# COLLABORATION OF ACADEMIC LIBRARIAN WITH RESEARCH TEAMS: EMERGING ROLES AND CHALLENGES

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***Abstract :***

*The advent in new technologies is changing the academic environment. New technologies is revolutionizing the landscape of academic institutions. As the academic librarians plays an important role in the academic sector, they too have to keep them updated with these technologies which enhances their roles. One of the roles of an academic librarian is to act as the collaborator of the research work with research teams which is taking place in the institution. This article focuses on the roles of academic librarians as the collaborators of the research work with research teams. By analysing several relevant articles, the study shows valuable insights about the roles played by the academic librarian throughout the research lifecycle of the research teams as their collaborator. The study shows the role of academic librarians as the drivers and the enablers of the research work. The study shows few benefits of academic librarian as the collaborator of the research work. The study also provides in-depth understanding of the challenges that an academic librarian faces as the collaborator of the research work.*

**Keywords :** Academic librarian, Collaborator, Research Work, Artificial Intelligence tools, Drivers and enablers.

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**Introduction :**

Libraries being an institution which provides information and knowledge to its users. For a library's smooth workflow, a librarian plays many important roles. A librarian act as a medium between the members of the library and the sources of information in the library. For the smooth workflow of the library, the librarian has to keep him updated with the latest technologies and the new sources of information. With the advent of latest technologies, the role of the academic librarian is changing. To keep himself updated, he needs to learn new technologies used for the usage of information. That's how an academic librarian transform himself from a information provider to a research partner. The academic librarians provides information to the researcher throughout his research lifecycle and they have always played

an important role in providing research services to the research scholars associated with the library. With the advent in data management systems, the role of academic librarian became more important. The Open Access made librarians work easy for the research work of the researchers. Academic librarians provides research skills development services to the members in higher education. Academic librarians for themselves don't do research just for promotion or professional development but they do research for the profession itself. Working in collaboration with the researchers and the research teams, the academic librarian plays an important role as the contributor of knowledge within the researcher team(Bedi & Walde, 2017).

There comes the concept of 'embedded librarian" which means for the librarians who work out the boundaries of the library and for that Powell, Baker, and Mika says that, "research is not a process that is the responsibility of others; research is a way of knowing, a way of making better practical decisions that is the responsibility of each of us". They says that the librarians need to contribute in the research work stating that, that librarians have a fundamental role in the research process not just to produce empirical research but as a way to learn further about the research process and ultimately to make better decisions on services we provide through reference, instruction, and collection(Powell et al., 2002). The strong relationship between the academic librarian and the collaboration with the researcher team is what the feature of embedded librarianship. The academic librarian often brings out an important perspective in collaboration with the research team that no one else can brings out(Bedi & Walde, 2017).

**Emerging Roles Across the Research Lifecycle :**

The academic libraries are redefining the roles of the librarians by the transformation in the higher education. The role of academic librarians is transforming with the advancement in the various technologies related to the library activities. These advancements in the technology redefines the scope and new roles of the academic librarians in providing the latest services. This advancement could also be satisfactory to the academic librarians as it smoothest their responsibilities. This new technological environment in the library activities created new opportunities for academic librarians which encourages them in making themselves involved in the lifecycle of research work. These new technologies are being adapted by the academic librarians for the collaboration with the researchers in their research work which enhances the user experience. Traditional library activities are losing their spots rapidly as the advancement in the new technologies related to library activities is taking place which enhances the role of academic librarians. The role of academic librarians becomes crucial when they engage in research work and become effective partner in collaboration with researchers. The academic librarians for the research work of researchers shifts from collecting, preserving and disseminating the sources of information. New roles of academic librarians are emerging by providing scholarly communication to the research teams. The librarians are still providing various services that are related to traditional but there is a transition to the new roles. Librarians are responding to the changing technologies like providing services in areas like open access publishing. To transform the delivery of services

and to evaluate user needs the academic librarians has adopted new technologies and tools. The ease in technologies gives academic librarians the confidence to perform thier new roles. The new roles require new skills and knowledge, and this comes from professional work experience of the academic librarian and by their self-teaching. The academic librarians with their subject knowledge in the collaboration supports the research teams. The performance which academic librarians performs in both depends on which role they are performing.

