

Role of the Libraries as Information Resources in Globalization

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Abstract

Information technology is currently taking center stage and transformed the whole world into a global village with a global economy, which is increasingly dependent on the creative management and distribution of information. The enormous advantages it has in easing the delivery of information around the world. The paper discussed about Role of the libraries as information resources in globalization. It also highlights the problems faced by the Library & Information Service (LIS) sector in India and achievements over the years using modern information technologies.

Keywords: ICT, Information Technology, Library Services, Information Resources

INTRODUCTION

Information technology has transformed the whole world into a global village with a global economy, which is increasingly dependent on the creative management and distribution of information. Over the past decades the world has been experiencing significant changes in which the need to acquire, utilize and share knowledge has become increasingly essential. Now, in the 21st century, the age of knowledge and information is in its higher gear. This is an age when invisible knowledge and information take the role of prime movers leading all sector. The World Bank has used metaphor "knowledge is development". Lack of knowledge is largely responsible for under development. In a knowledge and information-oriented society, creative brains become leaders of economy and knowledge workers are in great

demand. if knowledge can be equated with development, then the wider the knowledge gap, the broader the development gap.

NEED FOR THE STUDY

In the present ever changing information environment, libraries are encountering both opportunities and challenges. Information technology has introduced many changes in the way information is identified, procured, processed and disseminated to library clientele. Libraries and information centers are witnessing new paradigm shifts. These shifts include: Furthermore, information technology has created a sense of urgency among library users and librarians themselves.

- Transition of information sources and systems from paper to electronic media.
- Complexity in information needs of highly demanding clientele.
- Increase in the cost and quality of information.

It is an accepted fact that the information technology has influenced all the components of a library system: information sources, services, human resources and users (Ramesha and Kumbar, 2004). It is more so in case of management libraries where the emphasis is more on the currency of information. The industry-oriented, case study methods and hands-on methods of imparting management education require management libraries to be ever responsive to the changing information needs of their clientele.

OBJECTIVES OF THE STUDY

The primary objective of the present study is to examine **the “Role of the libraries as information resources in globalization”** library services imparting professional education the specific objectives are to:

- Survey the existing information technology infrastructure
- Study the impact of IT on library resources.
- Study the impact of IT on information services.

Information Technology enhances easy information retrieval of documents. Retrieval of information from electronic resources and Internet is simpler, easier and faster in comparison to manual systems. The impact of Information technology in collection development is very prominent in library. The help of web, acquisition work has become very much simplified. Order placing, duplication checking, price checking etc are done very effectively using IT technique. Online bookshops and publisher’s websites save the time of the librarians. For the procurement of journals, order is placed in the prescribed format to the publishers through Internet. Invoices can be downloaded from the Websites that makes service faster and avoids postal delay. E-mail helps in sending reminders to the publishers, vendors and even to the borrowers of the books. IT also helps in the process of the serial control in the library. It helps in preparing union list of serials and helps in circulating via e-mail to the libraries. Establishing links to the most frequently used library catalogues help the librarians for

authority work. With the help of OPAC, it is now very convenient for the technical staff to assign call numbers to the newly added books. IT has revolutionized the practice of cataloguing in the library. With the help of OPAC users access the holdings of the library catalogue at their desktop across the campus. It reduces the cost of maintaining a catalogue. Elimination of many paper files and decentralization is possible. Technical section provides new additions alert service to the users including the staff. Circulation, Reference, Electronic Information Service, Online Search / Literature Search, CD ROM Search, Developing Local Databases, Document Delivery Service, Patent Information Service there are so many services that we can fulfil with the help of Information technology. IT reduces labor and saves a lot of time of the staff and users too. LAN is used to link variety of different communication devices. Internet and E-mail system in library enable the students and scholars to remote access, worldwide communication. Professional communication among library and Information Science societies has become easy with the help of E-mail.

