



PRESERVATION OF HERITAGE INFORMATION RESOURCES IN SELECTED LIBRARIES IN TAMILNADU: AN OVERVIEW

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ABSTRACT :

The paper describes about the heritage information resources available in the selected libraries in Tamilnadu State. The paper covers the methods of preservation of heritage documents including digital preservation, standards followed for digitization and the storage medium used for the digitized heritage documents. The paper discusses about the services rendered to users, standards of preservation, format of storage of digital collection in the heritage libraries.



KEYWORDS : Heritage documents, Preservation, Digital Preservation, Heritage Libraries, Dublin Core, Palm Leaves, Manuscripts, Rare books.

INTRODUCTION

The heritage information resources are non replaceable assets of a country. To get knowledge on many phases of world and Indian history especially on social background behind historic events, we need to preserve the heritage documents. The heritage and cultural resources are preserved by using State of the art scanners, Digital Photography, Artificial and Natural Preservatives. The heritage documents like manuscripts, palm leaves, art, paintings, rare books, artefacts, maps, rare photographs, slides...etc plays a major role to collect the historical information of any field.

HERITAGE

The Oxford Dictionary defines Heritage as “the traditions, qualities, and culture of a country that have existed for a long time and that have great importance for the country”. A country's heritage is all the qualities, traditions, or features of life there that have continued over many years and have been passed on from one generation to another.

CULTURAL HERITAGE PRESERVATION IN INDIA

Oxford Dictionary defines preservation as “ To keep something safe or in good condition”. The Archaeological Survey of India (ASI) as an attached office under the Department of Culture, Ministry of Tourism and Culture, is the premier organization for the archaeological researches and protection of the cultural heritage of the nation. Maintenance of ancient monuments, archaeological sites and remains of national importance is the prime concern of ASI. Besides it regulate all archaeological

activities in the country as per the provisions of the ancient monuments and archaeological sites and remains act 1958, it also regulates antiquities and art treasure act 1972.

PRESERVATION OF LIBRARY RESOURCES

Preservation of Library materials is defined as “the set of procedures taken to prevent, stop, or neutralize deterioration of library materials through the administration of storage techniques and housing of materials, environment, prevention of theft, handling practices, and through user and staff education. The New World Encyclopaedia defines that Preservation, of library materials is an activity concerned with maintaining or restoring access to artifacts, documents and records through the study, diagnosis, treatment and prevention of decay and damage. Similarly DK Illustrated Oxford Dictionary defines preservation as “the action of keeping something in its original or existing state”.

OBJECTIVES OF THIS STUDY

1. To find the oldest heritage library
2. To know the number of heritage libraries has their own website
3. To identify the services to the users rendered by the heritage libraries
4. To find the types of heritage materials available
5. To identify the number of heritage materials available in heritage libraries
6. To find the no.of heritage libraries digitized and to find the no.of heritage resources digitized
7. To know how the digitized heritage collections are maintained and to find what are the software applications used
8. To find what are standards applied for digital preservation of heritage documents and to know what are the barriers in digitization
9. To know storage medium of digitized heritage collection and to find the file formats used for digital content.

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

1.Digital preservation of cultural heritage resources and manuscripts: An Indian government initiative, Anil Singh. International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions, 38(4) 2012. In this paper the author examines the potential for preserving Indian’s cultural heritage resources in a digital world and making it globally accessible and discusses the initiatives taken by Indian government for digital preservation of cultural heritage resources and manuscripts. The paper describes that digital preservation finds the way to maintain our cultural heritage and the importance of cultural heritage to be taken to next generations. This paper also states that the preservation of Indian Heritage poses a great challenge and the merging of information technology can offer a solution not only for preservation, but also for enhancement and for its access.

