



# Present Scenario of Library and Information Science Professionals in Changing Environment

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## Abstract :-

The information professionals of today must discharge their duties in a hybrid environment, one deals with traditional print documents but digital documents as well. To make digital information management a reality, Innovation and development of Information and Communication Technology (ICTS) and different library software and its application in the field of Library and Information Science (LIS) create changes in entire library management system. The present study highlights the pre scenarios of LIS profession and the professionals in this changing environment. The new roles of professionals especially as advocate, consortia manager, researcher, LIS schools to upgrade managerial skills of LIS professionals to be fit for the changed situation are discussed. The study are the prospects and opportunities to cope with the changes in Library world from traditional to di environment.

**Key Words:-** Hybrid library, Automated library, Information Technology, Digital library, Virtual library, Information engineer, Information manager.

## INTRODUCTION

Rapid advances in information technologies have revolutionized the role of libraries. As are libraries face new challenges, competitors, demands, and expectations. Libraries are redesign services and information products to add value to their services and to satisfy the changing inform needs of the user community. Traditional libraries are still handling largely printed materials the expensive and bulky. Information seekers are no longer satisfied with only printed materials. They to supplement the printed information with more dynamic electronic resources. Demands for d information are increasing. Nevertheless for Library and Information Science (LIS) professionals, a change is often linked. Modern information technologies and management issues. Over the past few decades, the nature library environment and mode of service has changed drastically. With the development and application of information and communication technologies (ICTs) library environment has shifted from the traditional library to hybrid library, then automated library then digital library and virtual library and presently it is shifted to Library 2.0. With such changes structure and nature of library and side by side the LIS profession has also changed in a dynamic Now in this present situation the LIS professionals are playing all-round multimodal roles to satisfy different approaches of the end users.

## Statement of the Problem

LIS research has been changing from traditional topics to diversified topics in view of emerging trends in library management and services viz., LIS Education, ICT application in library services and management, Library Automation and Networking, Digital Library and Institutional Repositories, Web Technologies, Open Access Movement and Open Access Resources, Library Management, TQM, Benchmarking Practices, Knowledge Management etc. In the field of library and information science researches, the Colleges, University Departments and the Professional Library Associations have taken initiatives for the arrangement of continuing education programme, organising national and international seminars, workshops and conferences. Now-a-days many universities and institutions are organising national and international seminars, conferences, workshops, training programmes etc which are supported by many funding agencies like UGC, New Delhi, CSIR, New Delhi, AICTE, New Delhi, ICMR, ICAR, ICSSR ICCR, ICPR, DST, DBT etc. on the contemporary topics of research and studies in across the disciplines.

Library and Information Science has been an emerging disciplines and being recognised world wide as the library or learning resource centres which are one of the important components of any academic institutions like colleges, universities & research institutions including other Institutions of higher learning. Library and Learning Resources Centre has been established as one of the vital component and hub of all the teaching –learning activities. Therefore, the Library and Information Science as one of the important professional subject has been growing tremendously in the last century and also in the present century, which has been evident from the various events like seminar, conference and workshop being organized by educational institutions, professional agencies. The events are advertised by means of publishing seminar and conference brochures. These brochures include all the details of the events. It is a communication between the organizers and the participants. Therefore the statement of the problem of the study is “Present Scenario of Library and Information Science Professionals in Changing Environment”.

**Scope of the study:-** Library and information professional communities are being affected by a range of ICT developments and so find their roles changing worldwide. Technology alone cannot help bring about the required changes. Attitudes, practices, and policies need to change if libraries in India are to truly benefit themselves and their community of users by the application of new technologies.

