

TRAINING OF LIBRARIANS FOR DIGITAL LIBRARY PROJECTS IN HIGHER EDUCATION – A REVIEW

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Abstract:

The main purpose of this study is to know the benefits of training to librarians for digital library projects in Higher education and to understand the benefits and problems of digital library. The term digital library has a variety of meanings ranging from a digital collection of material that one might find in a traditional library to the collection of all digital information along with the services that make that information useful to all possible users. Digital libraries have evolved as a result of fast technological development in order to cater to the needs of individuals with varying interests in various fields. Although the term digital library has gained popularity in recent years, such libraries they have evolved along the technological ladder for the past 30 years. There is lot of interest in digital libraries today. The term is rarely defined, or even characterized. It has been applied to an extraordinary range of applications from digital collaborators to collection of electronic journals, software agents that support inquiry based education, collection of e-mail and similar objects, electronic version of a public library, personal library collection and the entire internet among others. Electronic library as one where collections are kept in digital formats and accessed by computers. Electronic libraries are the result of digitization. Its content can be locally stored and remotely accessible via computer networks. It is undoubtedly a particular kind of information retrieval system. The main benefit of the electronic library is that it facilitates research for everyone, including students and intellectually curious individuals. However, the advantages of preparing university librarians for electronic libraries cannot be overstated or rated, particularly in this new advanced technological age where librarians' roles have changed from serving as traditional information sources to serving as technology sources and with a wealth of self-improvement training resources that can be accessed online with the help of a minimal number of training personnel. This paper is prepared with aid of secondary sources of data such as journals, articles, websites, and books and so on.

Keywords: Training, Librarians, Digital Library, Projects, Higher Education, ICT etc

INTRODUCTION:

The term digital library has a variety of meanings ranging from a digital collection of material that one might find in a traditional library to the collection of all digital information along with the services that make that information useful to all possible users. Digital libraries have evolved as a result of fast technological development in order to cater to the needs of individuals with varying interests in various fields. Although the term digital library has gained popularity in recent years, such libraries they have

evolved along the technological ladder for the past 30 years. There is lot of interest in digital libraries today. This is reflected in the fact that an advanced Altair Vista search conducted in early July 1996 on “digital library” or “digital libraries” retrieved about 20000 entries. In spite of the plethora of literature it is not clear what we mean by the term “digital library”. The term is rarely defined, or even characterized. It has been applied to an extraordinary range of applications from digital collaborators to collection of electronic journals, software agents that support inquiry based education, collection of e-mail and similar objects, electronic version of a public library, personal library collection and the entire internet among others. It is not easy to see what these have in common except for their digitization. A digital library contains digital representation of the object found in it. Most understanding of “digital library” probably also assumes that it will be accessible via the internet, though not necessarily to everyone. But the idea of digitization is perhaps the only characteristic of a digital library on which there is universal agreement. Digital library is popularly viewed as an electronic version of a library. The term digital library evokes a different impression in various groups. To some it simply means computerization of traditional libraries. But to others who have studied library science, it indicates carrying out the function of libraries in a new way, encompassing new types of information resources, new approaches to acquisition, new methods of storage and preservation, more reliance on electronic systems and networks. But to a computer professional, a digital library is simply a distributed text-based information system, a collection of distributed information service, etc. A digital library is a library of digital documents, artifacts and records.

Since the turn of the twentieth century, manual-based libraries in academic, special, and public libraries have become less important due to the advent of Electronic Library (E-Library) Services. This is because how information communication technology is used and integrated into library services greatly depends on the librarians' attitudes toward this cutting-edge technology. Libraries in industrialised nations and some developing nations have undergone significant changes as a result of ICT's use in cataloguing, circulation management, electronic document distribution, and Local-Host Library Service databases. Expert systems, wireless networks, virtual collections, interactive online interfaces, virtual reference services, and personal web portals, according to Eguavoen (2011), have brought about more significant changes since the turn of the millennium. The researcher went on to say that the field of librarianship is undergoing major and quick change, with digital and electronic libraries being built to supplement and, in some cases, replace traditional libraries entirely.

