

COMMUNITY INFORMATICS AND SOCIAL INFORMATICS WITH SPECIAL REFERENCE TO USE NETWORK AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

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ABSTRACT

Community Informatics and Social Informatics are important facets in the field of Information Science and Technology. Community Informatics and Social Informatics may seem like same but has some dissimilarity. Community Informatics is the smaller knowledge gradients and less scope oriented cluster than Social Informatics. Community Informatics is actually integration and application of Informatics to the community. More clearly this is the collection, selection, organization, processing, management and dissemination of information to the community on several topic and matter. It helps in better Community Information Infrastructure building. The larger dimension of community computing is actually Community Informatics; however it may be computational or manual. Community Informatics is also similar with Community Information Systems. This domain is mainly survive under some tools and technologies, out of which Networking and Communication Technology play an important role. This paper is talks about Community Informatics and Social Informatics and role of computing and communication technology to these emerging socially responsible domains and tools.

Keywords: Community Informatics, Social Informatics, Network Technologies, Communication Technologies, Social Development, Information Science, Digital Divide, Information Divide

INTRODUCTION

Community Informatics is actually responsible for Information Infrastructure development among the community on variety of topics are areas; which includes Education, Politics, Business, Trade and Commerce, Health and Medicine, Mass Awareness and so on. Virtually, Community Informatics is not at all any point or centre, this is actually a concept. For community information dissemination Community Informatics is essential and for large community or group of community, society Informatics plays an important role. The Information processing and dissemination is basically carry out by some Community located centre called as Community Information Centre and so on. For healthy Community Information Systems; Community Informatics takes the help of tools and technologies such

as Database Technologies, Network and Communication Technology, Hardware Technology, Information Retrieval Systems, Search Technology, Web Systems and Technologies and so on.

OBJECTIVES

The main aim and objective of this study in including (but not limited to):-

- To learn about Community Informatics and Social Informatics;
- To find out main features of Community Informatics and Social Informatics;
- To learn about contemporary role and significance of Community Informatics and Social Informatics at a glance;
- To know about tools, techniques, technologies adopted in Community Informatics systems;
- To find out role of Networking and Communication Technology for better Community Information Infrastructure Building;
- To learn about challenges and issues of Community and Social Informatics in Indian Scenario;
- To learn the possibilities of Community Informatics in Academic world.

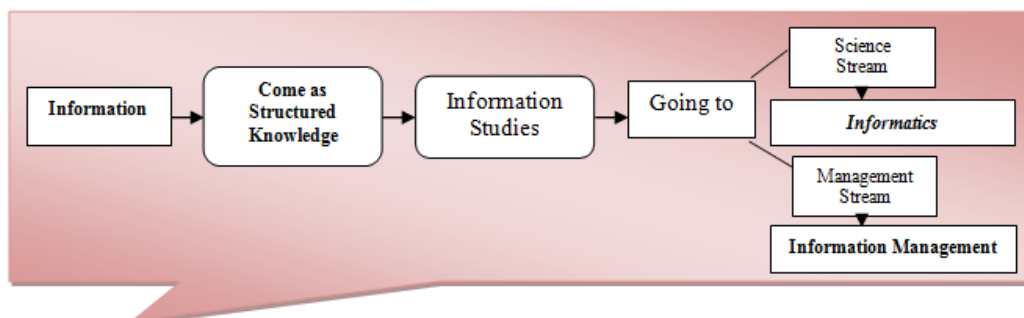


Fig: 1. Depicted as Information based domain and structured

Community and Social Informatics: Meaning and Features

Community and Social Informatics are actually application and integration of tools, techniques and technologies for better information processing and dissemination; which includes collection, selection, organization, processing and dissemination. The range of information is including educational, health and medical related, political, social, agriculture, science and technology related and so on.