## Review Of Literature

The literature review is an important part of any research work. Review of related literature is conducted to enable the researcher to get a clear understanding about the specific field of study. It also helps the researcher to have an insight into the tested methods, procedures and interpretations of similar studies conducted elsewhere. Research studies in Library and Information Science have many library and information sciences researchers most of the studies investigated the general trends and characteristic of these and dissertations. Review of Literature is an early step for conducting research. It enables to avoid the duplication of research work and broadens the understanding of the research problem. Wikipedia defines literature review as “a body of text that aims to review the critical points of current knowledge including substantive findings as well as theoretical and methodological contributions to a particular topic.”

According to Cooper (1988) '... a literature review uses as its database reports of primary or original scholarship, and does not report new primary scholarship itself. The primary reports used in the literature may be verbal, but in the vast majority of cases reports are written documents. The types of scholarship may be empirical, theoretical, critical/analytic, or methodological in nature. Second a literature review seeks to describe summaries, evaluate,

clarify and/or integrate the content of primary reports. Some studies are comprehensive in nature and covered all types of e-resources. Some are specific to the use of e-journals only. Also, there were many studies conducted on the topic "Current trends in LIS Research and seminars conferences and workshops" various kind of related information source are to collected from primary to secondary source literature. Primary source include text books and secondary source include journals, unpublished materials and seminars proceedings etc.

For the present paper , many literatures like "Recent Trends in Library Science" "Trends and issues in LIS education in India " "Information and Communication Technology" web resources etc have been consulted from University Library. Besides that related research papers from many State, Regional, National and international journals have been scanned for review purpose. Literature data is an essential part of any research work because it helps one to be aware of findings and principles of different aspects involved in carrying out the work. In order to have in-depth insights into the subject matters, various types of documents from primary and secondary sources have been consulted to have a detailed background of the study and identify the gaps in this area of research. Review of some selected literatures is presented below:

**Singh and Malhan**, conducted a study on "*Trends and Issues in LIS Education in India*". Their study is based on review of literature, interviews with students, employers and experts, and personal experience of the authors. The purpose of this study was to identify the emerging trends and lingering issues in Library and Information Science (LIS) education in India, and give suggestions to align LIS education programs with job- market and end-user expectations.

**Laksmi** (1998) in her book "*Recent Trends in Library Science*" discussed about the transformation of libraries from traditional to modern one with changes in its resources from the conventional print to the digital resources. Moreover, challenges for Librarianship are discussed in detailed way.

**Mangla** (1998) in his paper on "*Library and Information Science Education: Trends and issues*", pointed out that the research in LIS in the past was considered primarily to provide a theoretical foundation to professional practice. The roots of research in LIS profession appears to be not very deep. Research in library science during the twentieth century in the areas of LIS can be traced to the Library School of the University of Chicago, in mid-1920s. The visionary efforts of the Chicago School bore abundant fruit and offered leadership to the world in library science research (Shera 1976, 145). The pace of library research is picking up everywhere today due to social pressure, as well as, inspiration. In justifying the Ph.D. programme in our profession, it has been urged that "*if librarianship aspires to become a profession, it should depend upon research to develop its knowledge base and its theoretical framework*" (Wilkinson 1983, 39).

**Singh** (2003) conducted a study on "*Library and Information Science Education in India: Issues and Trends*" and traces the emergence of library and information science (LIS) education in India before and after independence. It describes the current status, the different patterns and levels of LIS education, as well as the research programmes being offered by various universities, provides an overview of the institutions providing LIS courses at various levels through regular courses and open schools, emphasizes the need for having a national level accreditation body to maintain uniformity and standards in LIS education. It also discusses the problems affecting the status of LIS education and suggests ways to solve these problems and the approaches to prepare the LIS professionals to face the growing challenges of the job market.

## THE CURRENT TRENDS

Emergence of Internet and Communication Technology (ICT) libraries has been acquiring different approaches of the same and mode of service is changed. Therefore, different types of libraries have born in society, such as:

**Hybrid library**:-The hybrid library is a term used to describe libraries containing a mix of traditional print library



resources and the growing number of electronic resources. Hybrid libraries are mixes of printed books and magazines, as well as electronic materials such as downloadable audio books, electronic journals, e-books, etc. Hybrid libraries are the new norm in most public and academic libraries (Rai 2007).

