

LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE EDUCATION: DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION

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Abstract: Library and information science education is the study of how people organize, access, and use information in libraries and other information environments. This field of education focuses on the theory and practice of library science, information science, and knowledge management. Library and information science educators teach courses that cover a wide range of topics, including cataloging and classification, reference services, digital libraries, archives, and metadata.

Library and information science education provides students with the knowledge and skills that they need to become effective librarians, archivists, and information professionals. It also prepares them for managerial positions in libraries and other organizations that deal with information management. The education in this field is multi-disciplinary, drawing on fields such as computer science, information science, psychology, sociology, and business. The curriculum of library and information science education typically involves a mix of classroom lectures, laboratory exercises, and fieldwork experiences.

Graduate programs in library and information science are available at many universities around the world. These programs typically confer master's degrees in library science or information science, and they prepare students for careers in a variety of information-related fields.

This passage investigates the metamorphosis of Indian Universities and their libraries during the latter part of the 20th century. It elucidates the role played by the University Commission scholarship, which manifested through various reports, presentations, conferences, and financial aid, fostering the replacement of collections, construction of library infrastructure, and enhancement of library services. Furthermore, it delves into the involvement of other national entities like AIU, AICTE, NAAC, and library network. This modernization has substantially contributed to the evolution of university libraries into 21st-century institutions. Noteworthy characteristics of these contemporary libraries are examined, encompassing aspects like library software, retrospective transfer, and digital library initiatives. The text also contemplates the shifting landscape of library science, emphasizing the acquisition of novel skills by librarians remain unaltered, the methods employed to execute these functions have been transformed due to the application of information and communication technology (ICT). The result has been the augmentation of library facilities, leading to greater accomplishments.

Keywords: Dynamics of Academic Libraries and Librarianship, Library Modernization.

1.0 Introduction

The astounding progress in the Indian educational landscape is evident, especially when juxtaposed with the meager 18 universities and 600 colleges that existed during the pre-independence era in 1947. Presently, academic libraries, as integral components of the Indian library system, interweave with 430 universities and 20,000 colleges of diverse categories, diligently catering to the scholarly pursuits and research needs of nearly 110 million students and 5 million educators. Each academic year heralds an upsurge in these figures, further propelling the momentum. Consequently, a spectrum of academic libraries now adorns India, ranging from highly commendable ones to those with room for improvement. Exhibiting their unique characteristics, city networks and the national library have played a pivotal role in expediting the proliferation and maturation of university libraries. The Government of India's National Knowledge Report of the Commission on Libraries, Bookstores "knowledge brokers: roadmap for the revitalization", launched in 2007, also guides the possible construction of an academic library.

University libraries have been kept up to date and efficient by the UGC's various development schemes in the past 50 years. These schemes include providing special grants for infrastructure and collection development, launching and executing different activities and programs, and establishing standards and guidelines for their proper operation. National bodies such as the Association of Indian Universities (AIU), the Indian Council for Technical Education (AICTE), and the National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) have also contributed to this process. University libraries have evolved along with their growth. Higher education and science have undergone many

qualitative transformations in the last five decades. These include multidisciplinary studies, use of educational/learning technologies, university improvement programs, distance and open education, institutional autonomy, IT-based collaboration with international universities. Some of the issues faced by university libraries were: academic status and salary of library staff, library professor scheme of models and sanctions personnel, and timely release of UGC and Govt. grants. Local and national associations have advocated for libraries and librarians on these issues fifty years ago. Most of them have been resolved satisfactorily, though there are still challenges in implementing the decisions made in this regard. These dynamic changes have affected every aspect and function of the library. To avoid duplication and delay, save time and work efficiently, and enable new connections and integrations by applying technology, the whole library has been scanned for changes to a greater or lesser extent. This process of library creation led by ICT has resulted in complete and fast access to bibliographic and textual information for library users. The old principles of preservation, the different sections based on the content style of the library, the techniques of the player and structures, workflow and time schedule also need a fresh look. Library administration is becoming more integrated. A phrase that aptly describes the current world achieved through the use of information and communication technologies is twenty-first centuries.”

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This article explores how universities and their libraries in India have evolved in the latter half of the 20th century. It highlights the role of the University Commission scholarship in providing reports, presentations, conferences and financial support for enhancing the collections, the infrastructure and the services of the libraries. It also mentions other national bodies such as AIU, AICTE, NAAC and library networks that have contributed to the development of the libraries. These efforts have paved the way for the emergence of 21st century university libraries with distinctive features such as library software, retrospective conversion and digital library initiative. The paper also examines the changing landscape of library science, focusing on the new competencies required for librarians and information professionals. It concludes that, while the core functions of libraries remain unchanged, the traditional methods of performing them have been transformed by the use of ICT. The library facilities have become more advanced and effective.

