
UNIT 3 EVALUATION OF INTERNET INFORMATION RESOURCES

Structure

- 3.0 Objectives
- 3.1 Introduction
- 3.2 Need for Evaluation of Internet Resources
- 3.3 Process of Evaluation
 - 3.3.1 Identification of Links to Resources
 - 3.3.2 Follow a Link to Find Out More about the Resources
 - 3.3.3 Analyse the URL
 - 3.3.4 Examine the Information
 - 3.3.5 Assess Accessibility
 - 3.3.6 Consider the Design and Layout of the Material
 - 3.3.7 Consider the Ease of Using the Resource
 - 3.3.8 Obtain any Additional Information
 - 3.3.9 Compare the Resource to Other Similar Material
- 3.4 Criteria for Evaluation
 - 3.4.1 Initial Appraisal
 - 3.4.2 Suitability of Resource
 - 3.4.3 Content Analysis
 - 3.4.4 Structure and Presentation
- 3.5 *Summary*
- 3.6 Answer to Self Check Exercises
- 3.7 Keywords
- 3.8 References and Further Reading

3.0 OBJECTIVES

Evaluation of Internet information resources is an important activity in selection of information resources for a meta resource. It is imperative for the libraries to apply their expertise in the process of selection, evaluation and filtration of **Internet** resources before adding them to their meta resource collection and subsequently, providing organized and structured access to them through their **meta** resources. After studying this Unit you will be able to :

- understand the need and steps involved for evaluation of Internet information resources; and
- get yourself acquainted with the criteria for **evaluation** of Internet **information** resources.

3.1 INTRODUCTION

Information is important for all round activities. However, the information should be valid, reliable, authoritative and relevant. The information resources in the

printed world go through a process of filtering, i.e. reviewing, authenticating and evaluating for its merits and claims. Users of such information resources are aware of the process of evaluation in the printed world. They come to trust the printed sources and accept the facts and assessments made by the author as valid and authoritative. However, unlike the world of printed information, the Internet is a vast network of ever growing, unfiltered information sources. Most of the information sources on the Internet are not peer-reviewed, edited or revised. Almost any one with access to a website can publish his or her works on the web. The volume of information resources available on the Internet is immense. A search executed on an Internet search engine such as Google or Alta Vista on any topic brings out thousands of links to information resources, most of which are irrelevant while quite a few have ceased to exist.

The information resources available on the Internet cannot be treated differently from those available in the printed media. The Internet and the web is merely a new medium that provides access to different types of information resources. A better guide to Internet information resources is one that provide links to the best information resources that are carefully selected after evaluation rather than the one that provides the most. Providing links to information resources are only useful if the links provided are useful to their users. It is, therefore, imperative for libraries to apply their expertise in the process of selection, evaluation and filtration of Internet resources before adding them for their meta resource collection and subsequently, provide organized and structured access to them through their meta resources. A meta resource consists of information resources that are carefully selected by the librarians and information specialists, and serve users best through their value-added characteristics that provide intuitive access to a selective few, high-quality information resources. Some of the evaluation criteria used for printed resources may be used for evaluating Internet information resources.

This unit elaborates on the need for evaluation of Internet information resources. The steps involved in the process of evaluation of Internet information resources are discussed in detail. Moreover, the unit also provides questions that an evaluator of the Internet information resource should be trying to answer in the process of evaluation. Finally, the unit elaborates upon various criteria employed for evaluation of **Internet** information resources under four major categories, namely i) Initial appraisal of information resources; ii) Suitability of resources; iii) Content analysis; and iv) Structure and presentation.

3.2 NEED FOR EVALUATION OF INTERNET INFORMATION RESOURCES

A library selects documents for its collection after careful evaluation and adds them to its collection in their proper context. The process of selective acquisition adds value to information resources available in a library that, in turn, helps library users to harvest the information that they need. Internet resources cannot be treated differently from those in printed media considering the fact that most of the Internet information resources do not go through the process of filtration prevalent in the printed world. The web is merely a new medium that acts as an effective system for delivering electronic information. Librarians have been traditionally selecting, evaluating, describing and providing intelligent access to information resources for decades, they are, therefore, best suited to do this

job. The need for evaluation of Internet-based information resources can be justified on the following grounds:

- i) Authenticity of information published on the web need to be established;
- ii) The author of published information may not be an authority or an expert in the area;
- iii) The information on the Internet may be outdated;
- iv) Reliability of information on the network may not have been established;
- v) The information needs to be presented for a given audience. The librarian needs to establish its relevance for the targeted audience.