2.Preservation and Access to Indian Manuscripts: A Knowledge Base of Indian Cultural Heritage Resources for Academic Libraries. Gaur, Ramesh C....et al. ICAL – VISION AND ROLES OF THE FUTURE ACADEMIC LIBRARIES (2009). This paper describes that It is estimated that India possesses more than five million manuscripts, making her the largest repository of manuscript wealth in the world. This paper also states *that* to achieve various challenges in manuscripts preservation Indian National Manuscripts Library at IGNCAL has been proposed. With all manuscript resources compiled at IGNCAL under Kala Nidhi and NMM projects, a centralized repository of manuscripts will be available to the users worldwide. This is going to be the first such library in the world, and of course the foremost, to among all other institutions to fulfill the twin objectives of preservation and access to Indian manuscripts.

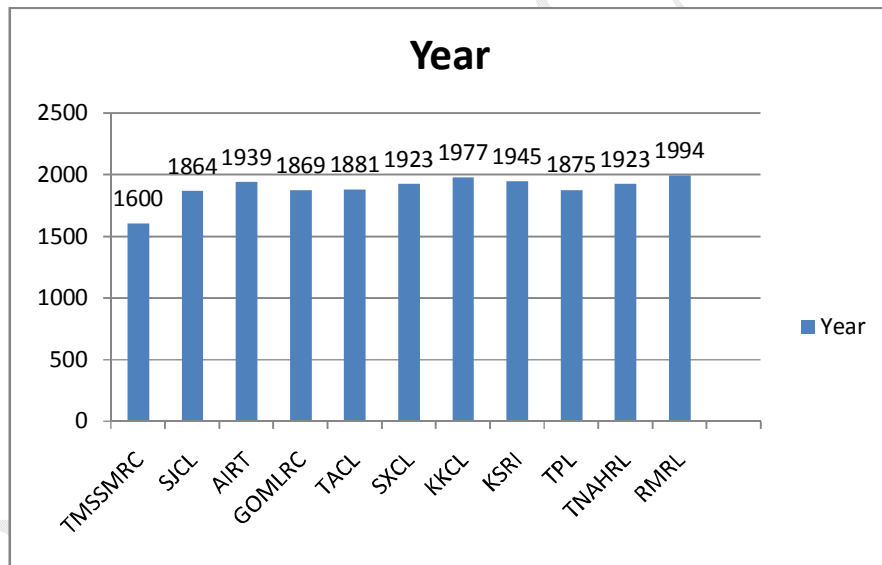
METHODOLOGY OF THE STUDY

A set of questionnaire is prepared and data collected from 11 selected heritage libraries in the state by in person, mail and post. The data were analysed by using statistical tools and techniques. The following 11 nos. of heritage libraries were selected for this study.

1. Thanjavur Maharaja Sarafoji Sarasvati Mahal Library and Research Centre (TMSSMRC), Thanjavur
2. St.Joseph’s College Library (SJCL), Tiruchirapalli
3. All India Radio Station Library (AIRT), Tiruchirapalli
4. Government Oriental Manuscripts Library and Research Centre (GOMLRC), Chennai
5. The American College Library(TACL), Madurai
6. St.Xavier’s College (Autonomous) Library (SXCL), Palayamkottai
7. Kalaikaviri College for Women Library (KKCL), Tiruchirapalli
8. Kuppuswami Sastri Research Institute Library (KSRI), Chennai
9. The Pennington Public Library (TPL), Srivilliputhur
10. Tamilnadu Archives and Historical Research Library (TNAHRL), Chennai
11. Roja Muthiah Research Library (RMRL), Chennai