- Community Information Systems may be computerised or manual based, or may be on traditional tools and techniques; such as traditional- abstracting, indexing, documentation, classification, cataloguing and so on;

- Community Informatics may be established within a community or large community. Large community based information solution is called Social Informatics;
- Community Information may be possible with community computing, or Community Informatics point or it may be established Community Informatics infrastructure policy; not directly by any point or establishment;
- Community Informatics may be helpful in information dissemination of several topic and field and thus, it helpful for information divide removing among the community and society

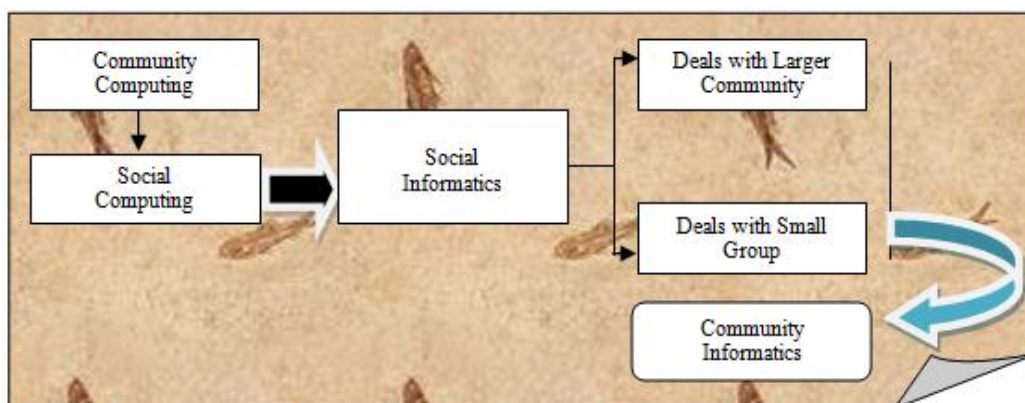


Fig: 2. The related domain and practicing area of Community Informatics

- Community Informatics may be on specific information service like- job and placement, e-billing systems, internet service;
- Community and Social Informatics may be established in online or offline in nature;
- Treated as important facet for removing digital divide.

Community and Social Informatics: Role and Importance

Community and Social Informatics play an important role for social development and upliftman many ways. Now let look this roles and importance:-

- First of all, Community and Social Informatics are responsible for Information Infrastructure building within the community and society and the community people can information on various topic depending upon their need;
- Community Informatics keeps people with time and as per happening out side the community or other community;
- Community Informatics is helpful to build Information Transfer Cycle and Information Channel between various stakeholder between community ad society;
- Information treated as power and still it is consider same as wealth and money. The disparities between 'have and have not' is many ways responsible for educational disparities;

- The higher symptoms of Information Divide create 'Have and Have Not' and ultimately this is responsible for Digital Divide. Still some community having Digital access facilities such as TV, Internet, Mobile, I-Pod, FM and Social Networking sites and so on and some people of community still not avail such benefits. Practically Community Informatics and Social Informatics are the right solution for removing 'Have and Have Not' between Digital Facilities;
- Ultimately Community Informatics and Social Informatics are responsible for overall information awareness and information systems.

