

## Changing Role of Librarians in Digital Environment: A Study of State Universities of Jodhpur

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**Abstract** -The work of librarians has recently undergone a significant change as a result of the digitization of information. Librarians today need to handle a variety of digital resources, be informed about new technology, and assist users in using digital tools and finding information in addition to managing physical collections of books. They are instrumental in guiding customers through the complex world of Internet information by providing advice on how to identify trustworthy sources and steer clear of false information. The study is based on the opinion of librarians, they have given their perspective on how they can keep themselves updated in the digital environment, and what the challenges they face. In this, four state universities of Jodhpur district of Rajasthan have been studied.

**Keyword**-Changing role, Librarians, State University, Rajasthan, Digital Environment

### Introduction

As the world becomes more digital, the job of a librarian has changed a lot. In the past, managing the actual collection of books, periodicals, and other materials was the main responsibility of librarians. They were also tasked with helping users locate the information they needed. Yet in today's digital world, librarians perform a far more varied and difficult job.

In modern times, librarians are in charge of overseeing a wide variety of digital resources, including databases, online journals, and e-books. They also need to be familiar with emerging technology and digital tools that can improve patrons' access to and use of information. In addition, librarians are now required to guide customers through the complex world of Internet information on how to identify trustworthy sources and steer clear of false information. Also, librarians are playing an ever-increasing role in the production and distribution of digital content, such as the digital reproduction of old books and other resources. Also, they can teach users how to use Internet databases for research or how to assess the reliability and accuracy of online sources.

In general, the work of a librarian in the digital world has broadened beyond traditional recordkeeping and research assistance and now includes a wide variety of duties associated with maintaining, providing access to, and analyzing digital materials.

### Review of Literature

Verma, M. K. (2015) discussed that technology will continue to evolve, and libraries and library professionals must adapt to provide their patrons with the best access to content and service. Certainly, the electronic information environment presents problems for the library community, transitioning it from a traditional paper-and-print format to a world of circuits and connections.

Mokhtar, W. K. A. W., & Bin Hashim, L. (2012) addressed concerns, trends, and challenges in preparing new-generation librarians and information workers. Discussed several personal attributes,

as well as new skills and competencies, are required for new-era librarians to produce and administer library collections and services. For new-era librarians to manage the Digital Information System (DIS), demonstrated skills and sophisticated expertise competencies in imaging technologies, optical character recognition, markup languages, cataloging, multimedia indexing, database technology, user interface design, programming, and Web technologies are required.

Sumiati, E., & Wijanaraga, I. W. (2020) discussed how librarians serve users in the digital literacy era. Librarians must have the following skills to engage with users of varied characteristics: tool literacy, resource literacy, social-structural literacy, research literacy, publication literacy, emerging technology literacy, and critical literacy. Realizing the role of librarians in the digital literacy era also necessitates academic and government support in the use of online libraries, the provision of technology, the equitable distribution of human resources, librarian development capabilities, and government guidance to build a much better library.

Mwaniki, P. (2018) imagine how academic libraries will function in the future with additional user demands, staff needs, and services. The literature demonstrates how new technologies have developed and the effects they have on employees, library services, and emerging user demands. The topics in this article are framed by a conception of the library materials and services that academic libraries will offer in the future. It also considers upcoming research that investigates ways for librarians to develop their professional roles.

Melchionda, M. G. (2007) discussed according to the literature study, librarians have differing opinions on imposing networked and digital technologies on the information landscape. In the era of the internet, librarians must adjust to both the increasingly dematerialized workplace and the changing information habits of their consumers. For their professional category to continue to exist and play a significant role in the information society, it is clear that they must be able to strike the right balance between old and new duties.

### **Objectives of the Study**

- To identify the emerging digital technologies and tools that have influenced the role of librarians in the modern era.
- To examine the evolving responsibilities and skillsets required of librarians in the digital environment.
- To explore the challenges and opportunities faced by librarians in integrating digital resources and technologies into their workflows.

### **Research Methodology**

It is part of descriptive research, and a survey approach was employed. The researcher used a closed-ended questionnaire to collect information about librarian's opinions on the changing role of librarians in the digital environment and the challenges they face. As part of the study objectives, the researcher visited state university libraries and also employed interview, observation, and questionnaire techniques. MS Excel was used to graphically represent and analyze the collected data.

### **Scope and Limitation of the Study**

The study was limited to four state university libraries in the Jodhpur district of Rajasthan and its scope included all state university libraries in Rajasthan. These are Jai Narayan Vyas University (JNVU), Dr. S.R. Rajasthan Ayurved University (DSRRAU), Sardar Patel University of Police, Security and Criminal Justice (SPUPSCJ), National Law University (NLU).

### **Data Analysis**

#### **Use of digital technologies and tools in library services**

Table 1 presents that Jai Narayan Vyas University and National Law University provide online databases. Only National Law University has e-books and social media platforms. All universities except Sardar Patel Police Security and Criminal Justice University are providing online reference

services. All universities are using library management software. Only Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan Rajasthan Ayurved University and National Law University have OPAC. All universities are providing e-mail alerts except Dr. Sarvepalli Radhakrishnan Rajasthan Ayurved University.