3.3 PROCESS OF EVALUATION

The process of evaluation of Internet information resources consists of the following steps:

3.3.1 Identification of Links to Resources

Identification of links to resources to be included on a meta resource is the first step in the process of evaluation. Identification of information resources may be done using mailing lists, distribution lists, other meta resources, Internet resources newsletters, Internet search engines, speciality search engines, directories of Internet resources, etc. Besides, Internet altering services like Gary Price's New Resource Bulletin and Scout Report (<http://scout.cs.wisc.edu/>), or listservs and discussion groups can also be subscribed to. One can also obtain the links to resources through newspapers, magazines, e-mails, etc.

3.3.2 Follow a Link to Find Out More about the Resources

Following a link to the document where the link is originally referred can provide details about the intended scope and audience, and whether the information is likely to be updated and how often. The links to the present document can lead to the producer of information and its origination. Details like provenance of the source, individuals or groups responsible for information, details of their expertise, details of organizations involved in the production and dissemination of information, details of their reputation and expertise within the field, can also be obtained. Contact details and copyright information may also be collected which can be used for assessing the authority of the information. Questions that an evaluator should be trying to answer in this step are:

- i) What is the subject scope of the resource and is it relevant to the meta resource?
- ii) Who is the intended audience?
- iii) Who is responsible for the information resource?
- iv) Is the individual or group responsible for the information resource qualified to provide this information? Are contact details available?
- v) Is the organization, such as publishers, sponsors or funding agencies, responsible for the information, reputable and recognised?
- vi) Is the resource well-known and / or heavily used?

- vii) What is the provenance of the resource? Does it have a print or electronic predecessor and how long has it been available?
- viii) Is the information likely to be kept up-to-date?
- ix) Are there any access restrictions?

3.3.3 Analyse the URL

The URL (Universal Resource Locator) provides useful information for evaluation of an Internet resource. Most often the URLs consist of meaningful words or phase(s) conveying the contents or purpose of a website. The URLs also provide indication about where the information comes from, who has produced it or why. Different countries and organizational domains are represented differently in URLs. Important prevalent domain names are:

.ac .biz .cc .com .edu .gov .info .net .org .co .mil

Countries except the US have an additional country code (e.g. “.in” for India), although many site do not use country codes. “*www.alldomains.com*” provides a complete list of country codes along with sub-domains within that country.

You can delete portions of tail-end of a URL to find out more about the resource. For example, in the URL *http://www.iitd.ac.in/library/services/erl.html*

Deletion of “*services/erl.html*” would lead you to the home page of the Central Library, IIT Delhi. Further, deletion of “*library/*” would lead you to the home page of IIT Delhi. In other words, the tail-end of a URL take you to sub-parts of websites while the main URLs represent the parent organization.

Deleting parts of URL is a useful technique that can be used to assess the authority of a resource and those responsible for producing it. Questions that an evaluator should be trying to answer in this step are:

- i) Where has the information come from?
- ii) Has **an** individual or group taken responsibility for the resource? Are they qualified to provide this information? Are contact details available?
- iii) Is an organization responsible for the information? Are any organizations associated with the resource, such as publishers, sponsors or funding agencies, reputable and recognized?

3.3.4 Examine the Information

Once the authority of a resource and its producer of information are established, you need to examine the information contained within it to assess its coverage, accuracy and its currency.

