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## HUMAN RESOURCE DEVELOPMENT FOR DIGITAL ENVIRONMENT : A CASE STUDY OF THE LIBRARIES OF MANIPUR

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### Abstract

*The present paper highlights the scenario of application of information technology in the three types of libraries i.e. Publics, Special and Academic Libraries residing in the valley of Manipur. The objectives are to present an unbiased account of the scenario which has been large affecting the services of the libraries. It also states the problems and prospect regarding the areas, which can be developed in future for effective functioning of the libraries in Manipur.*

**Keywords:** Information Technology; Human Resource Development ; Operating System; INFLIBNET.

### 1. Introduction

"Human Resource" is regarded as the most important resource for the advancement of the nation. If it is not properly developed, it cannot be put to proper use. Human force is the basic raw material for the development of an advanced nation. According to Peter Drucker "The most valuable asset of a 21st century institution will be its knowledge workers and their productivity. In an organization staff development and staff training are parts of the bigger concept of human resource development (HRD). HRD encompasses the broad set of activities that improve the performance of the individual and teams of an organization.

HRD is considered as the most vital link of the library. HRD involves both management and operative functions. Operative functions include procurement, development, compensation, integration and maintenance of personnel. It is the most powerful tool for any organization's success and the training of employees is regarded as one of the most important functions of effective resource management. In order to obtain a competitive edge in providing the best services to the customer, training which will develop a well-trained workforce is vital to render efficient and effective services in modern library and Information centers.

Further, libraries require appointing staff, which possess IT skills so that they are in a position to perform a wide range of functions. This particular paper has been brought out to get a view of human factor, which is one of the most complicated aspects of any system. Yet, it's the one that gets the least attention, is least discussed, the least researched, and perhaps the least understood.

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## **2. Scope of the Study**

The study entitled "Human Resource Development for Digital Environment: A case Study of the Libraries of Manipur" covers two 2 Public Libraries, 9 Special Libraries and 18 Academic libraries functioning in the valley of Manipur accounting for 29 Libraries in all.

## **3. Methodology**

Questionnaire method and on the spot interview was conducted for collecting the data. The target group comprises almost all the staff of each and every library. Altogether a total of 160 questionnaires were distributed among the three types of libraries of which 118 were collected (Public-27, Special-37 and Colleges-54). The Age group of the respondent was divided into three categories viz., 31-40, 41-50, 51-58 and 58 and above respectively. It was found that the majority of the staff was in the age group of 41-50 followed by those in 51-60, 31-40 and 60 above. Sexwise, the ratio of male and female was found to be 66.94 male to 33.05 female.

## **4. Objectives of the Study**

The objectives of the study are:

- To find out the present status of staff (i.e. Human Resource) of valley libraries of Manipur.
- Improvement of staff morale.
- Offer continuous training on new aspects.
- To find the present attitude of library staff for the implementation of IT application.
- To evaluate the need of training for IT application in valley libraries of Manipur.
- To highlight the problems faced by the staff.
- Encourage staff development.
- Create a supportive learning environment that can bring a mutual regard for individual strength within.

## **5. Training Programme for Staff**

Effective training programme for the library staff is a must to acquire authentic meaning of a library. There are different methods of training, which can be adopted by an organization. Some are:

- Sending staff for relevant courses and seminars.
- Library professionals must regularly read literature not only in their field of specialization but also allied fields especially on IT.
- Job learning training can be carried out at work place itself.
- Information literacy programme within the libraries.
- Network literacy programme.
- Computer literacy programme.
- UGC sponsored programme.

