

University of Nebraska - Lincoln

DigitalCommons@University of Nebraska - Lincoln

Library Philosophy and Practice (e-journal)

Libraries at University of Nebraska-Lincoln

Winter 2-5-2023

Re-structuring for Relevance in Digital Era: A Paradigm Shift of Public Library Services in Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR)

Manendra Kumar Singh

Mizoram University, Aizawl, manebhu007@gmail.com

Bhabnanda Das

das.bhabananda@gmail.com

Follow this and additional works at: <https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/libphilprac>

Singh, Manendra Kumar and Das, Bhabnanda, "Re-structuring for Relevance in Digital Era: A Paradigm Shift of Public Library Services in Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR)" (2023). *Library Philosophy and Practice (e-journal)*. 7608.

<https://digitalcommons.unl.edu/libphilprac/7608>

Re-structuring for Relevance in Digital Era: A Paradigm Shift of Public Library Services in Bodoland Territorial Region (BTR)

Bhabnanda Das¹ Research Scholar Department of Library & Information Science, Mizoram University, Aizawl, Email: das.bhabananda@gmail.com

Manendra Kumar Singh², Ph. D, Assistant Professor, Department of Library & Information Science, Mizoram University, Aizawl (Mizoram); Email: manebhu007@gmail.com

Abstract:

Public libraries are the reliable platform for the people to exchange information, understand culture, language, literature, customs, and traditions. However, the success rate of public library services in BTR is not satisfactory due to inadequate infrastructure, less use of ICT, unskilled staff, poor funding, and improper policy. This study analyses the present status of public library services to identify the problems, possibilities, and prospects of Bodoland public library services for re-structuring by taking relevant elements of the digital age. The study's main objective is to suggest for re-structure the public library services to minimize the gap between public libraries and the people of Bodoland (BTR).

Keywords: *Bodoland Territorial Region, Sixth Schedule, Restructure, ICT, Public Library Service.*

1. Introduction:

Bodoland, officially the Bodoland Territorial Region, is an autonomous region in Assam, formed under the 6th Schedule of the Indian Constitution in 2003. It is made up of four districts covering an area of 8970 sq. k. m. with a total population of 31, 55,359 () with 71.26% () literacy rate, Official Languages: Bodo, English, Assamese¹. on the north bank of the Brahmaputra River below the foothills of Bhutan and Arunachal Pradesh. It is administered by an elected body known as the Bodoland Territorial Council which came into existence under the terms of a peace agreement signed in February 2003 and its autonomy was further extended by an agreement signed in January 2020. It is a memorandum of settlement formed by the Territory council to save the guard of the indigenous people living in the Bodoland area with language, literature, culture, custom, and tradition. Approximately 95% of the population depends on the agriculture and live in the rural area. (<https://bodoland.gov.in/aboutbtr.php>)

Bodoland Council started public library services in the year 2009, to promote reading habits, recreation, and leisure to the people of Bodoland. Presently, four district libraries, four model rural libraries, two sub-divisional libraries, twenty-three rural libraries, one central reference library are serving the region. Bodoland Public Library Services operates under a separate department of the Secretariat of the council, and the respective executive member of the BTR Council (EM) is responsible for monitoring all activities of the public libraries in this region. The head of the Department of Council (CHD) is the Government Executive Head of the Public Library Service. The power and function of the Department of Public library services was shifted to the council from the State government of Assam. The Librarian of the council's central reference library acts as CHD of the public library services. The hierarchical structure of the functioning of Councils' public library services is given below-

