

## ROLE OF INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY AND LIBRARY'S IN TODAY'S GLOBLIZED ERA

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### ABSTRACT

*Information technology is currently taking center stage and transformed the whole world into a global community, 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 discusses the role of information technology and libraries in today's global era. It also discusses the problems faced by the Library & Information Service sector in India and achievements over the years using modern information technologies.*

**Keywords:** *ICT, Information Technology, Library Services, Knowledge Management*

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## 1. INTRODUCTION

Information technology has transformed the whole world into a global community, which is increasingly depending 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. Creative brains become leaders of economy and knowledge workers are in great demand.

## 2. ROLE OF LIBRARIES

In today's globalized era, libraries have a new role and there are various types of library models. In the modern era, 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. Today libraries have a new role and there are various types of library models. These are as follows:

- Traditional library as a memory institution.
- Library as a learning and research centre.
- Library as a cultural and communication centre.
- Electronic library.
- Digital library.
- 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, 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. But libraries in the 21st century should fulfill more dynamic role. They should exchange knowledge and sharing information's 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 a vital 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.

### **3. PROBLEMS AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR 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 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 Library and Information Services 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.

To summarize, the major constraints faced by the libraries which militate against effective dissemination and use of information are:

1. A considerable percentage of the population is illiterate or functionally literate making libraries of minimal use to them.
2. Poor resource allocation for infrastructure improvement and collection development for public libraries.
3. Lack of sufficient sanctioned posts, forcing most services to be operated by voluntary non-professional staff, which damages information organization and services.
4. Lack of national policies promoting ICT as a tool for development of library systems and services.
5. Lack of adequate trained manpower in the use of IT.
6. Lack of funds for acquiring necessary hardware and software facilities.
7. Resistance on the part of library staff to change from their traditional practices to the use of IT.

Despite the above problems, Library and Information Services (LIS) sector in India has got remarkable achievements. Efforts had been made to set up networks at local, regional and national level to deploy information and communication technologies and to build electronic information sources.

To overcome the problem of financial crunch and the rising costs of journals, librarians have formed consortia to subscribe all the required journals and databases. Some special libraries and research organizations have established consortia known as Forum for Resource Sharing in Astronomy to share electronic access to journal literature.

For the improvement of quality of library and information services through the systematic acquisition, organization and dissemination of knowledge, various library associations have been set up at national and state level. They annually organized conferences, seminars and training programs to trained and update library professionals with latest development in LIS. Recently libraries and research organizations realize the importance of digital libraries and they started the work of digitization of important documents. Many libraries in India bring its own unique collection of literature into the digital library. DLI has a vision to build a universal digital library of world knowledge. One million books have already been available through this project.

India perhaps has one of the oldest and largest collections of Manuscripts in the world. These manuscripts are in different languages and scripts; written on different materials such as birch bark, palm leaf, cloth, paper etc. They are in the custody of libraries, museums,

monasteries, mutts and individuals. A significant proportion is not preserved scientifically. Experts estimate that almost all palm leaf manuscripts may perish due to wear and tear over next 50 to 100 years. In this regard the National Mission for Manuscripts has taken a step to save the most valuable, intellectual property of our cultural inheritance. The missions has started a pilot project for digitizing the manuscripts in five states across India covering five caches of manuscripts and for the same four digitizing agencies have been selected.

Importance of open access archives, institutional repositories and open access journals has been realized by the library and information professionals in India. This movement has been accelerated by the availability of open source software namely DSpace, EPrints, Greenstone, etc. Among the top 25 publishing countries, India ranks 12th for the overall number of journals, but drops to 18th for journals with online content. At present there are more than 150 open access journals in India. The open access journals in India are mainly initiated by six journal publishers.

National knowledge Commission is also formulating similar open access policies and guidelines for the higher education and R & D sectors to improve access to research literature and disseminate research literature to the global communities. The National Knowledge Commission has submitted its report to the government on how to redefine the information services sector. The report of Knowledge Commission on library sector suggests that “Every state should establish a registry and archives of knowledge based digital resources which should be made accessible to all”.

#### **4. CONCLUSION**

The acquisition of knowledge and sharing information has therefore been the thrust area throughout the world. The economy of present times depends no longer on visible resources and capital goods but on invisible knowledge and information. Therefore, poor nations as well as poor individuals can create wealth through active contacts and usage of knowledge and sharing of information. Libraries of the 21st century can help fight poverty and narrow the gap between rich and poor. For the first time in history poor are getting opportunity to enhance their wealth through the creation, usage of knowledge and sharing of information's'. And libraries are taking a central role in this notable movement.

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