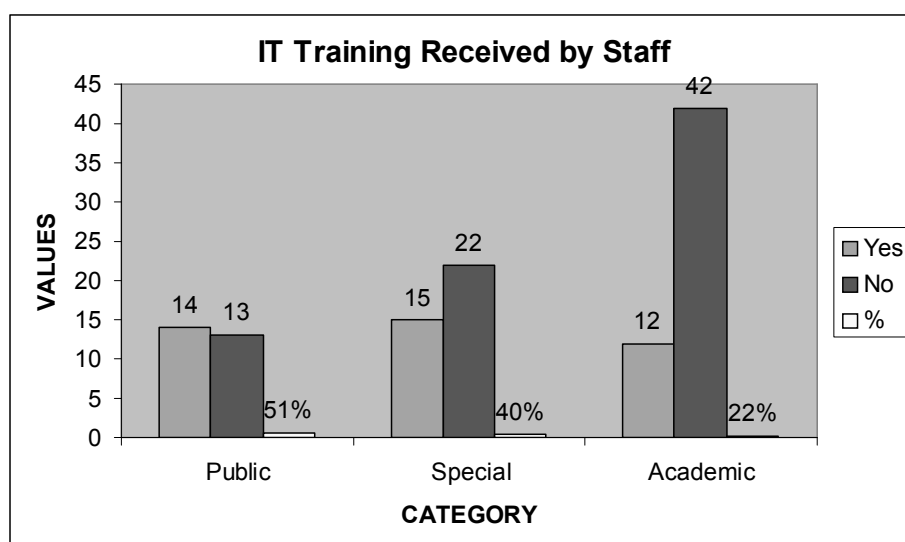
- Staff must be trained to install software and tackle simple technical problems.
- Training must be given to familiarize with some Operating Systems (OS) such as MS DOS, MS WORD, MS EXCEL, MS POWERPOINT, etc.
- Knowledge of e-mail technology must be given.
- Training in data organization, structuring and presentation of contents must be given to library professionals.

## 6. Status of Automation

Sl.No.	Category	No. of libraries not automated at all	No. of libraries Partially automated	No. of libraries fully automated	Total
1	Public		2	-	2
2	Special	5	4	-	9
3	Academic	12	6	-	18
	Total	17	12	-	29

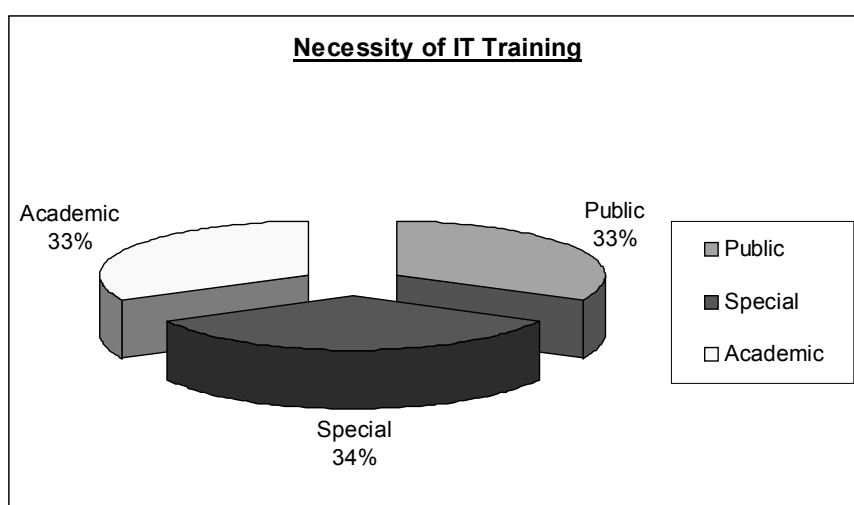
From the data collected, it was brought to light that most of the libraries were partially automated doing minimal of jobs or sometimes just for namesake. Not even a single library was found to be fully automated. Out of 29 libraries, 12 were partially automated and the rest was far from the idea of automation for the next 5-10 years.

## 7. Training Received by staff regarding Application of IT



Since, from table 1, we found that the status of automation in libraries was very poor. Hence, the training received by library personnel was also naturally very few. Looking at table 2, it is clear that only 34.74% received training in one way or the other through orientation, conferences, seminars held in the state as well as in other parts of country outside Manipur. This reflects the sad picture of the functioning of all the Government institute libraries of Manipur. A strong library Movement is the need of the hour to propagate the importance of library to the society by those person who is in these fields.

