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The Prospects of Library and Information Science Professionals in Post-Industrial Era

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Abstract

The world is changing in every movement. Changes in society and demand for information, utilization have forced the LIS professional for more effective and efficient ways to provide services. This paper highlights the futures prospects, impact of IT, application of web 2.0, benefit of internet, new and core skills measure to cop up with the challenges. In working environment each and individuals required professional strength and awareness to improve the weaknesses.

Key words: Required skill, Future role of professional, Impact of IT, Web 2.0, Strength, Weakness.

Introduction

The beginnings of the 21st century appear a new era of human life with a number of very significant changes, both positive and negatives at the rapid speed. These changes are causing due to: *Firstly* Knowledge, today is deemed to be the primary superpower that provides energies to deals with human development and growth and combat every negative force. New knowledge arises out of R&D in science and technology, social science, and humanities.

Secondly in general all aspects of technology, specially information and Communication Technology is the chief enabling agent of these change at the same time digital technology that is being widely applied to all process of information storage retrieval and communication.

The introduction of new technology in the library has brought about sea-changes in various services provided by modern libraries. Rapid change in modern technology and communication has raise the need for acquire new skill and knowledge in the present day working environment. The advent of modern technologies have revolutionized the library and information operation by opening up new possibilities in collecting, organizing, disseminating and providing access to the vast volume of information in accordance with the specific needs of groups of people or an individual.

Required Strengths for Future Professionals:-

It is true that each and every professionals has occupies the essential qualities of professions which known as the professional strengths. The prospected areas of strength are as follows,

- LIS professionals to deal with subject classification and indexing, designing classification scheme and thesaurus construction searching techniques in information retrieval, abstracting, condensation and consolidation and repackaging, intimate knowledge of information and development of information products.
- Present LIS Professionals have computer and communication skill and get-in-depth training in software package designs, use of software package, as part of their professional education.
- At present, it is an exposure only but in courses may be offered in knowledge management by enterprising LIS schools.

- LIS Professionals are managing the R & D complexes, Industrial Undertaking, Business enterprises, in science and Technology, social science, Humanities and Cultural centre and such information institutions with considerable success.
- It is generally recognized that LIS Professional performance involve a unique combination of intellectual process, managerial abilities, communication and computer skills, all at a fairly high level. Further strengthened to be take care of future needs and demands.

Analysis Weaknesses to Improve:-

Although there are so many professionals strength but there are so many weaknesses to improve. The areas of improvement in the context of Information Society may be narrated as

- Knowledge Management comparatively a new discipline in the context of fierce competition in National and International industrial and business house.
- New Professional skills like collect information from internet and intranet from web portal pick up human brain skills using various technologies and get the validated and value added information.
- To prove the potentiality of professionals in the global market to provide a high quality information service to the parent bodies. The performance should be the highest level.
- It is true that LIS Professionals have to increase the standard quality of performance for the knowledge management.
- All the current libraries and Information institution have to reformat their strategies to imaginatively designed fresh programs for execution tune with the new outlook of the parent organization for the creation of new knowledge, innovation new programs and activities .
- Professionals should be equipped and acquired a lot of skills to works like such sector as Energy Management, Healthcare, Hospitality industry etc. These sectors have lot f opportunity to the LIS Professionals.

Challenges to the Professionals:-

Changes in various sector like social, political, economical, cultural, educational are taking place so faster rate. These changes can affect the human life and professions. The professionals are facing the challenges on account of following reasons.

1. Economic reasons: Library is a nonprofit organization and generally face shortage of funds, employing additional staff, purchasing equipment and limited resource, increasing demand of clientele, high cost of document and services.
2. Technological reason: Information technology such as computer, telecommunication media, micrographic, online database, library networks are changing at faster rate.
3. Social and cultural reason: Our society is moving from Agrarian to Industrial and finally to Information Society. So the life styles along with work style, food habits, above all information seeking behavior are changing dynamically.
4. Other reason: It is a factor that professionals are come from the library schools are not competent enough to face challenges of 21st century may be the good quality of teaching, infrastructure facilities and skill based curriculum.

Impact of IT to LIS Professionals:-

Information is a dynamic and unending resource that affects all disciplines and all walks of life. The single force that has brought revolutionary changes in the functioning of libraries is IT. The introduction and application of these modern thought the libraries are becomes a very high user centered and

improving its function and services to revolutionary extent. The role of library professionals is compelled to change as an information gatherer and information provider from the maximum possible resources available globally. Librarian working traditional setup is overburdened with the size and complexity of growing information resources. By automating library services the profession of librarianship is changing dynamically. Automation give ability to cope up with an increasing workload.

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.

With the help of information technologies library personnel can do the routine job like acquisition, catalogue, stock verification, circulation, periodical subscription, reference service, serial control, documentation and information retrieval more quickly and accurately. IT has speeded up the accessioning and other processing work of the accusation section. The use of technological devices such as computers barcode scanner, RFID technology etc helps in the performance of the routine circulation work easily and quickly. It saves lot of time of staff and users. Computer helps in periodical subscription and subsequent monitoring of the receipts of individual issues.