Assess the Coverage of the Resource'

Examination of index, contents pages and site may be made to get an assessment of the range of subjects covered within a resource, whether a resource is comprehensive or if there are notable omissions. Evaluation of some of the resources may be a daunting task because of their comprehensive coverage. One could browse major headings to assess the types of materials **that** are covered and comprehensiveness of coverage within different areas. Search facility on site can also be used to find specific areas and to identify omissions. Although many sites provide their target audience, however, this needs to be

confirmed by browsing the information and reading some of the text. Questions that an evaluator should be trying to answer in this step are:

- i) What is the subject coverage of the resource?
- ii) Is the resource relevant to the meta resource?
- iii) Is the resource comprehensive within its given area?
- iv) What is the range of different subjects covered within the area?
- v) What is the retrospective coverage of the source?
- vi) Does the resource cover the subject adequately?
- vii) Does the information provided have sufficient details for the target audience?
- viii) Are there any links to further information?
- ix) Does the link add value to the existing information or is it of value as an information source in its own right?

Accuracy of Information

Accuracy of a resource could be assessed by searching sites for information known to you, alternatively an expert in the area may be consulted for this purpose. If none of two options are available, a range of other factors can be used as an indicator of accuracy. Some of them are as follows:

References to published information are indications to the fact that the information has a research basis. The site might also indicate whether the process of referring or editorial control has been exercised before publishing the information on the site. The resource may put in place a mechanism for users to ascertain its accuracy and quality of information by providing links to other structural resources. The information content of a site may also be biased which, in turn, may affect the potential accuracy of a resource. Such material, if included on a meta resource, could be included with a note in the resource description highlighting the source of potential bias. Questions that an evaluator should be trying to answer in this step are:

- i) Is the information accurate?
- ii) Has the information gone through a process of editing or refereeing?
- iii) Does the information have a research basis?
- iv) Is the information supported by published research findings?
- v) Is there any evidence that the source may be biased by those involved in its production and/or dissemination?
- vi) Is there a facility for sending corrections to inaccurate information?
- vii) Is the source professionally presented? Are there any typographical or grammatical errors?

Currency of Information

The resource site generally provides information on date of production and updating of materials as well as details about the frequency and regularity of updating. Individual documents may indicate when they were written while resources such as journals, databases or new information are updated at a regular frequency. Resource description may include such details.

However, currency of information can also be verified by searching current facts and by browsing through hypertext links to assess whether they have been maintained. Questions that an evaluator should be trying to answer in this step are:

- i) Is the information up-to-date?
- ii) Is the information likely to be kept up-to-date?
- iii) Where applicable, how frequently and /or regularly is the information updated? Is this appropriate to the type of information?

3.3.5 Assess Accessibility

Contrary to the popular belief, all information resources on the Internet are not free, several Internet resources have restrictions to their accessibility such as cost, access to geographical regions only, requirement for specific hardware or software tools and need to register. The level of complexity of the registration process may also be indicated. The resource descriptions may also include modes and level of charging.

Accessibility may also be assessed in terms of time taken in accessing a resource. Some sites are particularly slow to access, sometimes because of inclusion of large graphics. Such limitations may be mentioned in the resource descriptions. The accessibility options may also include alternative URLs, mirror sites, if available, or sites in other languages. Mention may also be there about the provision of copyright specially if the resource is freely available for reuse. Questions that an evaluator should be trying to answer in this step are:

- i) Is the resource frequently unavailable?
- ii) Do the graphics / pictures inhibit ease of access?
- iii) Is there a mirror site?
- iv) Are there any geographical access restrictions?
- v) Is special hardware or software required to access the resource'?
- vi) Do users need to register to use the resource, and if so, is the registration a straightforward process?
- vii) Is there a charge to access the resource?
- viii) Is the resource written in English? Is a special character set required?
- ix) Is the information in the public domain or are there copyright restrictions?

3.3.6 Consider the Design and Layout of the Material

Design and layout of a site can enhance its usability, likewise, invaluable contents may be made restrictive by poor design. An Internet resource should, therefore, be assessed for its overall design, professional presentation of resource and consistency of design between different parts of the same resource. A proper navigation system can enhance the usability of the site. Features such as site map, index, menu system or search facility should, therefore, be considered as methods to enhance effectiveness and usefulness of an Internet resource. Navigation systems within a document, from document to document and outside the document may be noted. The evaluator of an Internet resource site may also wish to note the use of images and whether they have been used appropriately or whether they are merely decorative and add no value to the contents of a resource. If the site incorporates advertisements, assess if they

distract or add to the value of information. Questions that an evaluator should be trying to answer in this step are:

- i) Is the resource well-designed?
- ii) Is the information professionally presented?
- iii) Is the design consistent in different parts of the same resource?
- iv) Does the source contain finding aids, such as a site map, index, and menu system or search facility?
- v) Are the links between pages useful and are there any navigation aids available to guide users?
- vi) Are images used appropriately or are they merely decorative?
- vii) Is advertising used appropriately or does it distract from the value of the information?

