LIBRARY PROFESSIONALS DEVELOPMENT IN MODERN SCENARIO

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ABSTRACT:

Libraries in India has made significant development from ancient age to modern age, lot of changes brought with the implementation of modern technologies. In view of changing IT scenario, the impact of new technologies on librarian, need to expertise with these new Information Technologies. The librarian should familiarize with the digital, electronic and other online resources. In this new age of assembling and disseminating information, there will still be a need for special libraries and librarians to manage these technologies and provide different digital, electronic information services to the users. Today many libraries are in transit, from traditional to the digital library. Not only recent publications, but also many historical library holdings are being digitized. These digital collections allow users from anywhere at any time to access/consult the material without doing any harm to the fragile documents. With the ever-growing electronic availability of information on both national and global networks, many libraries have turned their attention to providing access rather than building local collections. In seeking to enable patrons to locate material (increasingly full-text) where they require it most -- in dormitories, in offices, in classrooms, or at home -- librarians are stressing the need to provide resources to faculty and students at locations other than the library building. As Hauptman and Anderson point out, what users desire is "a 'seamless' system [that] will integrate all types of information, whether accessible on site or deliverable from some distant location....Users just want to retrieve the information."1 With the advancement of the technological revolution, librarians will play a major role in meeting this expectation, continuing to be in the forefront of helping faculty, students, and others gain access to the vast multitudes of information -- whether digitized, print, or multimedia -- ". At a time when intellectual capital is encroaching on physical capital as the driving force in the world economy and order. Teaching and facilitating information access.

INTRODUCTION:

The availability of electronic documents on Internet and the support extended by World Wide Web to access these documents have recently increased tremendously. Several print journals have shifted their platform to Web, which includes free and paid publications. In this scenario, it is imperative for the traditional librarian to acquire

necessary skills in effective use of modern gadgets and associated software to locate and retrieve the widely dispersed information in the cyberspace.

The environment in which librarians work is also changing in terms of greater access to a range of information, increased speed in acquiring information, greater complexity in locating, analyzing and linking information, constantly changing technology and adaptation, lack of standardization of both hardware and software, continuous learning for users and staff, management of financial investment for technology.

Role of Librarian in Internet and World Wide Web are very powerful and bringing changes not only in librarianship but also in his daily professional activities. In the fast emerging and ever growing digital and electronic resources, it is very difficult to retrieve particular information without wasting of the time. Recent advances in the field of IT contribute significantly to improve the services of libraries. The impact of technologies, such as Computer Networks, Internet, digital and electronic etc. has led to a paperless society. Digital library could be accessible anywhere, anytime, over the net, it can be accessed 365x24 hrs. The medium of information storage has changed from clay tablets to paper and now to digital, electronic form. The library building is not the limit of library, with the existence of digital library, electronic library, and virtual library without walls.

Definitions

Since the beginning of library profession, librarians have been in direct contact with users seeking information. We have learned to understand what they need, not what they say, they need (which can be considerably different). Our services are personalized and targeted for our clientele, ``interface agents'' and ``personal filters'' as described by Nicholas Negroponte (1996, pp. 149-159) are in place that are able to substitute person-to-person mediation.

Technology for producing and distributing information is useless without some way to locate, filter, organize and summarize it. A new profession of ``information managers'' will have to combine the skills of computer scientists, librarians, publishers and

database experts to help us discover and manage information. These human agents will work with software agents that specialize in manipulating information - offspring of indexing programs such as Archie, Veronica and various ``World Wide Web crawlers'' that aid Internet navigators today. (Varian, 1995)

Libraries were once thought of as buildings with books, periodicals etc. in physical form. Now they have evolved into a decentralized network providing services and resources not limited to what they have. ALs are now in an environment of change characterized by: (i) greater access to a range of learning resources (ii) increased speed in acquiring information (iii) constantly changing technology, and (iv) lack of standardization of both hardware and software etc. (Gilbert and Klugkist,1998).