Skills Required for Professionals:-

In short, skills means a person has a ability to perform any task successfully. A skilled person has following attributes i.e. efficiency, precision, flexible behavior and effectiveness etc. The library professionals have to acquire new skills to cope the new changes in technology. The existing skills of classification, cataloguing, indexing etc. are to be remodeled for data analysis, data structuring, data organization, packaging and repackaging of information.

- *Communication skills:* Communication skills have vital role in the life. It is also important to the library and information science professionals. Communication media may be written, oral, interpersonal, human or public relation and user orientation etc.
- *Management skills:* Management is the core aspect of library and information centre. These skills required to manage the library financially by applying technique and skills i.e. supervisory, counseling, auditing, planning, decision making motivating etc.
- *Technological skills:* The present age is considered as a “Age of Technology”. Skills are required to handle technology in general with reference to information technology like computer operation, telecommunication medias, library network, micrographics, online database, website design, internet searching, handling audio visual material and digital collection.
- *Traditional skills:* Traditional skills include acquisition, organization, collection, classification, catalogue, indexing, abstracting, preservation, conservation and dissemination of information.
- *Research and statistical skills :* Research & statistical skills are basically required for faculty members, researcher in library school to analysis, synthesis, manipulate, consolidate, evaluate, interpret result of the research in a scientific manner.
- *Other skills:* There is large number of skills like navigation, advocacy, innovation etc. These skills help to professionals to take proper decision in the changing environment.

Prospects of LIS Professionals:-

The role of the librarian of the future would be involvement in the packaging of information and even in electronic publishing and some librarian may become hypertext engineers. The role of reference librarians is evolving and shifting from providing online service where modernization is required in the form of one –to- one tutorial or search sessions to that of performance manager consultant and advocate. As the information technology has brought in fundamental changes in libraries therefore, the role of information professionals is continuously changing.

The nomenclature of librarians has changed to “Documentation Officer”, ”Knowledge Manager”, ”Information Manager”, ”Information Scientist”, “Information Specialists”, “Information Officers” etc. The libraries are similarly named as “Resource Centers”, “Information Centre” and “Knowledge Resource Centre” etc.

Consultant:-

Generally speaking, consultants do not provide clients with existing published information, rather they advise to solve problems. The library and information professional often acts as an adviser who recommends both the best sources of information and ways in which to access information. However to be convincing, skills need to be developed to a high level in order to achieve the librarian as consultant role

Content manager:-

Digital and virtual libraries are a natural outcome of the movement of digitization and inter-networking. Library and documentation centers have increasingly used the technologies of intranets, extranets and portals for specialized techniques of content management and deployment. Use of Info maps and knowledge mapping are additional competencies for creating visuals for knowledge maps, which makes search and retrieval much easier and enjoyable

Facilitator:-

Rapid growth of electronic documents and their availability in the web now creates exploration of information. Even so many printed versions of books, journals have shifted their platform to Internet, which includes freely available and paid publications also. In addition to more efficient and more effective searches by librarians, research has determined that a single librarian or information professional can save the equivalent amount of time of three, or four, or even five end-users.

Knowledge manager:-

Some of the qualities of a librarian to become a knowledge manager:

- i) Providing services to the user community.
- ii) Sharing the information and understanding the user needs.
- iii. Theoretical and practical experience in designing and implementing information systems.
- iv) Analyzing the documents, classifying and storing them for easy retrieval.
- v) Knowledge of current advances in information systems and technologies and their application in libraries.
- vi) Building the index, using standard vocabulary.
- vii) Ability to effectively teach end-users, individually and in groups.

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.

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.

Guide/teacher:-

Most often LIS professionals are acts as a teacher to ensure that patron know how to access relevant sources of information. The shifted role of the teacher-librarian has evolved from "keeper of the books" to "information resource specialist." Teacher-librarians play a vital role in educating users to become information managers and lifetime learners.

Intermediary:-

Librarian is a person who functions between the end-user and an online bibliographic retrieval system to assist in database selection, establish telecommunication connections, formulate useful queries in correct syntax and evaluate the relevance of information retrieved. Mediated searching is provided on request in most academic libraries by a public services librarian specially trained in online searching.

Web designer:-

The use rate of Internet is increasing at a galloping stride. The Internet can now be accessed almost anywhere by numerous means and thus allowing users to connect to the Internet not only from the library. The traditional skill of a librarian in locating, evaluating and organizing the information would be of immense use in the creation, development and content filling of a Web site for the organization and library.

Researcher:-

LIS professionals have played a crucial role in research process. They are highly skilled in the research process. A well viewed interface always attracts the users and increasingly relevant to the way people access and use digital technologies.

Conclusion

Information society of the new millennium will depends on a skilled and literal work forced. Concept of library of post-industrial society becomes "Library 2.0". The characteristics virtual libraries become user centered and "Library without wall" therefore, in order to change the force of librarianship and modernized the information services. The library professional of today should be ready to adopt the opportunities, changes, and challenges presented by Post-Industrial society. The librarian can be treated as a dynamic and aggressive professional like Librarian, Information Scientist, Cyberian, or whatever is the designation. LIS professional must come out the four of the library and play proactive role in the changing information scenario.

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