

Online Reference Services by Libraries in Higher Education Institutions of Government of India situated in West Bengal: A Comparative Study

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Abstract— A library plays a crucial role in a University. In educational aspect, Universities library has indispensable source of learning and it becomes a knowledge hub for the parent institution. Reference and information services have always been the main component of library services. The research has been carried by selecting all the Central Government affiliated Higher education Institutions in West Bengal. . We believe that this study will help universities to build and maintain reference services that can facilitate a user's information need with accurate guidance to a collection of information from the library and from other sources.

Index Terms— Reference Service, online reference service, central University's library website, library website, West Bengal Higher education, Higher Education's comparative study, online library.

1 INTRODUCTION

The library and information professional is facing the challenges of electronic age. Technological developments gave way to new range of reference services. In this series of developments online reference or digital reference is the latest trend of the library era. Easily accessible reference information has rapidly become one of the hallmarks of internet. Reference Service is a personalized service by the library reference staff to individual user in making maximum utilization of library resources. It is bridge between library resources and users. Some time users are directed to source of information or just guided by the reference staff to find out what is where? There are two types of reference service.

- Ready Range Reference Service/Short Range Reference Service
- Long Range Reference Service

The Radhakrishnan Commission (1948-49) expressed that "the library is the heart of all the university's work, directly so, as regards to its enabling research work and indirectly its role in promoting educational work, which derives its life from research. Scientific research needs the library as well as its laboratories while for humanistic research the library is both library and the laboratory in one. Both for humanistic and scientific studies, a first class library are essential in a university." India, Ministry of Education. Report of the University Education Commission 1948-49. Delhi: Manager of Publication, 1949. p113).

A library plays a crucial role in a University. In educational aspect, Universities library has indispensable source of learning and it becomes a knowledge hub for the parent institution. Reference and information services have always been the main component of library services of a higher education institution. They provide personalized assistance to library users in accessing suitable information resources to meet their needs. This study examines the varied types of reference services provided by the library websites of Central Universities in West Bengal State through means of online interviews and secondary research. This study demonstrates the nature, objectives and values of reference services provided by the library websites

and correlate the various components to identify common services that can be treated as minimum essential for effective knowledge dissemination. The research has been carried by selecting all the Central Government affiliated Higher education Institutions in West Bengal.

2 RESEARCH OBJECTIVE

The objective of this study is to study reference service offered by West Bengal's states under central Universities library Websites. We believe that this study will help universities to build and maintain reference services that can facilitate a user's information need with accurate guidance to a collection of information from the library and from other sources. Moving forward, as libraries develop their digital reference services, technology will continue to play a critical role in their ability to effectively understand and serve user's needs. During the course of this study, we were able to collect and analyze digital reference service model for a limited number of data due to time limitations. This keeps the options open for further study on a number of other sources of digital referencing service that would provide more insights and provide more robust recommendation.

The objectives of this study is to execute the following

- To study the present status of reference service being provided in the West Bengal Central Universities libraries website under study
- To find out the various types and modes of Reference Service at the West Bengal Central Universities libraries websites
- To compare of reference service being provided in the university libraries websites

2.1 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

The purpose of this study is to answer the following questions.

- Which types of reference services are provided through the library homepage of Central Universities library's websites in West Bengal?

- Which Universities libraries websites represent maximum number of reference services

2.2 Scope of the Study

The present research was conducted to determine the status of reference services in higher education institutions in West Bengal. Total number of State run Universities are 28 (twenty eight), 9 (nine) Central Universities and an additional 9 (nine) Private Universities. In this paper, our main focus on the 9 (nine) Central Universities which are situated at West Bengal

3 LITERATURE REVIEW

Dodamani, A., & Brahma, T. (2016) find through a study conducted at Sit Dorabji Tata Memorial Library (SDTM Library), Tata Institute of Social Sciences (TISS), Mumbai in manage to understand the perception of students, staff and faculty members of TISS about the library and its services. Neeraj Kumar Singh (Singh, Neeraj Kumar, 2012) focused on his paper the present status of Digital reference service in the four University libraries and minutely study of the strength and weakness of existing reference service being provided in the libraries under study and comparison study of no. of 4th University libraries in Northern India. Mr. Bhatt's (R. K. Bhatt, 2009) discusses on the genesis and growth of academic libraries in ancient, medieval and modern Indian libraries. Adebayo (2007) study's to observe the execution of library service principles in the colleges of education in Nigeria under name "Library Services Standards Implemented in Colleges of Education in Nigeria.

