CHAPTER : 6
SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION
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Summary of the findings and Conclusion

Summary of Findings: The finding of the study in concise and summarized way arranged here for consideration and evaluation.

The researcher has conducted this study on two sections of people which are directly related to RTI. These are- Information Seekers, the people who have asked any questions under this act and Public Information Officers (PIO), people who are at the functional end under this act and vital for effective implementation and success of this act. Researcher has used purposive sampling method to collect the primary information from the universe. The study has confined on the district Cachar area of Assam only and data were collected with the help of questionnaire schedule prepared by researcher himself.

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS COLLECTED FROM INFORMATION SEEKERS

• The present study is male dominated as 100 % information seekers participants are male only; it indicates that women participation is very low at unnoticeable level in using RTI.

• Youth population is major user of RTI in the universe and decrease has been recorded in RTI cases while moving form young age to old age. This has approved with the figure that 52% of total information seekers come form 18-30 years, 40% form 30-40 years and 8% form 40-50 years.

• Comparatively more people from urban areas use RTI then from rural areas, but in a given universe the edge of urban people is marginalized as 53% among information seekers come from urban area and 47% form rural areas.

• Majority of information seekers in the universe come from Hindu religion background as 67% of total information seekers are Hindu and 33% are Muslims, followers of other religion have unnoticeable presence in this business.

• Study has observed that there is a negative co-relation between high income group and use of RTI as only 16% from higher income group people have filed any RTI against 84% from lower middle and middle income group people.
The universe represents a mixed job profile as out of nine categories five have score in double digit.

The universe is dominated by highly educated people as 44% out of total respondent are graduated, 18% are PG, and around 30% are up to higher secondary educated and 7% are illiterate.

Majority of information seeker do not have email address (56%) and only 44% have exposed to ICT as they are having email-address.

Maximum RTI (92%) asked from state government departments and very little amount of RTI filed in central government offices (8%) in the Cachar.

RTI in principle used for personal causes or to satisfy information seekers individual needs (56%) and comparatively less but in a good proportion (44%) RTIs are placed for social welfare or public causes.

There is no unanimity on the name and post of addressee of application as information seekers have mentioned PIOs (38%), HOD (56%) on this variable.

Majority of respondents have agreed (78%) that RTI application format is required to file any query that may be taken as perception of non-essential procedure. However, only 22% of respondents have accepted that no prescribed format is required.

Majority of respondents (82%) have knowledge of Rs.10 charge for APL people seeking information and no charge for BPL people. However 18% of the respondents do not have exact idea on such charges.

Majority of respondents (61%) have shown knowledge of varied mode of payment for RTI fee but a sizable proportion of mode of payment mentioned under this Act.

Information sighted under the RTI Act can be receive in any medium mentioned above but in this study majority of respondents have mentioned (63%) one or any two medium of receiving information and 37% answer all three medium.

Information sighted under the RTI Act can be opted on any means i.e. paper, CD, etc. but in this study majority of respondents have mentioned (76%) that photocopy is the way to receive information.

Depending upon the mode office can charge different rate for giving information majority of respondents have knowledge (76%) that Rs.2 for photocopy can be charged for the purpose.
• RTI Act has considered as of the most effective Acts among various public welfare Acts of India. This fact has approved by the respondents as 89% have expressed their full satisfaction received by using this Act.

• PIO is a key functionary in the RTI Act. If he rejects the application entire effort of asking question will be stopped. He has right to check the applicability of requests on mentioned criterion but majority of respondents do not feel like that as 59% have denied such right of the PIO.

• In very rare circumstances any RTI application can be rejected and maximum due to national security and international affairs. However 76% of the total respondents have knowledge that national security related incidents are those important affairs.

• A PIO can be charged with maximum Rs.25,000 as fine under this Act for deliberately delaying or violating the Act. Majority of respondents with marginal edge (54%) have awareness of this fact. However a major amount of respondents (46%) do not have proper perception of it.

• RTI provides right to citizens to get information from prescribed destination and majority of respondents (83%) have of opinion that RTI is the only way to get information from government offices.

• Majority of respondents (76%) have accepted that information received with the help of RTI can be used in legal matters and 24% have taken it to increase official’s accountability.

• Aware people or face to face direct communications have recognized as the main source of knowing regarding RTI (91%) people. However newspaper (73% respondents) and television (50% respondents) are also recognized on a supportive medium to increase awareness on RTI. Radio and training camps have very low to nil recognition in this regard.

