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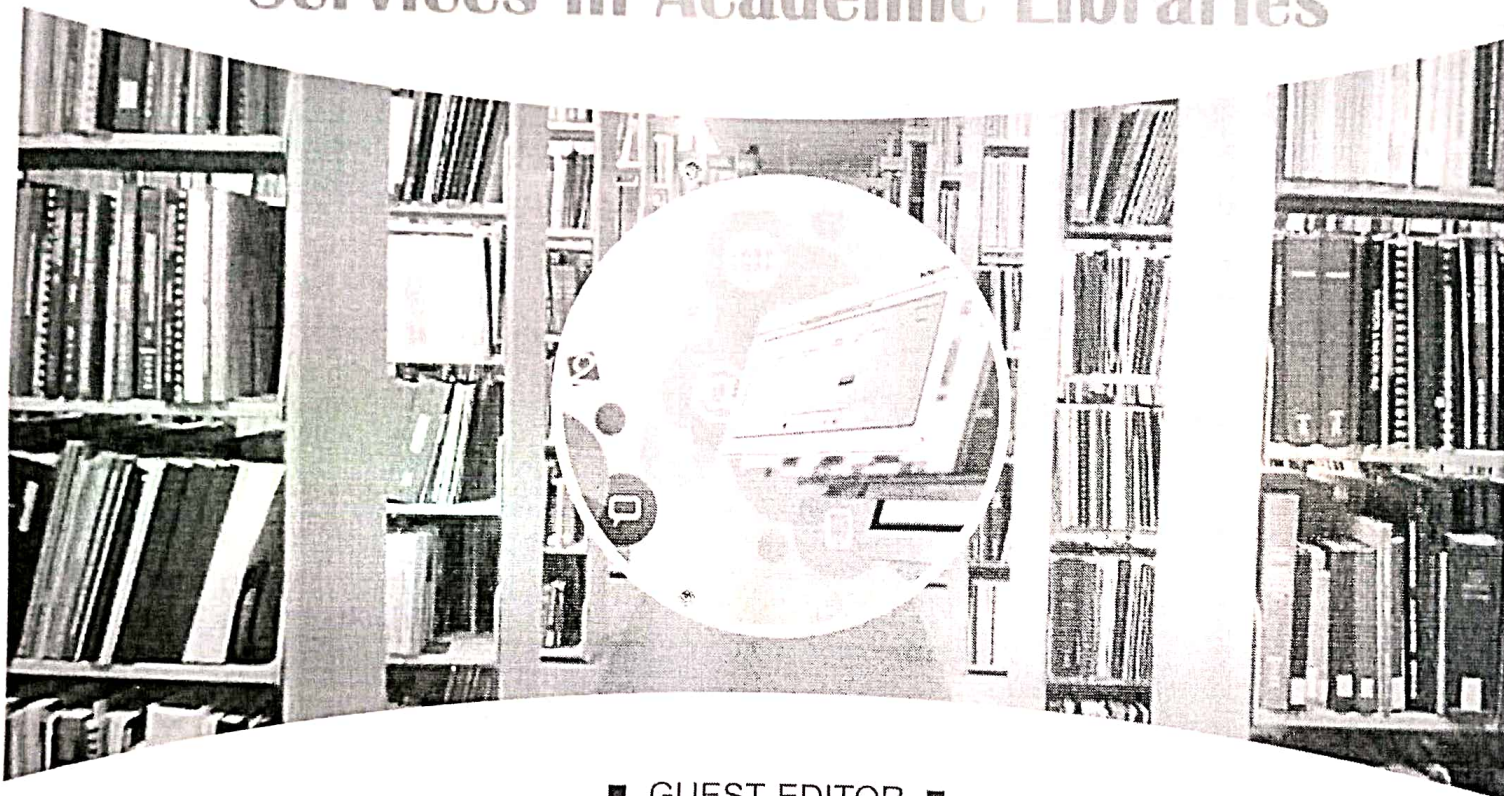
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Web Based Library and Information Services in Academic Libraries

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Web Directories in Academic Libraries

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ABSTRACT

Web Directories created and managed with varied backgrounds like 1) Bulletin Board for Libraries (BUBL), 2) Yahoo Directory, 3) Open Directory Project (ODP), and 4) IFLA Electronic Collections (IFLA EC) are evaluated. Classification structure, Classification Schema and Browsing are interrelated in web directories. Metadata elements cannot be ignored as they are very crucial for improving precision and relevance. All above discussions simply reiterate implications of Five Laws of Library Science, library classification theory, principles, techniques and tools for web directories. Developing and maintaining a web directory is like developing and maintaining a library. It takes years to develop a good directory, like a library. It requires, men, money, materials, continuous collection development and constant efforts. Management should extend continuous support in maintaining directory by providing required resources and managerial vision.

Information finding, organizing and accessing are a never ending concerns for any human activity. It continued from incunabula to books in physical form. The activity of finding and organizing information resources will continue to exist in some new form in future also for future human generations. Locating an information resource and organizing a collection for future use and sharing with others have become essential, even on trivial issues. Therefore, Web-based resources are also forming part of library collection development policy. In near future Networked Information Resources will become critical for library collection. The process of organizing these information resources in the collection of Cybraries is going to be a daunting task. Some of these information resources have a peculiar nature of continuous addition of information due to web2.0 applications and services.

For information explosion in print form library and information professionals devised techniques and tools like Classification, Cataloguing, Indexing, Subject Headings, Thesaurus, etc. for organizing and retrieving information. These information organizing and retrieval tools and techniques are being employed in digital environment also with and without modifications. This study is such an effort to understand implementation those practices by Web Directories.

1 SIGNIFICANCE OF THE RESEARCH

Web Directories are proved important tools for locating information on Internet for academic community to fulfill their research, teaching and professional information need. These services are extended to for general users with directory structure by Yahoo, DMOZ, etc. A study on such web directories or Internet trees or Web catalogs and their evaluation could be a significant study to understand how far the techniques and tools developed by Library and Information science and skills of profession are implemented on Internet.

The main interface of directory structure is browsing. The structure of web directory is dependent on classification process and classes thereby obtained for linking and finding an information resource. A user browses through these classes to find resources. This whole process depends on classification structure, i.e. sequence and hierarchy of classes. Library and Information Science has developed theory and principles for process of classifying universe of knowledge. In the same lines, resource metadata creation standards were also developed to identify a resource. These two elements are very critical for information storage and retrieval

Table1. Four criteria used for selection of sample

		Proprietorship	Personnel	Orientation	Purpose
1	BUBL	Institution	Librarians	Academic	Educational
2	YAHOO	Enterprise	Employees	Business	Commercial
3	ODP	Noncomercial	Volunteers	Repository	Informative
4	IFLA EC	Association	Members	Professional	Occupational

Information that was available in traditional forms (Print, Audio-Visual) is published and made available in digital form on the Internet. Whether it is electronic form or print form documents contain information. Librarians and information professionals have developed a set of theories and principles for Classification, Cataloguing, and Subject Headings. All the