

**ROLE OF ACADEMIC LIBRARIAN IN DIGITAL ERA**

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**Abstract**

The shifting responsibilities of academic librarians are discussed in this study. The librarian is responsible for a variety of duties and obligations. Academic librarians have access to a diverse set of chances and a wide range of advancements. Since the beginning of higher education in India, libraries have been one of the most helpful educational resources available. Libraries have also been instrumental in bringing about educational changes by freeing institutions from the shackles of outdated educational models. The digitization of a library's collection, the implementation of automation in acquisition, circulation, cataloguing, and referencing technology, and the use of open source software all have the potential to liberate both the time and the space of librarians and libraries for the purpose of devoting them to new endeavours. The vast majority of these services may be obtained through the use of open-source software; hence, the initial investment cost is manageable for the majority of the current libraries; as a result, migration is occurring at a breakneck speed. Nowadays, librarians are sometimes referred to as knowledge keepers or information producers.

**Keywords:** *Librarian, Academic, Digital Era*

**Introduction**

In earlier times, people did not have access to books, therefore they could not learn anything from them. It was impossible for everyone to purchase books. We recall that about thirty years ago, people were unable to purchase newspapers, and then, about that time, people in tiny communities began utilising ordinary newspapers. After some time had passed, it was discovered that the records were dispersed and could not be accessed due to the lack of a central location that might be described as a library. It used to be the case that librarians would just wait around inside the library for customers to come in and request information from them. However, in our modern age, technology users may utilise the internet to quickly learn knowledge and information in only a few seconds due to the ease with which most topics can be accessed. The most notable illustration of this is Wikipedia. This scenario is always evolving as a result of the introduction of new technologies into the libraries. ICT (Information and Communication Technology) is becoming increasingly popular in the modern world, and it has had an effect on every aspect of academic library work, particularly in the form of library collection growth plans, library buildings, and library organisations. ICT has brought about unprecedented changes and transformations to the academic library services such as OPAC, current awareness service, document delivery, inter library loan, audio visual services as the offer, convenient time, place, cost effectiveness, and the most up to date dissemination and end users involvement in the library and information service process.

**Objective**

1. Study on Library and their Role in Higher Education
2. Study on Librarians in Digital Environment.

### **Academic Library:-**

An academic library is a library that is associated to an institution of higher education and serves two purposes that are complimentary to one another. These purposes are to assist the school curriculum and to support the research of the university teachers and students. It has been said that the academic library is the beating heart of the community of learners. Providing a space where students and professors may work on their own research projects.

### **Academic Library and their Role in Higher Education:-**

A well-stocked library is one of the most important conditions that must be met before the execution of a successful higher education programme. Reading is encouraged in elementary school pupils through their exposure to the school library, but college and university libraries are considered to be part of an institution of higher education. In order for a college or university to successfully cater to the requirements of its teaching staff, academic researchers, and students, it is absolutely necessary for the institution to have a well-stocked, well-balanced library.

### **Status of Librarian:-**

In the past, the sole responsibility of the librarian was to keep the books. The duty of the librarian in the modern period encompasses a variety of responsibilities. As a modern information professional in addition to a conventional librarian, he is responsible for a variety of responsibilities that pull him in diverse ways. It is inevitable that in the future the librarian will also serve as the knowledge manager. Experts in several fields of information etc. They are responsible for managing every library function and carrying out every administrative responsibility, from the procurement of information resources to the provision of information services, both now and in the foreseeable future. The ideal candidate for the position of librarian will be a collaborative and visionary leader who can demonstrate the proven qualities necessary to manage, develop, and advance the library's long-term strategic goal.

### **Librarian becoming as:-**

- Librarian as teacher
- Technology specialist
- Information consultant
- Knowledge manager
- Subject librarian

### **Role of Librarian:-**

The function of the academic librarian is to coordinate with the academic staff in order to guarantee that. Both the student and the researcher possess the necessary materials or have access to them. In addition, both the student and the researcher should be able to carry out their own literature searches. Therefore, the academic librarian will instruct students in the competence of informed literacy. In addition to providing responses to questions pertaining to a certain area of study, they will see to it that the academic and student demands are met. In academic libraries, the line management of personnel is frequently assigned to the academic librarian. It's possible that this will involve a group of library assistants or a senior

academic librarian on the go. The proliferation of new communication technologies presents possibilities for librarians to rethink the ways in which information and the education that goes along with it are conveyed to students and staff. The function of the librarian, who is responsible for collecting, organising, and preserving information resources, is also being reimagined due to changes in technology and format. The shifting responsibilities of other library staff members are becoming an increasingly significant component of the expanded duties of the librarian. Staff members with professional, technical, and support responsibilities.