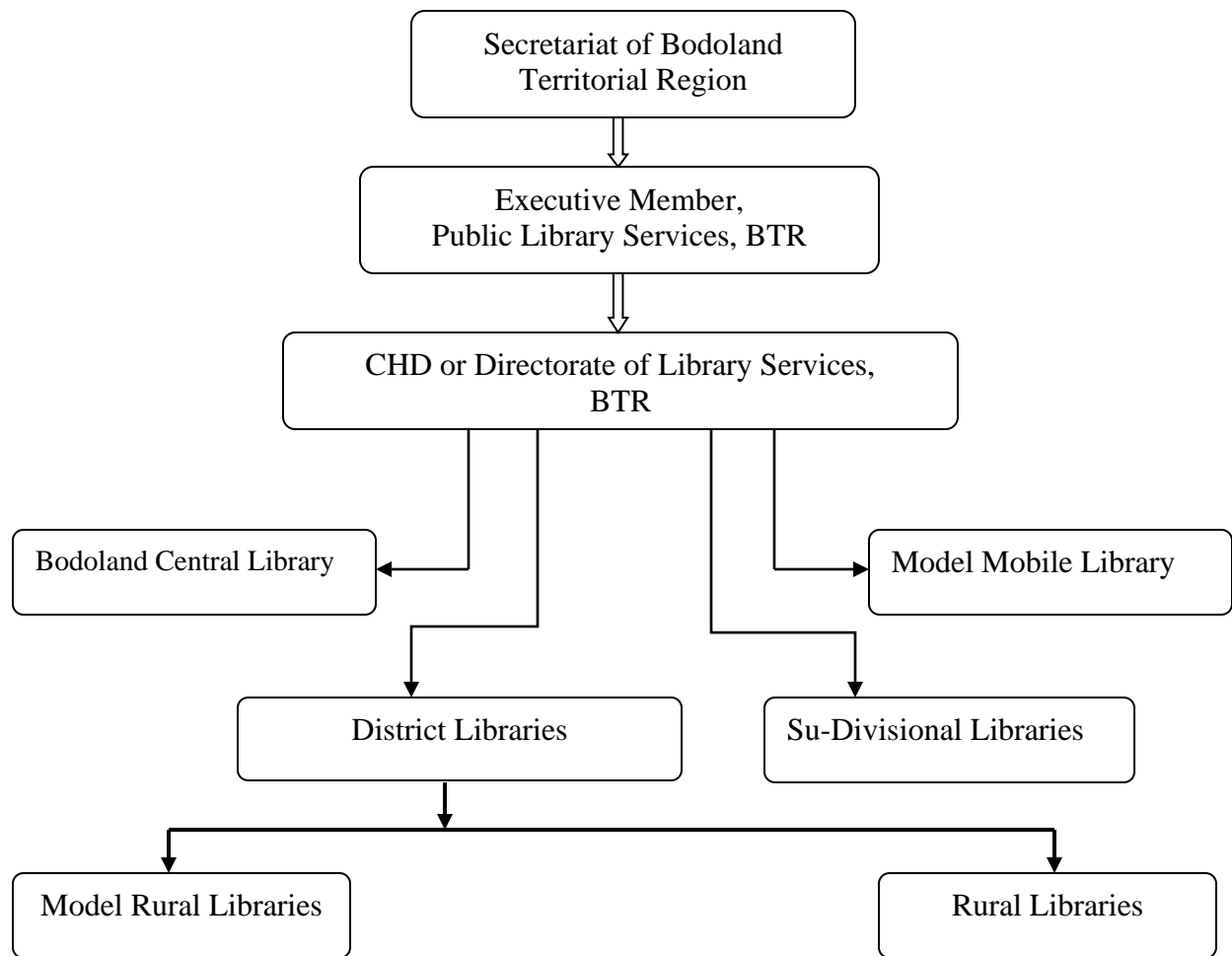


Fig 1: Structure of the Public Library System of BTR

ICT has expanded the everyday lifestyles and use of information by the people worldwide in the digital era; the people of Bodoland do not differ from it. Technology has increased people's daily necessities, and which has led to the lack of time and facilities for people to visit public libraries physically. Today, in the digital era, traditional public library services usually need help to know the information need of people. Bodoland's public library services unable to reach the needy people of the area due to insufficient infrastructure facilities and technological support². Consequently, gaps between public library services in the area with people's choices, technological limitations, staff performance, and service policies must be reduced to connect the public library with the local community. In this context, it has become essential to re-structure the public library services of the Bodoland area. This study identifies the prevailing problems and barriers to library services reaching the area's people. There is great significance to re-structuring the relevance of public library services for paradigm shifts in digital era.

Re-structure the Public Library Services in Digital Era

The public library is a people's institution, initiated spontaneously by the people and playing a vital role in the socio-cultural development of society by providing knowledge and information to everyone. The primary purpose of traditional public library services is collecting, storing, preserving, and disseminating information to the people. This traditional role of public library services transformed into automated services after the introduction of computer technology in library services in 1980. These automated

services have an advantage over traditional services. It replaces the print catalogue with an online public access catalogue. According to Stephen Mayega³, the digital age revolutionized library services after the introduction of the Internet in the 1990s. Today, in the digital age, digitally driven public library services facilitate e-books, e-journals, OPAC instead of the print catalogue, multiple real-time access of information, web-based services, real-time e-learning, consortia-based services, social media participation, discovery services, online delivery of information, audio & video transferring. In this context, the traditionally operated public library service is failed to meet users needs in the digital era. In this regard, there is a need to re-structure and reframe public library services according to the relevance of the digital age, which has the potential to meet the needs of users.

2. Objectives of the study

1. To examine the operational status of public libraries in the Bodoland Territorial Region.
2. To explore the infrastructure and information resources available in public libraries of the Bodoland Territorial Region.
3. To access the present staff strength in public libraries of the Bodoland Territorial Region
4. To know the purposes of users visiting public libraries.
5. To identify the possible remedies for the re-structuring the public libraries.

3. Methodology:

This study was carried out by the survey methods to fulfil the objectives. A structured questionnaire with both open and closed-ended questions prepared and distributed in respective areas. The population of a central reference library, four district libraries, two sub-divisional libraries and four model rural libraries covered for the data collection. One hundred ten users were randomly selected ten from each library, and surveyed to know user satisfaction, visit intention, and awareness of public libraries among users. An interview method was adopted to know about the plans and policies, and administrative mechanisms of the public library system. The direct interaction with library staff was made to identify situations. The collected data were tabulated and analyzed with the help of an MS-Excel sheet and interpreted the fact by tables, charts, and diagrams to meet the research questions.

4. Literature Review:

Singh (2017)⁴ mentioned in his study that traditional public libraries should be changed according to the changing trend of the local society. According to him, staff skills are essential for implementing digitization programs in public library services. Singh (2018)⁵ noted that the application of advanced technology in libraries and some global drivers have transformed the entire nature of public library services. Rajendran & Srinivasaraghavan (2014)⁶ stated that rapid changes in digital technologies and the changing trend of the environment in the digital age pose severe threats to libraries and have made the re-structuring of libraries relevant in this era. Singh & Tripathi (2018)⁷ mentioned that public libraries are based on traditional service modes that are different from the changing environment of the digital age. Hussain and Mojumder (2018)⁸ study emphasize the importance of modernizing public library services using modern tools according to environment of the digital age. Gautam (2014)⁹ study revealed that public libraries are more effective at bridging the digital divide. There is a significant change in the concept of public library services due to the advancement of technology and per digital era call (Singh & Nayan, 2020)¹⁰. The hybrid library services were created by combining traditional and digital library services. It has numerous advanced facilities in the digital platform over the traditional public library

services in accessing knowledge; public libraries play a significant role in the digital era (Pandit & Churi, 2021)¹¹. Public libraries can connect information-rich and information-poor people worldwide through its digital drives (Rath, 2020)¹². According to him, ICT significantly impacts public library so that time has come to rethink about public library services in the digital era.

5. Public Library System of Bodoland (BTR): An Analysis

5.1 Present operational status of public libraries in BTR

Public library services in Bodoland were launched in 2009 with four District Libraries, two Sub-Divisional Libraries, and two Model Rural Libraries. The District Library, Kokrajhar (1972), District Library, Udalguri (1989), Sub-Divisional Library, Tamulpur (1987), and Sub-Divisional Library, Gossaigaon (1991) were established by the Government of Assam.

Table1: operational status of public libraries in BTR

Sl No	Name of the Public Library	Established by the Fund	Year of Establishment	Present Status of Library
1	DL, Kokrajhar	State Govt. of Assam	1972	Operational
2	SDL, Tamulpur	State Govt. of Assam	1987	Operational
3	DL, Udalguri	State Govt. of Assam	1989	Operational
4	SDL, Gossaigaon	State Govt. of Assam	1991	Operational
5	BCRL, BTC, Kokrajhar	Bodoland Territorial Region	2009	Operational
6	DL, Chirang	Bodoland Territorial Region	2009	Operational
7	DL, Baksa	Bodoland Territorial Region	2009	Operational
8	MRL, Patkijuli	Bodoland Territorial Region	2009	Operational
9	MRL, Borobazar	Bodoland Territorial Region	2009	Operational
10	MRL, Deargaon	Bodoland Territorial Region	2010	Operational
11	MRL, Hasraobari,	Bodoland Territorial Region	2010	Stop service due to lack of staff from 2018

Source: Author survey

The BTR authority established the Bodoland Model Rural Library to enrich and reshape rural libraries with modern concepts. In 2009, two district libraries and four Model Rural Libraries were established with the assistance of BTR funds. Other three sub-divisional libraries in Bijni (Chirang district), Shalbari (Baksa district), and Bhergaon (Udalguri district) are under construction. However, Model Rural Library, Onchay Afat, Subhajibhar, Hasraobari, established in Chirang district in 2009, had to close the service in 2018 due to a lack of staff. This is because the study reveals that Model Rural Libraries do not have any permanent staff. Because temporary employees are paid a minimum wage, they move elsewhere when they get other suitable Jobs.

