

# **Role of Library and Library Professionals: Today and Tomorrow**

**Prof. Umbare Kailas Gorakh**

B D Kale Mahavidyalaya Ghodegaon, Tal Ambegaon Dist Pune 412408

kailasumbre@gmail.com

## **ABSTRACT**

*The 21<sup>st</sup> century will be the age of paperless society. The advancement of Information and communication Technology has brought a lot of changes on library and information services and also on the roles of the libraries and information professionals. The new technologies have facilitated the transformation of data into digital publishing the libraries are going from traditional to digital format with the arrival of digital publishing; the libraries are going from traditional to digital epoch. At present, like demand of digital information is increasing on desktop. The article focuses on the role of library professionals and libraries in these days. It also highlights the library of old age, challenging and changing role of new technologies, current Trend in library in IT environment and required skills for library professionals in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.*

**KEYWORDS:** Library professionals, Information and communication Technology, Professional skill, Virtual library, Internet.

## **INTRODUCTION**

Libraries are changing in terms of their collection, facilities, and services to constant changing scenario of information on account of information and communication technology application and information seeking behaviour of users with the advent of information technology and explosion of knowledge, the world is going from traditional libraries to e-libraries. Today, the role of library professionals and libraries has changed drastically because the computer has entered in very field of knowledge. The library professionals cannot ignore the changing face of libraries. The fantastic growth of e-products have become a challenging tab to the library professionals in the way of providing qualitative service to its users. Today, the fast growth in ICT and particularly INTERNET has changed the traditional method of research, storage, retrieval and communication of information.

Dr. Ranganathan stated, “*Librarianship is a noble profession. A librarian drives his joy by seeing the draw of joy in the face of readers, helped by him to find the right book at the right time.*” Nowadays, it has become essential that the library professionals are well trained and possess the requisite knowledge and skills. The development of libraries

in this IT environment has become a common source for information seekers. It provides the remote access at worldwide level at a very faster rate.

## **LIBRARY PROFESSIONALS**

*A profession is defined as “ a calling requiring specialized knowledge often long and intensive preparation including instruction in skills and method as well as in the scientific, Historical, or scholarly principles underlying such skills and methods, maintaining by force of organization or concerned opinion, high standards of achievement and conduct and committing its members to continued study and to a kind of work which has for its prime purpose the rendering of a public service” (krishnakumar 2008).*

Library professionals work for information organization, which are defined as those entities that deliver information based solution to a given market. The library professionals strategically use information in their job to advance the mission of the organization. This is accomplished through the development and management of information resources and services. The library professionals harness technology as a critical tool to accomplish their goals. They include, but are not limited to libraries, knowledge managers, chief information officers, web developers, information brokers and consultants.

## **LIBRARY IN OLD AGE**

In the ancient times, the libraries were considered as a mere depository of books and other documents. The library professionals were through as the custodian of these documents. The information was used to be stored in clay tablets, palm leaf and papyrus. The books were kept in lock and key. Everyone could not have an access to them and the documents were accessed by special persons. The main duty of librarian was preserve the collection and make them available to the special person.

But now the concept has been changed due to the swift developments of information technology. Change in the law of nature and the development of IT has entered very field of knowledge and library is not an exception. Because of which the conventional process and services of library have affected.

## **SKILL, KNOWLEDGE AND COMPETENCIES REQUIRED FOR LIBRARY PROFESSIONAL**

The basic goal of library and information profession has always been to provide access to information to those who need it. The activities realizing this goal have evolved and transformed over the year. For successful implementation of ICT knowledge and skill in this regard. Library and information professionals need to know the following:

- Collection development skill, collection processing skill
- ICT skill
- Information retrieval skill
- Staff and user education skill
- Knowledge resources -Books, periodicals, Internet etc

## ***Role of Library and Library Professionals: Today and Tomorrow***

- Technological facilities and resources: computer, online catalogues, websites, LAN file servers etc.
- Financial resources or budget and its management Human resources and its development.
- Should be professionally qualified
- Possess excellent communication skill
- Knowledge of users interaction with knowledge resources
- Acceptance of change, adaptive, flexible and resistant.
- Create awareness among the users , makes them accept the changes and understand the problem of users.

Librarians should have good knowledge of various subjects.

Librarians should have leadership quality, good administrator and make honest judgments. (Rajyalakshmi, 2004)

## **THE CURRENT TRENDS OF LIBRARIES**

The role and perception of libraries and information centres continue to change in 21<sup>st</sup> century. It is therefore, necessary to evaluate the effectiveness of library and information systems in the changing scenario. The changing scenario calls for skills and competencies beyond the daily operational skills. Today's library and information professionals are confronted with a broad range of challenges and opportunities to improve the effectiveness of their organizations, to respond better to the information needs of their communities, and to provide leadership in the information environment.

