied for primary data collection. Three out of 5 University libraries used KOHA. ALICE FOR WINDOWS and LIBSYS were used in other two libraries. Library using KOHA adopt MARC 21 on rudimentary basis while other libraries apply their own inbuilt standard based on the Library Software. According to the study, there is no proper MARC standard followed as well as no proper levels applied seen. The awareness level of staff on MARC and its use were very low. The complexity of MARC and its diversified fields was the main obstacle they face and 55% of staff endorsed the fact. Due to the time, wasting and related problems were evolved. As solutions, training and awareness programs on MARC and its application should be conducted for the staff. They have to be motivated by giving an interest and awareness for them. 80% of the staff endorsed that proper MARC standard system should be introduced for the use of university libraries. It is proposed a Uniform MARC standard system should be established under the National Library and Documentation Service Board, Sri Lanka.

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