Digital Library: An Academic Perspective

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Abstract: Digital Library means a paperless library totally based on electronic computer technology. The advancement of information and communication Technology have forced the traditional library professionals to transfer themselves into modern, skilled information scientists who can lead the overall library activities through the help of advanced technology for the better use. It is the era of digital knowledge. Therefore, digitization of library services has become very important in recent years. In this study we have discuss advantages and disadvantages of Digital Libraries, Role of Library professionals in digital age & Role of Digital Library in the Current Education System.

I. INTRODUCTION

In the era of digital information, electronic technology, WWW growing popularity and tremendous growth of CD – Rom products, digital libraries offer a huge range of multimedia information, everything from movies, speeches, images and photos to sounds, text and beyond. Digital libraries add value and can make libraries truly useful and user friendly. The former President of India, Dr.A.P.J.Abdul Kalam forecasts that the future digital Libraries would have speech interfaces so that the user could interact with the Information and will be language independent.we can say the digital libraries will be linked to the campus E-learning and administrative systems to provide a one stop access fingertips.. The term digital libraries are the result of information proliferation and technological advances. The revolution in the information technology has changed the basic concept of traditional libraries, where the print and paper media are the main parts .Digital library is the electronic   library in which the access, storage and dissemination of information in the digitalized form .Libraries are playing a very important role in the growth of information and knowledge from a decade. Libraries have been considered as the repository of human knowledge , and a hallmark of human civilization . These are the product of culture maturation and information explosion. [1]

➤ *What is a Digital Library?*

Clifford Lynch, a well know expert on Internet and web technology, defined digital library as "System providing a community of users with coherent access to a large organized repository of information and knowledge. The digital library is not just one entity, but multiple sources are seamlessly integrated.

According to computer professionals, a digital library may be simply a distributed text based information system a collection of distributed space, inters linked information or a networked multimedia information system.[2]

II. ADVANTGES OF DIGITAL LIBRARIES

A digital library is not confined to a particular location or so called building, it is virtually distributed all over the world. The user can get his/ her information on his own computer screen by using the internet. Actually it is a network of multimedia systems which provides fingertip access.

A. No Physical Boundary:
To manage large amounts of digital content such as thousands of images, figures or hundreds of audio clips. It allows learners to use electronic resources from anywhere.

B. Access 24 X 7:
Digital libraries Provide access to users 24 x7 & 365 days of the year.

C. Multiple Accesses:
Resources sharing among libraries can be used at the same time by a number of users. Promote Universal accessible. . It can be used a large number of clients at a one time.

D. Structured Approach:
Contain multimedia information. Digital libraries provide access to content in a more structured manner i.e. we can easily access book through catalogue.

E. Information Retrieval:

The user can search any term belonging to the word or phrase of the entire collection. Users can peruse them instantly. The E-books and E- journals provide keywords, subject and various other searches.

F. Preservation and Conservation:

Archival of resources. It is the best tool for preservation of heritage collection through digitization. An exact copy of the original can be made any number of times without any degradation in quality. Protecting rare books with de acceding process.

G. Space:

It saves the space that is required for physical documents. whereas traditional libraries are limited by storage space, digital libraries have the potential to store much more information, simply because digital information requires very little physical space to contain them.

H. Networking:

A particular digital library can provide the link to any other resources of another digital library very easily. Thus a seamlessly integrated resource sharing can be achieved.

➢ *Cost:*

It saves the cost and manpower required for publishing and bringing out new editions. The cost of maintaining a digital library is much lower than that of a traditional library.

➢ *Sophisticated Technologies:*

It used in digital libraries demand dust free, centrally air-conditioned atmosphere for perfect performance.

III.   DISADVANTAGES OF DIGITAL LIBRARIES

A. Following are Disadvantages of Digital Libraries.

➢ *Copyright:*

Copyright is unique king of intellectual property. Under copyright law authors have special rights. Digitization of resources give an opportunity to user for to violation of copy right law.

➢ *Intellectual Property Rights (IPR):*

The first and importance problem of IPRs where the library authorities have to inform the publishers and authors on their aspect to evolve some mechanisms, which become beneficial for library users, publishers and the Authors (Intellectual property Rights Issues)

➢ *Reducing Speed:*

more computers are connected with Wi-Fi hence the speed of access automatically get reduced.

➢ *Cost:*

Technological changes are also coming very fast in which everyone is expected to be the shortcoming for implementing various programs. So it is not feasible to change all the resources into digital forms by the common

libraries. Cost of digital library equipment is also high.

