Chapter – VI

CONCLUSION

6.0 THE BACKDROP

The present study has shown us the fact that library automation is not a new term today. As the review of literature indicated a number of studies on various dimensions of library automation have been taken up by different researchers in the field of library and information science. The phenomenon is global. Advancement in Information and Communication Technology (ICT) has made the library and information systems enable to modernize the same to provide effective and efficient services to the end users. Rapid growth of ICT based gadgets, particularly of software in the field of librarianship has also given ample opportunity to modernize different types of libraries which are in existence at various levels. The wind of the library automation has also reached to the tiny state Manipur, where there are libraries of different types at various levels. The present study gives us the stock of the current automation status of libraries under various organizations and institutions operating in the state. The same has given us many clues on the nature and types of the organizations and institutions and the libraries and information systems associated with the same. While the systems are facing a number of problems in the process of automation, there are also prospects on the other hand. Meaningful suggestions as given by the librarians of the different libraries covered in the study provide avenues to
automate the library system of Manipur in a more purposive way. In this concluding chapter of the work, as such, on the basis of the major findings, suggestions and recommendations are being made, the implementations of which, as expected, would be benefited for the library and information systems towards their effective automation and delivery of services.

6.1 MAJOR FINDINGS OF THE STUDY

The major findings of the present study can be generalized as enumerated below:

6.1.1 There are different types of organisations and institutions in Manipur comprising of Central Government (20%), State Government (40%), Semi- government (12%), private organizations (25%), and Voluntary organizations (2.67%) which maintain libraries of their own.

6.1.2 The various institutions and organizations whose libraries have been considered for study are of different nature which fall within the category of – Educational, Educational and Technical, Technical, Cultural and others.

6.1.3 Of the 75 institutions/organizations covered in the study, 73.33% are related with education followed by 6.67% related with both educational and technical education; 8% with technical only, 2.67% with cultural and 9.33% with other category.
6.1.4 Majority (44%) of these institutions/organizations are established during 1968-1988, while 28% during 1988-2008; 21.33% during 1948-1968; 4% during 1928-1948 and 2.67% during 2008 onwards.

6.1.5 Regarding the types of libraries, 72% are academic followed by special (20%) and public (8%) libraries respectively. These libraries under various organizations/institutions are established mostly (45%) during 1968-1988 followed by 28% during 1988-2008, 16% during 1948-1968, 6.67% during 2008 and onwards and while 4% during 1930-1948.

6.1.6 Only one library opens more than 9 hours during summer and winter, 17.33% of the libraries open 7-9 hours during these seasons. On the other hand, 5-7 hours is found to be the working hours of 72% of the libraries during summer and 64% libraries during winter, while 3-5 hours is found to open by 9.33% libraries in summer and 13% libraries in winter.

6.1.7 Regarding collection size, majority (37.33%) of the libraries in Manipur have less than 5000 volumes, while 26.67% of them have 5000-10000 volumes and while 36% libraries having more than 10000 volumes is highest of which library under the state government being 8% and under private organizations being 5.33%.

6.1.8 Possession of e-resources in the libraries of Manipur is not encouraging. Majority of the libraries (92%) of Manipur do not possess e-resources, only 4% of them have less than 1000 such resources. In this regard,
among different types of libraries, 93.33% special libraries, 92.59% academic libraries and 3.55% public libraries do not have such important resources.

6.1.9 Availability of resources like manuscripts, maps, archival materials, theses/dissertations and reports in all types of libraries of Manipur is very low and almost marginal.

6.1.10 Libraries under central organizations/institutions have more number of staff as compared to libraries of other organizations/institutions. The phenomenon is true in case of professional staff. However, almost similarity is observed concerning availability of non-professional staff in all types of libraries operating in the state.

6.1.11 Registered number of users in average is found more in academic libraries followed by special libraries and public libraries.

6.1.12 Use of classification scheme for the processing work is highest among the libraries of semi-governmental organizations (44.44%), followed by central and state government (40% each) and private organizations (31.58%). Both central and state government libraries mostly adopt cataloguing code (60% each) while semi-government and private libraries adopt 55.56% and 14% respectively. Use of subject headings in the processing work of the libraries of Manipur are almost marginal.
6.1.13 Among different types of libraries, special library is highest in adopting classification and cataloguing followed by academic and public. However, use of subject headings is highest in public library followed by academic and special library respectively.

6.1.14 Majority of the libraries under all types of organizations have general administration section. While acquisition and technical section is highest in the libraries under state government, circulation section is highest under semi-government, property counter under central government, reference, periodical and reprographic sections under the semi-government organizations.