5.2 Collection and Language:

Bodoland Public Library collections are based on language and ethnic groups in the surrounding area of public libraries. Bodoland is a multilingual and multicultural region inhabited by various indigenous peoples, and while public library collections predominate in the Bodo and Assamese language. But collections in other languages, such as Bengali, and Hindi are also available. The people of different ethnic groups in the region use their ethnic languages within the ethnic group; however, most people can speak, read, and write English, Assamese, and Bodo.

The survey reveals that the oldest Kokrajhar District Library and Odalguri District Library have 41.51% and 11.17% of the total collection of books in six languages, i.e., Assamese, English, Bodo, Bengali, and Hindi. Bodoland Central Reference Library (20.75%), Baksa District Library (5.05%), Chirang District Library (1.91%), Tamulpur Sub-divisional Library (4.94%), Gosaigaon Sub-divisional Library (9.30%) are the libraries that have collections in five languages. A minimum of three languages are available in the Model Rural Library at Borobazar (0.71 %).

Table 2: Language-wise distribution of collection in public libraries of Bodoland

Sl No	Name of the Public Library	Book Collection	% of collection	Language of Collection
1	DL, Kokrajhar	82139	41.51%	English, Hindi, Assamese, Bodo, Bengali, Nepali
2	BCRL, BTC, Kokrajhar	41057	20.75%	English, Hindi, Assamese, Bodo, Bengali
3	DL, Udalguri	22107	11.17%	English, Hindi, Assamese, Bodo, Bengali, Nepali
4	SDL, Gossaigaon	18402	9.30 %	English, Hindi, Assamese, Bodo, Bengali
5	DL, Baksa	10000	5.05 %	English, Hindi, Assamese, Bodo, Bengali
6	DL, Tamulpur	9776	4.94 %	English, Hindi, Assamese, Bodo, Bengali
7	MRL, Debargaon	4600	2.32	English, Hindi, Assamese, Bodo,
8	DL, Chirng	3779	1.91 %	English, Hindi, Assamese, Bodo, Bengali
9	MRL, Borobazar	3218	1.63%	English, Assamese, Bodo,
10	MRL, Patkijuli	1400	.71 %	English, Hindi, Assamese, Bodo,
11	MRL, Hasraobari,	1400	0.71 %	Data Not Available
	Total collection =	197878		

Source: author survey

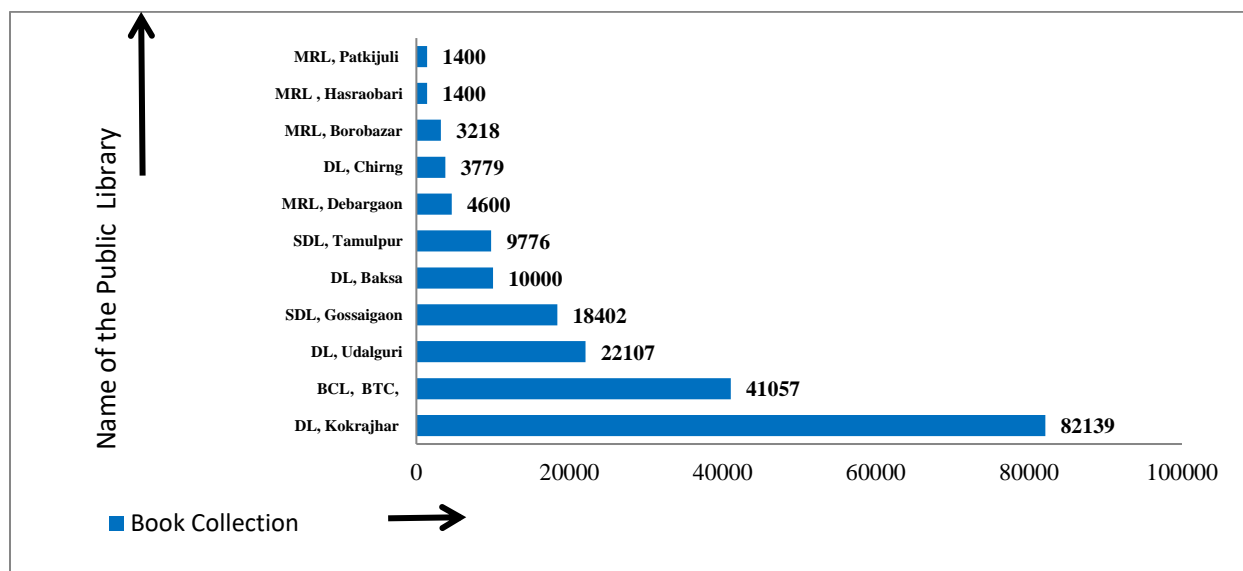


Fig 2: Distribution of collection in public libraries

In Table 3, the Baska district library shows the highest collection growth of 52.67% during the four years of 2019-2022. Collection growth in public libraries is represented by Kakrajhar District Library (38.48%), Udalguri District Library (4.89%), Tamulpur Sub-Divisional Library (1.54%), Chirang District

Library (1.44%), and BTC Central Reference Library (0.96 %). However, the Gossaigaon Sub-Divisional Library and all four Model Rural Libraries have not seen any growth in their collections.

Table 3: Percentage of the growth of collection in the period 2019-2022

Name of the Public Library	Added collection in 2019- 2022 N=10394	% of addition
DL, Baksa	5475	52.67 %
DL, Kokrajhar	4000	38.48 %
DL, Udalguri	509	4.89 %
SDL, Tamulpur	160	1.54 %
DL, Chiang	150	1.44 %
BCRL, BTC,	100	0.96 %
SDL, Gossaigaon	0	0
MRL, Debargaon	0	0
MRL, Borobazar	0	0
MRL, Hasraobari	0	0
MRL, Patkijuli	0	0

Source: Directorate of Library Services, BTR

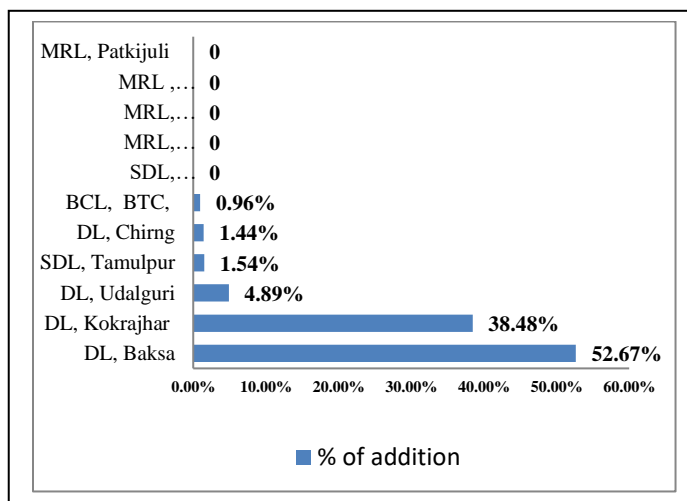


Fig 3: % of the growth of collection in 2019- 2022.

