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## Need for Digitization : Problems and Prospects in College Libraries of Manipur

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### Abstract

*The development of computer and communication technology has paved the way to the development of electronic devices and has changed the traditional libraries to digital libraries. This paper describes the concept of digital libraries, its needs, characteristics and functions. The scope, methodology adopted for collection, presentation, analysis and interpretation of data for this paper are concentrated to libraries of some leading colleges in Manipur. It also highlights the problems and prospects in College libraries of Manipur.*

**Keywords :** Digitization, College libraries, Manipur.

### **0. Introduction**

Information technology and networks are the major tools to shape our society in future. The application of information technology has the largest impact on library and librarianship. It has changed the way we perceive and disseminate information and has even threatened the traditional approaches to library and library professionals. The impact of such technologies (Computer network, Internet, Hypermedia, Multimedia, CD-ROM etc.) has led to a paperless society. The convergent of computational storage and networking technologies now have a wider impact on society. The computers can record any information/document at high speed and disseminate information wherever required to the users. It is possible now to digitize and store information in the form of high quality graphics, network texts, color images, voice signals and video clips at a relatively affordable cost.

### **1. Digital Library**

The term "Digital Library" in a broad sense is a computerized system that allows obtaining a coherent means of access to an organized, electronically stored repository of information and data. It is a relatively new concept. The term digital library explains the nature of its collection. This term became familiar towards the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. Resources in digital library are electronic store and access of information. Access to digital library is therefore, not based on space or time.

According to the Berkeley Digital Library Project, University of California "the digital library will be a collection of distributed information sources, producers of information will make it available and consumers will find it perhaps through the help of automated agents". The Stanford Digital Library project states "the integrated digital library will create a shared environment linking everything personnel information collection to collection of conventional libraries to large data collection shared by Scientists". Digital Libraries do not mean libraries in the classical sense but a network of multimedia systems.

### **2. Need for Digitization**

With the rise of information explosion libraries facing manpower and monetary constraints are able to acquire every document published under one roof and thus evolve the concept of resource sharing and network.

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Automation has helped libraries in improving library activities and accelerates their working. It saves the effort, time and manpower of libraries. In an automated system the information can be altered and updated without the repetitive work involved in the manual system. With the development of computer, any information can be turned into sequences. So, any user can access into the sequence without any trouble and delay. It saves the time for the users, staffs and increases productivity and reliability.

As a series of development the concept of digitization evolved in the field of libraries. The process of library culture is and shall be as follows – the traditional libraries shifted towards automated libraries; the automated ones towards electronic ones; the electronic ones towards digitization ones and ultimately to virtual libraries (libraries without walls).

### 3. Characteristics of Digital Library

The important characteristics of digital libraries are as follows :

- ✍ Digital library is a digital object.
- ✍ Digital library provides faster access to information
- ✍ Digital library enables easy management of large amounts of data
- ✍ Digital library collections are fixed and permanent.
- ✍ Digital library support formal and informal learning procedures
- ✍ Digital library can be accessed by any user from any workplace.

### 4. Functions of Digital Library

The most important functions of digital libraries are:

- ✍ to provide friendly interface to users.
- ✍ to avail network facilities.
- ✍ to support library functions.
- ✍ to improve the cost effectiveness of library operations.
- ✍ to enhance advanced search, access and retrieval of information.
- ✍ to support in editing and publishing annotations and integration of information.
- ✍ to digitize documents for preservation and for space saving.

### 5. Scope of the Study

The scope of the study entitled “Need for Digitization: Problems and prospects in college libraries of Manipur” is limited only to some leading colleges of Manipur. In this paper an attempt has been made to study the problems and prospects of Digitization.

### 6. Methodology

The study was conducted through questionnaire and interview method.

**6.1 Major Findings Colleges in Manipur :** The development of college libraries in Manipur was very late and started only from the 1940s, when the first college of the state, the D.M. College, Imphal was instituted with a well furnished library. At present there are 32 affiliated government colleges and 8 government aided colleges, 22 affiliated private colleges and 8 permitted private colleges in Manipur (Source: Manipur University).

Libraries have been set up in all the colleges of Manipur. Majority of them are, however, facing financial problems for the development of resources manpower, money and collection etc. Application of modern technology in the work of college libraries still remains bizarre in Manipur.

