VIDU 18-182-1

THE LIBRARY - THEN AND NOW

ISHVARI COREA

The Library then:

The development of libraries during the past hundred years or so has been very rapid. In the classical and medieval times learning was mainly oral and took place mostly in temples and monasteries. It is evident in historic traditions in both the east and the west that there were monks and learned scribes attached to monastic libraries. Oral repetition of stories and ballads continued however, to be the normal way of keeping alive the records of the past. It was oral tradition that preserved the Tripitaka of Theravada Buddhism until the 1st century B.C. when it was committed to writing during the reign of Vattagamani Abhaya at Aluvihara, Sri Lanka. The Gospels of Jesus Christ too were not recorded immediately, but were left for a considerable time to oral tradition. In the past "things said," or, tradition made up the sum of man's knowledge.

In ancient days books were respected and venerated. In Sri Lanka books were called "Poth Vahanse" and were mostly found in temples. The ordinary layman did not have access to them nor were there books for pleasure reading. All through antiquity a book was read aloud to the audience by a skilled person. In Sri Lanka the books belonging to the Anuradhapura and Polonnaruwa periods were mainly written to be read aloud.

Even when there were libraries with sufficient numbers of books in them people thought of books as a "dead and troublesome mode of communication". This attitude continued for a long period, but today the whole scenario has changed. Until recently the library was the symbol of an educated and cultured minority. Now, with the social and economic changes, more and more people enjoy the privileges of a library.

The library now:

The library has progressively moved from the age of fixed location to an age of global dimensions. Modern telecommunications play a vital role in the dissemination of information. Today the information generation is so great that many types of publications both print and non-print are churned out very rapidly. Well organized sophisticated information networks and data bases are available for the customer/user for research and gathering of information.

Types of libraries:

There are many types of libraries catering to their customers - national, public, school, university and special. Their services and resources are directly related to the users' needs. Everyone working in a library ought to understand and come to terms with the precise aims and objectives of their particular library.

The ***national library*** being a legal deposit library is where a country preserves its national culture and literary heritage. Some of the major functions are the publication of the national bibliography and other bibliographical publications including union catalogues of the resources of libraries within the country. It is responsible to provide information to the government policy makers and law makers. It acquires, organizes and preserves the nation's collection of literature: print, non-print inclusive of manuscripts. It is also its duty to make available library resources of the nation for the benefit of society. It provides leadership in the professional field.

The ***public library*** serves all sections of the community which makes it different from other libraries. It provides a liberal and comprehensive service to the user providing facilities for education and recreation. It plays a major role in the process of self education. While meeting the informal needs of the community it helps to enrich and further develop the personality of the user.

In no other library is found such a number and range of people of all ages, backgrounds, cultures, classes and educational levels, using the same services. It has always catered for those in the edge of society as well as those in the mainstream. It is the only public space where one can spend time without being looked at or having to buy something.

The ***school library*** supports the educational programme of the school and supplies all the essential resources to fulfil this role. It is a place where "study skills" and "information skills" are fostered in students.

The ***university library*** directs its activities towards the fulfilment of the functions of the university. It is an active force in teaching and research and an important component of the university setup to meet the needs of its students and faculty. It is vital for a university to have a strong library.

The ***special library*** is a major source of information in the organization it serves. The emphasis is on collection, organization and retrieval of information for its users who are mainly researchers or specialists in the subject field.

Taken as a whole, any library should be able to provide a quality service which should be relevant to the needs of their community. The reader/user/customer should be able to view their library as accessible and user friendly; a place in which they can pursue their goals.

User services:

Taken as a whole, any library should be able to provide a quality service which should be relevant to the needs of their community. The reader/user/customer should be able to view their library as accessible and user friendly; a place in which they can pursue their goals. The importance of ensuring that advice and assistance is available should be made known to the customer. Providing a professional service takes more than investment in technology. There should be genuine commitment on the part of the staff to the services. The marketing and promotion of library services is essential today. This can be done through promotional publicity, literature, media coverage and the user. New and innovative approaches need to be explored and guidelines set up to cost-effectively develop targeted strategies.

It is important in a library to make certain that studies of users are based on what they need or require rather than on just what they say they want. In other words, these studies have to be of people in action and not static studies built around answers to questionnaires or meetings. The difficulties they come across in accessing information should be identified.

It is a matter of great regret that users are reluctant to consult the catalogues and even discuss matters of importance to them and air their difficulties with the staff. This reluctance, I believe, is still there and needs to be removed.

It is important to remember that whatever surveys, questionnaires, meetings and interviews have been used to obtain the desired information, almost as valuable will be the information incidentally acquired about the attitudes of the patrons for whom they are intended. The importance of the user must at all times be predominant in the Director's/ Librarian's mind at all times.

It is a matter of great regret that users are reluctant to consult the catalogues and even discuss matters of importance to them and air their difficulties with the staff. This reluctance, I believe, is still there and needs to be removed. The principle of asking for and receiving help is a normal social act, and should be accepted as such. Discussions should take place between the staff and user, and these discussions should be held with the maximum informality so that the right atmosphere is created for questions to be asked and for information to be sought.

A modern library has to be sufficiently flexible to cope without a fuss the strains imposed by rapid changes in the world outside. The emphasis should now be on access to electronic information sources and electronic information networks. The users have to be introduced to the use of such systems. The time is now right to get Information Technology (IT) in front of the users and make them "technology-literate". The user now should be capable of finding information in their library and outside their own library, town or country. For this purpose children, young adults, and even researchers need guidance. The Director Information/ Librarian too needs to be trained in the use of E-Mail, CD-Rom databases, on-line systems as information systems are moving very rapidly in the world of IT.

Access to international networks like INTERNET in libraries will be very advantageous in the speedy procurement of current information on any subject anywhere in the world. In this manner, no one need be isolated from the rest of the world. A user could also have access to the most recent publications and papers and so be well informed. To have access to this great wealth of information would indeed be really wonderful. If the youth of today could have access to all this wealth they would surely be better equipped to face the future. This could result in a happy and contented nation. For all this to be successful there must be dedication and enthusiasm on the part of the staff. Their friendliness and approachability towards their clientele are essential for the overall effectiveness of the information infrastructure. If the information superhighway is strongly entrenched, it may even be goodbye to books and print media.

The time is now right to get Information Technology (IT) in front of the users and make them "technology-literate". The user now should be capable of finding information in their library and outside their own library, town or country.

