

THE CHANGED ROLE OF LIBRARIAN TO EFFECT HUMAN DIGITALITIS

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Abstract :

The conventional librarian identity has been drastically altered by the digital revolution, which has changed the profession from being the passive custodian of books to an active steward of digital knowledge, information literacy, and human welfare. Librarians have become essential navigators of an increasingly complicated information landscape in an era increasingly marked by "digitalitis" the condition of excessive exposure to, dependence on, and psychological distress deriving from digital technologies. This paper explores how librarians respond to the opportunities and difficulties brought about by digital transformation by tracing the development of librarianship from its conventional custodial roots to its modern and emergent forms. It makes the case that contemporary librarians act as intermediaries between people and the digital world, facilitating information access while simultaneously fostering critical thinking, moral responsibility, digital equilibrium, and mental health. In this changing function, the librarian serves as a curator, educator, mediator, and human-centered guide within the digital environment in addition to being a goalkeeper of knowledge.

Keywords : Intermediaries, digitalitis, passive custodian, manuscripts, digital revolution

Introduction :

Librarians were once thought of as the custodians of knowledge, archives, and learning mentors. The physical book played a major role in their professional lives: cataloging volumes, safeguarding delicate manuscripts, organizing collections, and putting literature in readers' hands. The library itself was frequently thought of as a peaceful haven where information lay patiently on shelves, just waiting to be uncovered. However, the introduction of digital technology has drastically changed this conventional environment. These days, librarians do much more than just oversee collections; they also navigate enormous digital information ecosystems, foster digital literacy, instruct users, offer research advice, and increasingly support the advancement of digital well-being.

The idea of "human digitalitis," which is a metaphor for the social, psychological, and behavioral effects of an over-reliance on digital technologies, has become a significant issue in this quickly evolving society. The quality of human connection and learning can be



significantly impacted by constant connectedness, information overload, short attention spans, anxiety, distraction, and reliance on digital devices. Libraries are consequently in a good position to address these issues because of their special location at the nexus of knowledge, technology, and community. In addition to helping people locate information, librarians may guide them through the digital environment in a responsible, ethical, critical, and intelligent manner.

Journey of Libraries' through Non digital Period :

In many respects, the evolution of humanity's relationship with knowledge is reflected in the history of libraries. Libraries have continuously reimagined themselves in reaction to social and technical change, evolving from quiet archives of holy texts to dynamic hubs of digital education. What was formerly mainly used for the preservation of tangible collections has gradually evolved into a vibrant setting for knowledge creation, collaboration, teaching, information sharing, and technology interaction. The librarian's evolving identity, from that of a custodian who protected books to that of a curator who links individuals with relevant information, reflects this change. The scene of early library, before technological era, when preservation was crucial, was related to the print, classification and accessibility. Digital Era, when librarians developed into technologically proficient information professionals, educators, and facilitators of digital and human well-being, can be used to broadly understand this amazing journey.

Early Libraries: The Librarian as Custodian :

Libraries were mainly created in ancient and medieval societies to preserve manuscripts, rare documents, government records, and sacred books. Books were costly, hard to duplicate, and handwritten. As a result, a librarian's primary duty was to safeguard these priceless resources against theft, degradation, destruction, and unapproved usage. For instance, the Library of Alexandria in ancient Egypt made an effort to gather and conserve a sizable amount of information from all over the world. In a similar vein, religious documents and classical literature were preserved in monastic libraries throughout medieval Europe. Large collections of Buddhist, philosophical, scientific, and literary writings were kept in India by organizations like Nalanda.

During this time, a librarian's role was essentially that of a custodian. A custodian is someone who is in charge of keeping something valuable safe. Manuscripts were to be carefully maintained and made accessible to researchers or authorized readers, according to librarians.

In a medieval monastery, for instance, if a scholar wished to peruse a rare manuscript, the librarian would find it, oversee its usage, and put it back where it belonged. Therefore, rather than actively mediating knowledge, the librarian served as a guardian of knowledge. The position was primarily passive and focused on preservation. The primary issues were: • Maintaining books and manuscripts. • Physical protection and appropriate storage. • Keeping



the collection's records. Limiting the availability of uncommon materials. • Supporting academics who made particular information requests.

The librarian may therefore be referred to as a "keeper of knowledge" during this time. Instead of actively assisting users in finding new information, the focus was on safeguarding what already existed.

Libraries in the Age of Print :

The world of books and libraries was drastically changed when Johannes Gutenberg invented the printing press in the fifteenth century. Books may now be manufactured at relatively cheaper costs and in far greater quantities. Libraries grew their holdings in tandem with the growth of printed materials. As a result, a new issue arose: how could thousands of books be effectively located and organized?

As a result, the librarian's job description shifted from protecting books to information organization. Librarians started creating methodical techniques for: Book cataloging.-Subject classification. Putting books on shelves.-

- Building subject and author indexes.
- Keeping records of accession.
- Assisting readers in finding appropriate books.

The Dewey Decimal Classification (DDC) system, created by Melvil Dewey in 1876, was one of the most significant innovations. Philosophy, social sciences, science, technology, literature, and history were among the ten main categories into which it divided knowledge. For instance, suppose there are fifty thousand volumes in a library. It would be quite challenging to locate a specific book if volumes were arranged haphazardly on shelves. Books on science, literature, history, and the social sciences are categorized and assigned numerical notations using the Dewey Decimal System.