**Automated library:** - A library where access points and housekeeping operations are computerized is called an automated library. The graphic records are still print-on-paper publication (Sharma, 2005), <https://drtc.isibang.ac.in/handle/1849/407>.

**Digital library:-** A library in which a significant proportion of the resources are available in machine-readable format (as opposed to print or microform), accessible by means of computers.

**Virtual library:-** The access point as well as the graphic records are in electronic/digital form when these electronic/digital libraries are connected via various networks, particularly the INTERNET, this is called virtual library. A "library without walls" in which the collections do not exist on paper, microform, or other tangible form at a physical location but are electronically accessible in digital format via computer networks. Such libraries exist only on a very limited scale, but in most traditional print-based libraries in the United States, catalogs and periodical indexes are available online, and some periodicals and reference works may be available in electronic full-text. Some libraries and library systems call themselves "virtual" because they offer online services (example: Colorado Virtual Library) (Castelli, 2006).

**Library 2.0:-** Library 2.0 is a loosely defined model for a modernized form of library service that reflects a transition within the library world in the way that services are delivered to users. The focus is on user-centered change and participation in the creation of content and community. The concept of Library 2.0 borrows from that of Business 2.0 and Web 2.0 and follows some of the same underlying philosophies. Library 2.0 model gives library users a participatory role in the services libraries offer and the way they are used. Customers, should they desire, will be able to tailor library services to best meet their own needs. This can be done electronically, such as through the personalization of library web pages, or physically through new service options such as allowing customers to call impromptu book talks or discussion groups. Such collaborative efforts require librarians to develop a more intensive routine or soliciting customer response and regularly evaluating and updating services (Casey, 2006).

**TOWARDS NEW PARADIGM** From the concept of custodian, the LIS professionals are now engaged in different science knowledge manager, cybrarian and so on. This is due to the sea change in the content developer, world. The Information world is now undergoing through a transitional period. Now the world is shifting from a Library-centered to an information-centered society. Resources are shifting from Paper based documents to predominantly digital documents, that is, using search engines, online databases, data mining, etc.

LIS professionals are facing three major changes, that is, the transition from paper to electronic and multimedia resources; increasing demand for accountability; and new forms of work organization. To cope with the situation, it has become imperative for the LIS professionals to get continuous exposure of new technologies, regular professional updating and greater control over the information resources.

## ROLES OF LIS PROFESSIONALS

Presently, librarians are playing an integrated role beyond their traditional job. In a fast changing world, there are new demands and influences on libraries and information centers. Using modern technologies, libraries all over the world are now shifting their emphasis from traditional to multidimensional work force. As a corollary to this, LIS professionals are supposed to play versatile role in different areas of libraries and information centers to meet the expectations and needs of the present situation.

As the number of digital libraries grows, the role of the traditional librarian needs to be re-examined in the light of this new environment. Sreenivasulu (2000) authored one of the earliest papers looking at this aspect with particular reference to the emergence of the digital librarian'. The paper describes an array of roles for the digital librarian and discusses the competencies, skills and professional education and training needed by the digital librarians.

### **Advocate**

LIS professionals act as lawyer when they deal with the issue relating to law such as copyright law, intellectual property right, etc. Librarian champion the cause of academic libraries through various advocacy programs to promote the library and resources. They can communicate news about the library through newsletters, web sites and memos to parents and staff. Their job is to keep principals and teachers up to date on what is happening in the library and to promote library activities and special projects. "Schools are learning communities encompassing students, teachers, administrators and parents (Baule, 1999)". Librarians must communicate the mission, goals and objectives of the resource centre to the entire user community (Scheirer, 2000).