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ROLE OF THE LIBRARIES TOWARDS NATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

W.A. WISWA WARNAPALA

The Speech delivered by
Prof. W.A. Wiswa Warnapala
Deputy Minister of Higher Education
at the Thirty Fifth Annual Session of
Sri Lanka Library Association
held at "savsiripaya"
on 24th March - 1995.

Let me first thank you for inviting me to your 35th Annual Sessions. I notice that your Sessions this time want to examine and discuss a number of matters relating to library development in the country.

Sri Lanka Library Association, founded in 1960 and incorporated by an Act of Parliament in 1974, is the only professional organization in Sri Lanka which is committed to library development and information science. Your Association, as a collection of professionals with internationally recognized qualifications, is committed to the promotion and improvement of library services in Sri Lanka and yet another objective is to set up professional standards. No organization, in my view, can function, for the benefit of a nation, unless it adheres to certain standards of behaviour. It is my view that your Association, from the very inception, made a noteworthy contribution to library development in the country. Today, there is a wide network of libraries in the country; these are the National Library, University Libraries, Public Libraries maintained by Local Government institutions, Research Libraries of various organizations in both the private and public sector and School Libraries. Yet another centre is the age - old Temple Libraries which contain ancient works including ola material and then there are libraries owned by individuals who, during a life- time, make a collection of books. Such men are rare today, but in the past there were such men who, owing to their own interests in reading, collected books including first editions.

Still the library development is comparatively poor in Sri Lanka. Local Government Libraries are poorly equipped, and school libraries are totally a neglected sector. There is no Library Policy as far as the school library development is concerned, and the absence of a proper Library Policy, of which aimed at the expansion of schools library facilities, was the main reason. In the context of the educational policy changes which we intend to bring about in this country during the period of our regime, we intend to

give some priority to a scheme of school library development.

Sri Lanka has a very literate population, the national literacy rate is nearly 96%. This is a tremendous achievement when compared with the status of other countries in South Asia. Sri Lanka has a school going population of nearly 4.3% million. But our reading habits have declined in the past two decades; there is a decline in the reading habits among school children. This is due to two factors: one being the highly competitive examinations and structured material related to the syllabi, and nothing outside it attracts them because they, in their own view, do not help them to pass an examination. Next impediment to the growth of a reading habit is the tuition industry and the tuition related publications which are available in plenty. In my view, examination - oriented reading and over-concentration on subject wise reading has resulted in an overall decline in the reading habits of young people. In the Universities, the undergraduates make no use of the vast library resources in the Universities. I have discovered, in the course of my teaching experience which runs to thirty years, that some relevant texts have not been borrowed for years by the students. Language deficiency is one important barrier; apart from that, there is not much of an interest among the present day under-graduates to acquire knowledge. I do not know whether this is an extension of the same deficiency or the decline in reading habits which we witness among the school children. It is my own experience again at Peradeniya that library gets filled up only at the eve of the annual examinations, and this is not for the purpose of consulting major work on the subjects; they come there to read the notes.

I have already referred to the level of literacy in Sri Lanka. How many books are being published in a country which has the highest literacy rate in Asia? For 1992, 6855 titles have been published; 599 periodicals have been published. This I mentioned in order to say that our publishing industry is in a poor state.

There are some aspects which your Association, as one committed to the development of library facilities in this country, needs to examine during the course of your deliberations.

I see some of my friends from the Universities- people who man the libraries in the universities. University librarians are not a new tribe within the intellectual community of a university. We must accept that university is a place of culture; it is the culture of learning that we need to promote in our universities. Librarians as members of an expanding intellectual community, must contribute to the process of learning in the Universities by producing research in their own professional fields. Take, for instance, Mr. Ian Goonetileke, who, as the doyen bibliographer of this country, produced a monumental bibliography on Sri Lanka. This is a work which every researcher in and out- side Sri Lanka has to consult if one wants to do research on Sri Lanka. He was prevented from continuing his work at Peradeniya by a group of academics who did not see eye to eye with him on matters political; yet this great bibliographer manages to keep his interest in bibliography alive even at the late age. He is the unique type of librarian-cum-intellectual which the university needs today. What I am trying to emphasise is that mere professionalism is not enough, one must get himself embedded in the intellectual life of a university. In the universities today, there is an absence of critical and creative thought and the role of the universities the critic of contemporary society is now confined to a small group of students guided by a nondescript ideology. University intellectual must guide the changes in the contemporary society; for which more research needs to be done on contemporary social, economic and political issues.

I thank you again for inviting me, to speak on the occasion of your 35th anniversary. Your Association, as a professional organization, has contributed a great deal for the betterment of your tribe, the size of which is certain to improve with the provision of better-facilities for library development in this country. Information Sciences, with the new technologies now available in the world, can play a vital role in the development of a country. I am sure that your Association, with its responsibilities, can make a contribution to the process of development that is now taking place in the country.

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ORGANIZATION OF LIBRARIES FOR BETTER USE

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1. INTRODUCTION

A library is a organized collection of selected documents. It facilitates utilization of not only its own documents but also documents in other libraries that are accessible to it.

The library selects documents that are most appropriate for the users; acquires them on priority basis; organizes them to facilitate easy location; analyses them to expose the contents; prepares information tools to assist in searching for them; creates awareness of their existence by disseminating information among users and preserves them for future use.

Library activities are divided into three broad areas:

Library practices,
Documentation,
Information services.

Users who wish to explore information material personally to select what they need for study and research should be encouraged to visit the library. Large part of the collection is kept open to the users who prefer browsing the stacks while a small portion, mainly for economic use of space, is made closed access.[1]

2. LIBRARY PRACTICES

Library practices are aimed at collecting most appropriate documents and make them available for use. Out of these practices the following make the highest impact on users:

Collections development,
Collections organization,
Collections utilization,
Collections preservation.

2.1 Collections Development

Collections of the library should satisfy the current and potential needs of different categories of users. The Library adopts a collections development policy for the provision of appropriate, current, comprehensive and authoritative information.

The collections development policy has the following parameters:

(i) *Subject:* Define core subjects, allied subjects and general subjects. Specify allocation of resources (funds, space and staff time) for each group of subjects.