3.3.7 Consider the Ease of Using the Resource

Assess the Internet information resource for its ease of use. The information resource may also contain help information or user support service, **FAQ** or read-me file, e-mail address, telephone line, or availability of training course, discussion list or user support groups. Questions that an evaluator should be trying to answer in this step are:

- i) Is the source easy to use?
- ii) Is there any help information? Is it useful? Is it context-sensitive?
- iii) Are there any user support facilities? Are they useful/responsive?

3.3.8 Obtain any Additional Information

Additional information about the quality of Internet information resources can be obtained from professional and academic journals. Inclusion of an Internet information resource in other meta resources is an indication of its quality. You can use “link” facility of Alta Vista to find links given to a resource. In the Alta Vista query box, type “link” followed by the URL of the site you are evaluating. Alta Vista will list all the sites it can find which are linked to the site being evaluated. You can also search a bibliographic database to determine how extensively an author has published in a given area. Questions that an evaluator should be trying to answer in this step are:

- i) If an individual or group has taken responsibility, are they qualified to provide this information?
- ii) Is the resource well-known and/or heavily used?

3.3.9 Compare the Resource to Other Similar Material

Comparison of Internet information resources on similar subjects/topics helps in estimating the value and usefulness of a particular resource. Special note may be made for anything unique that the site covers in terms of its coverage or format. Questions that an evaluator should be trying to answer in this step are:

- i) How does the source compare with others?
- ii) Does the source offer anything unique in terms of its coverage or format?
- iii) Is there a print or other equivalent to the resource? How do they compare? How do they compare in terms of the cost and value for money?

- iv) Is there a mirror site that is accessible faster? Is there any difference between the original site and the mirror site in terms of coverage? Is there a lag between updating the original site and the mirror site? Does the mirror site or original site provide any special features?

3.4 CRITERIA FOR EVALUATION

The Internet hosts a lot of information resources, but all sources available on the Internet are not equally valuable or reliable. Like in the printed world, there are several alternatives available for a given **piece/item** of information/subject field. There is a need, therefore, to evaluate the Internet information resources. Some of the criteria employed for evaluating printed information resources are also used for evaluating the Internet information resources. Criteria usually employed for evaluating Internet information resources can broadly be divided into the following four categories:

- Initial appraisal
- Suitability of resource
- Content analysis
- Structure and presentation

3.4.1 Initial Appraisal

The initial appraisal of an Internet information resource may be made based on the following criteria:

Author

Author's credentials, i.e. institutional **affiliation**, educational background, other scholarly works, experience, etc. Secondary services and online databases may be used to determine how prolific an author is. Biographical sources may be used to determine the author's credentials. Citation index **can** be used to find how frequently an author is cited.

Rate of Publication

Date of publication or date of last revision is an indication of currency of information. Date of last revision is generally given on the home page of a site.

Edition or Revision

Revision/ updation reflect changes in the subject contents.

Publisher

Publisher does not necessarily guarantee quality. However, publications from a university press or scholarly society are likely to be treatises of high scholarly value.

Title of Journal

Is the journal popular or scholarly? The two flavours have a different target audience that presents different levels of complexity in presentation of items.

3.4.2 Suitability of Resource

After initial appraisal of a resource, determine the author's intentions for publishing Internet information resource. Scan its contents and indices to determine the suitability of the resource for the meta resource on the following criteria:

Scope and Coverage

Scope and coverage of an information resource is an important consideration in its evaluation. Since most Internet-based information resources do not have a formal introduction or preface, determining the scope and intended audience can be a daunting task. Breadth and depth on an Internet information resource would determine suitability of a resource for a meta resource. The time period covered in an information resource is also an indication of its coverage. A resource may be an overview of a topic or it may be specifically focused on only one aspect of the topic.

