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Study of Information Sources and Services of the National Medical Library in India

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Introduction

The National Medical Library aims to provide wide and efficient information resources and services to the health science professionals as well as users in India. It functions under the administrative control of the Directorate General of Health Services. The National Medical Library was initially conceived as departmental library having a small collection of books for the use of officers of the erstwhile Directorate General of Indian Medical Services (DGIMS). The DGIMS was later merged with the Office of the Public Health Commissioner in India in 1947 to form the Directorate General of Health Services (DGHS) and the library became DGHS Library. Realizing the need for a Central Medical Library to support academic, research and clinical work of Biomedical Professionals in the country, the DGHS library was developed gradually and declared as Central Medical Library in 1961 and as the National Medical Library on 1st April 1966.[1]

Review of Literature

To set the scene for the study, a review of the literature was first undertaken. *Maharana* (2004)[2] tells that under the title "Policies and practices of development and management of e-resources in the select R&D libraries of Kolkata City" depicted the current state of e-collection, policy statements, and management practices under vogue. It also examined various criteria for selection and evaluation of e-resources. *Bali* (1997)[3] examined the collection development program in National Institute of Science, Technology and Development Studies (NISTADS) library. The library collection development plan was being developed by resource sharing with outside libraries and making use of available information technology. *Katogi* (1994)[4] States the genesis of the National Diet Library, Tokyo, Japan and its organizations, collection and preservation of documents and their accessibility and use. States the major collections and their catalogues, bibliographies and indexes. Describe its services; inter library loan, and automation used in the library. Also states its buildings facilities and finance.

Shafi (1997)[5] conducted a study on "Health Science Research libraries in India. It focuses on permanent Health Science Research institutions attached to ICMR, CSIR, DRDO, CCRALS, CCRH, CCRUM and CCRY & YV. The findings were that the selection policies were arbitrary and vary from institute to institute. There was an average growth in the finance. Different types of services are available such as Inter library loan, Bibliographic services, on-line services etc. Author had also given some suggestions like there should be a common policy for the functioning of the library. Library should subscribe core journals. Financial allocation should be made to purchase technology units/gadgets, specialized services should be provided. *Nomma* (1994)[6] in his article "Information services in National Diet Library" presents an outline and the state of information services of the National Diet Library of Japan. States the application of information and communication technologies, shifts towards networking, development of automated cataloguing and indexing systems, creation of bibliographic databases of domestic and foreign materials. Introduction of information services, library services to users and plans for total automation. *Singh* (1999)[7] attempted about background information about the emergence of Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Kanpur. She discussed the methodology used for data collection, acquisition of periodicals and other documentary collection. Majority of the users rated library collection, services and attitude of library staff was good. The users were not satisfied with the photocopying services. Examined the user's awareness and usefulness of various types of reader services.

Akhtar Hussain and Krishna Kumar (2006)[8] carried out a survey the use, collection and services of IIRS Library. The major findings of the study were: (1) A majority of the users (41.25%) of the IIRS Library use the library services daily. (2) Majority of the respondents mainly used the library to borrow books and other materials (81.25%) and the list number of respondents use the library for audio-visual materials. (3) Most of the respondents preferred to print collection (87.50%) were using books followed by electronic collection, (68.75%) were using CD-ROM, further followed by 86.25% respondents use for current periodicals. (4) Most of the respondents fully satisfied with library services. *Choukhande and Kumar* (2004)[9] examined under the title "analytical study of information needs and use pattern of faculty members and research scholars of Amrawati University". The Main objectives of the study were the information needs and use pattern of faculty members and research scholar; to identify the problems faced by the faculty members and research scholars; and to suggest some remedies to solve the problem. The major findings of the study were: The reference sources preferred by the users are encyclopedias, periodicals, dictionaries etc. The users in comparison with other electronic sources use less audiovisual materials. Most of the users use the catalogue, bibliographies, indexes and abstracts. Majority of the users use the library to borrow books to study research, training programmes. *Sheena Kumari* (1997) [10] attempted to ascertain the role of informal communication among scholars in the university

and to check the adequacy of the Kerala University Library system to meet the information requirements of the researchers. The important findings of the study were: (i) Indexing and abstracting periodicals were being well used by researcher in science.(ii) Most of the scholars used services of INSDOC and also libraries other than that of their parent institutions.(iii) Information sources used in order to keep themselves abreast of latest information vary from discipline to discipline, and. (iv) Information sources such as supervising teachers, other fellow researchers, conferences etc. play a considerable role in the information use pattern of researchers.