(ii) *Media:* Media preferred by the library in collection development. Of more than fifty different information media, the libraries generally prefer the following:

Print	-	books, serials, reports
Visual	-	maps, drawings
AV	-	video, slides
Microform	-	microfiche
Electronic	-	CD-ROM, disks

(iii) Language: Emphasis is given to the language that the users are familiar with. National languages (Sinhala, Tamil and English) should receive priority. Documents in other languages are considered if users are capable of using them and literature on the subject concerned is available only in that language.

(iv) *Preferred User Groups:* The library dealing with different categories of users select the category which should be given priority in resource allocation.

In general there are eight different categories of library users. No library can develop its collection to satisfy the needs of all categories and hence most appropriate categories are selected.

The main categories of users identified in the point of view of libraries are:

(a) Managers,
(b) Educationists,
(c) Researchers,
(d) Extension/Development Workers,
(e) Journalists,
(f) Information Scientists,
(g) Students,
(h) General Public.

Library collections are developed and library services are provided to meet the requirements of these groups.

2.2 Collections Organization

Documents acquired according to the collections development policy are organized into several separate collections taking into consideration the method of utilization and physical features. Each collection, except for the lending collection, is given a 'collection code' for the identification and location of items in the collection.

Main collections of an average library are described below:

(a) *Lending*
Core collection of books that are available for lending. The collection is arranged in open shelves by the call number. A broad classification is used for the subjects. A 'call number' is constructed as follows: Broad Subject No., Author Code.

(b) *Reference*
Books with reference value (dictionaries, directories etc.) and books that are difficult to be replaced (rare books) will be available only for reference. Reference books will be organized in a separate collection.

The reference collection is updated from time to time by replacing old editions with the latest.

(c) *Repository*
A repository of documents is organized by many libraries to store following types of material:

(i) Unpublished reports. (even published reports on complex and narrow subjects with a fewer number of pages will be added to the repository).

(ii) Reprints and photocopies of articles: reprints of journal articles, photocopies of newspapers and journal articles and chapters of books.

(iii) Conference documents: individual papers presented at conferences. (conference proceedings should be in the lending collection).

(iv) Technical and research reports.

(v) Thesis and dissertations.

When books, journals, conference proceedings are acquired, they are analyzed to identify items for the repository. When a photocopy is obtained for the repository, the citation of the principal item is recorded in the photocopy.

(d) Serials

Serials are organized in several separate collections.

(i) Current serials: These are stored in periodicals display racks with the back issues of the year. Since displaying space is limited, only titles having high demand will be included in the current serials collection.

(ii) Retained journals: This collection has three types of items:

- current journals that find no displaying space in the current serials collection.
- permanently retained journals awaiting binding.
- temporarily retained journals during their retention period.

(iii) Bound journals: Journals retained permanently by the library are organized in a separate collection.

(iv) News letters: Current issues of selected newsletters are displayed in the current serials collection; all other titles could be added to the newsletter collection.

(v) Annual reports: Annual reports, transactions, programme reports etc. which records programmes and activities of selected organizations are organized in a separate collection.

(e) Microform

Information sources, particularly secondary sources, are available as microforms. Librarians prefer microforms to print media for secondary information sources (indexes, bibliographies, directories etc.) as they are convenient to handle. Although microforms are being replaced by the electronic media, a vast number of secondary sources and special primary sources (dissertations etc.) are still only available in microforms.

A Reader (Microfiche reading machine) should be available for reading microfiche.

(f) Audio visuals

Audio visuals are used as very effective information sources for educational purposes. Organizations engaged in promotion and training pay special attention to AV materials.

(g) Electronic media

Information technology has introduced several electronic media which are widely used in modern libraries in storage and retrieval systems. Electronic media stores digitally text, references, graphics and sound.

In addition to space-saving features, the electronic media have several advantages:

(i) Exchange and transfer of information can be done quickly and conveniently.
(ii) Retrieval of information is more efficient.
(iii) Easy to convert to paper media. (printouts)

(iv) Can be obtained in different formats (information in outputs can be arranged as desired).

The collection would contain following types of material:

CD-ROM -full text
CD-ROM-bibliographic references
CD-ROM-images (maps, pictures etc.)
Diskette-bibliographic references
Diskette-images

(h) Maps Collection

General maps and maps relating to subjects of the library are organized in a separate collection. The collection would contain maps printed in separate sheets and also maps extracted from various documents.

(i) Clippings Collection:

Short articles, news items, announcements on environmental serials will be extracted and organized in a separate collection.

(j) Profile Collection

A profile is a collection of documents on a given topic. Three types of profiles will be created.

(i) Subject of event,
(ii) person,
(iii) organization.

File dockets are used to store profiles.

Provision of reading facilities is the basic function of a library. Libraries endeavour to provide adequate reading facilities to the users who visit the library.

2.3 Collection Utilization

(a) Reading Facilities

Provision of reading facilities is the basic function of a library. Libraries endeavour to provide adequate reading facilities to the users who visit the library. Analysis shows that library users engage in three types of reading: browsing (relaxed reading), scanning/skimming (light reading) and study (concentrated reading).

Depending on the space availability, libraries organize separate reading areas for each type of reading:

(i) Relaxed reading area - For browsing journals and newspapers. Current serials are stored in this area. A settee with low tables is provided.

(ii) Light reading area - For scaning and skimming reference material,. Reading tables and chairs will be provided.

(iii) Study area - Allocated for concentrated reading. Some libraries provide study carrels to create quiet and undisturbed environment for users who wish isolation.

Four types of study carrels are used in libraries:

Reading carrel: With low desk-top shelf and a reading light.
AV carrel: For using AV material . A TV set, cassette players (audio/video) and head phones.
Computer carrel; For using online databases and CD-ROMS. Monitor, keyboard, CD-ROM player.
Microfiche carrel: For using microfiche. A microfiche reader.

(b) Lending

Books and serials in the library are loaned to members for a limited period of time. A lending policy specifying type of material, number of items issued at a time, period of lending for each category of members should be formulated.

(i) Personal loans: Library material (books and journals) lent to personal members.

(ii) Inter-library loans: Library material (books, journals, AV) lent to institutional members and to libraries participate networks.

3. DOCUMENTATION

3.1 Documentation Functions:

The basic function of documentation is exposing the information packed in documents so that it could be exploited by the users. Thus documentation converts a static document into an active information source.

Documents acquired by a library are processed using different techniques.

