

# A CRITICAL REVIEW ON CONVENTIONAL AND MODERN LIBRARY SERVICES

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## ABSTRACT

*The present review focuses on difference and transformation of services from traditional library to modern library and how the concept of digital library has revolutionized the library sector using the tool of information and communication technology mainly the bar code technology. This is so as the utility of bar coding allows faster library transactions and is time-saving, and recently many computerized libraries across the nation are using this technology. The bar code technology operations of circulation section have become efficient and error free. However, all areas need to be covered and thus the present paper that highlights developments in libraries from traditional to modern era is critical. The review discusses about the modern day libraries and the librarians and new challenges faced by them in their daily activities in dissemination of information due to the changing scenario where information is available thought globe and also provides solutions. In conclusion, librarians need to reorient themselves, think creatively and adopt new technology skills to generate services and resources where their skills of structuring and organizing resources are put to its best use.*

**Keywords: Traditional library, Modern library, Bar code technology, Computerized libraries, Service transformation, Digital library service.**

## INTRODUCTION

A library is a collection of sources of information and similar resources, made accessible to a defined

community for reference or borrowing. Library provides physical or digital access to material, and may be a physical building or room, or a virtual space, or both. A typical library's collection can include [books](#), monologues, periodicals, news, [newspapers](#), [manuscripts](#), [films](#), [maps](#), [prints](#), CD [documents](#), [microform](#), [cassettes](#), [videotapes](#) and [DVDs](#), [e-books](#), [audio books](#), [databases](#), and other formats. Libraries range in size from a few shelves of books to several million items. In Latin and Greek, the idea of a [bookcase](#) is represented by *Bibliotheca* and *Bibliothēkē*: derivatives of these means *library* in many modern languages, e.g. French *bibliothèque* [1]. There are different types of library services provided by a typical modern library common to all such as circulation, interlibrary loan, periodicals, learning resource centre providing net facility with multimedia, and research assistance. Moreover, a library must have lots of helpful fliers that provide directions, helpful staff support for users who are in confusion, scanning and printing service, reprographic service, current awareness service, selective dissemination of services, new arrival books service, news paper service etc. in comparison, the traditional library services merely had circulation service, periodical service, reservation service, staff supports service, interlibrary loan on the bases of trust. Thus, there has been a paradigm shift from traditional to modern library services that has created a revolution.

## History

Libraries have a very old traditions and functions to support information society to develop culturally and academically strong society with the help of public, academic and special library systems. Education system is well supported by information published in different forms like books, journals, reference material, teaching and research aids and helps in extension of knowledge. Libraries in earlier period were collecting information in different forms like clay tablets, papyrus and due to invention of paper knowledge spread in the form of books and thereafter manuscript libraries transformed into print media libraries. In above all cases, libraries provide a useful reference service to the users form the decades in the traditional as well as in the digital libraries. Moreover, libraries provide information as per the demands of users and the technology is used in the changing environment to support the different activities carried out in the libraries. However, as the roles and functions of the libraries goes on changing from traditional print media to digital, the information is now being made available on the desk top of users. The education system is using both formal and non-formal ways for propagating higher education in India in *e-learning* and teaching. Recent libraries perform their roles in providing knowledge from not merely stored and preserved in the four walls of library but plays dominant roles in extracting knowledge and information from books, periodicals, magazines, old manuscripts, archives, articles, standards, reports, government resolutions to name a few. Thus, major changes in the libraries have occurred due to adaptation and use of newer technologies.

## significance of work

The present review work is significant as it studies the difference between traditional and modern library services and the developments that have taken place in traditional and modern library services. This shift is important to understand for better implementation of approaches that are discussed in this paper for modern libraries establishment.

