

CYBRARY: DIFFERENT ROLE AND RESPONSIBILITIES OF LIBRARIANS IN DIGITAL PLATFORM

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ABSTRACT:

This paper covers the role and responsibilities of librarians in a cyber environment of the library. Librarian roles in this scenario become more dynamic, update his skill more macro manners, also develop new ideas, and identify their challenges. Emphasize some of the services offered by the librarian as a cybrarian and indicate some of the key skills and competencies requisite as a cybrarian.

KEYWORDS: Cyber Library, Cybrarian, Cybrary, Digital Library, Librarian, Modern Library.

INTRODUCTION:

In the Digital Age, librarians are guardians of knowledge who must adapt to rapidly evolving technology and user demands. The rise of web 2.0 tools like social media, open-source software, and online resources has reshaped their roles. Virtual libraries, or Cybraries, have moved from concept to reality, transforming libraries into digital spaces that provide instant access to information. Digital libraries are not just digitized resources but thoughtfully organized collections that enhance accessibility.

The term "Cybrarian," coined by Michel Bauwens, refers to librarians who specialize in using the Internet and online resources to manage, retrieve, and disseminate information. This role combines traditional librarian skills with expertise in digital tools, creating information professionals adept at navigating cyberspace to meet users' needs.

Technology has revolutionized libraries, transforming them into global knowledge hubs beyond physical boundaries. Digital libraries allow users to access a vast range of digitized content, including texts, images, maps, and multimedia, fostering the concept of the "Global Village." Modern libraries serve as gateways to remote databases and catalogs, offering seamless access to knowledge.

The librarian's role has evolved into that of a knowledge navigator, information manager, and technology facilitator. They assist researchers, promote resource use, and ensure access to digitized collections. New titles like Cybrarian, knowledge manager, and webmaster reflect their expanded responsibilities.

Advances in communication and computing have obliterated the need for physical library visits. Online Public Access Catalogs (OPACs), bibliographic databases, and digitized collections enable users to access information from anywhere. Collaboration with IT professionals is vital for designing and maintaining information systems that optimize Internet and web use.

The integration of technology in libraries has permanently altered their culture and roles. Librarians now provide quicker, more sophisticated services while guiding users through an ever-expanding array of digital resources. This shift has firmly established the library as a dynamic, indispensable part of the digital age.

Cybrary: Cybrary is the upgraded version of the library, which provides library resources and services according to the cyber environment. There are no boundaries for users and library professionals like physical libraries. Library users and library professional can interact without physical intervention.

Cybrarian: Webster Online dictionary (2015) defined Cybrarian as “a person whose job is to find, collect, and manage information that is available on the World Wide Web” Oxford online dictionary (2015) defines Cybrarian as “A librarian or researcher who uses the Internet as an information resource.”

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE:

Ansari, Munira Nasreen (2018) focus on the evolving role of Librarians, or "Cybrarians," in the digital era, emphasizing their duties in managing electronic resources and adapting to advancements in information technology. Rapid technological changes have transformed libraries, requiring librarians to acquire new skills for effective knowledge management. These professionals now serve as knowledge managers, information navigators, and information professionals in the digital landscape.

Banker, V. P. & Barot A. U. (2017) explores the transition from librarian to cybrarian, focusing on their evolving roles, responsibilities, and required skills in the Indian context. Modern librarians manage digital resources, create institutional databases, and ensure quick access to information. They face challenges adapting to new trends, shifting from traditional roles to becoming tech-savvy cybrarians.

Joshi, N. M. and Kamat, R. R. (2016) highlighted the skills and challenges for librarians in India, highlighting differences between traditional and digital libraries. It emphasizes the evolving role of librarians as "cybrarians" in cyberspace, driven by tools like social media, open-source software, and online resources. The shift demands librarians adapt to emerging trends and user needs.

Rao, K. Nageswara and Babu, K.H. (2001) enlighten the evolving scope of the Web, librarians' changing roles, and their interaction with intelligent tools and technologies. The transition from traditional to digital libraries has empowered librarians with dynamic roles, leveraging the Internet and Web technologies to better serve an information-driven society. The Web's

capabilities have revolutionized information access, reshaping libraries' roles, paradigms, and culture.