Language-wise distribution of News Paper and Magazine

Despite being a multilingual and multicultural society, people speak different ethnic languages in Bodoland, but Assamese, English, and Bodo are the most commonly spoken, read, and written languages. Newspapers and magazines available in public libraries are usually essential collections to attract users and enhance users' daily reading habits.

Table 4: Language-wise distribution of News Paper and Magazine in Public Libraries of Bodoland

Sl No	Name of the Public Library	News Paper	Magazine	Language of Collection
2	DL, Kokrajhar	8	5	English, Assamese, Bodo
4	DL, Baksa	6	5	English, Assamese, Bodo
1	BCRL, BTC, Kokrajhar	5	3	English, Assamese, Bodo
6	SDL, Tamulpur	5	3	English, Assamese, Bodo
3	DL, Chiang	3	1	English, Assamese, Bodo
8	MRL, Patkijuli	3	Nil	English, Assamese, Bodo
9	MRL, Borobazar,	3	2	English, Assamese, Bodo
5	DL, Udalguri	2	3	English, Assamese, Bodo
10	SDL, Gossaigaon	2	Nil	English, Assamese
7	MRL, Debargaon, Kokrajhar	Nil	Nil	Nil
11	MRL, Hasraobari,	No Operational		

Source: Author survey

The survey found that all the libraries except Gossaigaon Sub-divisional library have papers and magazines in Assamese, Boro, and English. Public libraries in the area are showing magazines and newspapers in Assamese, Bodo, and English. Newspapers and magazines are unavailable in Model Rural

Library, Debargaon, Kokrajhar, and Model Rural Library, Parkijuli. The survey resulted that it is challenging to collect magazines and newspapers in the Boro language due to limited publication.

5.3 Major Infrastructure facilities of Public Libraries in Bodoland (BTR):

Permanent buildings are an essential infrastructure of public libraries, and in addition, in this digital age today, ICT equipments are essential for the smooth running of public library services. This study revealed that public libraries face challenges in the digital age due to a lack of adequate infrastructure, including permanent buildings, reading room facilities, and other modern equipment as per time call.

Table 5: Infrastructural status of the Public Libraries in Bodoland (BTR)

Name of Infrastructure	Infrastructure available N=11		No Infrastructure N=11	
	No. of Libraries	% of availability	No. of Libraries	% Of no availability
Permanent Government Building	10	90.90	1	9.1
Separate reading Room facilities	10	90.90	1	9.1
Computer	11	100	0	0
Internet Connectivity	2	0.18	9	81.81

Source: Author survey

It has only 90.90% of the Permanent Government Building and reading Room facilities in Bodoland public libraries. The remaining 9.1 % operate in rental houses without any reading room facilities or seating arrangements for readers. Despite having at least one computer (100%), only 0.18% of libraries have access to the Internet and 81.81% do not have Internet connectivity.

5.4 Staff scenario of the public libraries in Bodoland

The feasibility and efficiency of a services-based organization depend mainly on the skills and strengths of the organization's staff. In the digital era, the skill and efficiency of the staff are vital to the quality of service provided to public libraries' users.

Table -6: Staff strength in public libraries of Bodoland

Sl No	Categories of Library	Professional staff	Non- Professional	Total staff
1	BCRL, BTC, Kokrajhar	1	6	7
2	DL, Kokrajhar	4	5	9
3	DL, Chiang	1	2	3
4	DL, Baksa	1	3	4
5	DL Udalguri	1	3	4
6	SDL, Gossaigaon	1	2	3
7	SDL, Tamulpur	1	3	4
8	MRL, Debargaon,	Nil	2	2
9	MRL, Patkijuli	Nil	3	3
10	MRL, Borobazar	Nil	4	4
11	MRL, Hasraobari,	Nil	Nil	Nil

Source: Author survey

A staff member's professional qualifications indicate their expertise and competence in public library services in the digital era. However, the number of professionally qualified staff in Bodoland public libraries is lower than the requirement. The survey shows that there is only one professionally qualified staff working in Model Rural libraries, Sub-divisional libraries and District libraries in the region except for the district library in Kokrajhar. It is a matter of concern that the objective of each district of the region is to bring public library services in rural areas of Bodoland (BTR) to the people

through the modality services of model rural library projects in the region. During the survey, the existing staff disclosed that Bodoland Council had engaged the public library staff for various other tasks, which disrupted public library services and hampered the services in the area.

5.5 Service Provided by Bodoland (BTR) Public Library System

The quality of public libraries depends on the availability of library services in libraries and how the services meet people's needs. Bodoland Public Library Service is newly launched and has yet to be able to provide much of the services as per the needs of people of the region in the digital era.

Table-7 status showing the service provided by libraries

Sl No	Services Provided by the Library	Frequency (N=11)		% of Service available
		Yes	No	
1	Reference Service	11	0	100
2	Newspaper service	11	0	100
3	Reading Room Service	10	1	90.9
4	Reprographic Service	7	4	63.63
5	Circulation Service	6	5	54.54
6	CAS	5	6	45.45
7	Display of list of recent acquisition	5	6	45.45
8	Internet browsing Service	2	9	18.18
9	OPAC	0	11	0