Increasing competition in service businesses (eg: Information Technology, Healthcare, Education ,Logistics, Distribution, Hospitality Financial and other services) is compelling corporate to adopt business improvement philosophies and methodologies for addressing customer demands for better quality service and organizational demands for improving the profit margins through cost reduction. Many companies around the world have already implemented Information Technology Infrastructure Library (ITIL) as a way to manage and control their information Technology (IT) Departments more effectively. These companies are now willing to improve their ITIL processes in order to become even more efficient. Lean Six Sigma is a methodology that has been suggested as a means to resolve these problems, reducing costs and improving quality. Its application in the IT Services area is becoming increasingly popular among researchers and academicians and can be used to conduct these improvements. Despite the application of lean six sigma approaches to different contexts in the service sector ,the application of Lean Six Sigma approaches in service delivery specific to Information Technology Service Management (ITSM) remains largely untested.

METHODOLOGY

The present study utilized a combination of historical analysis, literature review, questionnaires and personal interviews for data collection. Historical analysis and literature review were useful in collecting textual data from published and unpublished sources. The questionnaire method was quite useful in soliciting information from the librarians of management institutes. Hence, the data collected for this study was a combination of primary as well as secondary data. The survey was undertaken with the help of questionnaires designed for the purpose. While designing the questionnaire, care was taken that it has the mix of closed and open-ended questions. To enhance the response rate, multiple-choice questions were included in sufficient numbers. Interviews were also held with the librarians to interpret the questions to them and to collect the data. Researchers visited in person all the libraries of professional education institutes affiliated with the and met with the

librarians. Repeated checks and reviews were done on the questionnaire. Librarians, teachers and statisticians were consulted to critically review questions and improve their reliability and validity. Data collected from published sources and the questionnaires were evaluated and analyzed to produce the results. The Software Package used for analysis the data. After interpretation, inferences were drawn and recommendations were made.

EMERGENCE OF INFORMATION AND KNOWLEDGE SOCIETIES

Some 10,000 year ago the early ancestor of mankind, subsisted by hunting and gathering, started to building agrarian societies. The old agrarian societies began their transitions to industrial societies in mid-18th centuries. Expansion of intellectual activities in industrial societies, such as industrial production, international trade and transactions, and technological advancement, stimulated mass distribution of education and creation of libraries. Industrial societies continued their enormous material development throughout the 20th century. The information society has passed through four transformational stages of development, the most radical stage starting at the tail end of the 20th century. This stage has brought a never-ending revolution, particularly with the introduction of information and communication technologies during this period, there have been unprecedented developments, profoundly affecting the social Structure. the decline of manufacturing sector as compared to the prospering information-rich service sector is one example of such developments

The concept of knowledge societies is often used to denote a development in or second generation of information society. Whereas the information society aims to make information available and provide the necessary technology, the knowledge society aims to generate knowledge, create culture of sharing and develop applications that operate mainly via the Internet. The goal of knowledge society is to fill social needs, create wealth and enhance the quality of life in a sustainable manner. India is moving fast towards becoming an information society as the Government of India is paying due attention to the use of information technology (IT). The Prime Minister of India constituted a National Task Force on IT and Software Development in May 1998 with the purpose of formulating a long-term National IT Policy to convert India into an IT software superpower. These steps are helping India to shift from an “economy of goods” to a “knowledge economy” or “knowledge driven economy”. The beginning of the knowledge society has been made through creation of parks and corridors, and the Prime Minister has given a mission of converting India into a “knowledge society” by the year 2008. Today, India is one of the largest exporters of knowledge workers

ROLE OF LIBRARIES

In the modern knowledge society libraries have a new role and there are various types of library models. In the modern society, where the use of electronic services and Web-based information sources constantly increases, libraries are managed in a more

democratic way, have more flexible communication system and work organization, and their service development is based on the quality and user-orientation of services. In the modern knowledge society libraries have a new role and there are various types of library models. These are as follows:

1. Traditional library as a memory institution.
2. Library as a learning and research centre.
3. Library as a cultural and communication centre.
4. Electronic library.
5. Digital library.
6. Virtual library as library without walls.

Libraries had been performed many important roles in the past agrarian and industrial societies. But those roles were limited in scope. In the 21st century, libraries have to perform pivotal roles in disseminating and sharing the culture of knowledge. In this age of knowledge libraries should be repositories of all of the knowledge and information accumulated by human kind. They will have to store all kinds and forms of material and information and disseminate beyond the geographical boundaries. Today's advanced information technology is enabling libraries to accomplish this immense task.