(i)	Analysis	- identify important parts
(ii)	Classification	- group subjects according to their relationship
(iii)	Cataloguing	- describe items for easy identification
(iv)	Indexing	- provide access points for easy retrieval
(v)	Profiling	- assembling analytical items belonging to a given topic
(vi)	Translation	- conversion of documents from one language to another.

3.2 Analysis

Documentation identifies two types of documents:
(i) Macro (parent) document (ii) Micro (offspring) document. A micro item is a part of a macro which cannot be identified without the identity of the macro. Micros are distinguished from the macro by the method of presentation, the authorship or the subject.

Macro	Micro
book	chapter, map, book review
journal	article, announcement
conference report	paper
newsletter	news item, announcement
newspaper	article, news item

Analysis is the process of dissecting a macro document into micros and identifying the important micros that should be highlighted. A decision has to be taken regarding extracting a micro item from the macro item. If the macro is not retained indefinitely or if the two items go to two separate collections, the micro should be photocopied: bibliographic citation of the macro should be recorded for the full identification of the micro.

Analysis of macro documents is explained below:

(a) Books: A book would contain a chapter relevant to the core subjects of the Centre. If it is not documented, its existence would not be known to the users. If the book is not added to the collection, the chapters are extracted by photocopying.

(b) Journals: Articles on the core subjects are identified for indexing. Articles in the journal that are not retained are photocopied.

(c) Newspapers and newsletters:
Items extracted are:
- Articles on the core subjects;
- news items relating to the parent organization;
- news items and articles on topics, organizations and persons in the profiles list

(d) Conference proceedings: Important papers on core subjects published in conference proceedings are identified for indexing. These are photocopied if the conference proceeding is not retained.

Classification is a method used in organizing items by subject. Arrangement of subjects by the classification number ensures bringing similar subjects together. This action helps the library users in selecting an item by browsing through the collection.

3.3 Classification

Classification is a method used in organizing items by subject. Arrangement of subjects by the classification number ensures bringing similar subjects together. This action helps the library users in selecting an item by browsing through the collection.

Although classification can be used to satisfy the subject approach to information, computer assisted indexing techniques introduce more efficient methods for searching information by the subject. Therefore most libraries now use classification only for arranging the collection by the subject. Such libraries restrict classification to shelve arrangement of lending and reference books. A shelve arrangement does not require in-depth classification, and hence the library could adopt broad classification.

Libraries in Sri Lanka use international classifications to organize books in shelves and to organize information in catalogues or databases. Dewey Decimal Classification (DDC) is the most popular scheme generally used mainly in public, school and university libraries. The Universal Decimal Classification (UDC) is generally selected by Scientific and Technical libraries for subject arrangement, mainly because of its capability of providing specific class numbers for complex subjects.

3.4 Indexing

Indexing helps retrieval of items. The terms and phrases that represent the subject of the item are used as indexing terms in subject indexing. The indexers should be able to foresee the terms that would be used in searching the item. To ensure use of uniform indexing terms and to guide the indexers in selection of appropriate indexing terms, a controlled vocabulary is used in indexing.

Libraries use thesauri or lists of subject descriptors as controlled vocabularies. Two types of thesauri are used: General and Special. General thesauri list terms (subject descriptor) covering all subject fields while special thesauri list terms associated with a specific subject.

Indexing terms selected from the above three tools should be recorded in the input sheets.

Computers are capable of generating indexing terms automatically from the searchable fields such as title, author and series. Therefore indexing fields other than the subject will be handled by the computer.

3.5 Cataloguing

Libraries generally restrict the cataloguing practice to description of documents. Libraries in Sri Lanka use the Anglo American Cataloguing Rules, generally referred as AACR in cataloguing.

A card catalogue is maintained by libraries to help searching for documents in the library. The catalogue can be used to search by author, title, series and subject. This is done by preparing a separate card for the above search keys. Hence a document would be represented in more than one card in the catalogue.

Libraries using computers now store their catalogue in computers. Since a computer can store more than one search key in a record,

preparation of multiple records to satisfy different search keys is not required.

Computerized libraries would in the future provide Online Public Access Catalogues (OPAC) for users.

3.6 Profiling

Action of assembling various documents for a profile is called profiling. This involves selection of items, translating if necessary, mounting them on paper, labelling for identification and filing in the relevant docket. Profiling is an extension of the analysis activities mentioned in 3.2. Three types of profiles, as mentioned in 2.2 (j) are maintained by libraries.

3.7 Translation

Important articles, news items and announcements that are identified for inclusion in library publications are translated if necessary, into national languages. Service of in-house translators or external translators would be obtained.

The libraries make arrangements to provide translations of selected documents published in foreign languages. A panel of translators are appointed by the libraries for this purpose. The library would maintain a Register of Translators giving bio-data, language capabilities, subject specialization, terms and conditions etc.

3.8 Editing

Information products that are output in the documentation process have to be presented in appropriate formats. Editing involves organization of the material such as computer outputs, clippings, photographs, maps, captions, into readable formats. Knowledge of typography, art work and computer graphics will be required for editorial work.

Operation of various information services to satisfy userneeds is one of the main functions of a library. Users seek information for research, study and recreation aiming at expansion of their wisdom, improvement of their quality of life and enhancement of their efficiency of work.

4. INFORMATION SERVICES

4.1 Organization

Operation of various information services to satisfy user needs is one of the main functions of a library. Users seek information for research, study and recreation aiming at expansion of their wisdom, improvement of their quality of life and enhancement of their efficiency of work.

Information needed by the users fall into four main types:

(i) Reference - Information on information sources (help in identification, selection and location of information sources).

(ii) Factual - Information that could be assimilated.

(iii) Statistical - Numerical data tabulated and displayed illustrate effects, progress and trends.

(iv) Graphic - Geographic and pictorial presentation of data in maps, drawings, plans etc.

Above information is stored in books, serials, conference proceedings, unpublished reports, AV and electronic media.

Documents that are available to a library belong to two categories:

(i) Owned (documents owned by the library)
(ii) Accessible (those in local and foreign libraries having links with the library)

Information on documents owned and accessible by the library is stored in bibliography tools and computer databases prepared by-

(i) the library itself (catalogue, bibliographies etc.)
(ii) local libraries participating in networks (union catalogues, union lists, accession bulletins etc.)
(iii) foreign organizations (indexing and abstracting serials, current awareness bulletins etc.)