## The shift: Traditional to modern libraries

Traditional era of publication started with maintaining information written and preserved on stones, cloths and metal wall's and maintained and exploited information to society. The development of libraries was essential for the development of the civilization. From the old Gurukul system where knowledge was given to the students orally by the teachers and gurus were the development of information recording in form of information sources used [2]. Thereafter, the printing era began with Gutenberg in 1456. In 1883 Dewey became librarian of Columbia

College, and in the following year established the School of Library Economy, the first institution for the instruction of librarians ever organized. In India the Central Library of Banaras Hindu University, Varanasi was established in 1917 with the assistance of Sayajirao Gaekwad III, Maharaja of Baroda state (1875 to 1939), known for establishing libraries throughout his state. India always had a rich cultural tradition of higher learning centers. These centers were identified as Gurukula, Paatshala, Taxila, Nalanda and Vikramshala where the courses were offered for advanced studies. Thereafter, modern universities in India came into existence with the recommendation of Wood Dispatch of 1854. In India three universities were started in Calcutta, Bombay and Madras in 1857 by the British. After Independence various commissions were appointed by Government of India. Primarily, University Educations Commission was set up in 1948 under the Chairman ship of Dr. S. Radhakrishnan and Education Commission was set up in 1964 under the chairman ship of Dr. D. S. Kothari which contributed tremendously for the improvement of higher education in India (1964-1966). Thereafter, University Grants Commission (UGC) was established in 1956 to promote and coordinate the university education across nation and establishing standards for teaching learning and knowledge extension [3]. There were 20 universities before independence and now there are about 500 universities in India. UGC Committee for University and College libraries was setup in 1957 under Chairmanship of Dr. S.R. Ranganathan and Education Commission setup in 1964-66 under the chairmanship of Dr. D.S. Khothari have significantly contributed for the improvement of library conditions in universities. The University education commission (1948-49) headed by Dr. S. Radhakrishnan had recommended that the University Librarian is the position equivalent to University Professor who has specialized in some aspects of library sciences and who has capacities for organization and management. Also, University grants commission appointed a committee in 1957 under the chairmanship of Dr. S.R. Ranganathan for the higher academic and professional qualifications, the combination of academic and administrative responsibilities, and the practice in the universities all over the world indicate that the status and the salary scale of library staff should be same as that of teaching and research staff. After the development of public libraries many universities and colleges (academic) libraries were developed [4]. Later development took place and different parameters set for library staff, their nature of jobs, functions, working conditions, salary structure was laid down, keeping in consideration the traditional staffing pattern enunciated by of Dr. S.R. Ranganathan, UGC, Kothari Commission, AICTE Norms to name a few. New subjects streams were introduced in the academics and information was required by the users

through library. To cater the needs of the users the libraries started providing information using books, periodicals, magazines, reference books, maps, articles and standards specifications. Thus, information was scattered throughout the globe. Traditionally, libraries were considered as the store houses of knowledge and used by researchers, teachers, students, academicians, lawyers and doctors. The information provided by the traditional library was print based referring to catalogues and indexes. Academic libraries were the sole custodians of the library in the traditional era. The change in the education systems came into existence after 1991 in India when globalization, privatization and liberalization was announced under the chairmanship of Prime minister P. V. Narsimmarao, and thus during 1990 the computers came into existence in India. Due to globalization and impact of information communication technology, information explosion and growth of internet technology the information was now available in *e*-formats, *e*-books that changed the role of library from traditional to digital era.

In the 21<sup>st</sup> century, digital information in electronic format was required by the user to cater to their needs. The libraries and the librarians have to face new challenges in dissemination of information in the changing scenario where information is available thought globe. Thus, development of libraries from clay tablets, traditional library, digital library, virtual library, and electronic library took place and now in the current scenario the libraries on cloud is active and further development might take place based on developments. In all the conditions staff is an important factor to manage and provide services to the users [7, 8]. Nowadays, as the technology changes, the practices also change and the staff should strengthen with job requirements. In the current ICT era it is proposed to have additional technical staff to carry out the library services and provide immediate information to the users.

**Functions of library staff in any library**

The basic function of libraries and the library staff is to provide pinpointed information to the users from the available resources. Many authors have described about the function and roles of libraries. In NKC report (2008) the function of libraries and staff were reported and few other researchers have also pointed out functions of libraries [5, 6]. A brief comparison of variation in functioning of a traditional and modern library is as mentioned in table 1.