A book about English literature, for example, might be in the 820s, whilst books about history might be in the 900s. As a result, the librarian started organizing and mediating information. The librarian should lead the reader through an organized collection rather than just stating, "This is the book we have." Order, accessibility, classification, and neutrality were the key tenets of this era. It was expected of the librarian to give patrons access to information without imposing personal preferences. The standards, regulations, cataloging procedures, and ethical precepts of professional:

Librarianship have grown over time, as a result, the librarian's identity shifted from:

Information Mediator → Organizer → Custodian → Cataloger.

The librarian was now doing more than just keeping books safe; they were also making the collection accessible and usable.



The Digital Shift :

Another significant change occurred in the latter part of the 20th century. The character of libraries was altered by computers, electronic databases, the internet, digital catalogs, e-books, online journals, and digital repositories. The library was no longer confined to its actual location. Without going to the library, a student could use an electronic database, download an academic article, read an e-book, or browse an online catalog from home.

This significantly altered the function of the librarian. The librarian has evolved into an information specialist who assists patrons in locating, assessing, interpreting, and utilizing information efficiently.

For instance

A postgraduate student studying "Dr. B. R. Ambedkar's views on the Hindu Code Bill and Uniform Civil Code" is one example. A student might go through literature on Ambedkar, constitutional law, Hindu law, and social reform in a traditional library. The required literature might be found with the assistance of the librarian. However, in a digital library, the learner could have to look up: Online catalogs for libraries. JSTOR and additional academic databases. • Collections of electronic journals. Institutional archives.

- Digital archives
- Publications from the government.
- Online theses and dissertations.
- Digital manuscripts and e-books.

The function of the librarian has become much more active. The learner may learn from the librarian how to create search phrases, apply Boolean operators, assess sources, recognize peer-reviewed publications, properly reference sources, and discern between accurate and false material. For instance, the librarian might teach how to search rather than just informing the student where a book is: "Hindu Code Bill" AND "Ambedkar" AND "Uniform Civil Code" "Hindu Code Bill" AND "women's rights" This illustrates how knowledge navigation has replaced physical collection management.

A further advancement in the professional position of the librarian is represented by the term curator. A curator chooses, interprets, links, presents, and constructs meaningful settings around knowledge in addition to organizing and preserving things. Users have access to a vast amount of information in the digital world. The issue now includes more than just "Where can I find information?" Information is now readily accessible thanks to the internet, yet accessibility does not always equate to dependability. Fake news, dubious websites, predatory publications, plagiarism, information manipulation, and erroneous social media content can all be encountered by students.

As a result, librarians are teaching information literacy more and more.



A librarian might, for instance, lead a workshop outlining:

- How to look up scholarly databases.
- How to recognize research that has undergone peer review.
- How to assess the credibility of an author.
- How to spot phony or dubious websites.
- How to prevent plagiarism.
- How to utilize MLA and APA citation styles.
- How reference management software is used.
- How to find relevant academic sources.

As a result, the librarian becomes a teacher of information skills in addition to a provider of information. Thus, the evolution of librarianship across time might be summed up as follows:

Curator → Information Professional → Custodian → Cataloger → Knowledge Facilitator

Preservation was the librarian's main duty in the early era. Organization and accessibility became more important during the print age.

As a result of the digital revolution, librarians have developed into tech-savvy information specialists who assist patrons in navigating vast amounts of electronic data. By choosing trustworthy sources, building digital collections, directing research, teaching information literacy, and putting users in touch with pertinent information, librarians now play an increasingly important role as knowledge curators.

As a result, a modern librarian is more than just someone who "looks after books." The librarian has evolved into a professional advisor, teacher, researcher, digital expert, and knowledge curator. Although the physical collection is still significant, the primary goal has shifted from information preservation to enabling meaningful access, comprehension, assessment, and application of knowledge.

Comprehending the Definition of Human Digitalitis :

The cognitive, emotional, and social strain brought on by excessive digital interaction is known as "human digitalitis." It includes:

The incapacity to handle large amounts of digital data is known as information overload. Digital dependency is an obsessive reliance on gadgets. Reduced attention span: difficulties focusing due to numerous notifications.

Mental health issues :

digital immersion is associated with stress, anxiety, and burnout. Second reason is, proliferation of social media and cellphones. Content generated by algorithms with the goal



of increasing engagement. Users are not digitally literate. This causes students find it difficult to focus and think critically.

Distraction reduces productivity for professionals. Interpersonal communication is eroding in communities. Besides, the digital humanities created, the Modified Role of the Librarian in

Handling Digitalitis :

1. They are-teacher of Digital Literacy which entails librarians to instruct patrons on how to assess online content critically and instruct in locating reliable sources.
2. A therapist of information in which he work between people and the deluge of digital content, the librarian serves as a mediator.
3. Advocate for Community Wellness Programs targeting digital wellbeing are being held in libraries more frequently.
4. 4.Facilitator of Technology in which by giving people access to technology, librarians help close the digital divide.
5. Gatekeeper of Ethics Librarians support the principles of tolerance, intellectual freedom, and privacy. safeguarding user information in digital systems. Librarians will influence policies on digital ethics, privacy, and equitable access.

Conclusion :

The librarian's role has undergone a profound transformation. From custodians of books, they have become educators, therapists, and advocates in the digital age. By addressing human digitalitis, librarians safeguard not only access to information but also the cognitive and emotional well-being of communities. Their evolving role underscores the importance of libraries as sanctuaries of balance in an era dominated by digital excess.

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