**6.2 Library Collection :** The most important factor of any library is its collection. It grows in value with the passage of time. If the book collection of library is efficient, ideal and satisfactory to the needs of the readers, the image of the library shall automatically enhance. The efficiency of the library service is governed largely by the quality and quantity of its collection. The following table shows the collection of 20 college libraries of Manipur.

**Table 1 : Library Collection**

(NR = Not Received)

Source: Survey data

Sl.	College	Books	Journals	Newspapers	Audio	CD ROM Video
1	C.I. College	10200	4	4	NIL	NIL
2	Churachandpur College	7955	11	2	NIL	NIL
3	D.M. College of Arts	27500	NR	7	5	NIL
4	D.M. College of Science	53500	24	6	NIL	50
5	G.P. Women College	33315	NR	NR	NIL	NIL
6	HTT College	3309	3	1	NIL	NIL
7	Ideal College	12000	7	5	NIL	NIL
8	Imphal College	20844	NR	5	NIL	NIL
9	Lilong Haoreibi College	6750	50	5	NIL	NIL
10	LMS Law College	12012	509	NR	NIL	NIL
11	Manipur College	19799	3	NR	NIL	NIL
12	M.B. College	14035	3	6	NIL	NIL
13	Modern College	11250	4	4	NIL	NIL
14	Oriental College	7157	5	3	NIL	NIL
15	Regional College	5000	2	2	NIL	NIL
16	Royal Academy of Law	3469	848	6	NIL	NIL
17	S.K. Womens College	5455	NIL	5	NIL	NIL
18	Thoubal College	14269	4	3	NIL	NIL
19	T.S. Paul Womens College	11000	5	4	NIL	NIL
20	Waikhom Mani Girls College	10288	8	5	NIL	NIL

The above table indicates the great difference in the collection of materials and the non-uniformity in standard and status amongst the college libraries of Manipur.

**6.3 Manpower Structure :** The greatest and richest resource of any library is its staff. The staff provides services. The staff builds or destroys the image of the library. A trained and motivated staff is an invaluable asset of any library. The following table shows the manpower structure of 20 college libraries in Manipur.

Sl.	Name of the college	Professionals	Non Professionals	Professional Qualifications
1	C.I. College	2	1	BLISc
2	Churachandpur College	1	3	MLISc
3	D.M. College of Arts	3	2	MA/BLISc
4	D.M. College of Science	4	4	MLISc/Ph.D
5	G.P. Women College	1	3	BLISc
6	HTT College	1	2	MA/BLISc
7	Ideal College	1	2	BLISc
8	Imphal College	1	2	BLISc
9	Lilong Haoreibi College	1	4	BLISc
10	LMS Law College	1	3	MLISc
11	Manipur College	2	3	BLISc
12	M.B. College	2	3	BA
13	Modern College	2	2	MLISc
14	Oriental College	1	3	BLISc
15	Regional College	1	2	BLISc
16	Royal Academy of Law	1	2	BLISc
17	S.K. Womens College	1	3	MLISc
18	Thoubal College	3	2	BLISc
19	T.S. Paul Womens College	1	3	BLISc
20	Waikhom Mani Girls College	2	3	BLISc

**Table 2: Manpower Structure**

Source: Survey data

It is clear from the above table that staff pattern is not proportionate to the national standard and libraries of Manipur are suffering from lack of well trained staffs.

**6.4 Financial Resources :** Since the Library is NFP (Not for Profit) organization it does not have its financial resources. A library is on the other hand supposed to be a growing organism. It cannot grow without adequate amount of fund. Most libraries are run with government grants (Central and State) or public donations or contributions from the students. The following table shows the financial position of college libraries of Manipur.