Factual V/s Opinion

The information contents should be factual, it should not be propaganda, advertisement or opinion. It is not always easy to separate facts from opinions. Facts can usually be verified, opinions, though they may be based on factual information, evolve from the interpretation of facts. Skilled writers may present their interpretation of facts as facts.

Primary V/s Secondary

Assess whether the information is primary or secondary in nature. Primary sources are the results of original research, while secondary sources are (derivatives of the primary sources. Scholars use primary resources to further their research work as well as for writing secondary works like textbooks, articles for encyclopaedia, etc. Books, articles in encyclopaedia, etc. are secondary sources of information while research articles in journals and conference proceedings are primary sources of information.

Scholarly V/s Popular

A scholarly journal is generally one that is published by and for experts. The articles in a scholarly journal go through a process of peer review in which a group of widely acknowledged experts in a field review the article for its contents, scholarly soundness and academic value before it is accepted for publication. The scholarly journals publish new, previously unpublished research.

Popular magazines range from highly respected publications such as *Scientific American* to general-interest news magazines like *Newsweek* and *Time*. Articles in popular magazines are generally written by the staff writers and freelance journalists. The articles in popular magazines do not go through the process of peer review and rarely contain bibliographic references.

Audience

The information contained in an information resource should be relevant to the person using it in terms for whom the information is aimed at. An information resource on Internet (web site) should clearly define its potential audience. In Ranganathan's parlance of Every book its reader and every reader his/her book may be used like "Every Website its Surfer or "Every Surfer his or her Website". A website should define its purpose and targeted audience clearly so as to find its user. Lack of focused audience might prevent a strong connection between sites and their users, and will ultimately render the site under-used, unused or unusable. The site should clearly answer i) the typed audience it is targeting; ii) whether the information is targeted for specialized or general audience; and iii) whether the information contents of site is elementary, technical or advanced.

The information that is required to be obtained to judge the suitability of an

information source include:

- The intended coverage
- The intended audience

3.4.3 Content Analysis

Accuracy

Information contents of a resource should be accurate. The contents of a resource should be reliable and error-free. References to published information indicate that **information** has a research basis. Accuracy is also assured if the information contents of a resource have undergone the process of referring or editorial control.

Authority and Reputation

The reputation of an author as an accomplished authority in his field of study is an important criterion of evaluating traditional as well as Internet resources. It is specially applicable to Internet resources given the fact that any one having access to a **website** can publish any information on the Internet without going through the process of reviewing, refereeing and editing. An author's **affiliation** to an organization of repute is also an indication to his/her authority. References, bibliography **and/or** footnotes indicate that the author has consulted other sources and services to authenticate the information that he or she is presenting.

Objectivity

Information contents of a resource should be factual, unbiased and written most objectively. The information contents should **not** be propaganda, advertisement or opinion. It is not always easy to separate facts from opinions. Facts can usually be verified, opinions, though they may be based on factual information, evolve **from** the interpretation of facts. Well-researched information should be supplemented with evidences, references to the past work and footnotes. The ideas and arguments advanced in the information resource should be with the other works on the same topic. The more radically an author departs from the views of others in the same field, the more careful and critical an evaluator should be to scrutinize his or her view.

The potential for bias introduced by an individual or organization involved in the production or dissemination of information, such as host of a web site, a publisher or a sponsor, can also impact upon the potential accuracy of a resource. Information resources with bias can either be excluded from a meta resource or it may be included with a note in the resource description highlighting the source of bias of any kind.

Currency of Information

The date of the last update given on the site indicates **currency** of a resource. For individual documents, the date indicates **when** the document was written or last updated. For resources where there is a regular change to the contents, such as journals, databases or news information, frequency or regularity of **updating** is the indication.

Completeness

The information contents of a **website** should be complete and comprehensive. The information contents of a resource should not have noticeable omissions.