Libraries utilize these three types of information products to satisfy the user needs. Regular information services of libraries are discussed below.

4.2 Reference Services

Reference collection of a library helps answering specific questions of the users. Efficiency of the reference service depends on three factors:

(i) knowledge and skill of the reference librarian
(ii) comprehensiveness of the reference collection
(iii) currency of the reference collection.

When a query is received by post or by telephone, it should be analyzed to understand the actual problem. When the query is made in person, the library has the advantage of interviewing the user to identify the actual requirement. If reference tools that would provide the answer to the user's query is not available or if the reference tool is obsolete, the library would contact a library which possess the reference tool. The library should store information on important reference tools possessed by other libraries.

4.3 Referral Services

Any query that cannot be answered by the library due to non availability of relevant information sources, are directed to an organization which is capable of answering it. The library need to evaluate the stocks and capabilities of the associated organizations for operating effective referral services. The profiles collection and information tools such as directories compiled by the library help identifying the external organization which would answer the query.

4.4 Literature Search Service

The library undertake search of information on subjects specialized by it. The three types of information tools mentioned in 4.1 (domestic, local and foreign) are searched for literature.

A request form is used to specify the literature search. This will ensure defining the subject of the search with respect to time limit, language, type of material etc.

The search request form is used in formulating a search expression. While domestic databases require a standard search expression, external databases specially those presented in CD-ROMs require specific methods.

The search results are organized into a bibliography which is presented to the user.

4.5 Current Awareness Services

Current awareness services are provided to the information users to keep them informed of new documents added to the collections of the library. This service is particularly useful to the users who find it difficult to visit the library regularly to update their knowledge.

Following publications which records new documents are used in current awareness services.

(i) Library Accessions Bulletin - Books, AV , new serials added to the library.
(ii) Library index - Journal/newspaper articles, reports, conference papers.
(iii) Journal Contents - Contents pages of selected journals received by the library.

4.6 Selective Dissemination of Information (SDI) Service

SDI Services are designed to provide relevant current information to users. Current information is selected for each user considering their interests. Interest profiles maintained by the library are used in selection of information.

An interest profile will be created for each user. Information for the profile is collected by surveying and evaluating the information requirements of the user. An interest profile would contain the following types of information:

(i)	personal	- name, address, designation, place of work, affiliation
(ii)	activities	- research, consultation
(iii)	subjects	- subject headings, keywords
(iv)	databases	- databases that should be searched
(v)	journal title	- journals that should be included in searches

As the above information can change, interest profiles should be revised from time to time. Feed-back of the users is necessary for this purpose.

4.7 Selective Dissemination of Contents Pages (SDCP) Services

This service provides the users with photocopies of contents pages of journals selected by them. This is organized as a cooperate programme of library networks such as AGRINET. The users are asked to name the journals they are interested in. A list of journals acquired by the library or the library network is provided to the users to identify the titles. The titles selected by each user are included in their interest profile.

The library undertakes supply of photocopies of journal articles selected by users from the contents pages.

5. CONCLUSION

Effectiveness of library services largely depend on the skills and attitude of the library personnel. Development of library personnel is essential for planning, operating and maintaining library services. Professional skills and technical know-how can be gained through library education, training studying and by participating in professional activities. Librarian's capability of using resources of other libraries depend on the personal relationships that he/she develop with other librarians.

The librarian should be prepared to serve the readers and to look into their needs at all times. He/she should be easily approached and be disturbed by readers.

Effectiveness of library services largely depend on the skills and attitude of the library personnel. Development of library personnel is essential for planning, operating and maintaining library services. Professional skills and technical know-how can be gained through library education, training studying and by participating in professional activities. Librarian's capability of using resources of other libraries depend on the personal relationships that he/she develop with other librarians.

VIDU 18 - 1&2 - 15

THE ROLE OF CENTRE FOR INDUSTRIAL AND TECHNOLOGY INFORMATION SERVICE (CITIS)

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Industrial information plays an important role in the industrial development strategy in any country. The information generated in the industrial sector could be broadly categorised as technical know-how, machinery & equipment, entrepreneurship and trade.

In this context there are many government and non-government organizations and institutions in Sri Lanka which acquire and generate and disseminate information to decision makers, researchers, students, entrepreneurs etc. Lack of related information, inability to access technical information and unawareness of available information services are the main constraints to development. Industrial Development Board (IDB) is one of the key institutions established in 1969 to promote small and medium scale industries in Sri Lanka. Centre for Industrial and Technology Information Services (CITIS) is an agency of IDB and was established in 1989 with the view of upgrading the services of the library. CITIS functions under an Advisory Panel comprising representatives from eminent R & D institutions.

Resources

CITIS has a valuable collection of library material consisting of 12877 books and subscribes to 46 foreign periodicals, 26 local periodicals, 2780 research reports, 40 video tapes, 04 CD-roms, 06 floppy disks and 834 microfiche. It covers the subject areas such as: Agro Based Industries, Chemical Industries, Designs, Essential Oils, Food Industries, Energy, Rubber & Plastics, Pulp & Paper, Textiles, Wood & Wood Products, Construction Materials, Leather, Marketing, Management, Mechanical Engineering, Electrical Engineering, Packaging and Machinery & Equipment.

The CITIS is facilitated with a comprehensive catalogue, computerised data bases, laser printer, microfiche reader and 313 baby off-set machine.

The CITIS is enriched with a collection of reference sources consisting of encyclopediea, directories, formula books, hand books, indexes, catalogues, guide books and videos. This service is provided to the public free of charges from 8.30 a.m. to 4.30 p.m. on weekdays. Generally lending services is restricted only for IDB staff, but other libraries can obtain through inter-library-loan services.

A range of information services are provided by CITIS. Any client can contact the CITIS either by post, telephone, fax or by visiting. The queries are handled by experienced professional staff. We may pass on your inquiry to another organization if we judge that if would give you a more useful reply. The regular information services could be obtained by getting registered as a member. This services are provided on requests of specific members.

Documentation services such as preparation of information packages, information services, preparation of reading lists are also based on requests to specific clientele and a nominal fee will be charged.

The CITIS also computerized information based on the following:-

- Bibliographic data base
- Industrialists data base
- Technology data base
- Industrial development organizations

Extension services of CITIS are generally based on organization of exhibitions, mobile information desks and lectures.

The industrialists are provided with graphic designs and printing services too.