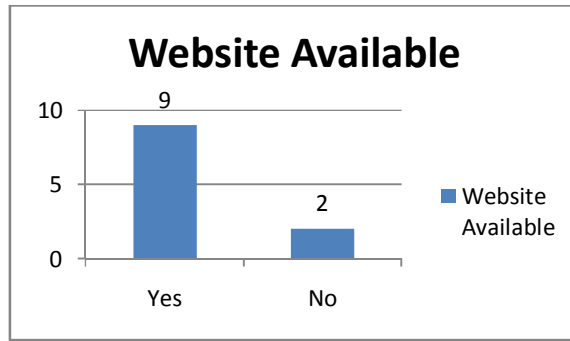
Data Analysis and Interpretation

Table 1 - Year of Establishment



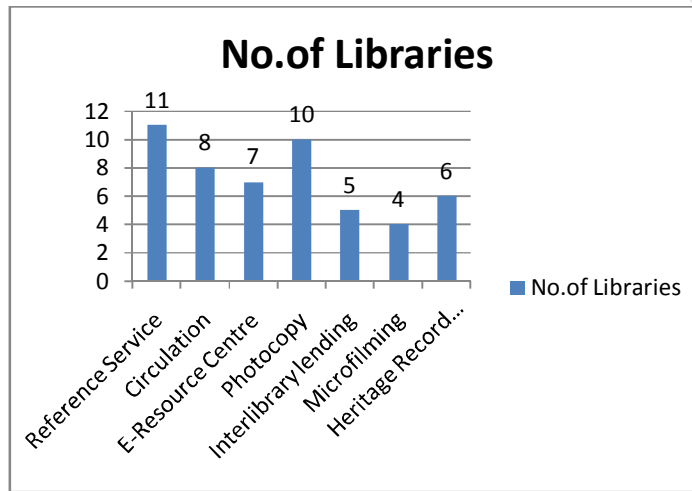
The above table shows that Thanjavur Maharaja Sarafoji Sarasvati Mahal Library and Research Centre (TNSSMRC) is the oldest Library followed by St.Joseph’s College Library (SJCL) and Government Oriental Manuscripts Library and Research Centre Library (GOMLRC).

Table 2 - Number of Libraries has websites



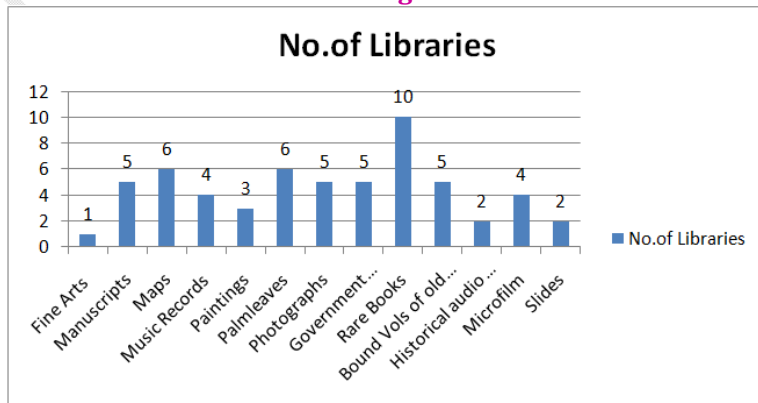
The above table represents that out of the 11 Heritage Libraries, 09 Libraries (81.8%) has their own websites and 02 Libraries does not have website,

Table 3 - User Services



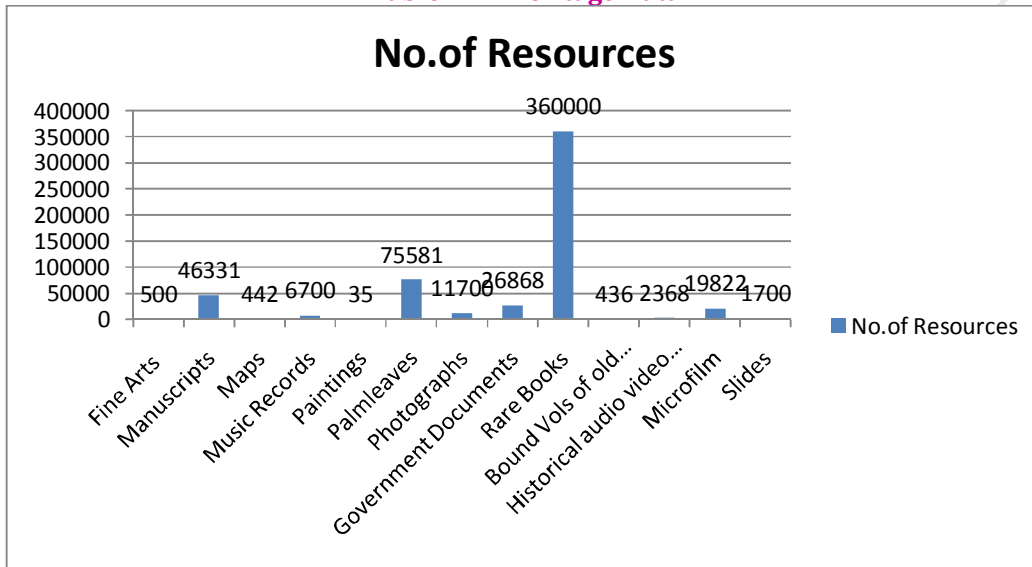
The above table states that All the 11 (100%) Libraries rendering offers reference service to the users, 8 (72%) nos. of libraries provides circulation services, 7 (63%) nos. of libraries offers E-resource centre facilities and 10 (91%) nos. of libraries gives photocopying facilities. The table also indicates that 5 (45%) nos. of libraries provide inter library lending services, 4 (36%) nos. of libraries offers Microfilming and 6 (54%) nos. of libraries offers heritage record publications.