Exchange of knowledge has always been the most important objectives of libraries. Various systems have been developed to share and exchange the records of human knowledge. Universal Bibliographic Control and Universal Availability of Publications are two major programs of IFLA (International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions) to exchange knowledge world over. OCLC is the world leading library network in USA for sharing intellectual knowledge among academic community in all over the world. But libraries in the 21st century should fulfill more dynamic role. They should exchange knowledge and information with users inside and outside their country, thus going beyond their traditional reference and lending services. This would possible when libraries agreed to expand their roles beyond the geographical boundaries by using state of art technologies.

The modern libraries certainly cannot be passive repository for books and other printed materials. The opposite requirements of storing increasing collection in various forms and of maintaining easy access to most part of it can only be balanced by deploying information and communication technologies. Libraries should upgrade their services by digitizing their resources for online use. These services should be accessible to anyone, regardless of time or location, through digital communication devices.

Libraries can play significant role in providing a good education and knowledge of high quality. Individuals around the world, no matter how poor they may be, can access whatever knowledge and information they need by visiting libraries via the internet, such as the library of congress.

PROBLEMS AND OPPORTUNITIES FACING LIBRARIES IN INDIA

Library and information services are fundamental to the goals of creating,

disseminating, optimally utilizing and preserving knowledge. They are instrumental in transforming an unequal society into an egalitarian, progressive knowledge-based society. It is well known that in India most of the libraries function in the government sector. These are in academic and research institutions and under the public library system, which is again under the state and central governments. At present, education being a state subject and coming under the purview of different apex agencies, there is no common direction or coordination among them. It is imperative that all libraries (public, academic, research and special) change gear and develop at an accelerated pace. Developments in information communication technology (ICT) have enabled libraries to provide access to all, and also bridge the gap between the local, the national and the global. Yet the Library and Information Services (LIS) sector in India has not kept pace with the paradigmatic changes taking place in society. There are a few libraries which are using state of art technologies to disseminate knowledge to their respective user community. There is lack of cooperation among the libraries of different organizations and which cause the lack of union catalogues at national level. The national library failed even to do this immense task. One of the major problems faced by LIS sector in India is lack of bibliographic control at national level which causes duplication in research. A considerable number of libraries had not been developed bibliographic databases of their documents for putting them on network.

ENHANCEMENT OF LIBRARY WITH INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

After IT World War, huge amount of information in the form of books and other printed material has been produced which has resulted into exponential growth of information. There is no information instead of information explosion. The libraries have found it very difficult to acquire, arrange and disseminate the information in traditional ways. So libraries are compelled to plan, organize and communicate the huge information according to the needs of users with the help of I.T. the information is no longer confined to books and document in the custody of individual or educational institutions, now it has embraced audio-visual, multimedia with color motion and three dimensions features etc. Application of modern technology via computer and communication are bringing all these to the doorstep of the people. There are various electronics computer based information which is available for the libraries like online and offline resources compact disk (CD's) and the Internet and due to this development in current scenario application of I.T. seems must for libraries. Creation database is the foremost step in application of I.T. in libraries.

Software package, keeping in mind the day to day activities of libraries via, acquisition, cataloguing, circulation, serial control OPAC, administration, indexing, abstracting, current activities services, (CAS) and selective dissemination of information (SDI) etc. To cop up with the current development, and fulfilling the thirst of the users. The various factors which have contributed the application of information technology in libraries are:-

1. Rapid growth in the information output and its usage has made it impossible to store and organize information using conventional methods. Now a day's most of the documents are available in machine- readable format therefore the

- application of Information technologies is necessary.
2. It is no longer possible for any library to collect all the published information. So with the help of I.T. resources sharing can be done easily.
 3. By using modern Information technology in the libraries, efficiency of the staff can be increase and better advanced services may be provided to the users.
 4. Implementation of barcodes and RFID based services; libraries can satisfy maximum no of users in very short span of time.
 5. Due to Information explosion literature search using manual methods is a very difficult, tedious and time consuming job where as computerized storage and retrieval of information make it faster and efficient.
 6. Now in libraries, it is very difficult to provide, inter library loan, translation, Anticipatory services including preparation and annotated lists, abstract bulletin board, news summaries and other information retrieval services manually. Whereas by the help of modern Information Technology above mentioned services can be provided in a very less time.