The emerging roles of an academic librarian with respect to the collaboration with the research teams has various categories and their specific activities. The data and search is done by systematic literature review, citation management and data curation. The writing and publishing is done by co-authorship, manuscript editing, journal selection and the guidance of open access. The strategy and grants are given by doing strategic planning, grant writing and project management. The networking is made by interdisciplinary matchmaking and research circle facilitation. All these roles are performed by the academic librarian for the research lifecycle of the research teams(Ducas et al., n.d.).

**Academic Librarian as Drivers and Enablers :**

The role of an academic librarian is not just bounded to make search of related sources of information for the research team. The role of academic librarian is to bring external funding for the data publication which will compelled libraries to develop the infrastruction and the services related to research lifecycle of the research teams. This transformation of an academic librarians not just make him the mere knowledge keeper but also a co-pilot of science. Academic librarian as a research assistance can generate ideas, provide background information and suggest research questions. Academic librarians can be in the collaboration with the research teams because they can connect unrelated ideas to new perspectives. Academic librarians plays a crucial role in critically evaluating the output of AI tools. Academic librarians can play an important role in supporting researchers which advances their quality of research work. For doing so, academic librarian can make use of AI assistant in the collaboration with the research teams. Academic librarians assists the research teams about the AI tools, their identification and their evaluation for the usage to their research work. Academic librarian can guide the research teams about the AI tool they want to use in their research work. The guidance is also given by the academic librarian about the integration of that AI tool in their workflow of the whole research lifecycle. The assistance is also provided by the academic librarian by designing research questions for the research work which are compatible with the tool. How to generate new ideas and to analyse data is by using those tools is also guided by the academic librarian. The guidance about the ethical behaviour and the transparency in the use of those AI tools in research work. Academic librarian can provide guidance on best practices of usage of AI tools in research work. Academic librarians have the potential to revolutionize the research work and the research process which makes the process much faster in pace and it makes the research work more efficient.

**Benefits and challenges :**

**Benefits :**

Job satisfaction, enhancement in individual as well as institutional reputation which strengthens library services by co-authorship and collaboration with the research teams which also deepens awareness of faculty practices. The collaboration of an academic librarian and the research teams has not only bounded to one subject field but also various fields including medical science which brings out largest share in various national contexts. Academic librarians when comes in the collaboration with the research teams brings out the quality and quantity of research outcomes. Bringing this collaboration requires will which is needed by faculty of research work with the academic librarian which brings the useful research outcome.

**Challenges :**

Though collaboration of academic librarian with the research teams have many benefits, there come many several challenges too. The advent technologies which causing change in academic environment makes academic librarian rething their roles. Although the academic librarian are very much confident in playing their changing roles but they too realize that their training related to this changing academic environment is not much sufficient. They require more training to make them useful as the collaborators of the research work with the research teams by giving them the better services. The usage of Artificial Intelligence in research work concerns the academic librarian the ethical implications which can cause biases or the discriminations in the research work. It is to be noted that the usage of artificial intelligence tools by the academic librarian in the collaboration with research teams for the research work must not cause any unethical outcomes. Time management is one of the challenges for the academic librarian as the time pressure is always there because of the academic librarian's funded responsibility. Another challenge for the academic librarian in the collaboration with the research teams is financial constraints. Technological infrastructure causes pause in the engagement for the research work. Questions are raised for the academic librarian about their professional identity and status is also one of the challenges.

**Conclusion :**

Collaboration of an academic librarian and the research teams for the research work will ease the research work. Academic librarians can be the best collaborator for the research work they provides the traditional library services as well as technological library services which is very useful for the research work. As the academic librarian provides the AI tools and technologies to the research teams as a collaborator of the research work, they have to be careful about the ethical practices. As there are benefits as the collaborator to the research work, there are also several challenges which an academic librarian has to face.

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