CITIS also undertakes printing of in-house publications and makes available to the clientele through the sales centre at Head Office of IDB as well as at Regional Offices of IDB.

VIDU 18-1&2-10

USE OF LIBRARIES:
THE IDEALS AND REALITIES

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Abstract

Establishment of an ideal library does not necessarily lead to the full utilization of its resources and services. In order to obtain the maximum benefits of a library, appropriate information seeking procedures should be comprehended and practised by the information seekers. Many library users have shown little interest in developing such abilities. At present only few libraries have formal arrangements for reader education. Although reader education is at present considered the sole responsibility of the libraries, ultimate success of such programmes depends on many important factors lying outside the control of libraries.

1. The Ideal Library

Libraries may be defined as institutions devoted to collecting, conserving and exploiting literature. Libraries are also considered an essential feature of modern civilization promoting intellectual capabilities, research, education, information, recreation and many other social and cultural needs of the community. To the right person a library is a continual place of surprise, adventure and growth. To the academic and the scientist the library provides a congenial background for perusal of information relevant to his subject of interest.

2. The gap between the ideal and the reality

Easy acceptance of the mission of the library in most encouraging terms as mentioned above, may sometimes be self defeating and counter productive. Five decades ago, referring to the same issue in respect of British libraries Carnel said, "It is a fine thing for a library to be an intellectual workshop and a cultural centre, but it is hard work, it costs money and it requires a combination of favourable circumstances, some of which are outside the control of the librarian".

All librarians capable of self appraisal are conscious of a gap between the ideals and realities pertaining to their own institutions. All good librarians are trying hard to keep abreast of new knowledge by acquiring, cataloguing and arranging library materials for the benefit of readers. Making these formal arrangements alone does not contribute to the optimum use of such facilities.

In this brief survey an attempt will be made to explore the circumstances contributing to the under-use of libraries and resources by information seekers.

3. The Need for Information Users' active involvement in the information seeking process

Acceptance of the mission of the library in most encouraging terms may sometimes give an

erroneous impression that benefits of an ideal library will reach its patrons automatically. A library may be well stocked with up-to-date materials. It may also possess most comprehensive facilities and services. The optimum benefits of such a library can be obtained only by the readers who will be actively involved in information seeking and information using activities.

Browsing the new accessions or going through the new current periodicals can be a rewarding experience for a newcomer to the library, because in the process of browsing, not only does he discover new information but he may also learn hitherto unknown methods of information discovery. An interested reader may further improve these capabilities by trying to locate an item he wishes to read, first in the library catalogue and then on the library shelves. When he fails to find the item he requires on the stacks, the reader can make it an opportunity to speak to the reader services staff in the library. The reader, if inquisitive, can then observe the methods the library staff is using to locate the item. The interested reader can make this the beginning of the process of his library education. Some readers consider that information seeking in a library from this point onwards is the responsibility of the library staff. Although it is the library's responsibility to assist the reader in locating information, it would also be useful for the reader to grasp the fundamentals of information seeking procedures in a library.

This practical involvement on the part of the reader can be further improved by using periodical indexes to locate new articles relevant to one's own subject. Using an abstracting journal to survey the newest literature relevant to a subject or picking up the abilities of making a subject search using a CD-ROM database, are further abilities a reader may acquire during the course of his long and fruitful association with his library.

It is therefore obvious that a practical involvement on the part of the reader is not only desirable but also necessary, if optimum benefits of a library are to be obtained. The library authorities should help and educate library readers in improving their information seeking abilities. The ultimate initiative in this endeavour should originate from the information seeker himself.

The under-use of library resources is a world wide phenomenon which unfortunately debars the optimum use of libraries. The same tendency results in nonuse of valuable library materials leading to the waste of scarce financial resources.

4. Under-use of library resources

The under-use of library resources is a world wide phenomenon which unfortunately debars the optimum use of libraries. The same tendency results in nonuse of valuable library materials leading to the waste of scarce financial resources.

Some of the following tendencies observed in readers have been identified as the main causes for this unfortunate situation:

i. Reader's inability to identify the specific library or libraries that may satisfy his information need.

ii. Reader's meagre knowledge of the arrangement of materials in his library.

iii. His inability to use the library catalogue and other information sources properly.

iv. His inability to locate periodicals relevant to his subject.

v. His inability to locate and use periodical indexes and abstracting journals relevant to him.

vi. His lack of interest (backed by his own inability) to locate special materials either in his own library or in other libraries.

vii. Unwillingness to spend time in the library to trace either the materials of his choice or bibliographic data he requires.

viii. His misconception that locating materials and tracing bibliographic data is the duty of the library staff.

ix. Inability to maintain friendly relation with the reader services staff.

x. Reluctance of readers to talk to the library staff when they have difficulties in locating and obtaining library materials.

xi. Inability on the part of the readers to formulate their queries properly.

xii. Lack of desire on the part of information seekers, to learn information seeking procedures, when library education initiatives are available in some libraries.

Many library users acquire the ability of information seeking by using libraries for a long period. Many others never acquire these abilities inspite of their long association with their libraries. It is unfortunate that facilities for the formal or informal education of information seeking procedures are non existent in many libraries.

5. Basic steps of a literature search

Although it is not possible to provide a simple series of instructions to cover all searches, there are common types of searches which can be designed to retrieve information needed to enhance an individual's knowledge of a topic which may be described as a "literature search" or a "retrospective search", each having a slightly different meaning.

Basic steps of a literature search can be identified as follows:

i. Define the information need.

ii. Seek clues or leads.

ii. Decide search policy and select search tools and search terms.

iv. Note all potentially useful bibliographic references (author, title etc.)

v. Check the library catalogue, published subject indices and bibliographies.

vi. Trace the materials available in the library.

vii. Try to trace the materials not available in the library. (contact/visit other relevant libraries and documentation centres).

viii. Assess the relevance of materials collected.

Ability to follow these steps demands a high level of information seeking skill. While doing the search there are many important decisions to be made depending on the circumstances. Figure 5.1 traces in a flow chart, the important steps of a literature search elaborating the points where decisions have to be taken.