**Table 3 : Source of Income**

Sl.	Name of the college	Budgetary Technique Adopted	Sources of income during the 9th plan		
			State/ Central	Fees/Fines	(UGC) Donation
1	C.I. College	Lump sum	87,000/-	1,25,000/-	28,000/-
2	Churachandpur College	Lump sum	35,000/-	15,000/-	Collected
3	D.M. College of Arts	Lump sum		40,000/-	Collected
4	D.M. College of Science	Lump sum		7,02,000/-	Collected
5	G.P. Women College	Lump sum		1,00,000/-	Collected
6	HTT College	Lump sum	28,000/-	NR	Collected
7	Ideal College	Lump sum	NR	NR	Collected
8	Imphal College	Lump sum	NR	NR	Collected
9	Lilong Haoreibi College	Lump sum	20,000/-	1,80,000/-	Collected
10	LMS Law College	Lump sum	1,22,950/-	2,50,000/-	Collected
11	Manipur College	Lump sum	45,000/-	1,80,000/-	Collected
12	M.B. College	Lump sum	5,000/-	2,00,000/-	Collected
13	Modern College	Lump sum	50,000/-	2,00,000/-	Collected
14	Oriental College	Lump sum	NR	1,00,000/-	Collected
15	Regional College	Lump sum	NR	NR	2,78,000/-
16	Royal Academy of Law	Lump sum	NR	NR	4,40,000/-
17	S.K. Womens College	Lump sum	NR	2,00,000/-	NR
18	Thoubal College	Lump sum	NR	NR	Collected
19	T.S. Paul Womens College	Lump sum	NR	NR	2,71,000/-
20	Waikhom Mani Girls College	Lump sum	NR	1,00,000/-	32,700

(NR = Not Received)

Source: Survey data

The above table vividly shows the lapses in financial resources of the college libraries in Manipur which would ultimately check their normal growth and development.

## 7. Problems

The manpower, money and collection in college libraries of Manipur are in a pitiable position. Without proper infrastructure and well-trained staffs, digitization of college libraries is not possible. The most important aspect in this regard is financial resources from the concerned authorities. Some burning problems in college libraries of Manipur may be noted as follows:

- ✍ Library facilities in the college libraries of Manipur are inadequate and disorganized.
- ✍ Training for manpower-development (library staff) is not yet seen in Manipur.
- ✍ The earmarked plan and non-plan fund allotted to the libraries are insufficient.
- ✍ Lapses in the management of the fund allotted to the libraries can be seen from time to time.
- ✍ Information technology is lacking far behind in the colleges of Manipur.

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- ✍ Creation of posts and consequent appointment of trained staffs are not done.
  - ✍ Lack of cooperation among the libraries in colleges of Manipur.
  - ✍ Lack of reading habit in the libraries by the students.
  - ✍ Non-application of modern advanced technology in college libraries of Manipur.

## 8. Prospects

The changing information and communication technologies have brought the creation, handling, delivering and storage of information in digital forms. In this changing environment using digital technology in the college libraries is of utmost importance. The college authorities (Principal, Libraries and Staffs) of Manipur are also aware of the same in the state.

The following points may be recommended/suggested in this connection for the College Libraries particularly in Manipur and in India as a whole.

- ✍ The government should take steps for providing library facilities with well-equipped modern technology at par to the colleges.
- ✍ The concerned authorities should not grant affiliations and permissions to the private colleges until and unless they can keep the requisite library norms.
- ✍ Information technology may be facilitated for making network among the libraries.
- ✍ A committee consisting of library authority, staffs and user community may be constituted to initiate joint efforts introducing computerized service in the library.
- ✍ Availability of information technology facilities (like internet) should be considered and encouraged.
- ✍ E-resources training/awareness programme may be organized from time to time by the concerned authority.
- ✍ College management committee should take steps to take help/assistance from the UGC (INFLIBNET) for the successful implementation of modern technology.
- ✍ Earmarked grants for the college libraries should be given.
- ✍ Libraries must be encouraged to renovate themselves in the modern trends.
- ✍ Adequate funds may be provided and utilized properly.

## 9. Conclusion

The information and communication technology has changed the complexion of today's libraries on a large scale. In developing a digital library, librarians will have a hard task to do. They will need the help of technologies to understand better the possibilities being created by digital technologies, and technologists will again need the help of librarians to make the process a successful one. When planning a digital library many factors like management support, adequate financial resources, staff co-operation, standard format and security are to be maintained and adopted. Then there is no doubt that digitization will work well and promptly in any type of environment. Digitization in all aspects of life including libraries will save time, energy, manpower, space etc. Everybody in the society must be aware of the need of Digitization Science and Technology.

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### About Author



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