4 METHODOLOGY

A proper methodology is the only key to success of any type of research. As a first we have tried to define the sample Universities for this study. We have selected all the central Universities in West Bengal and minutely studied all the selected Universities Libraries websites which were explored to identify and evaluate the present status of reference services.

4.1 Data Collection

In the present study, we have used information available on websites. Each university webpage is closely reviewed and tried to find out details about the varied mode of reference services provided from their websites. Selected Universities are:

1. Indian Institute of Foreign Trade (IIFT), Salt Lake, Kolkata
2. Indian Institute of Management Calcutta (IIM), Joka, Kolkata
3. Indian Institute of Science Education and Research, Kolkata (IISER), Haringhata, Nadia

4. Indian Statistical Institute (ISI), Baranagar, Kolkata
5. Indian Institute of Technology, Kharagpur
6. Indian Institute of Engineering Science and Technology, (IIEST) Shibpur, Howrah
7. National Institute of Technology (NIT), Durgapur
8. Visva-Bharati University, Santiniketan
9. Indian Institute of Information Technology (IIT), Kalyani

4.2 Data Organization

We will create tables for listed various types of services provided by University websites.

4.3 Data Analysis And Interpretation

An evaluation study was used for collecting relevant data from respective libraries websites under study. The data thus obtained was analyzed, tabulated and interpreted for comparing reference services provided by selected libraries websites. We make a comparison among these selected Universities.

5 COMPARATIVE STUDY OF REFERENCE SERVICES

In this study, we have discussed 9 selected Institutional library websites to collect data for analysis. Now we have made a comparison among them separated in 2 tables as below

Table-1A: Comparisons between 5 Selected University according to various forms of Reference Services

| Sl. No. | IIFT | IIM | IISER | ISI | IIT |
|----------------------------------|------|-----|-------|-----|-----|
| Library Websites | Y | Y | N | Y | Y |
| Web-OPAC | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y |
| Subject Gateway | Y | Y | N | Y | Y |
| Web-Database | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y |
| Reference Management tools | N | N | N | Y | N |
| Links to e- resources. | Y | Y | Y | Y | Y |
| RSS feed | N | Y | N | Y | Y |
| E-mail | Y | Y | N | Y | Y |
| Aska librarian | N | N | N | N | Y |
| Chat | N | N | N | N | Y |
| Instant Messaging | N | N | N | N | Y |
| Vpn | N | N | N | Y | N |
| Chatterbotter | N | N | N | N | N |
| Video viareference | N | N | N | N | Y |
| Webform | N | Y | N | N | N |
| FAQ | N | N | N | N | Y |
| New arrivals(CAS) | Y | Y | N | Y | Y |
| Mobile app | N | N | N | N | Y |
| Search Engine Reference Services | N | N | N | N | N |
| Web Based User Education | N | N | N | N | Y |
| Video conference | N | N | N | N | Y |
| Website Language Translation | N | N | Y | N | N |
| Plagiarism software | N | N | N | Y | N |
| Copy right | N | N | Y | N | N |
| Website last update date | N | N | N | N | N |
| User feed-Back form | N | N | N | N | N |

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Table-1B: Comparisons between 4 remaining Universities according to various forms of Reference Services

| Sl. No. | IIST | NIT | Visva-Bharati | IIT |
|----------------------------------|------|-----|---------------|-----|
| Library Websites | Y | N | Y | N |
| Web-OPAC | Y | N | Y | N |
| Subject Gateway | N | N | Y | N |
| Web-Database | Y | Y | Y | N |
| Reference Management tools | N | N | N | N |
| Links to e- resources. | Y | Y | Y | Y |
| RSS feed | Y | N | Y | N |
| E-mail | Y | Y | Y | Y |
| Ask a librarian | N | N | N | N |
| Chat | N | N | N | N |
| Instant Messaging | N | N | N | N |
| Vpn | N | N | N | N |
| Chatterbotter | N | N | N | N |
| Video viareference | N | N | N | N |
| Webform | N | N | Y | N |
| FAQ | N | N | Y | N |
| New arrivals(CAS) | N | N | Y | N |
| Mobile app | N | N | N | N |
| Search Engine Reference Services | N | N | Y | N |
| Web Based UserEducation | N | N | N | N |
| Video conference | N | N | N | N |
| Website Language Translation | N | N | Y | N |
| Plagiarism software | Y | Y | Y | N |
| Copy right | Y | Y | Y | N |
| Website last update date | Y | Y | Y | N |
| User feed-Back form | N | N | Y | N |

