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Changing Role of Librarians in Present and Future in Context to Change in Library Information and Communication Technologies

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ABSTRACT

Library professionals need distinct information tools (Information Communication Technology) for daily routine tasks as well as for research and academic activities. The latest devices for information communication technology have resulted in the rapid circulation of knowledge and have transformed the information handling activities in research and academic libraries in India. Research and academic libraries, mostly associated with universities and research institutions as centers of library services, have enormously improved with the expeditious changes in information communication technology. The emergence of modern library advances in ICT has opened up new ways of accumulating ,regulating and disseminating scientific and technical information. Research and academic libraries have already changed their routine tasks by using effective and efficient information communication technologies to intensify and integrate their electronic resources and services. Finally, librarians in research and academic libraries need to update their knowledge and expertise in information and communication technology (ICT) in order to successfully undertake their roles of being responsible for validating the library.

1. Introduction

In this 21st century the development of library information science education in India is drastically improved and so many universities having this programme both in regular and distance modes. The decision of selecting a career has become vital for both individuals and society. Career in librarianship may also be viewed as a process of improvement of value of life. In the 1930s Dr. S. R.Ranganathan developed a theory of five laws of library science that are in conformity with the Indian tradition of fundamentals profit of library life. The basic goal of LIS education hence is provide better knowledge and capacity building needed for an LIS career in the current digital world.

Libraries must continuously improve themselves with up-to-date computer technologies for knowledge transmission and networks. To sustain efficient services, library professionals need to have knowledge and skills in ICT techniques and handling procedures. Thus, changes in the LIS curriculum are needed to keep in step with the latest technology and modern computer networking experiences.

The LIS profession is a challenging and demanding profession in this current web environment. Professionals have modern digital technologies and their applicability to knowledge handling activities that have helped in distributing qualitative services to end users. To assist the information professionals should provide themselves with modern techniques which help in meeting user's needs in their knowledge centers. The prominent trend in ICT technologies and their application towards knowledge handling activities adds new technology to knowledge. In the information society the knowledge centers have the role of coordinator and accumulator and in order to be successful at this knowledge professionals have to adopt multiple knowledge roles in order to survive in an e-environment of sustained and rapid change. The information revolution and networked domains have made the information centers without walls and now virtual information centers exist where data and knowledge can now be communicated to all areas of the globe. Now knowledge is considered like any other product which can be bought and sold in the market place. As a result, the practice of providing services for free is being reviewed, and sometimes replaced by professional practices as knowledge centers are looking ahead to the possibilities of income generation. Library science courses have a lot of opportunities to provide the information and capacity building required to compete in the present day information society. Globalization and broad based networks have opened up different career options to the LIS professionals. The old functions of LIS have changed with the improvements in ICT. Librarians are expected to be higher system thinkers with proficiency to work in digital and computer communication environments. The LIS career should expand these pursuits, after providing the important training necessary to secure positions upon graduation, and to advance the perspective and understanding to help graduates to be better managers in a global information community.

2. LIS Education in India -An Overview

This year is the centennial anniversary of the establishment of a university level LIS programme in India. Library education was first formally began in 1911 at Baroda in the form of a training programme and establishing a public library system. At the university level, the Punjab University started a course in LIS in 1915. The scholars like K. M. Assadullah, Dr. S. R. Ranganathan, and Prof P. N. Kuala contributed greatly to developing the sources of LIS subjects in pre-independent India. In post-independent India, library science is being offered by more than 100 universities and other organizations at various levels such as certificate,

diploma, bachelor, masters, PG diploma, and research. To update the LIS syllabus, UGC (University Grants Commission) designated the CDC (Curriculum Development Committee) in 2001 to redesign the courses in LIS, which quickened the LIS schools to include different facets of ICT in their syllabi. So far, most of the departments in LIS in India have widely adopted the models given by the CDC. Currently in India, library and information science (LIS) education is disseminated through traditional classes and through the distance mode by important institutes like NISCAIR (National Institute of Science Communication and Information Resources), DRTC (Documentation Research and Training Center), ISI (Indian Statistical Institute) and all universities. PG Diploma Courses with ICT specialization are offered by Alagappa University, Annamalai University, IGNOU, Punjab University, Sambalpur University and University of Hyderabad, etc.