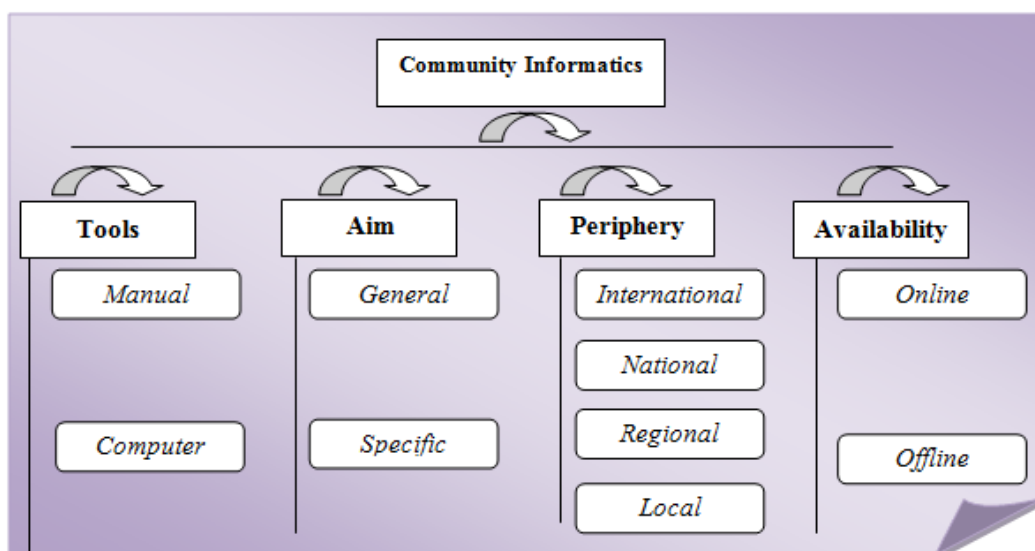


Fig: 3. The types of Community Informatics

Community and Social Informatics: Networking Technologies

- Community and Social Informatics systems requires the affiliation of several tools, techniques and technologies, such as Database Management, Networking, Web Technologies, Information Retrieval Systems, Search Technology and of course Computing Technologies;
- Virtually, each and every tools and techniques is responsible for Community Informatics building. For example the Information Retrieval System and Search System is responsible for information collection and selection from various medium and place;
- Though, Networking Technology is treated as one of the major tool for community and social informatics. Community Information centre is treated as main point for communicating information, thus from one place to another need to take help of Communication and Networking Technology;
- Communication between information an Information Systems and Networks (ISN) to small Information Centre and point possible with the help of WAN. Communication between in-house official tasks also depends on Network

Technology. Today various community related IT services are launched like SMS based information service, mobile based service, internet service, E-Billing (such as telephone, electric, gas, land and revenue), exam and job related form fillip fully depends on Network and Communication;

- For many case, Information is basically stored in a remote place/s, server and networking is the only way to collect and get information from such point. Apart from this overall networking in the community also promote the information literacy and remove information divide. Information collection, selection, processing and dissemination depending upon nature purely may be community network based;
- *Though, it is essential that, people should be aware about network literacy; the role and benefit of Networks many ways responsible for the healthy information infrastructure building.*
- Web Technology is responsible for information collection and selection from remote place with the help of web browser; thus the network technologies play an important role for better communication;
- Database Technology is dedicated to data and information storage and collection depending upon need. Virtually the lots of data dealing several characteristics need to take come and the storage technologies are required and DBMS is needed for finding actual and needed information;
- Cloud Computing based systems may be established depending upon need for virtualization of hardware, software and IT infrastructure. With out installation of own IT system this system may give the opportunities of better IT Infrastructure among the Community Information Systems.

Community Informatics may also involve in dealing of Television on various topic for removing Digital Divide and Information Divide and thus, here Satellite Technology may be implemented; which is also considered as important Networking Technologies.

CHALLENGES AND ISSUES

The main challenges and issues of Community Informatics and Social Informatics are as follows:-

- Still people are not aware about the benefit of Community and social Informatics and also about the services offered by the entities;
- In many cases launching E-Banking, E Learning, E-Commerce, Tele Conferencing and E Services are tough to launch;
- Adequate thinking and planning regarding Community Information Systems and Social Computing implementation is tough enough;
- Most of the people of India are living in Rural places, the planning a sophisticated and technology oriented Community Informatics is really tough to build;
- Installing tools, techniques, technologies have some of the concern like price, availability, and availability of open source software;

- Lack of proper skilled manpower is limited enough, in many cases;
- Hesitation among, the community people regarding the services available in community service is an important issue;
- Financial shortage and financial problems may also an important problems and challenges.



Fig: 4. Depicted process of Community Information building

FINDINGS

- Community Informatics is important name for Information Infrastructure building;
- Still awareness about the community aspects such as information literacy, network literacy, information and digital divide;
- Government fund and financial resources are still limited for information infrastructure building for the countries like India;
- Educational and training programme on Community Informatics is limited.

SUGGESTION

- Awareness programme on Community Informatics and similar aspect should be initiated;
- Academic research on Community Informatics and similar subjects still limited in universities and colleges;
- Proper planning should take care by the concerned ministries and departments such as Finance, IT, Communication and Information and so on;
- Open source software, tools, technologies should be utilised for cost effective Community Informatics and CIS.

CONCLUSION

Community and society are the important name development of community and society many ways depends on information and knowledge. And this knowledge access is many ways depends on healthy community and social informatics practice such as- Community Information Centre, Community Informatics Systems, Tele Vision Broadcasting, Radio FM broadcasting, internet and online services, community agricultural information services and so on. The information disparities between have and have not many ways responsible lack of educational and information access and Community Informatics play an important role for complete development and all-round sustainable development.

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