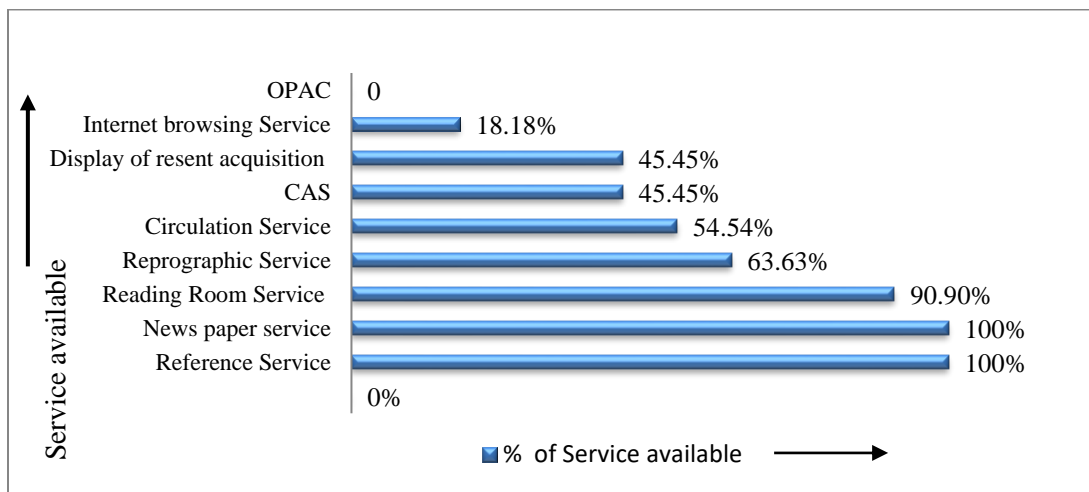


Fig 4: Status showing the service provided by Bodoland Public Library System

This survey revealed that some basic and primary public library services could not provide for the people of Bodoland. The survey shows that Newspaper reading (100%) facilities and Reference services (100%) are available in all libraries. During the survey, it is found that the services available in public libraries are Reading Rooms (90.90%), Reprographic (63.63%), CAS (45.36%), Internet Browsing (18.18%), and Publicity Service (18.18%).54.54%). The survey result reveals that 45.46 % of public libraries still need to start circulation services.

9.5 Public Library Awareness in the BTR:

Public library awareness means promoting public library services to the people. The following table summarizes the survey report on awareness of public library service according to the objectives of the Bodoland Territorial Council.

Table 8: Awareness of public library services.

Awarded about public library	Frequency (N=102)	% Of distribution
Teachers	47	46.08
Friends	18	17.65
Social Media	14	13.72
Library Staff	8	7.83
Awareness program by public library	6	5.88
TV/News/Electronic Media	4	3.92
General Public	3	2.94
Neighbors	2	1.96

Source: Author Survey

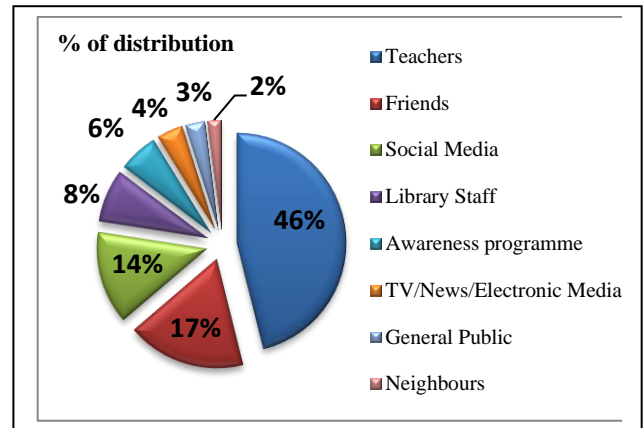


Fig 5: Awareness of public library services

According to the survey, teachers (46.08%), friends (17.65%), and social media (13.72%) all played significant roles in raising public library awareness. In comparison, awareness meetings organized by library staff (7.83%) and public libraries (5.88%) have yet to be as successful as expected in raising awareness of public library services. From the above analysis, more than awareness programs and promotional programs are needed to make public library information reach the people in the area. In addition, although TV/News/electronic media is the only media of rural society, it has not helped much public library awareness, and only 3.92% of the users are aware. On the other hand, the public and neighbors created awareness by 2.94% and 1.96%, respectively. The above survey study reveals very little awareness and publicity of public libraries among the public.

9.6 Purpose of Public Library visit in BTR:

Although the primary purpose of visiting public libraries is to acquire knowledge, it has been observed

Table 9: Purpose of the library visit

Sl No	Purpose of the library visit	Frequency (N=102)	% of distribution
1	To read a Newspapers	49	48.04
2	Recreational and leisure	43	42.16
3	To read a Magazines	37	36.27
4	Internet Browsing /Use computer	25	24.51
5	To read a book	22	21.57
6	To Collect cultural information	21	20.59
7	To meet a friend	21	20.59
8	To collect the educational information	21	20.59
9	To enjoy the cultural programme	18	17.65
10	To attend a public meeting	15	14.71
11	To collect social information	11	10.78
12	Other	11	10.78
13	To collect agricultural information	8	7.84
14	To Borrow a book	6	5.88

15	Collect political information	3	2.94
16	to read a journal	0	0

Source: Author survey

that people come to public libraries for different purposes. The table 9 summarizes the study's results on the purpose of visits to public libraries by people in Bodoland. A survey revealed that the primary purpose of public library visits in Bodoland is to read books (21.57%), recreational activities and leisure (42.16%), read newspapers (48.04%), read magazines (36.27%), internet browsing (24.51%). In addition, public libraries visit in the region has been associated with cultural information (20.59%), meeting friends (20.59 %), educational purposes (20.59 %), enjoying cultural activities (17.65%), public meetings (14.71%), and social information (10.78%). Moreover, a small portion of users visit for agricultural information (7.84%) and borrow books (5.88 %) and political information (2.94%). The survey result reveals that print books, magazines, and newspapers are still growing in popularity in the digital age. Among the most popular attractions of public libraries are the cultural events hosted in public libraries and socio-cultural information. However, the number of people who go to collect books from public libraries needs to be improved.

9.7 Frequency of public library visit

The frequency of library visits is indicative of users' reading habits. The BTR area is underdeveloped, the literacy rate (71.26%) is lower than the national average, and public libraries and reading habits are low.

Table10: Frequency of Public library visit

Sl No	Awarded about public library	Frequency (N=102)	% of distribution
1	Occasionally	25	24.51
2	Once in 15 days	21	20.59
3	Once in a week	18	17.65
4	Once in a month	16	15.59
5	More than one day in a week	13	12.74
6	Daily	9	8.82
	Total =	102	100

Source: Author Survey

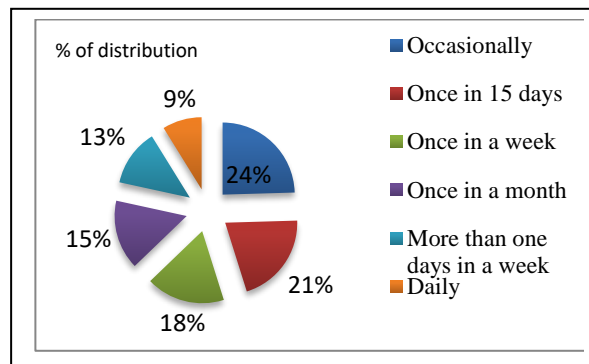


Fig 6: Frequency of library visit

According to table 10, the frequency of public library visits is Occasionally (24.51%), Once in 15 days (20.59%), Once a week (17.65%), Once a month (12.74%), More than one day in a week (12.74%) and daily (8.82%). Study results indicate that more users visit the public library occasionally, while daily users are relatively few. This indicates that the reading habits of public library users could be more satisfactory.