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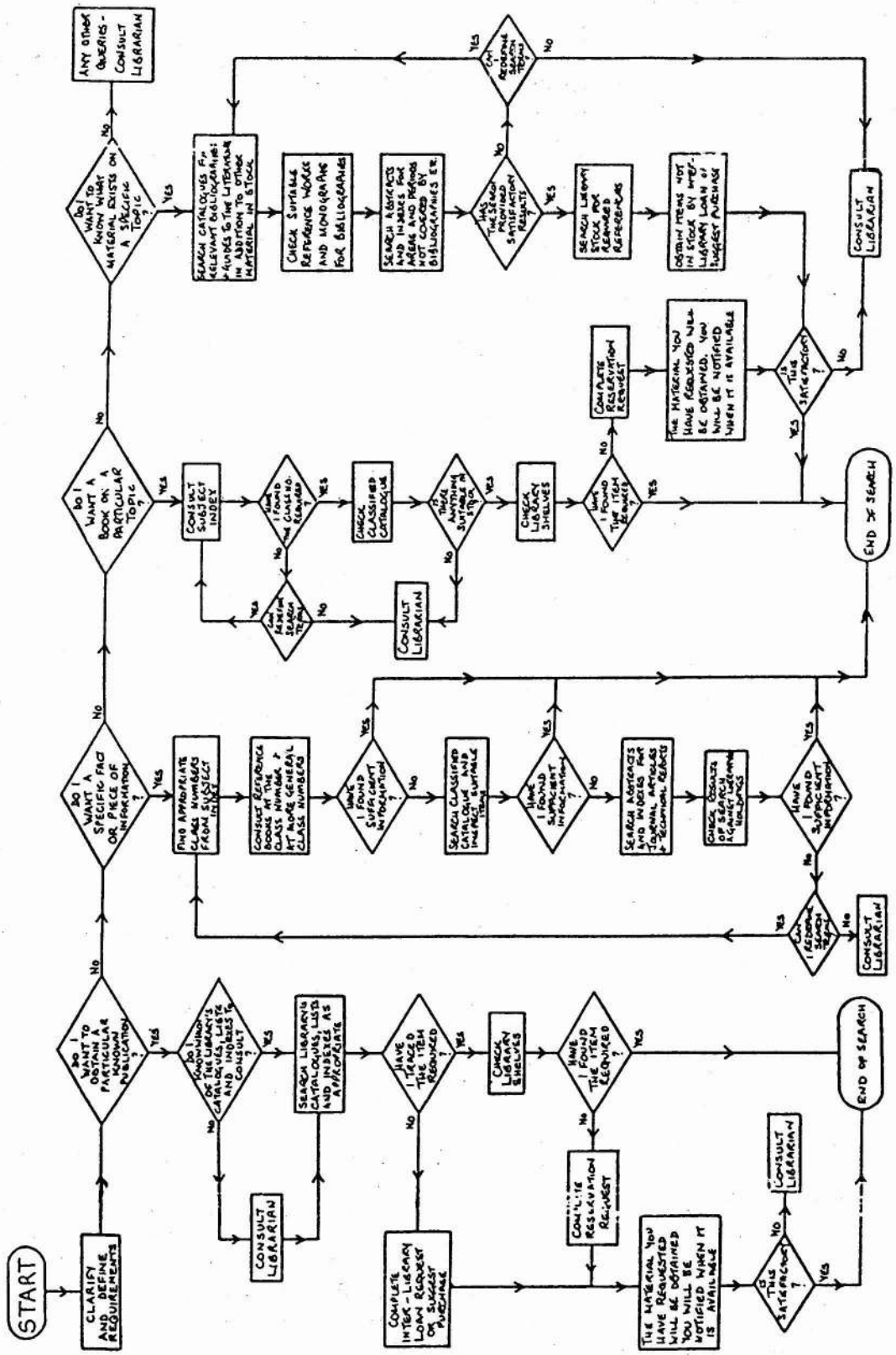

Figure 5.1: Flowchart of Search Procedure.

(Source: A.J. Evans. Education and training of users of scientific and technical information. p. 69.)

6. Some tendencies arising out of inadequate information seeking skills

A number of studies relating to the behaviour of information seekers have indicated that there is a group of readers among the scientists and engineers who are more talented than others in information retrieval techniques. Many of them select and pass information to their colleagues. This tendency is so widely prevalent that they have been identified as "gate keepers of information". The persons who either do not use libraries or do not have the capacity to engage in information seeking procedures often use the informal information resources introduced to them, primarily their professional colleagues. They find talking to such persons easier,pleasanter, quicker, more affective and rewarding than search the stacks of a library. Such practices not only reveal the underlying reality in information use, but it also indicate the need to establish a more systematic and acceptable system of educating library users.

The librarians should indeed take a considerable share of the responsibility of educating their users. The librarians can take the lead in this endeavour by either arranging brief introductory courses/training sessions or helping the individuals who show an interest in these procedures.

7. Improving information seeking skills.

The librarians should indeed take a considerable share of the responsibility of educating their users. The librarians can take the lead in this endeavour by either arranging brief introductory courses/training sessions or helping the individuals who show an interest in these procedures. Such education will not only assist the library users to obtain the best out of their libraries, but it will also lead to the better utilization of library resources and services by users.

The most decisive factor in such training sessions is the need for active interest on the part of the library user to acquire information seeking skills through practical work. This is an absolute necessity for which no alternatives can be found.

In the case of the institutions of higher education, the teachers can actively support this process, by encouraging the students to use library resources by giving them assignments and projects.

The use of computers in all spheres of information processing and use in libraries, CD-ROM database facilities, electronic mail services, computer network facilities now going as far as the INTERNET, demands a new set of information seeking skills from the users of libraries if the optimum benefits of libraries support by the new technology are to be obtained.

8. Conclusion

Provision of an effective library service does not necessarily lead to obtain the full potential of a library. Nature of library materials and their presence in libraries are such that their location and use require special abilities on the part of the library users. The library can certainly assist the user in locating the materials identified by him. However, there may be many other relevant items in the library of which the information seeker may not be aware. The need to acquire information seeking skills by the user himself arises from this situation.

The library should certainly take the initiative to educate the readers in the information seeking process. The readers should realize that the degree of success in library education programmes depends on the degree of interest by the users themselves. Reader education in fact should be a combined effort where the librarian and the library user should play their respective roles with mutual faith and diligence.