3. LIS Education Distinction

In the past, many bodies like the UGC, ILA (Indian Library Association), and IATLIS(Indian Association of Teachers in Library Information Science) took different initiatives for developing the quality of LIS education in India. Development has now passed through stages and LIS education has become a fast improving discipline with a multi-subject approach. Today LIS education not only includes the information specific discipline but has extended to subjects like digital technology, information science and management studies. With the changing situation, modern information professionals have become a profession with a multiplicity of opportunities and challenges for LIS students and librarians.LIS education is being provided at the university level in various eminent universities in India. LIS subjects desire to build competent human resources controlled the libraries and 246 information centers on scientific lines. These capable human resources are being taught all the techniques needed for proficient information resources in an effective manner. From some of the literature reviews, ICT skills requirements, ICT used in libraries and ICT in LIS education (syllabus), to provide the knowledge falling under the ICT skills requirements category by exploring whether ICT has an impact on job requirements in the Indian LIS market.

4. ICT Components in LIS Jobs

ICT (Information Communication Technology) has changed the way information centers manage. Today ICT plays a very drastic role in the library disciplines. All manual performed library operations are converted into computerized operations which means applied ICT techniques in libraries, and providing better and faster services in the end users. As an outcome, librarians have been forced to incorporate new ICT skills. Indian LIS schools should strengthen formal and informal ICT knowledge and training in order to meet the insistence of the current LIS job market. In this digital scenario, ICT has changed the possibilities of the library job promotions and has changed expected library performances. The computer and networking atmosphere has compelled LIS professionals to have appropriate basic ICT knowledge and training skills. These skills can help the librarians to merge advanced ICT skills and competence in areas such as web development in libraries, integrated library systems, and the World Wide Web (Ameen, 2010). This tendency has lead to significant changes in the LIS field.

5. ICT Techniques used by libraries in India

As per Dr. S. R. Ranganathan, librarians have to push the right information and make it accessible to the right person at the right time, which is the motto for any modern library. The World Wide Web has emerged as effective sources for various types of library users. The Internet has become more favored for selective dissemination of information for its various functions like, web portal, social networking sites. ICT are the software and operating equipment that authorize society to fabricate, accumulate, communicate and amalgamate information in multimedia formats and for different purposes.

6. Impact of ICT in Information Centers

ICT made knowledge construction in electronic format possible; ICT made electronic approaches and file transfer possible, thus ICT increases the level of digital learning. First the libraries will be networked, stocked with the core collection, and also provide access to worldwide knowledge and be virtual. Nowadays library automation is a core source. Effective ICT techniques used by libraries are found in circulation, a main task for library services, which saves a lot of time for users as well as for library staffs, and with the help of Web OPAC users can search information from anywhere. Users can easily reserve library resources through apps like IOS, Android, and others. Some automation software provides images of the resources through multimedia applications. RFID (Radio Frequency Identification) can help to protect the resources from theft. Automation also enables users to use self-circulation systems. Various online ICT tools can be used for library operations like OCLC Worldcat, Classification Web, Web Dewey, the catalog calculator, and others. These new trends in the application of ICT and computers to library operations and the allocation of information services bring pressure to libraries. However it is evidence that ICT as a device for library operations and services.

7. Access to the Web Based Resources

E-Journals: Libraries have been expected to easily cope with the dual issues of ever increasing prices of the journals and space requirements for back issues. Nevertheless, libraries are required to maintain back issues of the journals, usually in bound form. E-Journals provide the librarians a remedy to these issues without remarkably changing the service levels. E-Journals can be approached via the Internet from any web enabled personal computers. E-Books: The E-Book has been elucidated as a text corresponding to a book that is in electronic form to be unveiled on a computer screen. E-books can be read just like a paper book, using dedicated E-Book readers like Kindle, Kobo Touch, or others, or GemStar or other reader software on a computer screen after downloading it. Electronic Theses and Dissertations (ETD): Theses produced at universities are effective sources of knowledge for further research. A large number of universities have transformed their dissertations collection into electronic libraries and have made them available on the Internet for global access.