6.1.15 Under different types of libraries, sections such as general administration, property counter and reprography are highest under the special libraries. Existence of the sections-acquisition, technical, circulation, and reference are highest under academic libraries and maintenance, periodical and newspaper sections are highest in case of public libraries.

6.1.16 Excepting libraries under semi-government organizations, most of the libraries under other organizations are not having sufficient standard furniture items. Availability of appropriate tools and equipments in all the libraries under various organizations is also very less. More space for library is found under semi-government organizations. Majority of all types of organizations do not provide different sections in their libraries as desired. It is interesting to note that libraries under semi-government
organisations are having better collections as per the requirements of their users. Financial position in the libraries is better under the central government organizations. Availability of trained manpower and other facilities is seen in the libraries. Libraries under central organizations have more computer-hardware and software.

6.1.17 The academic library system in Manipur is found to have more infrastructure in terms of furnitures, tools and equipments, building, different sections, collections, number of computers and software. On the other hand, special library system is in a better position in terms of manpower, other facilities, internet connectivity, and other computer hardwares. Availability of more sections and financial resources are found under public library system of the state.

6.1.18 It is quite alarming to note that only 22.67% of the libraries of Manipur are automated, which is also highest among the libraries under central organizations. It is also seen that only 5.88% of the libraries are fully automated while 52.94% are partially automated and the rest 41.18% are under initial stage.

6.1.19 In true sense, none of the public libraries in the state is automated so far. They need to go a long way. Among the rest of the libraries, more academic libraries are automated than special libraries. Emphasis is found to be given by the academic and special libraries on the procurement of computer, printer and UPS also.
6.1.20 Libraries under state government organization have better position of manpower for automation followed by libraries under central organizations and private organizations respectively. Manpower involved for the process of automation in academic libraries is more than that of the special libraries.

6.1.21 Regarding areas of automation, cataloguing is highest 8.24% than other housekeeping operations of the library. It is also observed that 35.29% of the academic and special libraries automate general administration of the library, 8.24% for cataloguing, 23.53% for both circulation and acquisition.

6.1.22 Services rendered by automated libraries under various organizations include reference (76.47%) followed by internet access (58.82%), SDI (29.41%), CAS (17.65), preservation of books (11.76%) respectively.

6.1.23 While cent percent of the special libraries render automated reference service, SDI and internet access, it is 73.33%, 20% and 53.33% respectively by the academic libraries of the state.

6.1.24 Major reasons behind the non-automation of the libraries, include lack of manpower, fund, infrastructure and others (68%) each. It is also found that 8% of them also consider want of initiatives from the library staff and lack of awareness of the authority as the other reasons behind non-automation of the same.
6.1.25 Regarding planning for automation there are certain issues. While 25.33% of the libraries do not have any plan to automate, 24% libraries are going to start very soon, 12% of them has prepared proposal, 13.33% has submitted proposal and 10.67% libraries has started development of infrastructures for the process.

6.1.26 Major problems in automating library systems in Manipur are the lack of trained manpower (76.47%) and financial problems (76.47%) followed by work culture of the LIS professionals (64.71%) which need to be developed and lack of computer hardware (52.99%).

6.1.27 Major problems faced by the academic libraries for their automation are lack of manpower (80%), financial problem (73.33%), work culture (66.67%) and lack of hardware (60%). For the special libraries financial crunch (100%) is a big problem.

6.1.28 For the non-automated libraries, the major problems/reasons are lack of technological knowledge (63.24%), lack of staff (55.50%) and want of initiative to start the process (51.47%) and so on.

6.1.29 However, the librarians, on the other hand, feel there are lot of prospects of automation of the libraries in the state by giving a number of suggestions and comments towards having automated library systems.

6.1.30 The overall affairs of the existing library systems in Manipur is not upto the desired mark and needs to improve upon in many areas and aspects to provide effective library service in automated environment, so as to make them waterways to the knowledge resources.
6.2 ACHIEVING THE OBJECTIVES

The findings of the study have enabled the investigator to achieve the set objectives of the study that:

- the existing different types of libraries of Manipur have been surveyed;
- the number of automated libraries in the state have been identified;
- the present status of library automation in the state has also been assessed;
- the problems and prospects of automation of libraries and their mode of delivery of services in the state have also been analysed; and
- suggestions and recommendations have been made through which initiatives can be taken up towards automating libraries of Manipur to provide their services effectively.