Objectives of the Study

- To identify the factors which effect the provision of services in the National Medical Library in India,
- To study effects of various factors such as manpower, physical facilities, documents collection, and reference services provided by the library.
- To determine the uses of IT based services in the library
- To study the users image about the library personnel.
- To suggest measures to make library services more effective and efficient.

Methodology

The problem for the present study is the “Study of Information Sources and Services of National Medical Library in India”. The collected data are organized and tabulated by using statistical method, tables and percentage of the paper focuses the analysis and interpretation of the data collected through questionnaire, interview and observation method. The sample size in all categories of user’s population is 9.84 percentages. Random sampling technique has been followed for the study. The total number of users are 5000 approximately according 500 questionnaire are distribute 492 filed questionnaire were returned by users. [11]

Data Analysis

The Sample

There are large number of users and these ranges from BPT to faculty members. A sample from all categories of users was taken to find out their opinion about the services provided by the library. The table below has given the categories of users and the size of sample of the study.

Table-1: Size of the Sample

Users	Total number of users included in the study	Sample Population in Percentage
Doctors / Faculty	54	10.98
MD/MS	36	7.32
MDS	54	10.98
MBBS	81	16.46
BDS	198	40.24
BPT	69	14.02

(Abbreviations: see Appendix 1)

The above table shows that 10.98% of the total population under study

consists of Doctors/Faculty Members and MDS, 7.32% of MD/MS, 14.02% BPT has been included in the study. In the case of BDS and MBBS the size chosen is quite large their opinion likely to help in the formulation of the findings.

4.1 Frequency of Visit to the Library

The frequencies of the visit to the library are one index to judge the use of the library resources. If the users frequently visit the library it can be said that they are using the library more in comparison to those users who rarely visit the library.

Table 2: Frequency of Visit to the Library

Frequency	No. of responses	Percentage
Daily	249	50.61
Three times a week	81	16.46
Twice a week	63	12.81
More than three times a week	99	20.12
Total	492	100.00

The above table shows that 50.61% users visit the library daily while 20.12% users are visit the library more than three times a week. Followed by 16.46% users are visit three times a week whereas 12.81% users are also visit twice a week and as frequency of visit decreases to twice a week.

Purpose of Visit to the Library

The purpose of user's visit to the library was ascertained to find out whether they come to satisfy their information needs for research requirements or for general reading.

Table 3: Purpose of Visit to the Library

Purpose	Doctors/ Faculty	MD/MS	MDS	MBBS	BDS	BPT
Borrowing and returning of reading materials	36 (66.66%)	(50%)	27 (50%)	72 (88.89%)	135 (68.18%)	45 (66.22%)
Light reading	27 (50%)	27 (75%)	27 (50%)	60 (74.07%)	126 (63.63%)	45 (66.22%)
Preparation for class room teaching	NIL	9 (25%)	9 (16.67%)	63 (77.78%)	63 (31.82%)	18 (28.09%)
Gathering of professional information	18 (33.33%)	27 (75%)	NIL	18 (22.28%)	36 (18.18%)	45 (66.22%)
Keeping up to date information	18 (33.33%)	18 (50%)	36 (66.67%)	27 (33.33%)	45 (22.73%)	18 (28.09%)
Concluding reading material for research work	36 (66.66%)	27 (75%)	9 (16.67%)	54 (66.67%)	45 (22.73%)	9 (13.04%)
Carrying out internet search	36 (66.66%)	36 (100%)	27 (50%)	63 (77.78%)	144 (72.73%)	45 (65.22%)

(Multiple answers were permitted)