According to the Bhongade, Kude and Bharambe (2012), the development of information technology is playing a vital role in re-structuring of libraries. These days the e-publishing has become more popular in the digital environment. The electronic media, such as CD's, microfilms, videotape, e-mail, voice mail, video conferencing, animation, graphic picture, digital manuscripts, e-paper e-books, e-databases , INTERNET and other various documents in digital forms have been shifted the libraries from traditional system to digital and virtual system,

Therefore, different types of libraries have born in the society such as :

- Hybrid Library :- In the hybrid libraries, the printed material and as well as electronic material are available for users.
- Digital Library :- A library which is providing information to their users in digital form is called digital library. This digital information can be accessed remotely Via- Computer networks.
- Virtual Library :- "A library without walls" in which the collection do not exit on paper but electronically accessible in digital form via computer networks, particularly the INTERNET called a virtual library.
- Automated Library :- In this sort of library the activities of different sections of the Library acquisition, serial, circulation , cataloguing, Indexing, abstracting and other housekeeping operations are computerized.

## **LIBRARIES AND LIBRARIANS IN THE 21<sup>st</sup> CENTURY**

The libraries and librarians in the 21<sup>st</sup> century are going to work as disseminator of digital information rather than the custodian of information. A professional librarians needs to have a closer look at the existing skills for facing the challenges of today and tomorrow librarians with strong technological background will be essential in creating 21<sup>st</sup> century in library collection and services. To survive and sustain in the present environment, one should have the

combination of traditional and ICT related skills like digital archiving, content development, developing metadata, electronic database searches, network consortia access, video conferencing and knowledge of software etc. Some of important items of new technologies on which library professionals need to improve their effective utilization to deliver high quality services to the users are as follows

- Open source software- for library Automation
- Digital Information Resources- e-journal, e-books, Bibliographic Database
- Knowledge management
- Online publisher catalogue
- Web Technology – Web1.0, Web2.0, Web3.0
- E-learning, OPAC , Web-OPAC, world cat
- Metadata standard – MARC, Dublin core
- Digital presentation
- Smart card system
- Library security system – RFID, Surveillance technology
- RFID Technology- stock verification, security, circulation (Sarkar 2016)

Libraries services in 21<sup>st</sup> century:-

- Current Awareness services
- Selective dissemination of information services
- Document Delivery service
- CD- ROM service
- Access to Internet
- e-mail and Discussion
- Group and Bulletin Board Services etc

Now the information can be accessed 24\*7 instead of fixed hours. Hence, the digital revolution and network environment made the libraries without walls where the data and information can now be transmitted to all corner of the world.

## **CHALLENGING ROLE OF LIBRARY PROFESSIONALS**

The format of document has changed from paper to electronics and the information is now also extensively available in various media like CDs and DVDs. The librarianship is now facing a dual pressure of acquiring and processing of information in the form of both the prints as well as electronic and making its easy and convenient retrieval to the users according to their needs and requirements librarians are no more simply custodians of reading material, but they are the collectors, evaluation and disseminators of various type of information. Based on the requirements, new designations of library professionals have emerged like, Information managers, System managers, Information scientists, Cybrarians and other. They have now also been entrusted with the responsibility of the security of various electronic resources acquired by the libraries.

## ***Role of Library and Library Professionals: Today and Tomorrow***

The most issues and challenges that the library and information science professionals face in the present digital environment are: Copyright issues, privacy, manpower, collection of digital of e-resources, preservation of digital e-resources, organization structure, Technology challenges etc.

Basic challenges of library professionals are :-

- To impact basic knowledge to globalize products, methods and services.
- To build the necessary skills of new professionals and workers
- To expose the professionals to the latest development which directly or indirectly affect them.
- To broaden the aims of professional by providing opportunity for exchange the ideas and experiences.

### **CONCLUSION**

Librarian has a separate set of duties, function and responsibilities along with the general duties, functions and responsibilities of a professional librarian. To perform the different function related to these various roles, library professionals must possess the different skills and competences. In this situations, the role of library professionals demands a through knowledge of new technology by participating in orientation programme, personality development programme, workshop, national and international conference, refresher courses, etc. Due to digital revolution and IT environment, the role of libraries and library professionals has changed drastically. They are now not only the caretaker of a physical collection but also the information disseminator of learning resources. The library professionals of today and tomorrow will have to bring themselves at par with administrator in order to handle numerous spheres of professional activities.

### **REFERENCE**

- [1] Krishan Kumar , 2008. Library Organization. New Delhi: Vikas Publication. p. 233-34.
  - [2] Rajyalaxmi, D. 2004. Information Professionals: Knowledge and Skills for information Management, ILA Bulletin, 40 (3) P. 5-12.
  - [3] Bhongade, D N. Kude and Bharambe, V. 2012. Role of Library Professionals in Present ICT Era. International Journal of Research in Engineering, IT and social Sciences, 2 (11). P. 338-346.
  - [4] Sarkar, S. 2016. Role of Library Professionals in Digital Environment. Transformation of Library Services in Electronic era. P. 153-154.
-