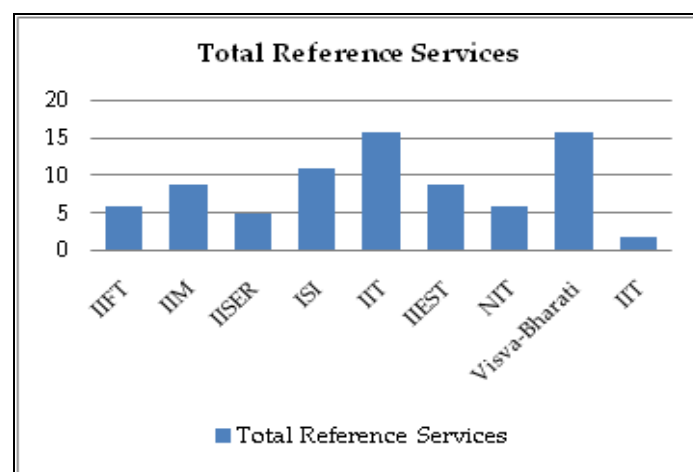
List of Universities under study

1. IIFT = Indian Institute of Foreign Trade, Kolkata
2. IIM = Indian Institute of Management, Joka, Kolkata
3. IISER = Indian Institute of Science Education and Research, Kolkata
4. ISI = Indian Statistical Institute, Kolkata
5. IIT = Indian Institute of Technology, Kharagpur,
6. IIST = Indian Institute of Engineering Science and Technology, Shibpur
7. NIT = National Institute of Technology, Durgapur
8. Viswa- Bharati = Viswa-Bharati University, Santiniketan
9. IIT = Indian Institute of Information Technology, Kalyani

The table-1A&B illustrates that all the nine selected University libraries have their own library websites. Except two Universities, NIT and IIT (Kalyani) All the seven libraries providing the Web-OPAC service and Subject portal service, but NIT and IIT (Kalyani) haven't provide the facilities of Web-OPAC service and five libraries have their own subject gateway but IISER, IIST, NIT and IIT (Kalyani) do not provide this type of

facilities for their users. All the Universities are properly linked with their web data-base except IIT (Kalyani). IIT (Kalyani) is established on 2014. It is younger Universities among others eight Universities. Only Indian Statistical Institute (Kolkata)'s library's website has linked to automatic reference management tools. They are used to Citation Machine for more than just citations grammar-checker and plagiarismchecker also. All of the nine Universities are well linked to e-resources and four universities are used plagiarism tools for their users. RSS feed service are maintained by IIM, ISI, IIT, IIST and Vishwa Bharati Universities and new arrival book or current awareness service are provided only IIFT, IIM, ISI and IIST libraries web-sites. Except IISER library's Website, all the others eight Universities have e-mail facilities. Ask a librarian, Chat and instant messaging and video referencing services are provided by IIT KGP only and VPN service is also provided by one of the library named ISI (Kolkata). IIM and Viswa Bharati have web form facility for their users. Only two Universities, named IIT kgp and Viswa Bharati have FAQ for users and IIT KGP is the only one University which has android support mobile application. Search engine based reference services are provided only Viswa Bharati. Web based user education facility has been provided only IIT KGP. IISER and Viswa-bharati have website translator. Copy right symbol is used only IISER, IIST, NIT and Viswa-bharati's libraries websites. Last web-site update date is clearly shown by IIST, Viswa- Bharati and NIT universities web sites. User's feedback form has only Viswa- Bharati's libraries websites.

After counting total number of reference services offered by each University, we create the bar-diagram to show that how many types of reference services are provided to these Universities.



6 CONCLUSION

The main aim of this study to find out the real condition of West Bengal's under central Universities libraries websites provided reference services. We have mentioned the findings obtained and interpretation of data. At last we find that IIT KGP and Viswa-bharati universities are the same highest values and IIT (Kalyani) website are new with many improve-

ment opportunities in terms of providing enabling reference services from their websites.

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