

INFORMATION COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY SKILLS FOR LIBRARIAN

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ABSTRACT

Information Technology affects all the fields of society. Libraries are also affected by IT. With the rapid advancement of technology and communication, the libraries are facing new challenges and competitions. In the digital environment, there is a need of stronger technological type of Librarianship. So, IT skills are required for the librarian. Librarians should have competencies to handle digital resources, online available services and knowledge of hardware and software required for digital handling and maintenance. In this article, various competencies are discussed which are the need of future librarians.

Keywords: Information Technology, Digital Resources

INTRODUCTION

The introduction of the various changes in work patterns, demands for new skills, job retraining schemes such environment require the library or information managers to think quickly and add these new technologies in their services and daily routine working.

Earlier libraries were considered as the storehouse of knowledge and intellectual property and the librarian was concerned as guardian of books. The sources are in the form of clay tablets, clothes and leaves of trees. In the middle age the era changed and universities appeared as a centre of education. In India many big Universities came into exist like Nalanda, Taxila etc. These Universities developed their own libraries having a big collection of hand written documents. Passing with the time libraries are also changed later, with the advancement of technology the needs of users and documents form also changed. Instead of close access open access took place with the changing role of documents and demands of the users the role of librarian also changed. Now he is considered as the information manager now librarians are considered as an information collector and he is able to give services to user with the help of many tools. To provide better services to the users now the staff of libraries take help from emerged technologies. Concept of virtual libraries come into exist now.

ROLE OF LIBRARIAN

In earlier time librarians were considered as the guardian of the library collection. Because of information explosion and advancement of information Technology the needs of the readers are now changed their expectations from the libraries are changed. Today we see that most of the users are using internet and prefer online facilities provided by the libraries so there is need to change the traditional libraries into digital libraries. Today's readers don't have time to come library and find books or documents which they require. So every library should have digital resources and have internet facility to fulfill the demands of their readers. So we can say in all these challenges the role of librarian is very important. To keep the identity of library the librarians have to learn new techniques which are required to fulfill the demands of the users.

In the context of India, we should start this change with change in curriculum. If we examine the curriculum of most of the Universities the syllabus of LIS is traditional type. In addition to the professional skills the librarian of the future must be equipped with a wide range of

personal and transferable skills in order to manage the changing environment in which he or she works.

ROLE OF LIBRARY SCIENCE DEPARTMENTS OF INDIA SHOULD BE

Library schools could help by teaching their students how to develop a strategy for continuing their education once they are out of library school, how to develop skills for learning new technologies and how to develop a strategy for troubleshooting technologies. No library school students should be allowed to graduate without basic internet skills and search skills.

Skills which a librarian should have: after be in a profession. A librarian should have abilities which are mentioned below:

TRADITIONAL LIBRARIANSHIP SKILLS

First of all the most important Skill is traditional skills. It includes classification, cataloguing, acquisitions, and reference and information search skills. After that value added skills like research skills and synthesizing and packaging information for the user which they can use this kind of information for their research work and for decision making.

IT SKILLS

In these kinds of skills Internet, Web and XML, ILMS, Digital libraries, CMS, RFID, federated search engines, programming and scripting ,Window operating system productivity tools like word processing , spreadsheet, database planning tools etc. They should have knowledge of hardware and software required for digitalization and automation of library. . Digital library applications are closely linked to Web technology. As modern academic libraries move to be digital libraries and make their contests digital and store through metadata management to make their special collections accessible through internet the need of the related technologies are essential , so the librarian should have knowledge of digital library architecture ,software ,hardware ,HTML coding, general computer skills and computer literacy.

OFFERING REMOTE ACCESS

Offering remote access to a variety of information sources not only in libraries but also worldwide via database homepages with selected internet sites and the like attracts much attention from librarians. Most of this attention is still technology driven.

NEED OF ESTIMATING USER NEEDS

To utilize the resources of libraries, the librarian regularly need to monitoring, observing the reader that how they search in the library? What are their requirement? Provide them the information or documents they need instead of tools to help them to find the right information. Librarian should research about their behavior and needs. For this librarian should give them some kind of profile form to know their needs or he can directly talk to them.

ABILITY TO KEEP UP WITH NEW IDEAS IN TECHNOLOGY AND LIBRARIANSHIP

Keeping up with new technology, is often not an explicitly listed part of one's basic weekly job duties, but its importance can't be stressed enough. Some years ago some people talk about blogs in libraries but now so many libraries using this tool to interact with online users. These kinds of technologies help libraries to help the remote users by internet. We need to be

able to keep up with what's new in technology and what kind of help we take from this. Try and take some time out of your busy schedule to keep up to date yourself.