## 8. Necessity of IT Training



Regarding the advancement in Information Technology and its application in libraries, majority of the respondent accounting for 90.67% agreed to the necessity of training in application of IT in their libraries. A mere 9% or so did not respond to it for they were just office bearers, helpers etc. Not only majority of the respondent agreed to the importance of IT training, but they all voice the same opinion of automating their libraries at the earliest possible time to provide efficient and effective services to the readers.

### Factors which Effects the IT Application in Libraries

Sl. No	Reasons	Great Extent	Small Extent	Not at all	Total
1	Equipments	111	7	-	118
2	Finance	97	21	-	118
3	Motivation	20	40	58	118
4	Support from Authority	18	19	81	118
5	Training	110	8	-	118

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The above table reveals that maximum respondents were of the opinion that the main factor which affects application of IT of the libraries is equipments to a great extent, followed by finance, training of library professionals, motivation and support from the authority.

## **9. Findings**

The finding of the data analysis can be summarized as follows.

- All of the libraries surveyed where financed and managed under the state government.
- The rate of computer literacy among the library professionals was very poor nearly 65% of the staff was computer illiterate.
- Almost all the libraries do not follow any staffing pattern.
- Out of the 29 libraries under the study only 12 were partially computerized with no standard library softwares.
- The scope of continuing education, training of the professionals was very limited.

### **9.1 Problems of IT application in the libraries:**

The step motherly treatment by the colleges authority as well as the government towards the development of libraries is one of the main problems plaguing the state.

- Lack of funds.
- Lack of innovation and professional ethics amongst the Library professionals.
- Lack of qualified staff.
- High cost of IT infrastructures.
- Library professionals lack knowledge and training in IT application.

## **10. Suggestions**

1. The professionals should be provided with required motivators such as monetary gain, working conditions, authority in decision-making, personal growth and development, self-esteem etc. to upgrade their skills in the ever-changing digital environment.
2. Selection and recruitment of library professionals should be more stringent and the skill and qualification required should be consistent with the nature of the jobs to be performed.
3. The main hurdle from the study towards digitization of the libraries was the finance. Here as a suggestion we would like INFLIBNET or any such organization/agencies to provide financial assistance or minimum hardware and software which at present are being provided to Universities all over India.
4. Professionals should be encouraged to participate in training programmes, seminars, conference etc to keep abreast of the latest trends in the field of their studies.
5. The professionals should also try to develop their skills and competencies in a changing library situation.

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## 11. Conclusion

The Indian system of Higher education during the last 30 years or so has been expanding primarily for social and political reasons rather than on economic and manpower considerations. Nearly one-third of the total outlay on education in India is spent on higher education. Unfortunately, our colleges resemble the inherited imperial pattern of pre-independence India and suffer from the worst effect.

Development of human resources lies at the core of the knowledge productive organizations, like libraries. The survival and success of organizations will increasingly depend on their ability to ensure that they are "smart" at all levels rather than only at the top. In this fast changing environment the library and information workers are required to possess enhanced managerial, professional and technical skills, adequate knowledge and right kind of experience. So, training the existing manpower or recruiting new professionals will become essential. They must possess flexibility of attitude, imagination and scientific bend of mind. Further, the libraries need to be upgraded along with the changing environment from its traditional to a digital environment. Even though the introduction and use of Information technology in the said libraries is in the initial stage in Manipur. Steps may be taken up to develop the libraries with IT rather than being just a custodian of documents. In the near future, if the conditions of the libraries doesn't change within 5-10 years than there is a chance that the libraries may be replaced by Internet café, knowledge kiosks etc. making way for other IT professionals. As a final word we would like to remind that immediate steps should be taken up for Human Resource Development keeping into view the changing digital environment.

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