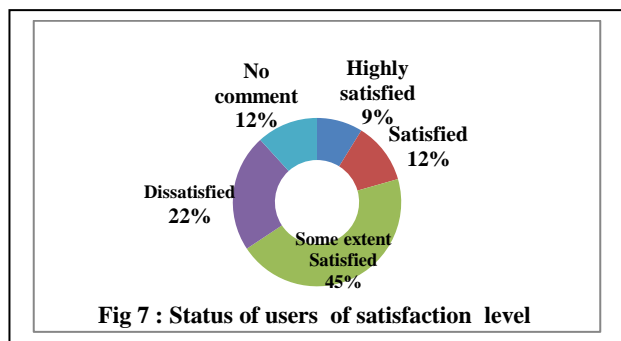
9.10 Users satisfaction with Public Library Services in BTR:

The success of a library service depends on user satisfaction and how deeply rooted it is in the people of a locality. Table-Q summarizes the satisfaction level of public library users in the Bodoland area. The satisfaction of users of public library services is Highly satisfied (8.82 %), satisfied (11.76 %), some extent Satisfied (45.1 %), and dissatisfied (22.55 %), where 11.76 % have any comment regarding the satisfaction of library services.

Table11: Status of users' satisfaction level of public libraries in BTR

Satisfaction Level	Frequency N=102	% of distribution
Highly Satisfied	9	8.82
Satisfied	12	11.76
Some extent Satisfied	46	45.10
Dissatisfied	23	22.55
No comment	12	11.76

Source: Author Survey



9.11 Need to Re-structure the Bodoland public library services:

Bodoland Public Library services are still based on conventional tools and run traditionally. Due to this, it is necessary to improve the services following the needs of the digital age. A survey was conducted on what facilities need to be included and improved in Bodoland Public Libraries in the digital age. Views were sought from the current working librarians/working staff.

Table 12: Bodoland Public Libraries need to include and improve in the digital age

Criteria for improvement/Inclusion	Frequency N=11	Distribution of %
Need improve infrastructure facilities	10	90.90
High speed internet browsing facilities	10	90.90
Collection according to the language used by communities available in the area	10	90.90
Need enough awareness programs on public library services	10	90.90
Improve/extend the circulation services	9	81.81
Fully automated the public library services	9	81.81
Digital preservation of cultural resources	8	72.72
Computer /ICT Training facilities	7	63.63
Improve & extend the existing bookmobile services	6	54.54
Include web base services that can access from home or remote access	6	54.54
Digital preservation of old & rare books	5	45.45
Use of social media tools	5	45.45

Source: Author Survey

According to the survey, 90.90 % of existing working staff reveal for improvement of the existing infrastructure facilities, high-speed internet browsing facility, collection according to the language used by communities available in the area, and enough awareness & publicity on public libraries in the region. 81.81 % suggested improving the operational methods and fully automated methods. 72.72% of respondents favor the digital preservation of cultural resources, and 45.45% favor the preservation of old and rare books. 63.63 % suggested including computer and ICT training facilities in public libraries. 54.45 % opinion of the inclusion of web-based services for remote access and improvement and extension of existing bookmobile services. However, by visiting public libraries and the opinions of the existing workers, it reveals that the staff's knowledge about the use of social media in library services is low (45.45%).

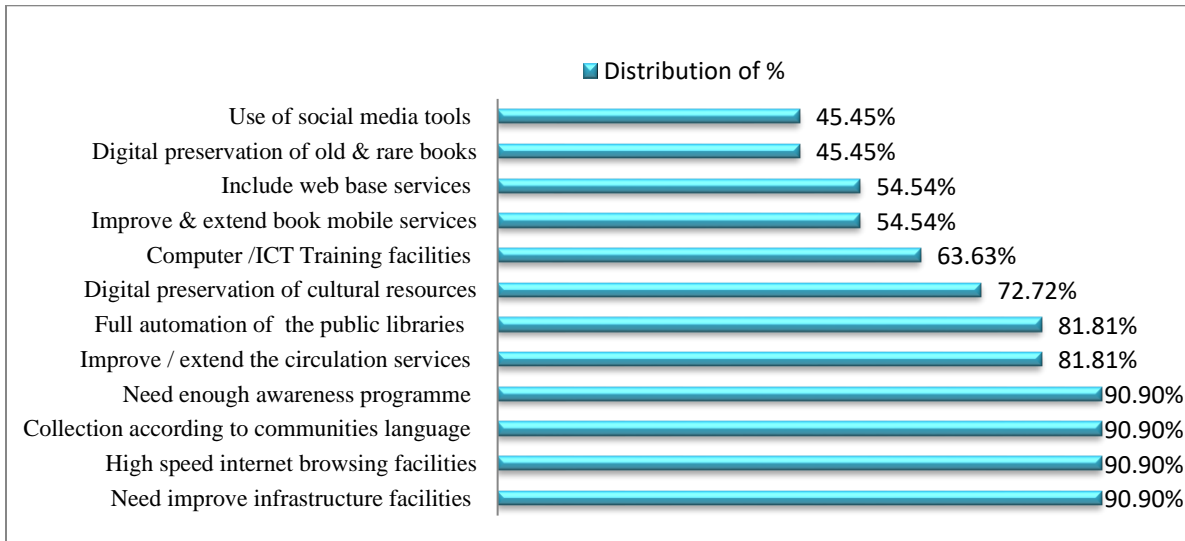


Fig 8: Bodoland Public Libraries need to include and improve in the digital age

6. Discussion

The changing trend of public library services with the changing of the era is primarily dependent on the pace of social and cultural development of a society. It is essential to modernize public libraries in line with the pace and times of society. During the visits and critical studies of libraries, several problems and challenges of public libraries have been identified. Some of the fundamental problems are discussed below.

a) **Insufficient Infrastructure:**

In today's digital age, the existing infrastructure facilities of public libraries in the Bodoland region of Assam are incompatible with today's digital age. The survey shows that 9.1% of public libraries still need basic infrastructure facilities like permanent buildings and reading rooms. Since the public library services in Bodoland have been newly initiated, services lacking some basic infrastructure like drinking water, toilet, an auditorium for public meetings, etc. The continuous power supply is a serious problem in the region.

b) **Less use of ICT:**

However, during the field visits and survey, it was observed that public libraries in the region have inadequate ICT infrastructure and very less use of ICT tools. Every public library in the BRT area has facilitated at least one computer system. However, this ICT Infrastructure is not sufficient to create a digital environment in library services. So far, online, and web-based services have yet to be launched in a public library service in the Bodoland region; on the other hand, today's most emerging popular tools, such as social media tools of library services, have yet to be used.

