



Libraries as Centers of Learning and Innovation

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Abstract:

In the twenty-first century, the function of libraries and librarian has sparked intense intellectual debates Among many individuals. The use of information and communication technologies for library operations and activities, as well as the growing amount of information available, particularly on the internet, are largely to blame for this. This has led to a number of presumptions, hypotheses, legislation, and claims that have attempted to cast doubt on the reality of libraries, librarians, and the information science profession. In light of this, this study aims to highlight the functions of libraries, librarians, and other information professionals in the twenty-first century in order to pique people's curiosity and help them understand the importance of libraries and librarians in the modern information society.

Keywords: 21st Century Information, Libraries, Librarians, and The Profession of Library and Information

Introduction:

Libraries were once thought of as places to preserve both used and unused books to keep them safe from theft or destruction. In addition, Momoh (2018) noted that a large number of students in postsecondary educational institutions utilized the library as a reading area during exams. This was due to the fact that many believed the library to be a distraction free space that could ultimately promote quicker comprehension and assimilation. Technologies that supported operations in both the general world and the field of librarianship have rapidly developed and changed throughout the past century. This increased awareness of the field of librarianship. As a result, librarians' responsibilities changed from simply keeping books to managing records and information. As a result, ideas like digitization, data science, and knowledge management developed. In keeping with the fifth Law of Library Science

(Ranganathan 1931), which asserts that "library is a developing organism, "many libraries have embraced and incorporated computers and other technologies in to their operations in order to satisfy the demands of their patrons in the twenty-first century. The conclusion that the aforementioned elements are to blame for the discipline's name change from library science to library and information science and, more recently, to library and information technology may not be far from the truth (Momoh 2018). The review of main and secondary literature, including journals, online articles, conference, proceedings, and seminar papers, served as the foundation for this investigation.

Conceptual Framework:

The term or idea of "Library" has several definitions. The idea can be viewed from a variety of angles, such as a library as an institution or as a building. Both viewpoints are entwined and

connected. In the past, libraries were thought to be places where information was preserved. However, Adeniran (2017) noted that the concept of a library has taken on a new meaning due to the emergence of ICT, which resulted in the introduction of new information formats. Accordingly, she described a library as "a place where information resources are accessed and information services are offered by experts who specialize in locating, gathering, organizing, processing information sources as well as interpreting information needs" However she pointed out that the terms "place" might also apply to a gathering or a constructed structure. From a fundamental perspective, a library is a location where print and electronic information resources are kept and made available to a specific audience for their own use. These resources may have restricted or unrestricted access. As a result, some libraries require a subscription. Library serve as a hubs for the production and exchange of knowledge. They serve as knowledge repositories and storage facilities in both print and digital versions. Therefore, the purpose of any library up to this point has been to spread knowledge to a certain audience. However, this audience differs depending on the setting.

What Makes Libraries Exist?

The main topic conversation among people, particularly those without strong ties to the library and information science fields, is the subject of why libraries exist in any setting. Two schools of thought have emerged as a result. There are two schools that support and oppose the creation of libraries. Libraries are used in academic and research settings to give its patrons up-to-date information. In addition, they help consumers locate pertinent information resources for their needs. Libraries act as links in the social

environment to create knowledge repositories and enhance human cognitive abilities. This can be achieved by offering up-to-date and pertinent knowledge resources that can both nurture the human mind and quench the thirst of illiteracy. Due to the development of social media, the internet, and online search engines like Google, Yahoo, and others there has been much debate about the necessity of libraries. Nevertheless, it is possible to overstate the importance of libraries and librarians in any community.

A Comparison of Libraries' Present and Last Century Role:

It is impossible to fully describe the tasks and functions that libraries and librarians conduct in the twenty-first century. Omeluzor et al. (2013) supported this claim by arguing that a library's importance cannot be summed up in a few pages. They continued by saying that the development of information and communication technology (ICT) as a tool for information accessibility and distribution did not weaken or downgrade the significance of a library instead, it has improved the library's reputation. When discussing the social and cultural functions of libraries, Idowu (2007) quickly pointed out that libraries support the preservation and organization of artifacts, concepts, and outstanding literary, artistic and scientific works for both current and future patrons. Records and archival management, a subfield of library and information science, has evolved as a result of this progress. Libraries are place to preserve the papers and cultural objects, according to Ekpwele et al. (2011). In this research, Halder (2009) indentified additional responsibilities for librarians, such as web design, knowledge management, consultant, content manager facilitators, lobbying and advocacy, and consortia manager.