The libraries assist in achieving the goals, which high-level teaching, learning, and research. They are also the centre of academic communities' intellectual life. In general, libraries are set up to offer a variety of information resources to support university academic programmes. University libraries, according to Agbola (2005), are crucial elements of academic institutions. This is due to the fact that without a strong library to support teaching, research, and other community service requirements, academic greatness cannot be accomplished. University libraries are no longer restricted to campus buildings in this era of information advanced technology; instead, they have evolved into hybrid learning venues with a far wider range of functions. They include documents that are available online in organised electronic formats The internet has

become the most effective instrument for fast access to information, according to Kumar and Kaur (2005). Information is easily accessible to users thanks to the internet. It is the most effective method of communication in the world, is widely used, inexpensive, and has access to a wealth of information resources 24 hours a day. Nigerian state universities recently began to build electronic libraries. In the recent years, methods for scanning books quickly and affordably have been adopted. Of course, public university libraries nowadays may consider establishing a digitization programme for their collection, resulting in the creation of an electronic library. The core function of an electronic library is to digitise original documents and store them in an electronic database that is then made publicly accessible over the Internet.

OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY:

- To know the benefits of training to librarians for digital library projects in Higher education.
- To understand the benefits and problems of digital library.

RESEARCH METHODOLOGY:

This paper is prepared with aid of secondary sources of data such as journals, articles, websites, and books and so on.

BENEFITS OF TRAINING OF LIBRARIANS FOR DIGITAL LIBRARY PROJECTS IN HIGHER EDUCATION:

Electronic library as one where collections are kept in digital formats and accessed by computers. Electronic libraries are the result of digitization. Its content can be locally stored and remotely accessible via computer networks. It is undoubtedly a particular kind of information retrieval system. The main benefit of the electronic library is that it facilitates research for everyone, including students and intellectually curious individuals. However, the advantages of preparing university librarians for electronic libraries cannot be overstated or rated, particularly in this new advanced technological age where librarians' roles have changed from serving as traditional information sources to serving as technology sources and with a wealth of self-improvement training resources that can be accessed online with the help of a minimal number of training personnel. Mayo (2001) supports the aforementioned claim by stating that these advancements have made it feasible for a variety of class-related activities to take place in the cybercafé and that training can now take place anywhere and whenever. Some of the benefits of Training University Librarians as follow:

- Training makes it possible for workers to pick up new tasks quickly and efficiently, which lowers the learning expense.
- It helps librarians stay current in their areas of expertise, which improves the quality of their job.
- It acts as a tool for maximizing the potential or productivity of employees within a business.
- A trained workforce is the product of training.
- Training has the power to alter an employee's attitude toward their job.

Advantages of Electronic library

- a) For all research, an electronic library serves as a good place to start.
- b) All students in higher education institutions have access to enough and relevant educational opportunities thanks to the electronic library.
- c) It offers fantastic chances for a wide range of patrons to find pertinent study materials in one location.
- d) The user's location is not necessary for access to the information.
- e) It's not necessary for every user to own a specific kind of computer or even a computer at all.
- f) Users can customize electronic libraries so they can access the materials they need and desire to use.
- g) Because of his expertise in the subject, the librarian has complete control over the selection of materials for the electronic library.

Disadvantages of Electronic Library:

- No internet access and unstable power.
- There are an excessive number of options.
- Because of the PDF format, cut and paste could be challenging for novice users.
- Google makes unnecessary materials available even when they are not required.
- Books become obsolete.
- Insufficient financing made it difficult for most e-library services to be delivered effectively and efficiently.
- The bandwidth issue.

Basic Functions of Electronic Library

- a) Simple access to a vast array of knowledge across all subject areas.
- b) Offer services appropriate for a 21st-century library, such as making information easily accessible through an electronic library.
- c) Offer enough library books and magazines to researchers.
- d) Offer a virtual exhibition place where digital photographs can be modified and processed.
- e) It allows for internet access to journal articles, books, papers, photos, sound files, and videos.
- f) It makes it possible for consumers to connect to telecommunications networks and directly access electronic data.