PERSONAL COMPETENCIES

Some of the personal competencies are identified by the researchers like Choi and Rusemusson (2009) in LIS work environment. These capacities of continuous learning flexibility, fostering change and the capacity to work independently. Some other competencies which we can add are enthusiasm and self motivation, reflective thinking and the quality to respond to other needs.

SOME CHALLENGES WHICH ARE FACED BY LIBRARIANS OF DIGITAL ENVIRONMENT

- First challenge is loss of access to the online resources on a regular basis. To have a full access to the documents of e nature special staff which have technical skills and knowledge is required. Acquisition point of view e-resources require more follow up than print resources.
- Second one which does not exist in the print environment is the need for multiple communication channels with a provider for a single order.
- Third one is Economical fact as most of the libraries do not systematically receive additional funding to maintain and develop electronic collection. It is hard to add new type of resources with limited budget.
- To handle e- resources records in a systematical way is another challenge for the librarians. Now the librarians are trying to cope with this challenge with the help of electronic resources management systems.

THERE ARE SOME WAYS TO OVERCOME FROM THESE CHALLENGES

- Planning for the electronic resources from all aspects like the budget required, staff training to handle the cumbersome working of e-resources.
- Second there is a need of a database of all printed, e-documents and all material acquired by library? If the library has all kind of materials list in electronic form then we can able to serve the readers well and without any cumbersome it will also helping library collection development policy. The librarian will be in the position what to purchase for the better service of library.
- Right communication is also an important factor for the success of library. In the process communication with venders, users and staff should be maintained in well manner. To communicate the activities like e-mail, newsletter, staff meeting, user education, one to one interaction helps them to feel they are connected with each other.

CURRENT TECHNOLOGIES KNOWLEDGE

For the librarians of digital age to know the current technologies is must. If they want to fulfill the all demands of their readers, it is compulsory to learn about the new technologies and they have to learn how these technologies will help them in giving services to the users. Some of the new technologies and services are listed below which are in use of Indian universities.

- **UGC-Info net:** - The UGC info net is a nationwide connecting network of the UGC. It is a link between UGC granted universities. It provides the users with the online journals reading material required by them.
- **BLOG Services:** - The BLOG Services in the library can be provided the help of internet connected with in the library premises this service support the BLOG related to teaching, research and communication for the benefit of the reader as well as the library staff.
- **Digital Library Services:** - In Indian context big libraries are going to be digital libraries to have the knowledge of digital resources, hardware required, software will help the librarians to go with the concept of digital libraries.
- **Automation with new technique RFID:** - Automated libraries are issuing & returning their books and other material with the help of scanner and barcodes. The new Technologies are arising day by day. The RFID technology is another level of library automation.
- **Open source Software:-** Open source is often mentioned in the digital preservation context. These are software, which are available online free of cost this software could be used as:
 - i. Management of the websites.
 - ii. Collection management and online catalogs.
 - iii. Manipulation, marking up.
 - iv. Building the infrastructure for preserving digital material etc.
- **Metadata**

The key to locating using and preserving digital context is metadata or we can say the data which is structured about digital resources metadata we can search digital objects and collection online. There are three different type of metadata.

- Descriptive metadata
- Structural metadata
- Administrative metadata
- Mobile Technology

M-learning or mobile learning has challenged the library world to rethink the way it delivers services to the users who has the portable device to access learning from a place and time of their choice.

- **Web OPAC**

If we simply stated web OPAC is a library catalogue online available to the users. Users can search by connecting to URL of Web OPAC anytime. It is designed to help the user to search through their own search. Now 'World Cat' is a big large catalogue which is serving the readers with a large catalogue list of world's libraries.

So, there is no ending of services in the new technologies era. Ask a librarian Web 2.0 and many more online services and digital libraries technologies have come to the existence. The role of librarian in this kind of environment becomes crucial so he should know about all these new trends. The level of expertise, competence and knowledge available in India in the

field of network technology has increased sufficiently. The libraries trying to come under a network to work together do face all these challenges. Special kinds of course are offered by INSDOC, NASSDOC for different technical skills. The new era librarian will become the guardian of digital resources and information. Hence all the professionals should be IT skilled persons.

- **Ask a Librarian**

Ask a librarian is a live virtual service that after online reference assistance to the readers of the particular library. This service is given by the library staff via live chat software, text message and e-mail.

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