Information seeking is a function not only of awareness of possible existence of documents but also their availability and accessibility. A quality service is about helping users to define and satisfy their information needs, building their confidence in using the retrieval systems and making the whole activity of working with library staff a pleasurable experience. The service should always be tailor made to accommodate the needs and wants of the customer. Quality means conforming first to customer 96+9requirements than to standards and specifications. (Sahu, 2007).

Changing role of librarian

In the 21st century the role of librarian and information professionals have changed from book lending professionals to intermediary between information and its users. They play different roles like researcher, advisor, trainer and specialist in order to meet the challenges posed by IT. And they should possess different skills such as computer skills, IT skills, communication skill and networks skills and also learn about the latest technology trends such as digital, electronic and cloud computing.

Traditional library is an ownership environment, whereas the modern libraries are only access environment, the digital/electronic resource provider are some other place. After sign on the agreement, they will give the access rights to the librarians for a certain

period, may be one year to three years depending on the pricing model. The librarian has to take the responsibility to provide access to all the users for better utilization of these resources.

The advancement of information technology, digitization, and networks caused lot of changes in the Libraries and role of librarians. The librarian has to play a dynamic role as information providers. He should familiarize himself with recent technological innovations and should have a clear understand of the needs of the users.

LIS professionals are required to collect information in written, printed or electronic format; and also to activate their use with the help of indexing and reference work. Recent advances in IT have made it possible to store, analyses and disseminate information in various form and means of media on a local, national and international level. As a result, LIS professionals are needed to shift their attention from collection (the objects) and look at the special services based on user-centric approach. The widespread use of computer mediated information storage and retrieval system has made IT skill as 'survival skill' for the LIS professionals.

Role of Librarian in the present electronic environment, are required to work independently or as a team to deliver service-oriented and user-centered applications, instructions, programmed, projects and services. In addition to general qualification and requirements, a commitment to excellent user centered services, effective oral and written communications, as well as team collaborators must also possess additional capabilities, experience, knowledge and skills such as:

Expertise in the use of innovative emerging technologies to design and develop web based applications, program and services.

Assist users to locate access, store and transform electronic information resources, services and instructions across multiple applications, databases, networks, platforms and systems through an academic library's information commons.

Having knowledge of designing, developing, launching and maintaining of digital content management and assess, evaluate, recommend and test various methodologies, policies, and standards for utilizing computer software in the process of creating and preserving digital collections and resources.

Assess, understand, think and adopt changes fit to the requirements rather become blind follower of versatile technological developments. (Li).

i) The traditional roles of the librarian in the print era can be defined as follows:

Collection development and acquisition to select and purchase material printed journals, abstracts and includes, monographs, etc. Cataloguing and classification to organize and provide access to information physically and via lists and catalogues.Circulation to reserve materials for and lend materials to users, and recover materials from them.Reference work to advise library users and to provide and facilitate quick and easy access to information. Reservation, conservation and archiving to archive, preserve and conserve information in eternity.

Collection development and acquisition: to select and purchase material - printed journals, abstractsand indexes, monographs, etc.

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Reference work: to advise library users and to provide and facilitate quick and easy access to information.

Preservation, conservation and archiving: to archive, preserve and conserve information in perpetuity.

ii) In the electronic environment, role comprises at least three major working areas:

Information Access Provider: We provide access to the most important information resourceson the network, making use of current technologies (WWW or its successor). Electronic resources must be organized in a logical, easily understandable manner, integrating documents and services that belong logically together... (Rusch-Feja, 1997) which match or supplement the targeted group's information needs.

Research Assistant: The second aspect of our role encompasses identifying, locating and obtainingpublications not owned or leased by the library. If we don't find particular information on the Internet, this does not mean that it doesn't exist. It is the librarian's duty to know which additional sources can be queried to make a search as complete as possible…(Rusch-Feja, 1997) Various methods for providing user support for networked library services can be developed, for instance distance support (by telephone or e-mail), printed or online manuals, and on-screen instructions (Mackenzie Owen and Wiercx, 1996). Face-to-face end-user training already has become an important part of our work.