Table - 4 Heritage Collections



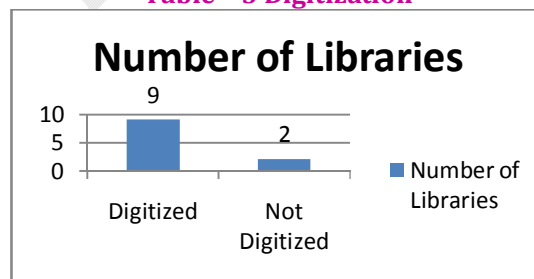
The above table shows that out of the 11 heritage libraries, 1(9%) no.of library has fine arts materials and 5(45%) nos. of libraries has Manuscripts, Photographs, Government Documents, Bound volumes of old news papers. The table also indicates that 6 (54%) nos. of libraries has Palm Leaves, 4 (36%) nos. of libraries has Music Records, Microfilms and 3 (27%) nos. of libraries has paintings. The table reveals that 10 (90%) nos. of libraries has Rare Books and 2 (18%) nos. of libraries has Historical audio video discs and Slides.

Table - 4A Heritage Data



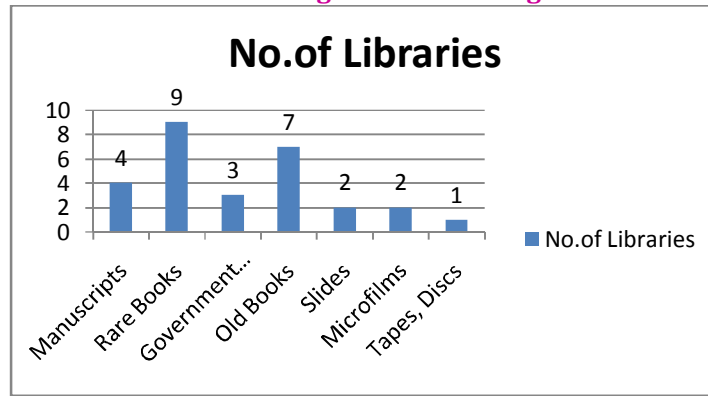
The above table shows that 500 nos. of fine arts materials, 46331 nos. of manuscripts, 442 nos. of maps, 6700 nos. of music records are available in heritage libraries. The table indicates that there are 35 nos. of paintings, 75581 nos. of palm leaves, 11700 nos. of Photographs, and 26868 nos. of Government Documents are placed in the heritage libraries. The table indicates that 360000 nos. of rare books, 436 nos. of bound volumes of newspapers, 2368 nos. of historical audio video discs, 19822 microfilms and 1700 nos. of slides are available in the heritage libraries.