• Television is most used and available medium among mass media as 76% respondents have Television sets and they regularly watch it.

• Majority of respondents (64%) subscribe to newspapers and read it regularly (81%) respondents.

• Mobile phone found everywhere or 100% responders have mobile phone connection.
• Internet, radio and land line phones have least respondent favors as subsequently they are available and used (radio = 12% and 4 %, landline =6% and 6%, internet= 17.48%) by respondents.

• 20% of total respondents do not have internet connections but they use it regularly or other places.

• Total respondents have satisfied with the provision and power of RTI Act.

• People have very positive acceptation from the RTI Act as 100% respondents want removal of corruption with this Act and 18% of increase accountability of the office. Nobody wants to misuse it to disturb the official or system.

• RTI Act does not restrict its users on number of question and sub question 89% respondents have mentioned that they can ask many questions in one application and 11% respondents do not have idea regarding this.

• Under RTI Act a public functioning is bounded to provide information within 30 days in normal care and within 48 hours in care if information is vital for life and liberty. Respondents have (79%) knowledge of 30 days limit only 16 have knowledge of both.

• Majority of respondents have received their RTI response in 30-40 days time limit (77.68%) and some have reported of receiving it after 40 days (11.65%).

• Majority of respondents have knowledge that they can appeal against PIO if he or she denial to provide information under this Act 55 % people have accepted that they first appeal system of RTI. However a big number (45%) don’t know regarding first appellate authority.

• State information Commission is a second appellate authority which is perceived by majority of respondents (55%) rightly but 45% people don’t have any idea of this.

• Majority of respondents (84%) did not face any problem or harassment due to file RTI and 16 % respondents have faced problem because of filing RTI.

• Only 26% respondents have firm believe that RTI will stop the corruption and 63% thought not very firm but hopeful regarding this fact only 11% respondents feel that RTI cannot stop corruption.

• All the respondents very keen in learning A To Z of RTI as 100% have agreed to attend RTI related training program if available free.
Majority of respondents do not have any negative perception of PIO’s attitude while dealing RTI application with PIO attitude, only 7% respondents feel uncomfortable with PIO attitude.

- Majority of respondents have agreed that RTI is an effective tool to bring transparency in governance.
- Majority of respondents (92%) feel that RTI have created positive impact on public servant and the share more responsiveness.
- Majority of respondents (50.50%) do not have any idea of line presence of CIC and SIC, whereas 19.41% use CIC/SIC websites and 30.09% people do not use it.
- All the respondents have satisfied with this Act and 100% have agreed that they will use it again in near future.

**SUMMARY OF FINDINGS COLLECTED FROM PUBLIC INFORMATION OFFICERS**

- Majority of PIO respondents 78% are male and rest 22% are female in the universe.
- Majority of PIO respondents (53%) come from 40-50 age group, followed by more than 50 years group (28%). Comparatively young people (<40 years) have less representation as PIO.
- Majority of PIO respondents are graduated followed by non-graduated 22% and PG (18%).
- Interestingly 70% of PIO’s in Cachar district do not gave e-mail address.
- All the PIO respondents know the right year of ratification of the Act.
- Majority of PIO respondents (68%) have 3 or more than 3 years’ experience or PIO followed by 2 years (21%).
- Majority of PIO respondents (72%) have given priority to scrutinize application form and conveying information on those from have mentioned as second priority. Displaying information under this Act have prioritize at no there by majority (89%) and organizing RTI related training programme is concerned at no form by all. Thus we can say that PIO’s are more interested in dealing with application and giving responses on that.
• Majority of PIO respondents (47%) says that only one PIO can be there in one office 20% each have mentioned that they do not know and can be two 13% have said that it depends on circumstances.
• Majority of PIO respondents have informed that maximum officer (72%) receive up to 5 RTI application per month and very few (16%) receive 6-10 and 13% more than 10 RTI.
• Majority of PIO respondents (94%) have not rejected any RTI application however 6% have rejected. All PIO’s who have rejected the application said that non-applicability were the only region behind that.
• Majority of PIO respondents (76%) agreed that many question may be asked under one RTI application 11% have no idea one that and 9% have restricted it to two to three.
• Majority of PIO respondents (65%) have mentioned that it depends on the circumstances to answer all the question that have been asked 18% have said it is necessary and 6% have said no. However 11% do not know.
• Majority of respondents (77%) have said that they have to transfer the RTI application at their right destination within five (5) days if it has reached at wring address without considering that this mistake has been done by the applicant 23% respondents do not have knowledge regarding this fact.
• All the PIO respondents have knowledge of 30 days limit of providing information but around only 14% respondents know the 48 hours emergency condition limit.
• Majority of PIO respondents (78%) are awarded that they are obligated to provide information, if needed within very short period of time. However 22% of PIO respondents do not know this fact.
• Regarding the circumstances of urgency 73% PIO respondents have considered question of life and liberty as the region to give information within 48 hours whereas 19% have said on court asked and 8% on senior marking.
• All the PIO respondents have knowledge that they can be fined by CIC/ SIC for unnecessary delaying in giving information.
• Majority of PIO respondents (75%) have identified denial to give information, delay in providing information, failing in bearing responsibility of PIO as the
professional cause to be fined as 22% have identified denial and delay as mention cause.