### **Digital Era:-**

In the modern age the nature of academic libraries is changing college library, University Library, research library, fall under the category and these libraries are not exempted from ICT. ICT has changed the forms of library service to provide the demand of the library users. Digital libraries are library who's all the accumulations of library are preserved in digital format, digital libraries services are provided digitally over computer network.

### **Role of the Librarian in Modern Era**

Students can access a variety of materials in today's modern day and age. They are becoming more and more dependent on various forms of technology. The term "academic library" refers to libraries found at educational institutions such as schools, colleges, and universities. Additionally, many businesses have their own internal libraries. Users include academic researchers, educators, and students, in addition to working professionals. They require the most up-to-date knowledge concerning their domain. The user prioritises the library because of the prohibitive cost of books, the constraints of time and space, and the abundance of available resources. Every institute has a significant print collection, but users are unable to find the information they need since the collection has been so widely distributed. A better exploitation of the available resources requires the librarian to design a variety of strategies that make searching the available resources easier. In the world of academia, librarians play the role of mediator between students and instructors. They provide assistance to students in locating the information that they are looking for; he explains how to search for information; he provides assistance to its user in locating books from stacks; they also guides how to use library OPAC in order to save time and easily search; and this assistance enables the users to fulfil any requirements that they may have. It is expected of librarians working in an environment dominated by information and communications technology (ICT) that they will continually improve their level of expertise and skill in order to increase both their productivity and their efficiency in order to meet the evolving needs of library users. They will constantly be behind the times if they do not adapt to the changing circumstances. In order to be successful in one's career as a librarian and to accomplish one's goals, certain talents are essential. Therefore, in order to properly carry out their jobs, library professionals should always possess the abilities listed below.

### **Communication Skills**

By utilising effective communication strategies, librarians are able to close the information gap, maintain contact, establish trust, track performance, and attract intense visitors and users. A strong communication system not only assists in efficiently transmitting the message but also raises the level of coordination that exists within the institute. Because of this, the experts working in the library have to have the capability to talk and involve the necessary stakeholders, such as the students, the employees, and the management.

### **User- Orientation Skills**

The librarian is responsible for providing users with sufficient help to enable them to make efficient use of the library's resources. They are responsible for efficiently providing the group with information on new members who have joined. They need to get their team involved in choosing the new books in the appropriate categories.

### **Collection Development Skills**

Wealthy collection of library is foundation of library service. Librarian need to find out new ways of getting information's through latest books and E-services available in the market from various institutes

### **Time Management Skills**

The fourth rule of library science, formulated by Dr. S. R. Ranganathan, emphasises the need of effective time management not just for library employees but also for library patrons. The professionals working in the library have to engage in careful planning of all of the services offered by the library in order to make the most of their time and that of the patrons.

### **Leadership Skills**

Work ethic and user motivation are essential components of effective leadership. The personal attributes, behavioural styles, and capacity for decision making of leaders are examined when discussing leadership. It's all about getting people moving in the correct way and keeping them motivated to reach the outcomes you want. It is the single most crucial talent that a librarian has to have in order to accomplish the goals of library usages. It is important for a librarian, in their role as a leader, to maintain positive relationships with management, employees, and users.

### **Interpersonal Skills**

In order to fulfil the goals of the library, a librarian has to have strong interpersonal and interactive skills so that they can cultivate relationships with the necessary stakeholders and keep those relationships healthy. He is responsible for motivating and engaging his workforce so that they may perform at their highest level and meet the objective. As a librarian, he or she is responsible for managing and organising a wide variety of activities, such as arranging library orientation courses for patrons to encourage them to utilise the library.

### **ICT Skills**

Every kind of library is experiencing a steady but steady growth in their information and communication technologies. A librarian is expected to have the expertise necessary to operate the technology that is now being utilised in libraries to carry out a variety of library operations. As a librarian, you must adapt to new technology developments and continually educate yourself in order to keep up with the ever-evolving information landscape. It is important for librarians to be familiar with the ways in which technology is utilised in library services.



