

The Emerging Role of ICT in Library Services

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Abstract: The fact is that the role of ICT in Library Services is emerging day by day due to invent of information and communication technology (ICT). The new technological developments have affected the way of information handled and provided by libraries and such other information centers. This impact may be observed like libraries access, retrieve, store, manipulate and disseminate information to users. The introduction of ICT trends has led to recognition, change in work pattern, demand for new skills, and job retraining and reclassification position in the library services. Nowadays a speedy trial and introduction of internet has radically transformed access to information and ICT has impacted every activity of library. Today ICT has made possibility of value added information services and digital based information resources for the users. The present research paper highlights the emerging role of ICT in library services.

Keywords: ICT, Library Services, Acquisition, Technical, Internet.

Introduction: Today we are living in the era of digital information, which has affected all disciplines and walks of life. Likewise, ICT has also revolutionized every field of library services. In other words, we can say that ICT is playing a crucial role in library services such as acquisition, organization, storage, retrieval and dissemination of information process in library science. Today the convergence of computer and communication technologies and their application to library services has changed the whole scenario for users. During the second wave of library computerization in 2000, the main focus was on the deployment of computer networks providing access to electronic information. After that a large number of ICT based

services in Library science were started and they remained very beneficial for users and service provider in library and information science.

The concept of ICT includes wide range of different technologies and it is the convergence of computers, communication and micro-electronic based techniques like radio, telephone, telegraph, fax, TV, mobile phone, telephone, internet, www, E-mail, LAN, ISDN, Video Conference and Satellite Communication techniques. These devices play a crucial role in library services like inter library loan, reference services and online information retrieval. Likewise ISDN technique has increased the capacity of data transmission which facilitated introduction of new services such as E-mail. Moreover, cheaper data storage media has also increased the storage capacity of libraries and due to it effective and valuable library services have been made possible by the service provider.

Actually ICT has brought unprecedented changes and transformation to academic library and information centers. The impact of ICT may be categorized on information services by changes in format, contents and method of production delivery of information for the users in library services. The emergence of internet as the largest repository of information and knowledge has changed the role of traditional library and professionals and shifted from physical to virtual services environment in the changing scenario. Today most of the library and information centers of India have started using computers and information communication technology in organization of their collections, housekeeping operations, processing, retrieval and dissemination of information to the end users. The use and impact of ICT is now visible in library services due to the drastic change in technology. The impact of ICT has made the possibility of library automation which covers usually housekeeping operations such as acquisition, serial control, cataloging, circulation, references and administrative work in library and information science.

Impact of ICT on Library Services: ICT has transformed library services in the recent years at the global level. Today most of the information's are recorded in electronic format. That is

why; the role of ICT in library services has emerged as a new aspect of technology. ICT has contributed to the libraries in the following ways:

Library Management: Library management includes the activities such as classification, cataloging, indexing, data base creation and database indexing. Today most of the libraries use software designed to manage these activities. Some of the examples of such software are CDS/GLAS/ALICE for windows and X-Lib and SLAM for strategic library automation management.

Automation Services: It is the concept of reducing the human intervention in all the library services. Some of the major areas of automation can be classified in to two categories – Organization of all library databases and all housekeeping operations of library. Today the word automated library is used to denote a library in which the collection of library materials are primarily on paper but in which the libraries procedure have been computerized the areas of library automation are – acquisition, cataloging, indexing, circulation, serial control, library administration, library management, online public access catalogue, CD- ROM Database searches, resource sharing, network / internet, Desktop publishing, office automation and information retrieval.

OPAC – It means Online Public Access Catalogue and it is the computerized version of the library catalogue or a database of library holdings. The main advantage of it is easy use of it and it saves space. It also provides access to the catalogues of a library on the local Intranet, extranet or even the internet. All this has been made possible by the use of ICT in library and information sciences. The ICT has also reduced the cost of maintaining a catalogue and it has eliminated many paper files.

Acquisition- The impact of ICT may be observed in acquisition section of a library. With the help of web, acquisition work has become more simple and convenient. Today order placing, duplication checking, price checking etc. works in library are done through the use of ICT. For the procurement of journals order is placed in the prescribed format through internet.

Moreover, invoices can be downloaded from the websites that makes library services faster. ICT also helps in the process of serial control in library and helps in preparing union list of serials.

Technical Section – The use of ICT has reduced the volume of work done in catalogue card preparation. Now with the help of OPAC it is very convenient for the technical staff to assign call numbers to the newly aided books.

Circulation – The use of ICT devices such as computers, bar code scanners and its software has been very helpful in performing the routine operations are circulation work.

Reference Section – The use of ICT has also impacted the reference section and all queries may be answered through telephone. Electronic information service has made it convenient for the service provider and users.

Networking – Today after the invent of ICT library users can access information of various types such as online databases, E-journals, E-books, Government publications digitally through networking system..

Electronic Document Delivery- The fact is that library may not rely any more on postal services to send documents to users. Due to use of ICT, Library service provider can deliver documents in pdf format which may be very convenient for the users.

Online Tutorials- In the wake of ICT revolution libraries can use internet or CD-ROMS to educate their users. Virtual tours can be offered online making user education more convenient for all.

E-Reference Services- Some services such as selective dissemination of information (SDI) and virtual reference desk, announcement of new acquisitions and other reader advisory services have been made easier through the use of ICT in the area of library and information science.

E- Libraries- The emerging role of ICT in library services have created a new term in library and information science as E-libraries. These libraries totally depend on information recoded in digital format. It is more convenient than the traditional format of information.

Importance of ICT in Library Services- Most of the scholars assume the facts that ICT based library services are playing a crucial role in library and information science. The use of ICT in library services may be observed as advantage on the following grounds-

- It makes easier all library services and activities.
- It avoids repetition of library services.
- It increases the quality of library services and saves the time for users.
- It increases the efficiency and makes speedy access of information for users.
- It enhances the knowledge and experience based services in library.
- It improves the quality and status of services in a library.
- It is helpful in remote areas to access to any information for users.

Conclusion: Thus we can say that ICT has reduced and saved a lot of time of the library staff and users. Nevertheless the use of ICT has also created some problems in library services. In case of E-journals and online databases, the library loses its access after stopping the subscriptions. Therefore, here it is an urgent need to work on ICT based library services in a planned way so that any rigidity may be avoided. Today the scenario in library services is changing and the use of ICT has broken the traditional approach to provide library services and paved a way to transformation.

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