c) **Lack of Awareness and Publicity:**

The Bodoland Territorial Region of Assam is an underdeveloped area. The BTR area of Assam is located at the foot of the Himalayas and has the worst in a communication system. The illiterate and poor agricultural depended people are not aware of public library services in the region. The awareness programme organized by the public libraries needs to be more to reach the public library services to the people of Bodoland. It is shown that the publicity through different media like TV, newspaper, and Social

media is a little. In this context, awareness and publicity are essential on public library services in the area.

d) Skill and Strength of the Staff

The skill and strength of the staff are one of the basic requirements for the efficiency of public library services. However, the skills and strength of the staff in the Bodoland Public libraries are deficient, and there needs to be more professionally qualified staff.

e) Poor Funding

Public library services operate purely on government grants and public endowments. Bodoland Public Library services are in the early stages of development; hence the development of its infrastructure and other facilities requires substantial funds, but the supply of funds needs to be increased.

f) Difficulties in Policymaking:

Bodoland public library service is newly initiated by the council of BTR, which was framed under the sixth schedule of the Indian constitution. The BTR Council administers the public library service under the direction of the State Government of Assam, although powers still need to be fully transferred to the council. Therefore, there are difficulties in formulating administrative policies for public library services in Bodoland.

g) Lack of Reading habit

The reading habits of the people are the capital of the public library, which keeps the public libraries alive. However, the survey revealed that literacy and reading habits are deficient in the Bodoland region, which has adversely affected the creation of the environment in public library services in the region. There needs to be more awareness of public libraries among the younger generation, who are less interested in visiting them.

7. Re-structuring the relevant Digital Era: Probabilities in Bodoland Public library services

In the context of the digital age, there is a need to change public library services to keep pace with the changing preferences of the people. Several library services become irrelevant over time as user preferences change, so relevant public library services can only reach the public through timely services. It is essential to re-structure, redesign and redefine the Bodoland public library services according to relevant facilities, tools & techniques per the time call of the digital era. This survey aims to focus on the re-structuring of public library services to identify the strengths, weaknesses, potentials, and relevant criteria for improvement of public libraries in the region and discusses the relevant criteria for re-structuring public library services.

a) Use of ICT tools & Techniques:

The survey found that public libraries in Bodoland have abysmal ICT infrastructure and minimal use of ICT equipment. Therefore, the expansion of ICT infrastructure as compatible with the digital age and proper use of ICT tools is necessary to improve the region's public library services. During the visit to the public libraries in the region, it is revealed that the KOHA 2.0 system partially computerizes only the Bodoland Central Reference library. It is urgently needed to fully automate the public libraries in the region to store and retrieve resources quickly.

b) Networking & Resource Sharing:

A network among regional public libraries is necessary to cooperate with information sources in the digital era. Establishing a network among the public libraries in the region enables resource sharing. It can

access the resources in the library consortium, which helps the libraries provide better services with limited resources.

c) Web-base & Digital Library Services:

Today, Web-based services are most relevant to the time of digital era. It is observed that for the people of Bodoland, there are significant gaps in the library services needed by the people of the present time, due to which the public library services have yet to be able to reach the people in the region. The initialization of a Web-based service will increase the publicity, and awareness of the public library services in the region, minimizing the gaps between public libraries and the people of Bodoland. This will provide remote access facilities to the people of Bodoland from home.

d) Use of social media:

Social media tools still need to be used in the Bodoland Public Library service. Effective use of social media has encouraged public libraries in the region to raise awareness, social motivation, distribution, dissemination, and socialization of information. Using powerful social media tools will help bring public library services to the people of Bodoland.

e) Digital preservation and Initialisation of Digital library Services

Digitization and digital preservation of existing rare books, cultural resources, and resources related to customs and traditions of local interest are of great importance, and they will be significant steps in initializing digital library services in the region.

f) Improve staff strength and skill

The efficiency of services base organizations entirely depends upon the skills and strength of the staff. However, the picture of staff appointment is inverse due to the government's negligence in policymaking for public libraries. Very few professionally qualified staff is working, which denoted the need for more skilled staff in public libraries in the region. The power of policymaking for staff Structure & composition for the Public Library system has not been fully transferred from the Assam State Government to the council, which is a big obstacle for the council to create and recruit posts on its own in public libraries. It is necessary to transfer the power entirely to council authority as per the memorandum of settlement under the Sixth Schedule of the Indian constitution to enable policymaking for staff structure & composition for the region. It is essential to employ at least one professional qualified staff member in the newly initiated model rural libraries project, which project may change the whole scenario of public libraries in the rural area.

g) Awareness and publicity

Bodoland public library services have yet to reach the public due to the lack of enough awareness and publicity, creating a significant gap between public libraries and people in the region. The great value of the public library and its use is still in the dark to the people of Bodoland. The Public Library services should be widely publicized through TV/radio/newspapers and social media in addition to enough public meetings for awareness.

h) Library legislation

Although the Bodoland Territorial Region is a Sixth Schedule Autonomous Council within the State of Assam, it has the power to make its laws as an Autonomous Council under the Sixth Schedule of the Indian Constitution. Library legislation is responsible for continuous funding and strengthening public library services, which are crucial in Bodoland Territorial Region. Government negligence and poor and discontinuous funding are the main obstacles to developing public libraries.

8. Conclusion:

The Bodoland Territorial Council is an underdeveloped Sixth Schedule administrative area specially empowered by the Constitution of India to protect the language, literature, culture, customs, and traditions of the indigenous people living in the region for the region's development. After the council's formation, public library services were initiated to promote education and reading habit among the people. However, the success rate of public library services is not expected due to insufficient infrastructure, less use of ICT, Insufficient skilled staff, poor funding, and indifferent policymaking. Improvement of infrastructure facilities and use of adequate ICT tools as required by the digital age is very relevant for re-structuring or reshaping the public library services, which will re-initialize public library services and accelerate the growth of public libraries in the region. Introducing web-based services and networking among regional public libraries will help share resources and enable consortium-based participation while minimizing collection budgets. Social media can play an essential role in promoting and raising awareness of public libraries, which will help it reach out to the public libraries of the people of Bodoland. The complete transfer of power from the state government to the council will help enact the library legislation for continuous funding and the policymaking to administer the public library services according to the needs of the people of Bodoland. Re-structuring public library services with modern tools & techniques, facilities, and innovative techniques relevant to the digital age will bring public libraries closer to the people, transforming the services to a new dimension of public services in the region.