### Challenges of Changing Environment

New digital libraries need to be able to give consumers electronic access to all of the pertinent information that is associated with e-learning services, and they also need to be able to integrate this material on networks located all over the world. Abandoning the traditional notion of the library as a repository is the first step toward meeting the next challenge, which is to develop new standards and skills for the library profession so that it can more effectively meet the needs of its users in a proactive manner. Another important requirement will be the availability of library premises that are equipped with the necessary computer network facilities. Electronic reference services and other support services featuring a variety of expertise, as well as digital repositories, are becoming an absolute necessity in today's climate of online education and publication. The most important and prevalent concerns and challenges that the library and information science professionals confront in the present digital era for the purpose of delivering digital information service to the knowledge are the following:

1. Library as knowledge provider and generator
2. Technology readiness
3. Availability of digital e-resources
4. Organizational Structure
5. Knowledge sharing
6. Transferring the information

### The Changing Role of Librarians in Digital Environment

Since the previous two decades, there has been a significant transition in the paradigm of the library, which has been moving away from print services and toward digital services. A new idea of the library, known as the "Library without walls," was established as a result of the digital phenomena that affected librarians. The use of information and communication technology (ICT) by librarians to improve library services has a long and storied history. The digital environment has resulted in an expansion of the roles and responsibilities played by librarians. These roles and responsibilities now include the subscribing to, managing, and publishing of electronic information resources and services, as well as advising users on the most efficient strategy for locating relevant e-sources. The majority of librarians are involved in digital activities such as subscribing to e-books and e-journals, scanning old print materials, managing software and hardware, selecting and selecting content for web pages, marketing and publicising library products, outreach, usability testing, technical troubleshooting, e-publishing, feedback analysis, and committee coordination. In today's world, library professionals are actively involved in the creation of digital

collections and services, such as virtual reference services and research support services. These services make it easier to discover information 24/7 and have open access to it whenever and wherever users want it. This satisfies user expectations. Singh (2017) investigates the shifting responsibilities of librarians in the context of the reorientation of digital library services to be compatible with mobile devices. Senthilkumar (2010) identifies the shifting roles of librarians in the digital era as that of a Negotiator, Navigator, Facilitator, Educator, Entrepreneur (Marketing Library Services), and Information filter, among other responsibilities. The following is a list of the shifting tasks and responsibilities that are associated with digital librarianship in libraries:

**The Developer and Manager of the Collection:** The fundamental tasks of collection creation, in both print and digital media, are typically handled by librarians in virtually all libraries. This ensures that library patrons have access to a well-rounded collection. In the current digital context, collection development has developed into the process of selecting what should be digitised and how it should be offered online to open access by the people. This was not the case in the analogue world. The ordering of reading materials and the subsequent receipt of those orders are both part of the acquisition process; however, in the present day and age, librarians are dealing more and more with information resources that were born digitally in order to provide open access to users both on and off campus around the clock.

Librarians play an essential part in the delivery of a high-quality higher education system, according to the manager of an institutional repository (IR). According to the facts available in the current environment, the output of information throughout the world is fast expanding day by day. In virtually all establishments of higher education and universities, librarians are responsible for establishing and developing an institutional repository inside their respective institutions. Because of the rise in the use of sophisticated knowledge and ICTs, libraries need to strengthen their research and academic system. Establishing an institutional repository is one of the most significant components of this process. Library professionals need a solid foundation in information and communications technology (ICT) knowledge, skills, and abilities in order to set up and grow institutional repositories. Librarians are required to play a crucial role as IR managers in order to successfully manage the IR in an open access setting.

In today's digital era, library professionals and digital librarians are responsible for setting up and developing digital libraries through the technical implementation, installation, and customization of open source software for digital libraries, the creation of metadata, the creation of usage reports, and the preservation of digital information. This role is known as the Digital Library Administrator. A digital librarian is responsible for managing digital material regulations, advocacy and licences relating to intellectual property rights concerns, and user training for academic and research communities.

Librarians and other library professionals serve as content managers in the digital world through the creation and development of library collections and services. Web pages, digital libraries, and topic gateways that allow and provide quick access to digital information resources and services are all examples of what are known as "digital information resources and services." Creating a web page that allows for the distribution of information resources and services on user mobile devices around the clock is part of the evolving role of librarians.