The above data shows that among Doctors/ Faculty 66.67% users are using the library for borrowing and returning of the reading materials,

concluding reading materials for research work and carrying out internet search. In case of M.D. / M.S. 75.00% users, use the library for light reading, gathering of professional information and concluding reading material for research work. In case of M.D.S. 66.67% users use the library for keeping up-to-date information, followed by 50.00% users' uses the library for borrowing and returning of material, light reading and carrying out internet search. In case of M.B.B.S. 88.89% users use the library for borrowing and returning the materials, followed by 77.78% preparation for classroom teaching. In case of B.D.S.72.73% users are uses the library for carrying out Internet search, followed by 68.18% for borrowing and returning the reading materials. In case of BPT, 66.22% users use the library for borrowing and returning of reading materials and gathered for professional information resources.

Physical Facilities

Physical facilities and provision of sufficient number of reading seats, adequate library hours and peaceful environment is equally important to promote use of library.

Table 4: Physical Facilities

Facilities	Yes	Percentage	No	Percentage
Working hour of the library	120	70.18	21	12.28
Reading room facilities	102	59.64	33	19.30
Environment	99	57.89	36	21.05
General facilities (Air, lighting, water etc.)	114	66.67	30	17.54

(Multiple answers were permitted)

The analysis shows that the physical facilities was being provided by the library about 70.18% are satisfied with the working hour of the library, while 12.28% are not satisfied. In case of reading room facilities 59.64% are satisfied whereas 19.30% are not satisfied. In case of environment 57.89% users are satisfied, while 21.05% users are not satisfied. In case of general facilities 66.67% users are satisfied whereas 17.54% users are not satisfied.

Document Collections

A balanced and adequate Document Collection is an important indicator to reflect the use of the library. It helps to meet the users' requirements. The respondents were therefore, asked to express their opinion about adequacy of collection and in order to find out whether it was balanced the indicator of rating has been used.

Table 5: Document Collections

Categories	Most Frequently	Frequently	Sometime	Rarely	Never
General Books	30 (17.54%)	66 (38.06%)	24 (14.03%)	15 (8.77%)	03 (1.75%)
Reference Books	06 (3.51%)	30 (17.54%)	42 (24.56%)	15 (8.77%)	06 (3.51%)
Periodicals	06 (3.51%)	18 (10.53%)	21 (12.28%)	39 (22.80%)	9 (5.26%)
Newspapers	06 (3.51%)	30 (17.54%)	30 (17.54%)	24 (14.04%)	06 (3.51%)
		09	09	36	30

Theses/Dissertation	06 (3.51%)	(5.26%)	(5.26%)	(21.05%)	(17.54%)
Maps, Diagrams, charts etc.	3 (1.75%)	15 (8.77%)	18 (10.53%)	42 (24.56%)	30 (17.54%)
CD-Rom Databases	03 (1.75%)	36 (21.05%)	24 (14.03%)	48 (28.07%)	09 (5.26%)
Online Databases	09 (5.26%)	48 (28.07%)	33 (19.30%)	30 (17.54%)	06 (3.51%)

(Multiple answers were permitted)

The above table shows that 38.06% users are uses of general books as frequently, while 1.75% users are never use. 24.56% users are uses reference books as sometime while 3.51% never use. In case of periodicals 22.80% uses rarely while 5.26% uses frequently. In case of newspaper 17.54% uses sometime while 3.51% never use. In case of theses/dissertation 21.05% users are rarely used while 3.51% use most frequently. In case of maps, diagrams, charts etc. about 24.56% uses sometime while 1.75% uses never.28.07% user are uses CD-ROM database as rarely while 1.75% uses most frequently. In case of online database 28.07% are uses as frequently while 3.51% as never use.

Services

The basic function of the National Medical Library is to provide services to its clientele efficiently and effectively. The focus of the study is services provided by the Library essentially 'reader services' with a view to find out the type, nature extent, etc. [12] Questions have been asked to elicit information through the questionnaire.