➢ *Accuracy:*

Digital libraries also not give hundred Percentage accurate information. Somewhere accuracy gap is there.

➢ *Information Explosion:*

There is a huge size of information hence finding the right material for a specific work becomes increasingly difficult.

➢ *Traditional Environment:*

Digital libraries cannot reproduce the traditional library. Many people also find reading printed material to be easier than reading material on a computer screen.

➢ *Preservation:*

Digital material has to the chance of data loss. Physical books can last from centuries .Digital Libraries require active preservation efforts.

• *E-book Eye Strain:*

Staring at screens for more time create problem on users eyes. When you use paper book then user will not face any eye problem.

• *Security:*

Digital Libraries will face security issue regarding data theft. Cyber threats such as hacking, data breaches, and unauthorized access pose risks to the integrity and confidentiality of digital library resources, .[3]

➢ *Purpose of Digital Library*

• To develop the means to collect, store and organize information and knowledge in digital form.
• To promote the economical and efficient delivery of information.
• To encourage cooperation among libraries.
• To strengthen communication and collaboration between and among the research business, government and educational communities.
• To contribute to the lifelong learning opportunities.

IV.   ROLE OF LIBRARY PROFESSIONALS IN DIGITAL AGE

The present world is controlled by the Information Technology. Due to the revolutionary changes in the field of IT the whole world is turned into global village. The term information technology is made of two separate term information and technology, Where information is the power and refers to facts and opinion provided and received during the course of daily life, Technology is an all embracing term covering the equipment, knowledge, systems and methods used in transforming input to outputs. This information has to use library professionals.

For successful implementation of digital library it is essential that library professionals are well trained and possess requisite knowledge and skills in this respect.

Use of information and communication Technology in day to day activity of library is advantage for library professionals. Technology is changing day by day therefore library professional have to adjust with the change.[4]

V. NEW ROLE AND SKILLS

The librarian and information professionals of the Present digital era must be equipped with a wide range of personal and transferable skills in order to manage the changing environment in which he works. Skills in information management are more necessary in this age of information explosion.

A. Following are the Competencies to be Inculcate by Librarian

➤ Professional Competencies

- Library Professionals must have the subject knowledge for to provide information.
- Library professional himself updated with copy right norms for to guiding users.
- Must have ability to give proper orientation to user for to proper utilization of resources.
- Prepare abstracts and indexes for too easy understanding of subjects.
- Ability of to develop information product for use of organization or individual user.
- Ability to assess the outcome of information use and solution to information management problem.
- Ability of continues improve information services in response to the changing needs.
- Ability to guide to researcher for to get exact information.

➤ Personal Competencies:-

- He must be committed to service excellence.
- He must seek out challenges and sees opportunities inside and outside library.
- He must create an environment of mutual respect and trust
- Must have effective communication skills.
- Work with others as a team.
- He must be flexible and positive in a time. [5]

VI. ROLE OF DIGITAL LIBRARY IN THE CURRENT EDUCATION SYSTEM

The role of digital libraries in the current education system is increasingly vital as they provide accessible, efficient, and cost-effective learning resources. Digital libraries offer a vast collection of books, research papers, journals, multimedia, and other educational materials that can be accessed anytime and from anywhere. These libraries not only bridge gaps for students in remote areas but also integrate technology into education, enhancing the overall learning experience. Here are the key points on the role of digital libraries:

A. Accessibility:
Digital libraries provide 24/7 access to educational resources, enabling students from various backgrounds to access learning materials at their convenience.

B. Cost-Effective:
They reduce the need for physical textbooks, lowering costs for both educational institutions and students.

C. Up-to-Date Content:
Digital libraries offer current research, journals, and multimedia; ensuring students have access to the latest academic materials.

D. Support for Technology Integration:
By offering interactive learning tools, digital libraries help foster a tech-driven education system.

E. Global Learning Opportunities:
They enable students to connect with peers and educators worldwide, promoting collaboration and knowledge-sharing.

F. Personalized Learning:
Resources can be tailored to individual needs, offering a customized and flexible learning experience. Digital libraries are transforming modern education by making knowledge more accessible, interactive, and inclusive.

VII. CONCLUSION

Digital libraries give solutions to the main challenge of traditional libraries to replace the physical existence of documents. Digital Libraries are accessible 24x7 to all users. Digital Libraries currently change the scenario of Traditional Library. Now everything is available to users on their fingertips. Still some libraries are in hybrid form. Digital libraries are best for getting data on time but sometimes power problems also interrupt for getting data hence hybrid libraries are also required for backup. The new generation in librarianship has proved their importance by their skills and knowledge.

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