- All the PIO respondents have mentioned that they have responded within 30 day of stipulated time. Thus they have replied RTI in normal situations.
- All PIO respondents have replied that questions related to financial dealing most frequently asked (52%) by the information seekers subsequently follow by questions related functioning of the office (38%) as number two, on persons working in office (48%) as number three, recruitment (28%) as number four and personal life of official at number five.
- All the PIO respondents have positively replied that they have to inform the information seeker in case of any delay in giving information.
- Majority of respondents (70%) have said that in case if RTI is not related to their office, they have to send it to number of offices, if required, where as 22% have said to one office only and 9% do not have any idea on it.
- Majority of PIO respondents (90%) have said that a formal format is required to file RTI and 10% do not have any idea.
- All the PIO respondents know that they can seek assistance of their colleagues in getting information under this Act.
- Majority of PIO respondents (47%) have knowledge that there is no minimum age limit mentioned to ask a question under this Act. However 32% have said that 18 years is that minimum age limit and 22% do not have any idea on that.
- All the PIO respondents have idea of taking RTI changes in any out of case, DD, banker cheque or postal order mode.
- Majority of PIO respondents (52%) have announced 17 point mandatory public discloser. A good number, almost 48% of total PIO respondents said that they have not disclosed or announced mandatory disclosure/ information till he reply to the researcher and a big amount (19%) of PIO respondents do not have any idea of this.
- All the PIO respondents have record register to maintain RTI records in their office.
- Majority of PIO respondents (55%) do not contribute in preparing annual state/ central information commission’s report on RTI.
• Total 45% PIO respondents have supported in preparing annual reports by CIC/SIC, out of this, 80% helped by framing records, 20% by sending records as they have mention.

• All the PIO respondents have said that they do not have provided office staff to perform their duties.

• All the PIO respondents have agreed that they have properly supported by their senior to work as PIO.

• Majority of PIO respondents have said (86%) that their bosses have positive attitude on RTI and 14% said that they neutral on their business.

• Majority of PIO respondents (65%) have not attended any training program on RTI and 35% have attended any program on it.

• Majority of respondents (90%) have not organised any RTI awareness campaign/program where as 10% have organized program to spread RTI awareness.

• Majority of PIO respondents have very positive perception of this Act as all are agree that it is very vital right for people and it is helpful in achieving transparency in government 28% have said that it is a new weapon of blackmailing though 72% have denied this
**Conclusion**

Right to Information Act is established none as one of the most effective legislature of the country and a weapon of common man against the evils of social and demographic welfare. Public Information Officers have pivotal responsibilities over their shoulders to implement this Act effectively. Public Information Officers understanding and approach is very crucial as if they support the cause of RTI, it will be a powerful catalyst of social justice. Unfortunately most of Public Information Officers do not support the public centric cause of this Act and thus they become part of the stereotyped mechanism of prevailing official secrecy.

This study shows that RTI is used effectively by non-elite class of the socially and even the Act is welcomed by rural people. Youth have very firm favor for the use of this Act and it is being used for numerous causes. People know it’s potential as a tool to bring objectively, transparency and good governance and they try to use it accordingly.

RTI is a progressive and people-centric Act which shows the maturity of our democracy also. If we want to explore the potential of this wonderful Act then we need to spread awareness of it among the masses. Apart from, training of PIO’s to serve the public and prevent the soul of the Act is indispensable if we man to cultivate the democratic values through the use of RTI.