Table 6: Services

Services	Excellent	V.Good	Good	Average	B.Average
References	6(3.51%)	36(21.05%)	45(26.32%)	24(14.04%)	6(3.51%)
Bibliographic	3(1.75%)	9(5.26%)	18(10.53%)	21(12.28%)	18(10.53%)
CAS	3(1.75%)	15(8.77%)	30(17.54%)	21(12.28%)	18(10.53%)
Newspaper Clipping	6(3.51%)	30(17.54%)	33(19.30%)	15(8.77%)	9(5.26%)
Online Search	15(8.77%)	51(29.82%)	42(24.56%)	15(8.77%)	NIL
CD-ROM Search	12(7.02%)	54(31.54%)	36(21.05%)	15(8.77%)	6(3.51%)
Photocopying	30(17.5%)	39(22.81%)	42(24.56%)	3(1.75%)	3(1.75%)

(Multiple answers were permitted)

The above table reveals that 26.32% users rated the reference service as 'Good',21.05% 'Very Good',14.04% 'Average' and 3.51% 'Excellent and Below Average'. While bibliographic service was rated by 10.53% users as Good and Below Average,12.28% Average,5.26% Very Good, and 1.75% Excellent.

However, Current Awareness Services rated by the users are 1.75% as Excellent, 8.77% as Very Good, 17.54% as Good, 12.28% as Average and 10.53% as Below Average category.

The newspaper clipping service as rated by the users are: 3.51% Excellent, 17.54% Very Good, 19.30% Good, 8.77% Average and 5.26% as Below Average category.

The Online Service of the Library as rated by the users as excellent is

by (8.77%) users, very good by 29.82%, good by 24.56% and average by 8.77%. While CD-ROM service was rated 7.02% as Excellent, 31.54% as Very Good, 21.05 % as Good, 8.77% as Average and 3.51% as Below Average category.

The Photocopy service of the Library as rated by the users as excellent is by (17.5%) users, very good by 22.81%, good by 22.81%, average by 1.75% and below average by 1.75%.

Reference Services

The importance of reference service in a National Medical Library hardly needs any emphasis. This service is very useful to all types of users needing assistance in teaching and learning and for research work.

Table 7: Reference Services

Reference Services	Yes	No
Search the reading materials	120 (70.18%)	21 (12.28%)
Use reference sources	36 (21.05%)	96(56.14%)
Use bibliographical sources	18 (10.53%)	108(63.16%)
Search the specific Information	75 (43.86%)	60 (35.09%)

(Multiple answers were permitted)

The above data shows 70.18% users used for search the reading materials whereas 21.05% users used for the reference services. Followed by 10.53% users are used for the bibliographical sources. Further followed by 43.83% users used for search the specific information.

Table 8: IT Based Services

Services	Doctors/ Faculty	MD/MS	MDS	MBBS	BDS	BPT
Online service	36 (66.67%)	21 (56.67%)	21 (56.67%)	60 (74.07%)	102 (51.52%)	33 (47.83%)
CD-ROM Databases service	24 (44.44%)	18 (53.33%)	18 (53.33%)	45 (55.56%)	66 (33.33%)	12 (17.39%)
Internet service	45 (83.33%)	18 (66.67%)	18 (66.67%)	30 (37.04%)	90 (45.45%)	45 (22.73%)

(Multiple answers were permitted)

The above table shows that in case of Doctors/Faculty members, 83.33% users use the Internet service, 66.67% users use the online service and 44.44% users use the CD ROM database service. In case of MD/MS/MDS, about 56.67% users use the online service, followed by 53.33% users use the CD-ROM database and Internet service. Further followed by in case of MBBS, 74.07% users use the online service, 55.45% CD-ROM database and 37.04% users use the Internet services. In case of BDS, 51.52% users use the online service; followed by 45.45% users are use the Internet services whereas 25.58% users use the CD-ROM database service. In case of BPT, 47.83% users use the online service, 22.73% users use Internet whereas 17.39% users use the CD-ROM database service.

Rating the Efficiency of Library Staff

With a view to find out the overall performance of the staff the opinion of the users was gathered. If they are not satisfied it means their efficiency is below the average and if fully satisfied it means staff is performing duties very well.