2.0 Literature review

In their literature study, Starkey, Sylvester, and Johnstone (2017) identified three types of digital divide in schools: access, capability, and participation. They suggested that schools should improve access and provide high-tech educational tools and teacher training. However, they also noted that the education system failed to meet the students' expectations of computer training, which changed their perception of the importance of computers over time. To explore the digital inequality/teachers' use of technology theme, the researchers used Google Scholar and found 17,200 citations. They selected ten relevant studies for this literature review, which are listed below. The review showed that teacher training on technology or ICT was the most important factor for digital equality and inclusion among students (Karakainan et al, 2018). Moreover, the school culture for teacher professional development influenced the students' digital competence (Hatlevik, Ottestad, & Throndsen, 2015). Teachers who had a positive attitude towards technology and used it effectively in their teaching enhanced the students' motivation and learning outcomes (Gibson, Stringer, Cotten, Simoni, O'Neal, & Howell-Moroney, 2014; Beacham & McIntosh, 2013). The research also revealed that teachers played a crucial role in mediating the relationship between computer skill and academic achievement (Paino & Renzulli, 2013). This article summarizes the main findings from the research analysis.

3.0 Digital Transformation in Libraries

The digital age has greatly impacted the field of library sciences, prompting libraries to undergo a digital transformation. Libraries are now becoming hubs for digital learning, innovation, and community engagement. Here are some ways that libraries are embracing digital transformation: Digitization of collections: Libraries are digitizing their collections, making them available online for easy access. This includes books, magazines, newspapers, photographs, and other materials. Digitization has made it possible for people to access library collections from anywhere, at any time.

3.1 Use of technology: Libraries are using technology to enhance the services they offer. This includes self-checkout kiosks, digital catalogs, online databases, e-readers and other devices. Providing digital literacy resources: Libraries are taking on the role of providing digital literacy resources and training to the community. They are offering classes and workshops on digital topics such as coding, software and hardware basics, and social media.

3.2 Collaborations with other organizations: Libraries are partnering with other organizations that work in the digital space, including startups, tech companies, and social media platforms. This partnership allows libraries to be at the forefront of innovation in the digital age.

4.0 Changing role of Library Professionals

4.1 Digital libraries: As digital libraries continue to grow in popularity and importance, the role of library professionals is also changing to accommodate this shift. Here are some ways in which library professionals are adapting to the digital world:

4.2 Digital Literacy: Library professionals are becoming experts in digital literacy to better serve their patrons. They must know how to use and navigate digital resources and understand how to incorporate them into traditional library services.

4.3 Technical Skills: With digital libraries, library professionals must be able to manage complex metadata and digital archives. They should be familiar with programming languages, database design, and data mining techniques.

4.4 Resource Management: With digital libraries, library professionals must be skilled in managing electronic resources like online databases, e-books, and audiobooks. They should have knowledge of licensing agreements and digital copyright issues.

4.5 User Support: Digital libraries require library professionals to be available for online support and interaction. They must be able to assist patrons with accessing and using digital resources, troubleshoot issues, and answer questions.

4.6 Outreach and Advocacy: Library professionals must be advocates for digital literacy and digital libraries. They should promote the use of digital resources to their patrons and potential users in their communities. They must also work to increase awareness of the value of digital libraries and engage in outreach activities to reach broader audiences.

Overall, the role of library professionals in digital libraries requires a perfect mix of technical expertise and user support. They must be able to use digital resources effectively while also being able to translate that knowledge to their patrons. It's clear that as the use of digital libraries continues to grow, the role of library professionals will also continue to evolve.

5.0 Changing Trends in LIS Education

The digital world, librarians are not just responsible for managing the library resources, but they also become information managers / knowledge managers. Their main goal is to satisfy the user's information needs by using library sources or outsourcing. To adapt to the digital world, they need to be willing to learn new skills and techniques quickly. Librarians have always helped the community, but the technological revolution has changed their roles and tasks in academic libraries and information services. Some of the important changes are: -

Transition from the traditional to the digital environment

- More focus on user engagement
- Promotion of the library collections
- Adaptation to the new and evolving roles
- Dealing with user queries in the digital era
- Cooperation with the technical staff
- Selection of the electronic resources

- Mapping of the information landscape
- Teaching of the educational technologies and learning environments
- Collaboration in project teams

6.0 Conclusion:

In his book “Our Enduring Values: Librarianship in the 21st Century,” published by ALA in 2000, Michael Gorman examined the changes in libraries and careers. He argued that the core functions of libraries remained the same: collecting and creating information and knowledge, organizing and disseminating it. However, the introduction of ICT changed the methods of performing these functions. This applied to both university libraries and other libraries. Libraries have a long history of adopting new innovations and advancing them. However, they also face challenges in keeping up with the current developments and trends. To transform our academic libraries into 21st century libraries, library professionals should pay attention to emerging roles and opportunities. It is also encouraging to see universities offering librarians various resources to update their skills and knowledge through courses, seminars and workshops.

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