6.3 TESTING THE HYPOTHESES

The findings also have tested and proved the truth of the hypotheses formulated that

- Automation is a recent initiative taken up by the libraries in Manipur;
- Most of the libraries in the state are in the initial stage of their automation;
• Only a very few libraries are fully automated so far due to want of funds, manpower and other ICT based infrastructure;

• Though there are problems in automating the libraries, there are also a number prospects in future for the same; and

• A sound financial support with the initiative of the concerned authorities is essential for automating the libraries so as to make them gateways to the knowledge resources.

6.4 SUGGESTIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

As outcome of the study the following suggestions and recommendations can be made for onward implementation so that library systems under various organizations in the state can fully be automated to render services effectively to meet the complex needs of the users in new environment.

6.4.1 Suggestions

On the basis of the findings of the study and as per comments and suggestions given by the librarians of the suggestions are being put forward to improve the service conditions of the libraries in the automated environment:

• Ignorant on the part of the library and information professionals about the significance of automation is a big hurdle in automating library system, right from its initiative, planning, getting sanctioned from the authority, implementing and executing the same. As much, a positive attitude in the mindset of the library and information professionals working in the state, still need to be developed and inculcated towards library automation and use of ICT. They should accept the changes through ICT and its applicability in library management.
The authority of the concerned organizations are also responsible for the pathetic situation in the libraries of Manipur. They should come forward to have positive attitude towards library development and also know the importance of library automation. With their initiative and enthusiasm, their libraries can be developed and improved upon in many parts and automation of the same would not be a major problem.

The cooperative and concerted efforts among the working professionals seems to the missing in the state. The librarians particularly of different libraries barring the nature of organization(s) showed develop a network among themselves to share experiences and chalk out possibilities to automate their libraries. Such efforts and initiatives are required for the state.

In all types of libraries in Manipur, lack of professionally trained staff is the order of the day. Assigning responsibility to the unskilled/untrained staff to be the in-charge of many libraries in the state. They should be replaced by the qualified and professionally trained persons, so that the fate of the libraries can be made bright.

It has been ascertained that in majority of the libraries of Manipur there is lack of proper guidelines and planning for automation of the library activities. As such, an institutional level committee needs to be instituted to chalk out proper guidelines for automation planning of the library of the institution concerned so that automation process can be carried out in a systematic way.

Lack of knowledge on handling ICT based gadgets among the working professionals also creates problems in automating the library system in Manipur. Therefore, adequate training for computer application should be given to the professionals to handle the problems towards automation. They should be given training on library automation in a phased manner so as to develop a strong confidence in their mindset towards this end.

Separate fund should be allotted by the organizations concerned for their respective libraries to develop resources, the ICT based gadgets being one of the necessary components, for without which it would be difficult to go for automation.
While selecting hardware and software requirements for automation by the libraries it is suggested to set vendor support for installation of the system with testing and customization of the software as per needs of the library. Authorities concerned, as much, should be aware of this aspects for effectives implementation of the same.

Workshops, seminars, consultations within the expects, etc. should be organized from time to time to update knowledge on the trends of ICT applications in the libraries, only three effective service would be able to deliver to the end users.

6.4.2 Recommendations

In addition to the above general suggestions, the following recommendations are being made to enhance the process of library automation in the state.

6.4.2.1 For Academic Libraries

Among this group of libraries, the statuses of school libraries in Manipur particularly under the state government are far behind the desired rank. They are only in name sake. Such libraries under Central government and in CBSE affiliated schools, the situation is better. Due to lack of staff, the libraries in school education in the state are not in a position to deliver services in the automated environment. As such, as per guidelines of the school libraries of the CBSE, the following library staff is recommended for different levels of school having a student strength of 2000 or less:

- For secondary school, the library should consist of one Librarian (TGT Grade); one Assistant Librarian and one Library Attendant.
• For senior secondary school, the component should be the Senior Librarian (PGT Grade), one Librarian, one assistant Librarian and one Library Attendant.

With the provision of this component of library staff, automation plan for the same can be carried out in a convenient way.

College Libraries in the state are also facing problems of want of staff which led to non automation of majority of them in the state. So appointment of adequate staff as per norms of the University Grants Commission (UGC) for all the college libraries is strongly recommended. The early in appointing the staff, the early in initiating automation process.