The information that is required to be obtained in the process of content analysis include:

- Details of any organizations and/or individuals involved in the production and dissemination of the information, including the author, webmaster or equivalent, copyright owner, publisher, sponsor, etc,
- Contact details
- Copyright statement
- Subjects and types of materials covered
- Comprehensiveness of coverage
- Notable omissions
- Notable indicators of accuracy, e.g. potential for bias, ability to e-mail corrections
- Audience and level of detail if explicitly stated . . .
- The provenance of the source
- Editorial or refereeing procedures
- Research basis to the information
- Frequency and / or regularity of updating.

3.4.4 Structure and Presentation

Writing Style

The writing style followed for an information resource would largely depend on the targeted audience. In general, the text should be easy to read. It should follow the basic rules of grammar, spelling and literacy compositions. The arguments put forth by the author should not be repetitive.

Structure

The information resource should be organized logically with major points or headings clearly presented. The resource should follow the basic principles of graphic design, wherever applicable. The graphics used in the information resource should add to the information contents and not distract the users from it. Features such as site map, index, and menu system or search facility enhance the usefulness of an information resource. A well-structured site should lead a user to the information he or she needs within a reasonable number of links, preferably 3 or 4.

Design and Layout

Layout and design of a website should communicate a sense of location to the user. based on apparent patterns and consistent use of visual elements such as headings. Patterns in the background should help identify the page or orient the user to location within a complex site. The images should act as visual clues to orient the user within a site that is large or subtly organized: The element of consistency should be maintained between different parts of the same resource. It is important that the information resource has adequate navigation aids to facilitate easy movement of user within and outside the site. Each screen should offer a direct route back to higher levels or even direct connection to major parallel areas within the site. Use of frames can provide immediate access to be main constituent parts of the site while providing the over all structure of the site.

Further, every element of a **website** should justify itself because unnecessary HTML affects loading time and can slow down the site. HTML showmanship is disservice to users and devalues a site. To paraphrase **Ranganathan** is ideas, for the Internet environment “**Save the time of the web surfer**”. **The web may be free but the user's time is not.**

Easy of Use

The information source should be easy-to-use even for a novice user. Most sites provide contact information and user **support** services or links to training courses, user discussion lists or user support groups as additional information.

Accessibility and Reliability

The information resource should be easily accessible and quick to load. It should be compatible with the most popular browsers like Internet Explorer and **Netscape** Navigator. If the information resource requires another piece of software or plug-in to display the information contents, mention should be made of that. For example, most e-journals are available in PDF format and it requires an Acrobat Reader to display or use PDF files. Several sites have Flash Animation that require the Flash **Software** to display it.

Similarly, the site should be stable, i.e. the source should not change very frequently. In case of change in **URL**, the old URL may be used to provide a link to the **new** page.

The information that is required to be obtained while assessing structure and presentation include:

- If a resource is **frequently** unavailable or noticeably slow to access;
- Any access restrictions, e.g. by geographical region, **hardware/software** requirements;
- If there is a registration procedure and whether this is straightforward;
- The copyright statement and any copyright restrictions;
- Notable design features and facilities, whether particularly good or particularly bad;
- Appropriate or inappropriate use of images **and/or** advertising;
- If the site is particularly **difficult** or particularly easy to use;
- Presence or absence of user support facilities **and/or** help information; and
- Particularly good or particularly bad help information or support services.

Self Check Exercise

- 1) Describe the steps in the process of evaluating information resources.
- 2) What are the criteria used to **judge** the suitability of an information source?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

3.5 SUMMARY

Evaluation of Internet information resources is an important, **activity in the** process of selection of **information** resources for a meta resource site. The

information resources available on the Internet cannot be treated differently from those available in the print media. The Internet and the web is merely a **new medium** that provides access to different types of information resources. It is, therefore, **necessary** that the information resources available on the Internet go through the process of selection, evaluation and **authentication** given the fact that information resources do not go through **the process** of filtration prevalent in the printed world. The unit elaborates on the need for evaluation of Internet information resources. The following steps involved in the process of evaluation of Internet information resources have been discussed in detail:

- Step 1. Identification of Links to Resources
- Step 2. Follow a Link to Find Out More about the Resources
- Step 3. Analyse the URL
- Step 4. Examine the Information Contained within the Resource
 - 4.1. Assess the Coverage of the Resource
 - 4.2. Accuracy of Information
 - 4.3. Currency of Information
- Step 5. Assess Accessibility
- Step 6. Consider the Design and Layout of the Material
- Step 7. Consider the Ease of using the Resource
- Step 8. Obtain any Additional Information
- Step 9. Compare the Resource to other Similar Material

The unit also provides questions that an evaluator of the Internet information resource should be trying to answer in the process of evaluation. Finally, the unit elaborates upon the following criteria employed for evaluation of Internet information resources:

- Criteria 1. Initial appraisal of information resources based on author, his / her credentials and **institutional** affiliation, date of publication, edition or revision, publisher and title of journal
- Criteria 2. Suitability of Resource
 - a. Scope and Coverage
 - b. **Factual/Opinion**
 - c. Audience
- Criteria 3. Content Analysis
 - a. **Accuracy**
 - b. Authority and Reputation
 - c. Objectivity
 - d. Currency
- Criteria 4. Structure and Presentation
 - a. Writing Style
 - b. Structure
 - c. Design & Layout
 - d. Ease of Use
 - e. Accessibility

3.6 ANSWERS TO SELF CHECK EXERCISES

- 1) The process of evaluating Internet based information resources consists of the following steps:
 - a) Identification of Links to Resources
 - b) Follow a link
 - c) Analyse Universal Resource locator (URL)
 - d) Examine the Information contained within the Resource
 - e) Assess Accessibility
 - f) Consider the Design and layout of the materials
 - g) Consider the case of using the resource
 - h) Obtain additional information and
 - i) Compare the resource to other similar material.
- 2) The criteria usually employed for evaluating Internet Information resources can broadly be divided into following four categories:
 - a) Initial Appraisal, b) Suitability of Resources, c) Content Analysis, d) Structure and presentation.

3.7 KEYWORDS

- Animation** : Creating the illusion of movement in a programme by saving a series of images that show slight changes as well as display.
- Citation Index** : A list of articles that, subsequent to the appearance of the original article, refer to or cite, that article.
- Frames** : A position of data transmitted by a modern for purposes of checking for errors in other transmitted data.

3.8 REFERENCES AND FURTHER READING

Basu, K. Evaluation of Internet resources. Paper presented at the CALIBER 99. Academic libraries in the Internet era. Proceedings of the Sixth National Convention for Automation of Libraries in Education and Research. Nagpur, India, February 18-20, 1999. (Ed. P. S. G. Kumar and C. P. Vashishth) Ahmedabad, Information and Library Network Centre (INFLIBNET), 1999, pp.296-301.

Beck, S. Evaluation criteria: the good, the bad and the ugly: or why it's a good idea to evaluate web sources, 1997. (<http://lib.nmsu.edu/instruction/evalcrit.html>). Last updated on November 15, 2001.

Hastings, S. K. Selection and evaluation of networked information resources. *Acquisitions Librarian* (20), 109-22. 1998.

Kirwood, H. P. Beyond evaluation: a model for cooperative evaluation of Internet resources. *Online*, 22 (4), 66 -72, 1998.

Librarian's Index to the Internet. Selection criteria for adding resources to the LII. (<http://lii.org/search/file/pubcriteria>)

Ormondroyd, J. Critically analysing information sources. (<http://www.library.cornell.edu/okuref/research/skill26.htm>)

Sowards, S.W. Save the time of the surfer: Evaluating the **websites** for users, *Library Hi Tech*, **15(3-4)**, 155-158, 1997.

Royle J. and **Blythe J.** Evaluation of a system for providing information resources to nurses. *Health Informatics Journal*, **6(2)**, 100-109, 2000.

Toub, S.E. Adding value to Internet collections, *Library Hi Tech*, **15(3-4)**, 148-154, 1997.

University of Southern California. Criteria for evaluating information resources. (<http://www-lib.usc.edu/Info/Sci/pubs/criteval.html>)

Voigt, K. and Benz, J. The Internet as an information source for environmental chemicals - first results of the evaluation of the meta database of Internet resources. Paper presented at the Online Information 96. Proceedings of the Twentieth International Online Information Meeting, London, December 3-5, 1996, 151-60.