MAJOR ISSUES/CHALLENGES:**i) Technical architecture –**

Libraries need to enhance and upgrade current technical architecture such as: High speed local network and fast connection to internet, Relational database that supports a variety of digital formats, Full text search engines to index and provide access to resources, A variety of servers such as web services and FTP servers, Electronic document management system.

ii) Building digital collections –

One of the most important issues in creating a digital library is building of the digital collection. One of the major issue is the degree to which libraries will digitise existing material and acquire original digital works. This is the old access versus ownership issue. How is the specific material to be digitised / to be acquired to be identified by a given library? Who collects and/or digitises which material could be based on factors such as – collection strength, unique collections, the priorities of user groups, manageable portions of collection, technological resources and skills of the staff.

iii) Digitisation: Another aspect is what portion of collection to digitise. Digitisation is conversion of any fixed or analogue media – such as books, journal articles, photos, paintings, and microfilm into electronic form either through scanning or rekeying. There are several approaches available, at least theoretically.

- Retrospective conversion of collections
- Digitisation of a particular special collection or a portion of one
- Highlight a diverse collection
- High use materials
- An ad hoc approach (one digitises and stores material as they are requested)

iv) Metadata – Metadata is the data that describe the content and attributes of any particular item in a digital library. Metadata is important for digital libraries because it is the key to resources, discovery and use of any document like a library catalogue. The “Dublin Core” is one of the prominent schemes. There is the problem of naming, identifiers and persistence. Naming is required to uniquely identify digital objects. Any system of naming should be permanent, lasting indefinitely. The names cannot be bound with specific locations. A global scheme of unique identifier is required. Three schemes proposed to get over the problems of persistent naming are PURLs, URNs, and digital object identifiers: PURLs – are persistent URLs, a scheme developed by OCLC to separate document name from its a location. URN – Uniform Resource Name have been developed by Internet Engineering Task Force (IETF). Digital Object Identifier (DOI) – Developed by Association of American Publishers and Corporation for National Research Initiatives to provide a method by which digital object can be reliably identified and accessed .

v) **Copyright/rights management** - Copyright is one of the most important barriers to digital library development. The current paper-based concept of copyright breaks down in the digital environment because the control of copies is lost. Digital objects are less fixed, easily copied and remotely accessible by multiple users simultaneously. The problems of libraries are that they are for the most part simply caretakers of information, they do not own the copyright of the material they hold. So libraries will never be able to freely digitise and provide access to the copyrighted material in their collection. They have to develop a mechanism for managing copyright.

vi) **Preservation** – Another important issue is preservation. In the preservation of digital material, the real issue is technical obsolescence. There are three issues of preservation: —

- Preservation of the storage medium - tapes, hard drives, floppy discs — has a short life span when considered in terms of obsolescence.
- Preservation of access to content: this form of preservation involves Digital Libraries preserving access to the content of the document regardless of the format. While files can be moved from one storage medium to another, what happens when the formats (e.g., Acrobat PDF) containing the information becomes obsolete?.

CONCLUSION:

A digital library is much more than just the collection of material in its depositories. Digital Libraries It provides a variety of services to all of its users. The basis of the digital library is the information objects that provide the content in the form of digital resource. The goal of the digital library is to satisfy user needs for management, access, storage and manipulation of the variety of information stored in the collection of material that represents the holding of the library. The information objects may be digital objects or they may be in other media but represented in the library via digital means (e. g. metadata). They may be available directly over the network or indirectly. Although the object may not even be electronic, and although the objects themselves may not be available directly over the network, they must be represented electronically in some manner. Application of ICT has greatly improved the efficiency in Library Services with the sole aim of enabling the librarians and users to make the most effective use of the resources and services of libraries. It is essential for librarians to keep themselves updated with the use of ICT developments and applications for effective service delivery in Electronic Library in their universities. Of course, training is the first step, which will reduce fear when implementation of ICT begins. Equally, a committed effort should be made to provide training and retraining of University Librarians on a regular basis on the use of electronic library software packages to librarians, students, university staff, postgraduates, researchers and intended beneficiaries

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