Though university libraries are in better position in their automation, they are also required to take a model role in mobilizing the affiliated colleges and other organizations in terms of making the professionals aware and significance of automation of the libraries through:

• conducting awareness programmes
• organizing seminars, workshops, conferences
• initiating the possibilities of automation and providing resources through different agencies
• coordinating the librarians of various colleges on various issues of automation and use of ICT in the libraries and initiating a network of academic library professionals for the betterment and promotion of the library services.
**6.4.2.2 For Special Libraries**

Libraries under the special and corporate organizations need to further enhance their respective libraries in terms of fund, and other infrastructural requirements to have fully automated library system. Libraries under the centrally sponsored/funded organizations should take a pivotal role in this regard, for they are not dearth of funds.

**6.4.2.3 For Public Libraries**

Automation of the public libraries in the state is yet to be planned. Not even a single public library has started planning for the same including the biggest public library of the state, the State Central Library, Imphal. It is new high time for this category of libraries in Manipur to start with automation. Public library system in the state is still in a pathetic situation today. The public library system is under the Directorate of Art and Culture, Government of Manipur and found to be neglecting. The state became the sixth state having a Public Library Legislation in the country. But “The Manipur Public Libraries Act, 1988” has not been implemented so far. For the all round development of the public library system in the state it is necessary to implement the same without delay thrust which the automation of his public library system can be materialized in true sense.

With the launch of National Mission of Libraries, on the 3rd February, 2014 the Raja Rammohun Roy Library Foundation (RRRLF), Kolkata as its
implementing agency come forward to modernize the public library system of the
country. Since Manipur is logging far behind in this regard, the Foundation
should give more thrust on the automation of the existing public libraries on
priority basis in a phased manner in the state in the following order:

- State Central Library
- All the District Libraries
- RRRLF Beneficiary Libraries

State government, on the other hand, also require to start with:

- chalking out planning for the automation;
- procurement of hardware and software requirements;
- identifying areas to be automated;
- sending of professionals for training to deal with the process;
- automating the library in a phased manner;

6.5 MAJOR PROBLEMS/LIMITATIONS FACED

The following major limitations/problems have been experienced during
the course of the study:

- In many cases and occasions a number of libraries identified to cover
  in the study were found remain closed during the office hours due to
  many factors such as – want of staff, bandhs, general strikes,
  untoward incidents occurred, participation of the working staff in
  ceremonial functions like shradhah, marriage, swasti pujah, etc. which
  really hampered in collecting data in time.
Level of understanding about the automation and its aspects on the part of the librarians of a number of libraries were very low and for them explanation either from the side of the investigator or deputed enumerators was sought which created problems in getting filled in questionnaires in time from them.

Reluctant on the part of the library and information professionals in disclosing factual information/data of the library for which they also need to be convinced which was another problem for the investigator. Non availability of indexing and abstracting sources to find out sources for scanning related literature for review in the local libraries.

There are a number of parameters to be taken into account when one studies on the problems and prospects of library automation of a particular region. Many such parameters were not covered in the present study as the scenario of library automation in the state is just in the initial stage, thereby leaving scope for further study.

Awareness level of the users of the library about the significance of library automation is very low. Seeking their opinions and suggestions about automation and its problems and prospects, as such, was not fruitful and supportive in drawing conclusions for the study.

It was also difficult to contact the heads of the institutions concerned to draw their opinions about the non-automation of the library as majority of them are not serious about the matter. As such in most of the libraries, proper planning for library automation is missing. This has accelerated problems in drawing concrete suggestions and recommendations for the study.

6.6 SCOPE FOR FURTHER RESEARCH

Keeping in view the above problems/limitations and the findings of the study, further research as listed below in the field of the present study can be carried out in the state.
- Formulation of proper planning for library automation in a more effective and feasible way.

- Systematic analysis of the existing library systems to ascertain the feasibility for automating the same.

- A complete census of library system of Manipur to launch automation for all library programmes in Manipur.

- Use of softwares and their usability in automation.

- Status of Library services in automated environment.

- Towards forming a blue print for automating all the libraries in Manipur.

6.7 CONCLUSION

Automation of libraries in a border state like Manipur should not be neglected further. There are many reasons for delay in automating the library systems of the state as we understood from the problems faced by the libraries. While the influencing power of the professionals working in various sectors is a must, they also should develop skills to handle the situation. On the other hand, there are also bright prospects to carry out programmes and activities to automate the library systems in the state. The points as mentioned under suggestions and recommendations require to be taken into account for onwards implementation towards having complete automation of libraries of the state. Concerted efforts, as such, should be made by the authorities, professionals, etc. Automated library system would enable to provide effective service to the readership community to bring all round development in the state.