NEED OF THE STUDY:

The shift from traditional libraries to digital platforms, or cybraries, has significantly transformed the roles and responsibilities of librarians. As information managers, librarians must navigate the challenges of organizing, curating, and ensuring access to digital resources while maintaining user privacy and copyright compliance. The increasing reliance on digital platforms requires librarians to adopt advanced technical skills and provide digital literacy training to users. However, there is a lack of focused research on the evolving demands placed on librarians in the digital era. This study is essential to identify the new roles librarians play, the challenges they face, and the strategies they use to adapt. It will offer insights into their contributions as digital curators, technology facilitators, and knowledge navigators. By addressing this knowledge gap, the research aims to support the development of professional training programs and policy frameworks. Ultimately, it will help enhance the efficiency and relevance of cybraries in the digital age.

OBJECTIVES:

1. To know the role and responsibility of a cybrarian.
2. To know the significance of cybrarian.

What is CYBRARY?

The Cybrary is an essential, comprehensive strategy to meeting the information needs of lifelong learning and problem-based learning. It is an effective aid to flexible learning and an improvement to flexible teaching. Michel Bauwens, Information Officer of BP Nutrition in Antwerp, Belgium, developed the term 'Cybrarian' to characterise the personnel in a virtual library. A Cybrarian is nothing more than a classic librarian operating in an automated environment surrounded by digital items in the digital era. Cybrary is a method of bringing the concept of the library online. Existing technology will enable the cybrary, which will be buffeted by new knowledge economies, but it will also be formed by the heritage of the library. The library has long been a public and private meeting place for books, ideas, and people.

For many years, the literature has considered cybrary or virtual library services. However, it is only in recent years that the idea has been technically feasible. The Cybrary

combines cutting-edge information technology and traditional services to create a "virtual library" within a "wired university." Students can explore or target the universe of information as they desire from any of the Library's hundreds of high-end Pentium computers, day or night, from home or office. The Cybrary expands the scope of information collecting and provides students with new opportunities for synthesising and analysing the material they uncover.

The Cybrary is a necessary, integrated strategy to meet the information needs of continuous learning and problem-based teaching. It is an effective aid to practical learning and an enhancement to flexible teaching.

ROLE OF CYBRARIAN IN LIBRARY

The term "Cybrarian" is a combination of "cyber" (referring to the digital world) and "librarian," and it refers to a librarian who specializes in managing digital resources, online information, and technology in a library setting. In the modern library context, the role of a Cybrarian is crucial for adapting traditional library functions to the digital age. Here are the key roles and responsibilities of a Cybrarian in a library:

1. Digital Resource Management

- **Curating Digital Collections:** A Cybrarian is responsible for managing and curating digital collections, such as e-books, digital journals, databases, multimedia files, and other electronic resources.
- **Metadata and Indexing:** They help in organizing digital resources effectively, creating metadata and indexing them for easy retrieval and access.
- **Digital Archiving:** Ensuring the long-term preservation of digital materials, so they remain accessible for future generations.

2. Information Retrieval and Search Strategy

- **Search Engine Optimization (SEO):** A Cybrarian optimizes online catalogs, databases, and digital resources to ensure they are discoverable through search engines or library-specific search tools.
- **User Education in Information Retrieval:** They help library users learn how to efficiently search digital databases, journals, e-books, and other resources, ensuring they can find credible and relevant information.

3. Technology Integration and Management

- **Managing Library Software and Systems:** Cybrarians are involved in implementing, troubleshooting, and maintaining library management systems (LMS), integrated library systems (ILS), or digital asset management platforms.
- **Implementing Emerging Technologies:** They stay updated on emerging technologies such as artificial intelligence, machine learning, and virtual reality, and explore how these technologies can be applied in the library environment to enhance user experience.
- **Facilitating Online Access:** Ensuring that users can access resources remotely, including managing cloud storage, remote access portals, and virtual library platforms.

