



Skills of Library and Information Professionals in Digital Era

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Abstract

Information communication technology (ICT) enormously affects each field of the society like horticulture, wellbeing, schooling, business, enterprises, etc. Libraries are not exemption for these high-speed changes occur in the society. ICT has changed the general working of the libraries. The present study also provided a platform to LIS professionals to find the area of focus to learn and update their ICT skills in digital environment by LIS professionals for efficient delivery of library services for the betterment of the library as a whole. Today's librarian needs to update and upgrade themselves with the latest skillbase technology so that they can survive in technology driven era.

Keywords: - Information Communication technology, Digital Library, LIS Professionals

Introduction

ICT proficiency has become fundamental for the library professionals to take on the arising mechanical changes and full the digital information need of the users/stakeholders inside limited capacity to focus time. The current study aims to assess the current ICT literacy among library professionals and determines the need for training and orientation in ICT-based resources and services for library. The professionals of library and information science (LIS) must have an understanding of the social and personal needs of their clients to fulfil their informational needs. This has been attested to be a few recent studies. Therefore, many universities and institutions have incorporated personal skill improvement training courses into their curriculum. The knowledge about the methods of information identification, collection, organization handling and dissemination has also been incorporated as a core subject of specialization for information professionals. Besides, the technological boom in the recent decades has enhanced the need for information professionals to possess advanced technological skills.

Skill for the Library Professional

Skill is an ability or proficiency in execution or performance, which is required for a person to plan and execute an action designed to achieve some goals or accomplish a particular task. A skilled person has the ability to perform any task successfully. He can face the challenges occurs in a particular profession because of the social, economic, education and technological changes. Thus, in order to cope up with the ever-changing library and information science profession, the library professional must be a skilled professional. As the borderless library is fully a web-based digital library, so the library professional should be more acquainted with technological skill and so this skill should be enhanced among the working professionals.

Technological Skills

Technological skills mean those skills which are required to handle information technology and its other related fields such as computer operation, telecommunication medias, creation of online database, designing of websites, searching information from internet etc. As the borderless libraries are nothing but the advanced application of information technology on the library, so the library professional should have to familiar with the skills to handle IT and its application in the library environment in the relevant context.

Technological skills needed for a library professional can be discussed as follows

Computer and Information Technological Tools using Skill

The librarian in the cyber world must have the skill of using computer and other information technological tools properly. Because quality of the library services is dependant on the quality of the librarian's performance. Skill of computer operation, application of bar code technology, creation of database and its up dating, designing and updating of web pages etc are required for the web-based librarians.



Skill of using Internet and Computer Communication Networks

Skills of handling different computer communication networking architectures and systems i.e. LAN, MAN, and WAN as well as using of internet and other library related networks like INFLIBNET, CALIBNET, DELNET etc are required for a modern library professional working in IT environment to tackle the problems and challenges raised in building and maintaining a digital web-based library. Speedy resource sharing and dissemination of information is possible only with the proper computer networking skills. Moreover, the library and information professionals should have the knowledge of network protocols like TCP/IP, UDP, SMTP, HTTP, FTP etc.

Skill Enhancement of Library Professional:

Basic Level: In this level, importance is given in developing necessary professional skills required for a library professional for giving services to each user by using different Information Technology tools.

Advanced Level: In Advanced level training, areas like designing and architecture of computer networks system, developing web pages and databases as well as developing application-programming packages, troubleshooting of IT related tools etc. are included

The following steps can be adopted for the skill enhancement of library professional in a right track.

1. Library science school should introduce skill-based curriculum providing more provision of specialization
2. Timely updating the syllabus and the facility of well-equipped computer laboratory to cope up with the frequently changed technological environment are highly necessary
3. Short term courses for skill enhancement of library worker should be arranged by different professional associations & universities.
4. Different seminars, workshops, conferences etc. should be organized by different professional organization and opportunity should be made for the professionals in participating in such seminars, workshops etc.
5. The professionals should be highly encouraged in developing their professional skills by Participating in advanced studies, research programmes etc.
6. Provision should be made for the library personnel to interact with the different professionals and experts who are working in such developed digital borderless libraries.

ICT Benefits for Libraries

Information and communication technology globally is probably experiencing a huge effect on libraries operations. In various areas and facets of our society, ICTs are important and practical tools for sustainable development. ICTs offer a way of achieving developmental objectives in a variety of fields, including business, agriculture health, and education. Adoption of ICTs in education has resulted in the computerization of conventional materials including books, journals, newspapers, and other library resources for information. Additionally, because of this, there is now a virtual library. With the use of ICT, educational scholars may easily access current literature resources. ICTs also promote cross-locational collaboration among scholars. Technology advancements and advances have permitted advancements with the creation of a library and information science program. The LIS profession has difficulties as a result of numerous causes, despite the UGC's efforts in designing the modular curriculum and requiring all educational institutions to adapt their curricula to include additional Technology elements. Inadequate equipment for practical ICT-focused instruction. The issues that library science institutions deal with include a lack of ICT educated personnel, a lack of consistency in course content, an abundance of programs and students, a need of certification, a shortage of financing sources, and others.



Conclusion

The Role of the librarian in the digital or electronic era has become more important. The information explosion and beyond the control of the information overflowing create lots of problems. No one stands alone library in the world acquired all the published information. Billions of web pages, blogs, e-journals, e-books, e-database and so on. E-resources are published every day and available on the web. But the users are not able to search the required information. They heavily depend upon the google and other search engines. Most of the user is not getting their required information on the web. The information available on the net is free always not available. Users find some important information on the net but the information provider generally asks money in Pound, Dollar or in Euro. In such a situation the Librarian can help the users with their special skills and knowledge regarding various resources in the form of printed and non-printed. The role of the librarian has changed in the digital library era. Each and every librarian has to acquire new skills required for developing and managing the digital libraries. The library and information professionals are required to acquire such knowledge and skills. It is today's need and if we fail to do so then the people will acquire our place which is not a good sign for the pure LIS profession

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