

Use And Awareness Of Net Resources Among Users And Professionals of Libraries In Manipur : An Analysis

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Abstract

The internet has become the way of life in this information society. It brings the idea of wall less/boundary less open library. Whereas, in the states like Manipur, the distant and remote corner of North East India, it is only available to few people with access to a Computer Network. The ability and facility to access web contents are very limited. Keeping this in view the present piece of study attempts to analyse the status in 48 (Forty eight) different types of libraries of Manipur. Besides this, 321 (three hundred and twenty one) users of these libraries have also been taken into account to understand how far they can use and are aware of accessibility to internet.

Keywords : Accessibility, Internet, Open access, Manipur.

1. Introduction

In the emerging knowledge society, the availability, accessibility and use of information immensely determine the development of individuals and nations/countries. Today, information has become the most crucial resource for development of all aspects. So, development of a country depends upon its human knowledge and utilization and harvesting of natural resources also depend on Human Knowledge. In fact, knowledge has been considered as "Power" and it plays a significant role in all kinds of human activities and in an important factor for the overall development and forward progress of a society. Even the problem of brain drain is the outcome of the knowledge being treated as power. Therefore, timely accessibility and use of information is the main factor of generating knowledge. Automation/IT application is an essential consideration for all libraries to have the facility of accessing the web resources i.e. e-journal, e-book and other e-base resources.

Through we are discussing about web resources, open access initiatives and movement in global and national context, the automation and networking of libraries in north east region, the remote and distant place from mainland India is not upto the mark. In view of promoting the system in this region to conjoin in the national development, such present piece of work is very much needed to find out the weak points in the library management of the region. Here, in order to analyse the position of use and awareness of IT regarding e-resources among the staff and users of libraries of Manipur, the survey was carried out covering 321 (three hundred and twenty one) users of different categories of 48 (forty eight) leading libraries of Manipur. The libraries include; school-11; college-24; university-2; Public-4; and special-7. The sample characteristic, on the other hand, comprises of 273 (851) students and research scholars, followed by working professionals including teachers 41 (12.8%) and others, 7 (2.2%).

2. Objective of the Study

The objectives of the study are :-

- ◆ to survey the states of IT application in the libraries;
- ◆ to assess the level of use and awareness of users community in this field;
- ◆ to ascertain how far the users are benefited with the system in accessing the knowledge resources;
- ◆ to aware of the problem encountered by the users in accessing internet ; and
- ◆ to draw suggestions and opinion from the users and the LIS professionals working in the libraries.

3. Methodology

Two types of semi structurally designed questionnaires were distributed among the staff and users of libraries to collect the data for the study. Besides these, interact with library professionals users and academicians were also held. And observation of library activities were also made during the process of collection of data for the study.

4. IT Application

The present status of IT application in the libraries is not encouraging. Majority of them (71%) are going to start automation process as shown by table 1.

Table 1. Status of IT application in the library activities N=48

Sl. No.	Status	No. of Libraries
1.	YET TO START	34 (71%)
2.	INITIAL STAGE	08 (17%)
3.	PARTIALLY AUTOMATED	06 (12 %)
4.	FULLY AUTOMATED	NIL
5.	OTHER	NIL
	TOTAL	48 (100 %)

Source : Questionnaire

There is no library in Manipur which is fully automated as the table 1 high lights. However, 17% of there are in initial stage of automation and only 12% of them are found to be partially automated the remaining libraries (71 %) i.e. major sector are yet to start the process of their automation.

5. Service and Facility Provided by Library

Among the libraries of initial and partial automated, some of them have provided internet and networking facility as shown in table 2.

Table. 2 : Service & Facility

N=48

Sl. No.	Service and Facility	Yes %	No%	Total %
1.	INTERNET	7 (15 %)	41(85%)	48(100%)
2.	NETWORKING	03(6%)	45(94%)	48(100%)

Source : Questionnaire

6. Ways of Information Browsing through Internet

Most of the library users (39%) do not know the exact web addresses of his required information. So they go through google search. Only 30% of users can access through exact web addresses to get their information needs.

Table: 3 Way of Browsing

N= 321

Sl. No.	Ways Of Browsing	Yes %	No%	Total %
1.	Web Addresses	97 (30 %)	224 (70%)	321(100%)
2.	Through Google Search	126 (39%)	195(61%)	321(100%)
3.	Not Known	98(30.5%)	223(69.5%)	321(100%)

Source : Questionnaire

Table 3 indicated that (30.5%) of them can not access the web resources due to lack of IT/ Internet knowledge.

7. Ways of Meeting Information Needs.

There are different ways through which users meet their information needs as understood from the following table 4.

Table : 4 Way of Meeting Information by users

N=321

Sl. No.	Ways	Rate of Response (%)
1.	By Reading Books At Home	321 (100%)
2.	By Reading Books At Library	321 (100%)
3.	By Waching Tv	319 (99.38%)
4.	By Listening To Radio	304 (94.70%)
5.	By Accessing To Internet	223 (69.47%)
6.	Any Other Means	94 (29.28%)

Source : Questionnaire

It remarkable to understand that, in that process of meeting their information needs, the users read books at home and at the library (100% each). Watching TV (99.38%) and listening to radio (94.70%) also contribute a lot to meet their needs. On other hand, access to internet (69.47%) by them for the purpose is being the lowest response in this "Internet age"

8. Users Awareness on Networking and Internet facility

The level of awareness one users on networking and internet facility being hundred by the libraries is understood from response of users community. It is learned that 32.1 % of them are aware of internet searching facility and 14.6% are on networking facility.

9. Users Satisfaction

The level of satisfaction of the users on methods of the retrieval is understood from the table 5.

Table : 5 Way of Meeting Information by Users

Sl. No.	Methods	Level of Satisfaction		
		to a great extent	to some extent	Not al all
01	Retrieval through www	24 (7.5%)	13 (4%)	284 (88.5%)
02	Internet Surfing	51 (15.9%)	39 (12.1%)	231 (72%)
03	Networking	17 (5.3 %)	23 (7.2 %)	281 (87.5%)

Source : Questionnaire

10. Problems and Difficulties

The users under study encounter a number of problems and difficulties in the use of the library through IT related retrieval methods. Of the 321 users 294 (91.6%) responded that they encounter problems and difficulties mainly include :- lack of internet facility; lack of networking facility; lack of regular power supply; lack of knowledge of computer handling; lack of knowledge of web addresses etc.

11. Suggestions and Opinions

It is a good indication that the library professionals and users suggested a number of points for the improvement of existing position of accessing to web resources. Their suggestions have been analysed and are being summarized as below :-

- a) Improvement of over all infrastructure of the library;
- b) to appoint qualified librarian with sufficient trained manpower ;
- c) to give timely orientation programme of staff to cope with the dynamic changing scenario of LIS.

- d) to give training to the staff for working on IT environment
- e) Staff should have interest for getting training on IT application or any development.
- f) Sufficient financial support from the authority is must;
- g) Fully automation is needed;
- h) Regular Power supply should be there;
- i) Users should be aware of the latest advancement;
- j) Adequate users' terminal should be provided if library is automated;
- k) Basic training on the handling of computer for accessing to internet should be given by the library; and
- l) Library should maintained a list of some important web addresses.

12. Conclusion

The present piece of research finding indicates us a number of clues on promotion of utility of emerging e-base resources through internet. This web technology play a vital role in the process of accessing to resources available in the global arena. The same has an indirect impact on fulfilling the demands of the users. Implementation of the suggestions as opined by the users and library professionals will enhance to achieve upto to the mark of open library.

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