Collaborative System Designer: Librarians are in direct contact with users of information retrievalsystems. Often users report difficulties to us which they encountered while using a system, or we recognize what needs to be redesigned while we are explaining a system to our users. When IT departments design new databases, application programs and user interfaces for us, we must be able to explain precisely to them ``how language works and how to use layout, typography and design principles'' (Moore, 1996) in order to provide the required functionality. The information flood can only be mastered with appropriate tools that are capable of matching user needs with the available information, no matter whether these tools will be operated by librarians or users in the end.

iii) Roles of the librarian in the digital environment

A digital librarian, a type of specialist information professional who manages and organizes the digital library, combines the functionality for information, elicitation, planning, data mining, knowledge mining, digital reference services, electronic information services, representation of information, extraction, and distribution of information, co-ordination, searching notably CD-ROMs, online, Internet-based WWW,

multimedia access and retrieval. The ultimate goal of a DL is to facilitate access to information just-in-time to the critical wants of end users and additionally to facilitate electronic publishing. The digital librarian plays a distinctive and dynamic role in easy accessing of computer held digital information including abstracts, audio-video clips, etc. A digital library is expected to provide access to the digital information collections. A digital library may be considered to be any of these (William, 1995): (1) machine-readable data files; (2) components of the emerging National Information Infrastructure; (3) various online databases and CD-ROM information products; (4) computer information storage devices on which information resides; (5) computerized networked library systems.

iv) Role in teaching environment

Librarians must not only collaborate with and assist faculty in their research, they also have a central role to play in the teaching process. As college and university libraries and their systems of

networked information resource instruction become an intrinsic part of a pervasive electronic community, the librarian's traditional role, particularly that relating to teaching, will be even more acute. Librarians regarded more and more as the information specialists on campus, can help faculty develop new pedagogical services. Very often faculties are not completely up to date with the multitude of resources now available in the electronic library, especially the plethora of CD-ROM and online databases. They find it difficult to advise students on the latest searching tools. Moreover, many are ill acquainted with appropriate material on the Internet, whereas subject specialist librarians are in the forefront of this area. Steven Gilbert is correct: if faculty require students to use the Internet as part of a course, then the advice and skills of an Internet-savvy librarian become all but essential.

v) Role of Librarian in Information Literacy Programme

Librarians have to play significant role to promote information literacy in society. He has to play an important role in the education process by making the user aware of a need and motivating the use of information. And also requires good teaching and

communication skill to teach information literacy to the students. Information Literacy empowers people in all walks of life to seek, evaluate, use and create information effectively to achieve their personal, social occupational and educational goals. Students are able to access their required information with the help of these programs.

CONCLUSION

The advert of digital, electronic resource and their increased usage in libraries has brought about changes in collection development functions and roles. This has necessitated a new role of librarians who can understand the entire electronic information scenario procurement, organization, access and services for meeting users' information needs. Librarians and Information professionals challenged to meet this new ways of optimizing access to digital/electronic resource and to explore ways to fit new technologies and innovations into traditional library systems to meet the needs of the remote users.

Libraries value comprehensiveness because the only way to make a rich resource base available to researchers is to have as much onsite as possible. Today traditional libraries shifting towards electronic/ digital libraries and the existing library print collection has shifted from print to digital to provide access to the remote users also. The digital form of a book user can retrieve them in seconds and at the same time several users can simultaneously read and same book. The benefit of digital/ electronic library is to provide universal access to digital information throughout the world. Digital/electronic library is a common place where any educational institute users, researchers, and educators can have access to their required information at their work place.

Librarians have always welcomed new changes for enhancing their services and satisfying their needs. They will need the help of technologists to better understand the possibilities being created by digital technologies to make successful one.

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