Digital Technologies and Tool	JNVU	DSRRAU	SPUPSCJ	NLU
Online database	√	×	×	√
E-Books	×	×	×	√
Online reference service	√	√	×	√
Social Media Platforms	×	×	×	√
Library Management Software	√	√	√	√
OPAC	×	√	×	√
E-Mail Alert	√	×	√	√

**Table 1- Use of digital technologies and tools in library services**

#### Impact of digital technologies and tools on librarians

Table 2 shows that all university librarians agreed that patrons need better access to a wider range of resources, acquire new skills and knowledge to use digital tools effectively, and improve library resources, there is a need to increase efficiency in cataloguing and organizing services. Facilitate distance and virtual library services, and enhance engagement and interaction with library users.

	JNVU	DSRRAU	SPUPSCJ	NLU
Improved access to a wider range of resources for patrons	√	√	√	√
Required acquiring new skills and knowledge to effectively utilize digital tools	√	√	√	√
Enhanced efficiency in cataloguing and organizing library resources	√	√	√	√
Facilitated remote and virtual library services	√	√	√	√
Increased engagement and interaction with library users	√	√	√	√

**Table 2- Impact of digital technologies and tools on librarians**

### Important Skills for Librarians in a Digital Environment

The table shows that all university librarians agreed that data management and analysis, information literacy instruction, digital preservation and curation, user experience design, technology troubleshooting and support, and collaboration and communication skills are important skills they need.

	JNVU	DSRRAU	SPUPSCJ	NLU
<b>Data management and analysis</b>	√	√	√	√
<b>Information literacy instruction</b>	√	√	√	√
<b>Digital preservation and Curation</b>	√	√	√	√
<b>User experience design</b>	√	√	√	√
<b>Technology troubleshooting and support</b>	√	√	√	√
<b>Collaboration and communication skills</b>	√	√	√	√

**Table 3- Important Skills for Librarians in a Digital Environment**

### Role of Librarians to integrate digital resources and technologies

The table shows the role of librarians in integrating digital resources and technologies All university librarians agreed that they expanded their role in assisting patrons with accessing and using digital resources, increased responsibility for managing and curating digital collections, collaborating with IT professionals and vendors to implement new technologies, Leading digital literacy programs and workshops for library users.

	JNVU	DSRRAU	SPUPSCJ	NLU
<b>Expanded role in assisting patrons with accessing and using digital resources</b>	√	√	√	√
<b>Increased responsibility for managing and curating digital collections</b>	√	√	√	√
<b>Collaborating with IT professionals and vendors to implement new technologies</b>	√	√	√	√
<b>Leading digital literacy programs and workshops for library users</b>	√	√	√	√

**Table 4- Role of librarians to integrate digital resources and technologies**

### Challenges in adapting to the digital environment

The table shows that National Law University does not face any challenges in adapting to the digital environment but the other three remaining universities face a lack of adequate training and professional development opportunities, limited budget for acquiring and maintaining digital resources

and technologies, resistance to change from library staff and patrons, Privacy and security concerns related to digital resources, Difficult to keep up with rapid technological advances.

	JNVU	DSRRAU	SPUPSCJ	NLU
Lack of adequate training and professional development opportunities	√	√	√	×
Limited budget for acquiring and maintaining digital resources and technologies	√	√	√	×
Resistance to change from library staff and patrons	√	√	√	×
Privacy and security concerns related to digital resources	√	√	√	×
Difficult to keep up with rapid technological advances	√	√	√	×

**Table 5- Challenges in adapting to the digital environment**

#### Opportunities emerge with the changing role of librarians

The table shows that opportunities emerge with the changing role of librarians All university librarians agreed that increased collaboration with other professionals and organizations, enhanced user engagement and interaction through social media platforms, expanded reach and accessibility of library services to remote users, and integration of diverse multimedia resources into library collections.

	JNVU	DSRRAU	SPUPSCJ	NLU
Increased collaboration with other professionals and organizations	√	√	√	√
Enhanced user engagement and interaction through social media platforms	√	√	√	√
Expanded reach and accessibility of library services to remote users	√	√	√	√
Integration of diverse multimedia resources into library collections	√	√	√	√

**Table 6- Opportunities emerge with the changing role of librarians**

#### Major Findings

Remote and virtual library services facilitated by Jai Narain Vayas University, Dr. S.R. Rajasthan Ayurved University, SPUPSCJ, and National Law University.

Increased engagement and interaction with library users were achieved by JNVU, DSRRAU, SPUPSCJ, and NLU.

The majority of universities and institutions have implemented online databases, social media platforms, and library management software among their digital technologies and tools.

JNVU and NLU have implemented online reference services while DSRRAU has not.

All universities and institutions have implemented library management software and OPAC, but only SPUPSCJ has implemented E-Mail Alert.

### Conclusion and Recommendation

The study's findings revealed that although some of the roles and skills required of librarians are evolutionary and others are revolutionary, the ultimate role of librarians in the future is to drive the knowledge revolution in society (creating an informed society). Forging the next generation. The results also supported the idea that blended librarians who have a combination of enthusiasm, knowledge, abilities, and cultural intelligence are best suited for the future of libraries. Apart from the necessary knowledge and abilities, a librarian also needs to be passionate and disciplined. Unlearning is a skill that librarians need just as much as learning. The implementation of digital tools has greatly benefited libraries, as it has improved access to a wider range of resources for patrons. The use of digital tools has enhanced the efficiency in cataloging and organizing library resources, leading to a more streamlined and organized library system. The adoption of digital tools has required library staff to acquire new skills and knowledge to effectively utilize them. In addition, librarians are becoming more and more involved in the production and distribution of digital information, and they can help clients acquire digital literacy competencies. In general, the work of a librarian in the digital world has broadened to include a wide variety of duties associated with managing, facilitating access, and evaluating digital materials.

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