**Table 1: Comparative analysis of functions of libraries**

Traditional functions of library	Modern functions of library
Library staff performs their duties in acquisition section, cataloguing Section, classification section, periodical section as well as different sections as per need.	To provide easy access to information to users available in various electronic formats.
To identify and recognize different methods to procure books in library economically and qualitatively.	To identify the user’s needs and procure the information resources for the users.
To acquire books, periodicals, journals through proper vendors and as recommended by users and the management authorities.	To procure <i>e</i> -Books and online journals and other digital publication to the users as per needs.
To circulate publisher catalogues among the faculties for the recommendations of books based on need.	To subscribe online journals, <i>e</i> -books, databases and provide internet facility for the utilization of resources to gain knowledge.
To communicate with the teaching faculty to recommend different titles, print journals required for the syllabus.	To automate the library with library software and provide faster access and reference service to the users.
To prepare budget for the purchase of different resources and equipment’s in libraries.	To provide OPAC service with networking facilities to the users and help in resource sharing.
To record properly acquired resources both print and digital.	To develop library website for getting information from different locations by giving links to resources.
Process the material for access by catalogues and classify books, and prepare index terms and organize collection for effective use.	Libraries should have digital library software to access the digital contents subscribed and analyzed by the library.
To provide indexing; abstracting; reference service; information	To provide access to back issues of online journals to

services etc.	the users.
To provide information from the traditional sources including access to digital resources.	Learn skills to maintain the digital Library in addition to technical.
To Provide Current awareness services as well as Selective dissemination service to the users using different resources.	Library staff has knowledge of hardware and software to provide traditional as well as digital, electronic and virtual services using digital collection to users.

The sector-wise comparison between traditional and modern library services are summarized in table 2

**Table 2: Comparison table for traditional and modern library services**

Particular	Traditional Library Services	Modern Library Services
Library infra-structure	Temple, museum. Very old and not well furnished.	New and sophisticated and well furnished.
Library provides knowledge	Society, students etc.	Students, Academics, laboratories, researchers.
Library products	Books, magazines etc	Books, cds, dvds, magazines and journals, e-resources etc.
Library processing for recording.	In old catalogue cards records.	In online catalogue records.
Library technical processing	All work is manual in register.	All work is systematic and automated.
Library services.	Provide manual.	Provide automated.
Software used.	No software is used	Software is compulsory
Library operations mode.	By manual in register	By software in his account only.
Reference	Manual	Databases, e-resources

service tools	encyclopedia	
Protection in transaction of user.	Not maintained.	Maintained sincerely.
Overdue reminder	Manually	It reminds by email, and telephone to user.
Educational qualification	Not consider seriously, they work on the base of trust.	Here people have essential qualification for the library sector.
Efficiency	Less efficient	It is more efficient
Time factor	Time consuming	Less time consuming
Space require	Less require	More require with modern equipments.

## Conclusion and Discussion

The present review compares traditional and modern library services and has coined many important points that are critical for modern library establishment. Primarily, people must change according to time or else people are defeated and they may face problems. Secondly, improvements in the facility of traditional library services are necessary and adoption of new techniques and equipments have become vital to fill the time gap between traditional and modern library services by using integrated library management software. From the present review work it is concluded that for the rapid growth of modern library services, information technology is required particularly. This is so as the internet and associated technologies, has opened up an entirely new medium for providing improved information services and resources for the users. The future may require the librarians to reorient themselves, think creatively and adopt new technology skills to generate services and resources where their skills of structuring and organizing resources are put to its best use. To cope up with the trends, LIS professionals have to move in right direction with having a vision of the traditional ways and to adapt to social and technological changes. Also, as the libraries are distinct from the internet cafes, librarians are the only suited professionals to guide scholars and citizens towards an appropriate evaluation of online resources to provide accurate information to the needy scholars. The digital or virtual library uses technology and networks to link people to resources with a goal of providing universal access to these libraries. Normally the linkages between other digital libraries and information services are transparent. Digital libraries are systematic means to collect, store, organize, and distribute information and

knowledge in digital form. For the most part they are an efficient medium to deliver information to all sectors of society. The librarian must attempt to bridge gaps of understanding, or sense making and accepting the transformation process improving the LIS culture.

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