**Websites Designer:** It is the responsibility of the librarian to ensure that the library website is both interactive and informative when it is being designed. This is done to ensure that each and every significant facet is portrayed and that it is user-friendly. When a librarian creates a website, one of their responsibilities is to provide information about the library and the services it provides, such as the hours

the library is open, the location of its services, the staff members who work there, the library's rules and regulations, an interface to the library's Online Public Access Catalog (OPAC), library services, electronic books and journals, user guidelines, and so on.

**Training Organiser and Trainer:** Professionals working in libraries may now serve their universities or other organisations in the capacity of training organisers and instructors. The lecturers, students, and researchers at universities all benefit from the author workshops, training programmes, and conferences that are periodically organised by university libraries. They teach researchers and teachers how to self-check for plagiarism using the anti-plagiarism software "Turnitin," how to properly reference and cite sources, convert their document(s) to the PDF format, and create softcopies of Ph.D. theses in accordance with the standard format. In addition, they provide ICT-based skills, technical supports, avoid plagiarism skills, reference management skills, and ETDs discovery skills. Researchers are required to hand in a softcopy (CD or DVD) of their Ph.D. or M.Phil. thesis to their supervisor. Supervisors are then responsible for reviewing the thesis to ensure that it adheres to the standard format and that it meets all of the requirements established by the Institute for Ph.D. and M.Phil. Following the evaluation of the theses by the supervisors, the researchers amended their hard copy and CD/DVD versions of the thesis before submitting them to the Central Library for the final plagiarism check.

**The Development of Collaborative Electronic Resources:** Cloud computing services were initially developed by digital librarians to facilitate the creation of collaborative libraries and the sharing of materials on a worldwide scale. The digital librarians are aiming to foster a culture of collaboration to facilitate the sharing of materials in networking environments. The collaborative resources are of great assistance in meeting the needs of the users in a manner that is both timely and economical.

**The Researcher Suggests That:** Librarians and other library professionals have always educated, trained, and supported research scholars in the digital environment under the research support services to discovery services and access to current research materials. This is part of the research support services that libraries provide. Support for researchers and other users in the area of research management through the use of Reference Management Tools (RMT), with the goal of improving the overall quality of research works. At the moment, librarians offer consulting services relating to the fabrication of research, copyright concerns, and improper behaviour in research in order to assist researchers in avoiding plagiarism in their research work. Additionally, librarians are able to instruct research researchers on how to integrate publication data from RMT, Scopus, and other published indexes into their profiles, where it may be associated with distinctive identifiers such as ORCID, etc.

**Social Media Communicator:** In today's world, many librarians have created the social media account on facebook, twitter, Instagram, flickr, LinkedIn, blogs, Mendeley, and what app etc. on the behalf of their library to enable faster and more efficient delivery of information to users anywhere and at any time using a social media approach. The fourth law of library science is that librarians should "Save the time of readers," and they may do this by providing information services to the academic and research community around the clock through their social media accounts. Rangnathan (1931).

**Electronic Publishing:** In today's digital era, librarians and other information professionals use web publishing software to upload electronic versions of print materials such as newsletters, CAS bulletins, lists of new magazines and books, annual reports, and library manuals, etc., for open access by users.

**The Development of a Digital Library App** Librarians are working on the development of a digital library app so that users can access digital library resources on their mobile devices and smartphones. This is

being done in order to increase the utilisation of library collections and services in a digital environment. The National Digital Library (NDL) of India has only recently built and developed a mobile app in order to make India's largest library resource easily accessible on the go. There is no cost associated with downloading the NDL App from the Google Play Store. Users are able to use the mobile application from any location and at any time using their mobile devices. The NDL app has sophisticated tools for searching, browsing, filtering, tagging, commenting, and viewing information.

### Conclusion

Because they preserve books and other resources for learning that are, for the most part, printed, libraries are sometimes referred to as "the store house of information." The librarian of the 21st century needs to get oneself ready to operate in a network environment and should also learn the required abilities, such as leadership, exploiting information, communication, crisis management, team building, decision making, and resource selection, among other things. At the same time, jobs in academic libraries have become more competitive in comparison to other professions of a similar kind, particularly within the information technology industry.

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