



Management of Academic Library in 21st Century

Smt. Sunanda Vikas Patil

Librarian

Sahakarbhushan S. K. Patil College, Kurundwad

Corresponding Author –Smt. Sunanda Vikas Patil

DOI - 10.5281/zenodo.17275209

Abstract:

Academic libraries are the backbone of higher education institutions. In the past, their main function was to collect, organize and provide access to printed resources. However, in the twenty-first century, with the growth of ICT, globalization, and e-learning, the management of academic libraries has changed drastically. Modern academic libraries must focus on digital services, remote accessibility, and user-friendly interfaces while ensuring traditional resources are also maintained. This paper discusses the challenges opportunities and strategies in managing academic libraries in the 21st century.

Introduction:

Academic libraries are the backbone of Higher Education institutions. In the past their main function was to collect organize and provide access to printed resources in 21st century academic libraries have more from being primarily custodians of print collection to functional units integral to teaching Research and learning ecosystem Modern Academy must focus on Digital Services remote accessibility and user friendly interfaces while ensuring traditional resources are also maintained

Changing Role of Academic Libraries:

- From store house of books to knowledge and information hubs.
- Integration of digital resources (E-books, E-journals, E-Database, etc.)
- Adoption of learning resource centers (LRCs)
- User focused services like information literacy programs.

Key Challenges in 21st Century:

- 1. Digital transformation:** In digital era concept of book as a source of knowledge has been replaced by the concepts of document or information. Modern era librarian in the digital environment must be sound in the storage, retrieval and dissemination of information with the aid of information communication technology, this maybe through computer, internet, email, CD rom, slides, teaching aids, Android mobile, fax machine etc. The libraries are digitized to technical section, circulation section, and serial control section. Libraries must store large volume of information in digital form. The print literature is easy to store and managed for effective use, but preserve the resources would be difficult task.
- 2. Budget Constraints:** Rising cost of Digital subscription in an academic library face reduces budget. It is difficult to maintain subscription to costly academic journals and data bases or to invest in new technologies.

The cost structure of a resources is not fixed as in case of print information products. The cost of acquiring library materials both physical and digital content to increase. Library facing shrinking budget which directly impact on library management. Over all operations of the library can be hampered affecting the services and resources available to patrons. Budget constraints are major challenge for library. Librarians first step is to managing budget constraints is to develop a strategic plan.

3. Information overload: The information atmosphere around the world is changing every minutes. Information Revolution has changed the role of librarian from traditional librarian to information scientist. Because of information explosion user are often overwhelmed by the quantity of information rather than its quality. Managing quality and authenticity of information role of libraries are to act as information navigators, guide to users in filtering, authenticating and citing information. Train students and researches to identify, evaluate and use information effectively. It is a continuous process in the digital age. The true value of a library lies not in how much information it holds, but it how effectively it helps users. Find the right information at right time is challenging job.

4. Copyright and Licensing Issues: As libraries increasingly deal with digital resources navigating copy right laws, fair use, and licensing agreements become more complex. This challenge is particularly pertinent when providing access to open access resources and digitizing materials. The library is responsible for maintaining the awareness of all users about copy right issues. librarians responsibility is to formulate library policies for photocopy, digital access, and resource sharing, and maintain documentation of licenses and copyright permissions.

5. Training and Skill Development of staff:

Human element is very important aspect in any institution. The most challenging job of librarian is to change mindset of staff to adopt new technology. If library purchases automation software, digital library software, it is must to train the library staff and updates them time to time. Conduct workshops, seminars. Online training program, skill development program on problem solving and leadership abilities. Communication skill, searching, evaluating and using information is not optional but essential. Skilled and updated staff are the backbone of modern academic library.

6. Smart infrastructure: Today libraries are smart knowledge hubs. Smart infrastructure in libraries refers to use of Wi-Fi enabled campus, smart library management system, RFID technology for self check and checkout. OPAC, automated circulation and reservation systems, flexibility study rooms, discussion pod and digital lab. By adopting all these things libraries saves time, increases accessibility to global knowledge. If library provides comfortable, flexible and modern access to knowledge users attracts towards library.

Role of Academic Libraries:

1. Knowledge Access and Management:

Provide access to physical and digital resources (e-books, e- journals, databases, open access materials) preserve scholarly content, including institutional repositories and special collection.

2. Support for Research and Innovation:

Assist with literature searches citation management and systematic reviews supports scholarly publishing, including copyright guidance and open access publishing.

3. Technology and digital literacy: Equip students and faculty with digital skills for

research, writing and publishing, guide user in navigation misinformation and online sources.

4. Teaching and learning support:

Collaborate with faculty in curriculum design, embedding information literacy into courses. Provide academic support Services.

5. Community and collaboration Hub: Act as a physical and virtual meeting point for students, researchers and faculty. Support interdisciplinary collaboration through shared spaces and digital platform.

6. Preservation of cultural and intellectual Heritage: Digitize and reserve rare manuscript, archives and local knowledge. Promote awareness of cultural identity heritage and history within academia.

7. Automation and Library Management System: Use software for smooth functioning of library. Digital tools and information technologies to perform traditional library task such as cataloging, circulation, acquisition and reference services. Software manages all these functions in one system. Software also helps to digital search systems replacing card catalogue(OPAC). Software helps librarian to daily routine work and save the time of library staff as well as users.

8. Sustainable Practices: Libraries adopt sustainable practices to reduce environmental impact. A sustainable library focuses on eco-friendly infrastructure, digital transformation, energy conservation and green initiatives. Libraries designs eco-friendly building with natural light and ventilation, using solar panels, rainwater harvesting. Libraries reduce

use of paper by promoting e- resources and online databases.

Conclusion:

The management of academic libraries in the 21st century require adaptability, innovation and user centric approaches. Librarian need to balance traditional resources with digital Services, ensuring accessibility. Academic libraries will continue to evolve as dynamic knowledge centers playing a vital role in higher education and research.

References:

1. Singh, J. and Kour, A.(2020) Digital transformation in academic libraries. library Herald.
2. 2.Ahmed Khan, Shekeda, etc : Digital libraries the present scenario. ILA Bulletin 39 (I) 2003
3. Gessesse, K (2000).:Collection development and Management in the 21st century with special reference to academic librararies: A overview.(https://doi.org/10.1108/0143512001037255)
4. Pandita Naina (2009). Collection Development in Digital Era, (<http://openmed.nic.in/73/01/iaslicpaper1.Pdf>)
5. www. google.com
6. Jirage, A. C. and Patole, S. P.: Changing Role of Academic Libraries.National Conference on Changing Trends in Academic Libraries and Librarianship in Digital Environment 25th- 26th Feb.2024