8. Digital Library Archives

Libraries have been repositories of local information and owned publications like manuscripts, rare books, maps, photographs and paintings. Archives are also part of library system, particularly in research and development organizations. In other instances like university libraries, college libraries, and academic libraries, their publications such as thesis, research reports constitute the cognitive strength of the organization.

9. Use of ICT Tools by Libraries

Now every library is undergoing a transformation from paper to digital. It is essential for librarians in India to take part in this changing scenario. ICT has provided libraries with new technologies to advance their resources and services. The following ICT tools have been used for libraries, computers, printers, pen drive, DVD & CD ROMs, digital camera, web OPAC, modem, scanner, animation technology, e-mail, e-group, fax, internet, intranet, mobile phones and video conferencing. These are helping expand information literacy in the use of ICT among library professionals.

10. Impact of ICT on Librarians

Presently ICT has impact on different levels of librarians. Improvement in ICT and the extensive use of ICT result in electronic information sources and digital media collections and archives becoming the supreme form of knowledge storage and retrieval. ICT also sustains and makes new roles for librarians. ICT, with its significant knowledge sources and easy approach, ensures the benefits that users will demand.It also increases and elucidates the librarian's demand for library development. It is effective source for information centers.

11. ICT in LIS Career

Nowadays to enter the library science job market a M.Lib Sc with IT background is necessary for the position of librarian not even the information professionals, the position of librarian, sometimes called information professionals, as they are required to have IT skills for e-library development, library networking, database development and maintenance, and multimedia RSS feed, podcasting, etc.) The following list provides the new designations for library science professionals:

- Systems Librarian
- Electronic Resource Librarian
- Library web application specialist
- Electronic resource manager
- Head of research repository
- Digital archives manager

The above positions are available only for ICT trained Library science professionals, because ICT is being increasingly used in libraries for the electronic provision of services, and processing the dissemination of knowledge. Libraries have been using ICT based services to benefit their users. Moves towards electronic handing of knowledge will be cost effective and end users will be in a role to get precise information with the help of strong search engines. The use of ICT opens new opportunities for effective services in the electronic environment as the libraries appropriate new technologies. The roles of ICT- equipped librarians in India have included managing the ICT environment and the delivery of e-resources in order to benefit their communities. If librarians have the ICT training and skills that are needed to implement so many modern techniques in their libraries, this will help to access, evaluate, and communicate knowledge and to make publications available electronically by the use of digital technologies.

12. Conclusion

Pertinent, recent technologies and accomplishments on ICT have been infused in most of the syllabus of LIS schools in India. Where needed, restructuring revisions to syllabi in LIS schools in India should permit to include ICT. The ICT infrastructure in Indian libraries is good, and most of the libraries (large government libraries and special libraries) have already implemented many recent ICT technologies in their libraries. Some of the private libraries have yet to incorporate modern techniques and some of the libraries still have much room for development. For instance, real differences can be made in the empowerment of the LIS practitioners and students.It is ofcrucial importance to improve librarians' physical approaches, application and deployment of ICTs in the library's functions. In addition to this, LIS schools in India should fulfil their syllabus by utilizing the broad scope provided by ICT and positions made possible by the digital space and by expansion in the 21st century technologies. We conclude that ICT offers a major role in the LIS job opportunities in India.While basic ICT skills and training have become generally necessary in the LIS profession, there is drastically increased demand for advanced ICT skills in the LIS job sector. We recommend that LIS Schools in India should contemplate introducing advanced ICT courses to their syllabus in order to meet the employers' expectations and needs. Furthermore, Indian LIS schools and the libraries should sharpen formal and informal ICT education, skills and training in order to meet the stipulated demands of the current LIS job opportunities.

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