S/N	ROLES	LAST CENTURY	PRESENT CENTURY
1	Custodian	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Selecting and caring for physical materials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing access to electronic and physical materials Maintaining specialized knowledge of digital databases Evaluating electronic materials and acquiring licenses
2.	Guide	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assisting users in finding relevant materials 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Educating patrons about use of digital library services and generalized digital literacy Providing virtual services to users, often through library websites
3.	PR Officer	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintaining connections with community institutions and other libraries 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Developing relationship with database manager Host in community events Partnering with other libraries to increase access to materials

Setting Up The 21st Century Librarian for Successful Service Providance:

It is clear from the above that the 21st century librarian has a lot on their plate. According to several academics, librarians must have certain abilities that will make them relevant given the present trend and the use of information technology in library operations. Some of these abilities include the following, according to Ugwu and EZeani (2012) • Proficiency in information technology • the ability to manage • individual entrepreneurial abilities • Technical proficiency • Proficiency in information literacy.

21st Century Enterprenurial Opportunities for Librarians:

There will be less jobs for librarians, notwithstanding the belief held by many that the field of library and information science will disappear with the development of ICT. According to Galeon (2017), who cited Stephen Hawking, jobs are being replaced by intelligent machines. The field of librarianship will become mostly irrelevant as a result. In contrast, Momoh (2018) has outlined some business options for the 21st century librarian in order to refute this fact.

1. Data analysis and research, while data analysis deals with the collection, processing, and assumption making of data that may eventually result in the development of theories and laws, research is concerned with conducting inquiries into specific areas. A 21st Century librarian must master both the advanced and basic stages of conducting research because it is thought that research is life and that without it, the world would not exist. Numerous library activities require research.
2. Analysis of information. This area of librarianship is still developing. Librarians in the twenty-first century ought to be able to evaluate data for customers in any format.
3. Database Management: Databases are repositories that make a lot of information accessible. Therefore, the ability to manage a database is essential for the librarians in the twenty-first century. Effective service delivery particularly in the twenty-first century, requires a thorough understanding of keywords that might facilitate information retrieval.

4. Social Media Management: Social media has been integrated into library services and information sharing since the term of century. Therefore, it is critical that the people in the twenty-first century have the ability to handle several social media accounts. These accounts can be found on Facebook, Twitter, LinkedIn, and other platforms.

The 21st Century Librarian and Technology:

Thiel (2014) defined technology as "any new and improved way of doing things". Without holding back, technology has helped and simplified library operations in a number of ways. According to Viyakumar and Vijayan (2011), some advantages include the following:

1. Working together and establishing library network.
2. A decrease in the workload of employees.
3. Users get 24-hour access to library services
4. Providing library patrons with effective and efficient service.
5. Unrestricted access to knowledge from many sources
6. More recent data
7. Information accessibility in various formats
In light of aforementioned, a 21st century librarian needs to be proficient with information and communication technologies.

This will assist in achieving optimal efficiency and productivity at work. A basic understanding of computer software and operations is essential for a librarian in the twenty-first century.

Word processing software, graphic design, web design, etc. are a few examples.

Conclusion:

Libraries are now seen as agents of development and change in any society they are a

part of rather than just places to keep books. In order to stop the spread of disinformation and ignorance many people who are finally aware of the potential concealed in the area of librarianship are establishing libraries in various communities. Because of this, the climate for information provision in the twenty-first century competitive. In order to satisfy the demands of patrons, libraries and librarians must modify and create their various programs and services. Librarians must make an effort to package themselves to satisfy the wants and demands of their diverse customer base because their unique selling proposition is the capacity to deliver accurate, authentic, current, and up-to-date information to consumers in numerous formats. Over time, this will improve the reputation of libraries, librarians, and the field of librarianship as a whole.

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