Table - 5 Digitization



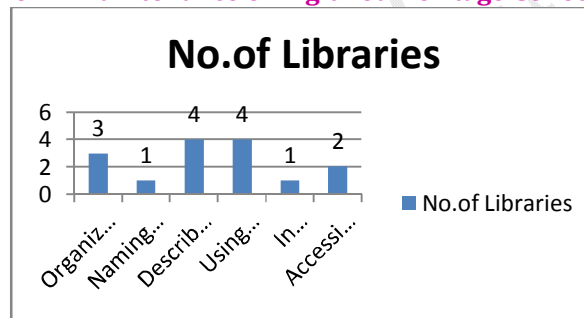
The above table shows that out of the 11 heritage libraries, 09 (81%) nos. of libraries had digitized their heritage collection and 02 (19%) nos. of libraries were not yet digitized.

Table - 6 Heritage Collections Digitized



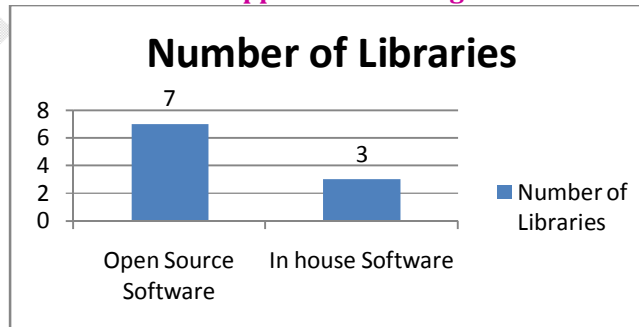
The above table indicates that out of the 09 digitized heritage libraries, all the 09 (100%) libraries digitized rare books, 04 (44%) libraries digitized manuscripts, 02 (22%) libraries each digitized slides and microfilms. The table also shows that 03 (33%) libraries digitized Government Documents, 07 (77%) libraries digitized old books, and only 01 (9%) library digitized tapes and discs materials.

Table 7 - Maintenance of Digitized Heritage Collections



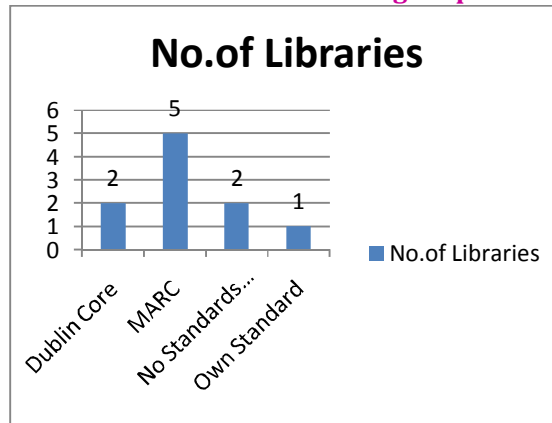
The above table shows that 03 (27%) libraries maintains their heritage collections by organizing the images, 1 (9%) library each maintains by naming of images and in website. The table also indicates that 4 (36%) libraries each maintains by describing the images and using metadata and 2 (18%) libraries each maintains by using accession register only.

Table 8 - Software Application for Digital Preservation



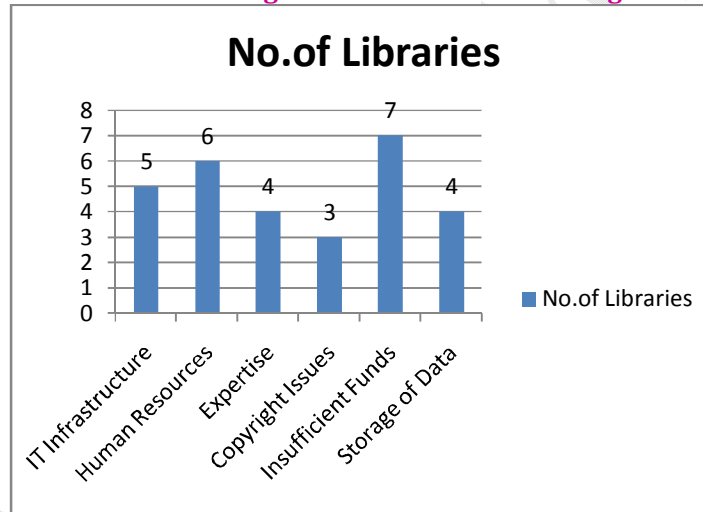
The above table shows that 7 (63%) libraries are using open source software and 3 (37%) libraries are using in house software for the digital preservation of heritage documents.