References:

1. Aggarwl, S. (2015, Oct-Dec). Restructuring the higher education with digital knowledge in Rajib Gandhi e-Library. *Journal of Indian Library Association*, 51(4), 40-47. Available at file:///C:/Users/home/Downloads/24-82-1-PB.pdf (Access on 10-08-2022).
2. Arora, J. (2008, Aug 9). LIBRARY 2.0: Innovative technologies for building libraries of tomorrow. In Rhoda Bharucha (ed.), *Current Trends in Libraries in the Digital era*, (pp.11-21) Ahmedabad Library Network, Ahmedabad. Available at <https://ir.inflibnet.ac.in/bitstream/1944/1460/1/5.pdf> (Access on 15-04-2022).
3. Brahma, S & Singh, C.I. (2013, Oct). Problems and prospects of modernization of public library services in the modern era: a study on public libraries of Bodoland Territorial Council (BTC), Assam. *International Journal of next Generation Computer Applications*, 1(7). 2-5.
4. Dongare, S.N. (2022, May). Reinventing trends of libraries & librarians in digital landscape. *Journal of Emerging Technologies and Innovative Research (JETIR)*, 9(5), c633-c640. Available at <https://www.jetir.org/papers/JETIR2205285.pdf> (Access on 14-08-2022).
5. Gautam, D.K. (2014, Dec.). Impact of digital divide and public libraries. *IOSR Journal of Humanities and Social Science (IOSR-JHSS)*, 19(12), 59-63. Available at <https://www.iosrjournals.org/iosr-jhss/papers/Vol19-issue12/Version-4/J0191245963.pdf>. (Access on 7-04-2022).
6. Hussain, M & Mozumder, S.K.(2018, july -Dec) . Digital library: The future role of public library system in Assam: problem and prospects. *Library Progress (International) (Library Science)*,38 (2), 291-298. DOI: 10.5958/2320-317X.2018.00031.4. (Access on 01-05-2022)

7. Keskar, B. Y. (2019, Nov-Dec). Restricting and capacity building in libraries. *"Knowledge Librarian" An International Peer Reviewed Bilingual E-Journal of Library and Information Science*. 6(6), 16-21. Available at <http://www.klibjlis.com/6.6.3.pdf> (Access on 01-05-2022).
8. Mayega, S. (2008, Oct 20-22). *Library information services in the digital age*. [Conference Session]. Fourth Shanghai International Library Forum (SILF 2008), Shanghai (China). Available at <http://eprints.rclis.org/12567/2/Paper.pdf>. (Access on 8-04-2022).
9. Mishra, R. N. & Ngurtinkhuma, R.K. (2020). Changing role of public libraries in bridging the digital divide for effective e-governance. In Abhaya Kumar Padhi (Ed.). *Public Library and Digital Divide* (pp.42-53). Odisha State Open University, Sambalpur, Available at <http://osou.ac.in/docs/public-library-and-digital-divide-opportunities-challenges.pdf>. (Access on 8-04-2022).
10. Onuoha. J. A. & Obian. D. C. (2015). The impact of information technology on modern librarianship: a reflective study. *Information and Knowledge Management*, 5(11), 52-58. Available at <https://core.ac.uk/download/pdf/234672211.pdf> (Access on 13-08-2022).
11. Paida, B. (2004, Feb 11-13). Emergence of digital library services in India. *2nd International CALIBER-2004*, New Delhi. INFLIBNET Centre, Ahmedabad, p.199-205. Available at https://ir.inflibnet.ac.in/bitstream/1944/334/1/04cali_26.pdf (Access on 04-05-2022).
12. Panda, B. P. & Swain, D. K. & Jena, K. L. Capacity building and restructuring of libraries and information centers, Available at https://www.researchgate.net/publication/41043851_Capacity_Building_and_Restructuring_of_Libraries_and_Information_Centers_a_Spotlight (Access on 09-09-2022).
13. Pandit, A. S. & Churi, A. P. (2021). The state of library in digital era. *International Journal of Creative Research Thoughts (IJCRT)*, 9(5), i253-i261. Available at <https://ijcrt.org/papers/IJCRT2105877.pdf> (Access on 16-08-2022).
14. Rajendran, S. & Srinivasaragavan, S. (2014). Policy, problem and challenges for collection development in the digital age. *SACLIB 2014 IALA –JOURNAL*. Available at C:\Users\home\Desktop\PubLibIn digital Era\SACLIB 2014 IALA -JOURNAL full text.pdf. (Access on 4-05-2022).
15. Raju, R.(2018). Restructuring for relevance: a paradigm shift for academic libraries. *Library Management*, 1-14. Available at <https://open.uct.ac.za/bitstream> (Access on 11-08-2022).
16. Rath, P (2020). Public libraries and bridging digital divide in indian perspective. In Abhaya Kumar Padhi (Ed.). *Public Library and Digital Divide* (pp.1-7). Odisha State Open University, Sambalpur, Available at <http://osou.ac.in/docs/public-library-and-digital-divide-opportunities-challenges.pdf> (Access on 4-05-2022).
17. Singh, M.K. & Tripathi, A. (2018). Re-engineering public libraries of varanasi. *SRELS Journals of Information Management*, 55 (1), February 2018, p.51-57. Available at <http://www.srels.org/index.php/sjim/article/view/114735> (Access on 4-05-2022).
18. Singh, M.K. (2017, Aug). Impact of digital India program on public library professionals. *International Journal of Next-Generation Library and Technologies*, 3(3). Available at https://educationdocbox.com/Distance_Learning/65586359-Impact-of-digital-india-program-on-public-library-professionals-manendra-kumar-singh.html. (Access on 03-05-2022).

19. Singh, M.K. (2018). Transforming the public library status in India. *Journal of Advancements in Library Sciences*, (5)2, 97-103. Available at <https://sciencejournals.stmjournals.in/index.php/JoALS/article/viewFile/151/909> (Access on 15-04-2022).
20. Singh, R. & Nayan, R. (2020). Public library and digital divide opportunities and challenges. In Abhaya Kumar Padhi(Ed.). *Public Library and Digital Divide* (pp.20-28). Odisha State Open University, Sambalpur. Available at <http://osou.ac.in/docs/public-library-and-digital-divide-opportunities-challenge.pdf> (Access on 4-05-2022).
21. Thompson, J. (2015). Changing needs, changing roles: *how public libraries are expanding traditional service models to best serve their communities*. Reference & User Services Quarterly, 54(3) , 2-5. Available at <https://www.jstor.org/stable/refusersrq.54.3.2> (access on 12-08-2022).
22. Wyatt, D. & McQuire, S. & Butt, D (2015, Sept.) . Public libraries in a digital culture: the University of Melbourne in association with state library of Queensland. *The Research Unit in Public Cultures, School of Culture and Communication, University of Melbourne*. Available at https://arts.unimelb.edu.au/_data/assets/pdf_file/0005/1867865/PublicLibrariesinaDigitalCulture.pdf. (Access on 15-04-2022).
23. Xiao, L. (2020). Innovative application of knowledge management in organizational restructuring of academic libraries: A case study of Peking University Library. *International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions*, 46(1) 15–24. Available at DOI: 10.1177 /0340035219892289.

.....@.....