4. Digital Literacy and User Support

- **Training Users in Digital Literacy:** Cybrarians provide training to library patrons on how to effectively use digital tools, access online resources, and critically evaluate the information they find.
- **Assisting with Digital Tools and Platforms:** They offer technical support to library users who need help navigating digital resources, websites, e-books, or using library systems.

5. Copyright and Licensing Management

- **Managing Licensing Agreements:** Cybrarians oversee the licensing of digital resources, ensuring compliance with copyright laws, intellectual property rights, and fair use guidelines.
- **Ensuring Access to Legal Resources:** They are responsible for ensuring that library patrons have legal access to digital content, especially when dealing with subscriptions and restricted resources.

6. Cybersecurity and Data Privacy

- **Maintaining Cybersecurity:** As libraries increasingly move toward digital platforms, Cybrarians play a key role in safeguarding sensitive data (both user information and library resources) from cyber threats.

- **Data Privacy:** Ensuring compliance with privacy regulations such as GDPR (General Data Protection Regulation) and other regional or institutional policies.

7. Developing and Managing Digital Services

- **Online Catalogs and Portals:** A Cybrarian is responsible for managing the library's online catalog and portal, ensuring that digital services are user-friendly and functional.
- **Creating Online Content and Resources:** They develop and curate web-based resources, digital newsletters, webinars, and online guides to promote library resources and services.

8. Collaboration and Networking

- **Collaborating with Other Institutions:** Cybrarians may work with other libraries, universities, and organizations to share digital resources, create joint digital projects, or develop community-focused digital initiatives.
- **Participating in Digital Library Initiatives:** They might also be involved in national or international digital library initiatives, ensuring that the library stays connected to global trends in digital information management.

9. Research and Development

- **Conducting Research:** Cybrarians often engage in research to evaluate new digital tools, platforms, or resources that can improve library services or offer new services to users.
- **Innovation:** They contribute to the development of innovative digital projects, such as virtual reference services, digital preservation programs, or integrating artificial intelligence in library operations.

10. Public Outreach and Advocacy

- **Promoting Digital Literacy:** Cybrarians advocate for digital literacy in their communities, helping users understand the importance of being able to navigate and critically assess information in the digital world.

- **Public Engagement:** They may also conduct outreach programs and workshops for various age groups, helping users understand the value of digital tools in education, research, and daily life.

MAJOR FINDINGS:

Here are five major findings from the provided content about Cybrary and the role of Cybrarians:

1. **Cybrary as a Digital Evolution of Libraries**

The Cybrary integrates traditional library services with cutting-edge technology to create a "virtual library" environment. It enables flexible teaching and lifelong learning by providing access to a wide range of digital resources, fostering problem-based and practical learning.

2. **Cybrarian: A Specialist in the Digital Era**

The Cybrarian operates as a modern librarian, managing digital resources and leveraging technology to support library functions. Their role encompasses digital resource management, online information retrieval, and user training in digital literacy.

3. **Core Functional Areas of Cybrarianship**

- **Digital Resource Management:** Curating, archiving, and ensuring easy access to digital collections.
- **Technology Integration:** Implementing library management systems, emerging technologies, and facilitating remote access.
- **User Support:** Training users in digital literacy and assisting with digital platforms.

4. **Importance of Cybersecurity and Compliance**

Cybrarians play a critical role in safeguarding library data and ensuring compliance with privacy regulations, copyright laws, and licensing agreements to protect both resources and users in the digital realm.

5. **Impact on Education and Research**

The Cybrary expands the scope of learning by offering students opportunities to synthesize and analyze information digitally. Cybrarians drive innovation by developing digital services, engaging in research, and collaborating with other institutions to stay at the forefront of digital library trends.

CONCLUSION:

Librarians' roles have evolved significantly in the digital age, expanding beyond traditional functions to include curating and managing digital resources, fostering digital literacy, and ensuring equitable knowledge access. They guide users in navigating credible online resources while safeguarding privacy and ethical use. Technical responsibilities, like metadata management and AI integration, are now central to their work. Librarians champion inclusivity, ensuring digital platforms meet diverse needs, including underserved populations. By embracing innovation and continuous learning, they bridge traditional library services with the demands of the digital-first world, transforming them into essential knowledge enablers in the digital ecosystem.

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