CONTRIBUTION OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY IN LIBRARY SERVICES

It is established fact that IT has brought the revolution in the field of library and information science, as we have already mentioned that all library housekeeping activities like procurement, processing, organization and dissemination of information services are based on computer, communication and reprographic technologies, which has facilitated the following services being provided to the users more effectively wizards. references services, Bibliographic Services, Referral Services, OPAC, Current Awareness Services, Document Delivery Services, Selective Dissemination of Information (SDI), Barcode Base/ Services, User orientation program, in- house personal training, Resources sharing and other services. Such facilities being extended to the academicians, researchers and library users to find their required information without any barriers are possible only because of I.T. application in library and Information centers.

MODERNIZATION OF LIBRARIES

Earlier library used to handle and disseminate the information which consisted of books, journals, monographs etc. by the help of catalogue, reference service, referral service etc. after the literature increased in multidiscipline and inter-discipline. It could not be easy for a library to provide the information up to date. As users always want to get information up to date and relevant information according to their requirement which were solved by bibliographic, indexing and abstracting was increased so it could not be easy for the user to locate their resources easily.

USERS EXPECTATIONS

Library and Information Centers are playing a vital role by providing the information

required by the users or their research and developmental activities. The libraries offer various types of services to the user community and spread the knowledge. The main task is of disseminating the information from the collection as well as made it available from the other institutional resources. The traditional services provided by the libraries like ILL, CAS, SDI, bibliographic listing, reading room, book borrowing were mainly based on the library collection, but due to application of Information Technology the trends in the library and information centers are also shifting towards modernization. The methods and practices used are also changing and the value added services have are emerging as key elements in the new library environment. Globally, libraries are facing the challenges due to the introduction of the IT in the profession and the escalation in the number of publications; whereas the user demands are getting very pinpointed and specific .The electronic Publishing has further changed the mode of services expected from the traditional libraries. The traditional mode of library services was based on the print media, whereas the present mode lays emphasis on digital information resources, web and Internet resources for providing the services Users Expects from the Academic Libraries the following aspects; Comprehensiveness, Accessibility, Immediate gratification, Follow ability of data, Ease of use and multiple formats and media.

CONCLUSION

The future of the automated libraries in the developed/ developing countries seems to be very promising and it can be hoped that more and more libraries will adopt automation techniques/systems in the very near future, sooner rather than later. The new generation of computers and its use in libraries is not only modernization but it has become a necessity. In coming times, computers hold good future. It is expected they would be found useful in handling information explosion and respective routine jobs in libraries economically .the remarkable growth of Internet has made significant Revolution in all the areas of science and technology. Rather than using it as a tool for searching and retrieving information, Internet has become the king of all media, by which we can access virtual information and can build a virtual library to provide timely, quality service to the users. Librarians of this digital era are in the position to change their role as arbitrary information scientists/gatekeepers and to meet the Challenges of the Internet, World Wide Web, and online access in the knowledge society. So they must enrich their knowledge with special skills of the latest IT developments, to browse, access and retrieve particular information across the global networks and to organize and manage the information by building digital libraries and by which they can provide quality-information service to the knowledge society. Library staff must be capable of working effectively in partnership with faculty members to enhance the strength of teaching and research.

RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the conclusions above, it is recommended that:

1. Provision of funds on a regular basis. The mandatory 10% of the budgetary

allocation of set aside for the Library should be so disbursed and monitored for judicious utilization. If this is realized, the Library Management should make automation top on its priority list and pursued conscientiously and to a logical and beneficial end.

2. There should be provision for alternative power supply by having a dedicated generating plant. This is especially important because of the total dependence of the IT use on electric power supply.
3. Students also need to be trained on how to use these facilities towards achieving academic excellence. This may be through continuous orientation and the inclusion of such courses like: Use of computer for Information retrieval, Use of Internet/world wide web and IT applications.

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