### **Researcher**

LIS professionals have played a crucial role in research process. They are highly skilled in the research process Halder 095 and possess a unique knowledge of both the breadth and depth of information resources in various subject specialties. Their active participations in research teams are very much important to critical analysis. By facilitating access to nascent information in the way to finding it, analyzing, synthesizing and packaging the LIS professionals would move to the beginning of the information production cycle, playing a more substantial role in the information creation process. Teams within an organization should have an information professional who is responsible for the information gathering skills of the team (Rao and Babu, 2001). To fulfill research work in least possible time the help of LIS professionals is inescapable. They are always happy to help by providing organized information in right time on the basis of research scholar's demand.

### **Consortia manager**

The LIS professional for Consortium operations is responsible for coordinating and overseeing consortium operations, including strategic planning, systems development and project management. Related responsibilities include facilitating communication among the participating libraries. In addition to these responsibilities, 094 Int. J. Lib. Inf. Sci. the Librarian for Consortium Operations acts as the consortium's representative with vendors for contracted products and services.

### **Cybrarian**

In the present scenario library is changing into cyberspace. Convention libraries are losing their importance with each passing day. New developments in this field such as library automation, library computerization, e-library provide new dimensions to the library system and librarianship. This change have transformed the librarian into something new, a cybrarian.

We have seen how the role of librarian has evolved, the image has changed and the name has taken different denominations through time :

- Librarian
- Documentalist
- Information broker
- Information mediator

- Information specialist Information Professional
- Information engineer
- Infonomist
- Information manager
- Knowledge manager

## CHALLENGES OF LIS PROFESSIONALS

There is always a debate on the roles of libraries especially in the present era. The frequently asked questions are:

i. Are Libraries "inefficient, limited, obsolete".

ii. Is there a need for Libraries and Librarians in the electronic age?

We have already discussed the various activities of LIS professionals in the light of present situation. But it should be kept in mind that professional and social acceptances of the profession depend upon the skills, attitudes and behaviors of the professionals.

Due to the changes in the working environment of libraries the LIS professionals are facing challenges day by day. Not only in the internal activities of the libraries but the demands of the user's expectations are also changing relating to information and communication technologies. The users' expectations always seem to exceed library's capacity in terms of documents, infrastructure facilities, finance, staff etc. So, the LIS professionals have to choose whether he or she will manage and/or control the events that impact their workforce and produce stress or to allow stress to manage them.

## REQUIRED SKILLS FOR LIS PROFESSIONALS

The electronic environment of the 21st century will demand a range of skills from by Library and Information Science (LIS) professionals, including: i. Technical skills. ii. Information Technology (IT) skills. iii. Managerial skill (Sridhar, 2004).

According to National Knowledge Commission, India, skills required fulfilling the changing role of libraries are:

i. Library and information handling skills. ii. Service orientation. iii. ICT knowledge skills. iv. Communication and training skills. v. Marketing and presentation skills. vi. Understanding of cultural diversity. vii. Knowledge mapping skills

## CONCLUSION

Presumably the spirit of LIS professional should be elevated if he can better review his shadypast and analyze more completely and objectively his present problems. Library and information professional communities are being affected by a range of ICT developments and so find their roles changing worldwide. A librarian with diverse talents and training, and who is flexible, will be able to meet the challenges of future library scene. The container of information is not only the print materials but this is the age we are living where a huge rate of information born in digital format. Technology alone cannot help bring about the required changes. Attitudes, practices, and policies need to change if libraries in India are to truly benefit themselves and their community of users by the application of new technologies. LIS professionals have been playing a versatile role beyond their traditional job. They have to gather adequate knowledge of computer and communication technologies, networks and networking, operating systems, Internet concepts, database management systems, along with adequate

practical exposure to handle technological devices. In mobilization of all kinds of information resources librarians are expected to work as pathfinders by assisting all users with varied backgrounds and abilities through information supportive environment and multiple strategies. In single sentence, the core objectives of LIS professionals are unchanged whereas the mode of services is changing to cope with paradigm shifts.

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