Table 9: Rating of Efficiency of Library Staff

Rating	Number of responses	Percentage
Excellent	60	18.52
Very Good	132	40.74
Good	90	27.78
Average	36	11.11
Bellow Average	6	01.85

(Multiple answers were permitted)

The above table shows that 40% users have rated the efficiency of library staff under 'Very Good' category and only 1.85% users have rated the staff under 'Below Average' category. No doubt some persons are very efficient, reflects the general opinion of the users.

Overall Rating of Library from the Users Point of View

It is important to find out the image of the library in general. It includes all aspects such as physical facilities, collections, library catalogues, shelf arrangements, services etc.

Table 10: Users Image about the Library

Overall Evaluation	Excellent	Very Good	Good	Poor	Very Poor
Physical Facilities	06 (3.51%)	21 (12.28%)	60 (35.09%)	21 (12.28%)	06 (3.51%)
Collections	09 (5.26%)	30 (17.54%)	60 (35.09%)	25 (14.62%)	08 (4.68%)
Library Catalogue	06 (3.51%)	24 (14.03%)	54 (31.58%)	38 (22.22%)	04 (2.33%)
Shelf Arrangement	15 (8.77%)	24 (14.03%)	75 43.86%	33 (19.30%)	08 (4.68%)
Services	09 5.26%	33 (19.30%)	50 (29.24%)	04 (2.33%)	15 (8.77%)
Computer Facility	15 (8.77%)	39 (22.80%)	32 (18.71%)	04 (2.33%)	10 (5.85%)
Attitude of Staffs	29 (16.96%)	39 (22.80%)	31 (18.13%)	30 (17.54%)	02 (1.17%)
Rules & regulation	04 (2.34%)	36 (21.05%)	32 (18.71%)	33 (19.30%)	02 (1.17%)

(Multiple answers were permitted)

The above table shows that maximum percentage of users has rated the library as good. This could be because it is very rich in terms of document collection. It provides computer-readable databases on CD-ROM and provides information retrieval services to its users on topics of their interest.

Findings and Suggestions

The majority of users visit the library daily for borrow and return the books and preparation for competitive examination etc. It has found that National Medical Library lacks reading seats/space facilities because it has capacity only 400 seats while requires at least 600 seats. At present the building also lacks of stacking spacing and more space is needed for services. It is noticed that 12.28% users have indicated that users are not satisfied with the working hour of the library, and 17.54% users are also not satisfied with the air, lighting, water etc. Majority of users are using whole documents collections of the library. It has also found that in the reference services, 63.16% users are not satisfied with uses of bibliographical sources, whereas 35.09% users are not satisfied with the search of the specific information. It is recorded that most of BDS students use IT based service i.e. 5.2% online service, 33.3% CD-ROM database service, and 45.4% Internet service. 40% users have rated the efficiency of library staff under 'very good' category and only 1.85% users have rated the staff under 'below average' category, and maximum percentage of users have rated overall evaluation of the library as good.

These studies related to only for National Medical Library, New Delhi. To satisfy the demand of the users' library may undertake various activities. A pamphlet containing information regarding the rules and regulations, size and types of the collection, various services, provided by the library, should be given to the readers in the beginning of the session. Library should conduct orientation programme for new staff. The professional staff should be deputed to attend the workshops/seminars/conferences and refresher courses. Library should prepare a policy in the matter of selection promotion and demotion of the library staff. To satisfy the demand of the readers, library should arrange more multiple copies of documents in all fields specially in S&T, more journals should be subscribed by the library keeping in view the needs of the researchers, library should acquire more audio-visual documents for teaching and research requirements, and library should acquire more reference sources to satisfy the needs of the user.[13]

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Appendix 1. List of Abbreviations:

Abbreviation	Stand for?
MD/MS	Doctor of Medicine/ Master of surgery
MDS	Movement Disorder Specialist
MBBS	Bachelor of Medicine and Bachelor of Surgery
BDS	Bachelor of Dental Surgery
BPT	Bachelor of PhysioTherapy

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