Table 9 - Standards followed for digital preservation



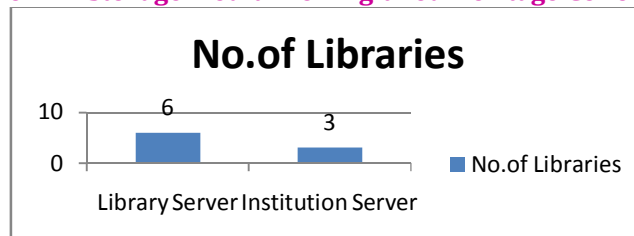
The above table reveals that 2 (18%) libraries using Dublin core format and 5 (45%) libraries using MARC format, 1(9%) library is using its own standard for digital preservation of heritage documents. The table also shows that 2 (18%) libraries does not follow any standards.

Table 10 - Barriers in Digital Preservation of Heritage Resources



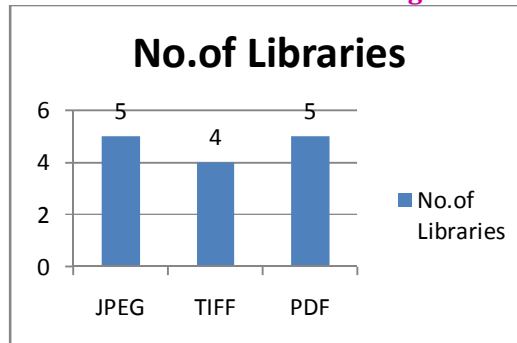
The above table shows that 5 (45%) libraries states IT infrastructure is the barrier for digital preservation of heritage documents. The table indicates that in 6 (54%) libraries Human Resources and in 7 (63%) libraries Insufficient Funds are the barriers for digital preservation. The table also indicates that in 4 (36%) libraries each Expertise and Storage of Data, and in 3 libraries Copyright issues are mentioned as barriers in digital preservation of heritage documents.

Table 11 - Storage Medium of Digitized Heritage Collections



The above table shows that in 6 (66%) libraries Library Servers and 3 (33%) libraries Institution Servers are used as storage medium for digitized heritage collections.

Table 12 - File Formats used for Digital Content



The above table mentions that in 5 (55%) libraries each are using JPEG & PDF format, and in 4 (44%) libraries TIFF formats are used to save the digital contents.

FINDINGS

1. The Thanjavur Maharaja Sarafoji Sarasvati Mahal Library and Research Centre (TMSSMRC), Thanjavur is the oldest heritage library which was started in the year 1600 and 82% of libraries has its own websites.
2. In the services rendered to users, reference service offered by all the libraries and majority of the libraries provide circulation services and photocopying services.
3. In the heritage materials, rare books is the highest number (3600000 of available material followed by palm leaves (75581), Manuscripts (46331) and Government documents (26868).
4. Majority of the libraries are digitized (81%) and all the libraries (100%) digitized their rare books for future use.
5. Most of the libraries (27%) maintain their digitized heritage collection by organizing the images, and majority of libraries using open source software for the digital preservation of heritage documents.
6. Majority of the libraries (45%) follows Dublin core metadata standard for preservation and most nos. of libraries states that insufficient funds is the barrier for digitisation of heritage documents.
7. Majority of the libraries (66%) uses library servers as their storage medium and majority of the libraries (55%) uses JPEG & PDF formats to save the digital contents.

CONCLUSION

The heritage collection plays an important role for research and reference in the field of Library, Information and Documentation Science. The heritage documents acts vital source in transforming historical information to the next generation and sufficient funds to be allotted by the government to preserve and digitize the heritage documents. One standard method to be followed for the preservation of digitized heritage materials and institute's servers are to be highly configured to access these resources. Sufficient trained professionals to be appointed to solve the barriers in human resource for digitisation.

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