VIDU 18-1&2-21

YEAR 2000

TRENDS IN LIBRARIES AND INFORMATION SCIENCE

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The year 2000 is now already within our reach. There is a considerable progress in technological engineering and communication fields throughout the world. Traditional boundaries are changing gradually and creating a new world order. Technological advancements have been made in the field of electronics. New products and services are coming up attracting the people more and more. It is remarkable that new technology presents enormous opportunities and challenge to librarians. The demand for co-ordination of services and linking with international systems for augmenting national resources are increasing. Now those who can have and who can afford are benefiting by having maximum access to the resources. It is necessary to reduce the gap between information rich and information poor nations in the present world. Therefore, time has come to study the capabilities of new technology and how to integrate it throughout their library services with the purpose of providing excellent avenues for the clientele in the emerging environments.

A glance at the recent past

Two hundred and fifty years ago at the British Museum Library the compilation of a catalogue code by Anthory Panizzi and application of these rules in some other libraries brought about an idea of an uniformity in cataloguing practice. In 1876 at the Amherst College, Melvil Dewey devised a system to arrange books on the library shelves in a helpful order using Arabic numerals with decimal points. It has opened appropriate avenues for experiments in classification schemes. The indexing techniques developed by specialists in various deciplines in a variety of formats enhanced the potential use of library resources.

Librarians and information specialists have utilized microforms in collection development, collection management, reproduction and preservation of library materials, specialised information storage and retrieval systems, and industrial record management. It was also able to augment their collections substantially through the increased availability of micropublications.

In the early 1960s a study had been carried out on the feasibility of using computers to store and maintain the whole of the libraries' bibliographical records of the Library of Congress. Subsequently Machine Readable Cataloguing (MARC) Project revealed that libraries could use the information on the tape for a variety of purposes. Although it was intended to use only

as cataloguing copy has subsequently extended to use for acquisitions checking, SDI services and procurement of materials. The MARC has been the leading record format standard in library automation for almost 25 years. This record format fulfilled a requirement of this decade and was established in most of the developed countries as well as in some of the developing countries for mutual exchange of cataloguing data and distribution of services, co-ordinated by various agencies. It could be imagined that there are over 8 million cataloguing records in the vast Library of Congress bibliographic and authority record databases. Library of Congress's MARC Distribution Service is the premier source for bibliographic records and could be used as a versatile resource in library and information services.

The PRECIS (Preserved Context Index System), was probably the most significant development in the field of subject indexing since Charles Ammi Cutter first tried to formulate the rules for the construction of subject headings in 1876. It approached the task of subject indexing and the construction of subject headings for books and other documents from a completely new direction. It had a different approach from the chain procedure developed by S.R. Ranganathan. It is based on the fundamentals of natural language and an ingenious conjunction of human indexing skills and computer capabilities. The British Library still continues this system in conducting experiments as required by various situations.

Another contributory factor was the emergence, from the International Meeting of Cataloguing Experts held in Copenhagen in 1969, of a programme of International Standard Bibliographic Description (ISBD) under the aegis of the International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA). The purpose of ISBD is to make it easier to recognize data elements irrespective of language to standardize national practices in the content and arrangement of bibliographic record, and to facilitate the application of computer processes to the manipulation of bibliographic data. These standards were incorporated into the (Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules, (AACR) in 1974 and later appeared in the AACR2 with a purpose of achieving an integrated and standard framework for the systematic description of library materials. It could be treated as a meaningful contribution to the development of an international cataloguing code. In the meantime UNESCO published the Common Communication format (CCF) which proposes a common method for structuring bibliographic records. The main purpose was to allow free exchange of information among different information systems at international level. Computer application for bibliographic data was a significant step to enter into the online era. Access through an online terminal to a computer database was a common feature in the majority of libraries in the developed world in the 1980s. Library operations were automated and the catalogue was only an integral part of the total library system. Online Public Access Catalogue (OPEC) is a gateway to a vast amount of information resources with the minimum boundaries. It is interactive, infinitely expandable public and versatile.

Electronic library is a general-purpose library system which helps the user to search, read and browse full-text information solely in electronic form. A reader can sit at a computer terminal and view the information required by author, title and subject etc. Any lines or the pages of the text can be printed for the user only by a matter of pressing a button. The materials of several libraries may become available to millions of users through the use of computer utilities.

Compact Disc Read Only Memory (CD-ROM) technology is rapidly changing the two way store and access information. This technology is having a tremendous impact on library and information services in the modern era. The capacity of a disc is over 650 megabytes which is equivalent to several hundred diskettes. Paperwise one disc can store the text of an entire set of an encyclopedia, which is running into more than 20 volumes. CD-ROM disc can also store a variety of media such as text, graphics, video or audio. It can not only an enormous amount of information but also find and retrieve desired data quickly and accurately. Most CD-ROMs allow the user to search for information in command driven or menu driven

systems. The user can try at least two ways: the browse search and the keyword search with logical connections (analytic or Boolean).

Year 2000

It has been forecasted that by the year 2000 the amount of paper stored will not diminish-although digitally stored information will increase. Document imaging will replace microform for commercial archives. Electronic disc cameras will outperform conventional 35mm still cameras. Most professional publications will still be in printed form. The appearance of conventional books will not change although most of them will be produced from author's discs. Publications on CD-ROM will lead to the demise of journals - but specialist journals are not expected to disappear very rapidly. Academic libraries may become marginalized and consequently downgraded to "swotting sheds". New professionals with high-tech skills will replace traditional librarians.

Information Age

As a result of combinations of computers and tele-communications, hardware and software, services and systems, we can see how information technology became powerful in the modern world. Information technology today, allows to create, store, manipulate, retrieve and transmit information on a scale never dreamt of before. "By the year 2000, to all intents and purposes, information technology will be able to create a nearly information transparent world where fibre optics will carry libraries of information to anyone, anywhere, who pushes a button". (Hughes G.G. "The Information Age". *Information Development 1991 - pp. 72 - 80)*

It is said that "we are currently experiencing a technological change, which is every bit as significant; the combination of the power of computers and the transmission capabilities of telecommunications is moving us inexorably towards a society that will prove qualitatively different from the one we know today" (Moore N. "Coming to terms with information" *British Books News*, 1990 - pp. 500 - 503).

If we look at the recent past in 1980s, we would have found novelties like CD-ROM, more micros with better peripherals, many more fax machines, smaller modems, more word processors, more online services and a number of improvements.

Integrated Services Digital Network (ISDN)

It has created a new pardigm of thinking and the globe we live in is shrinking. Shrinking in the sense that virtually every home in the industrialized free world can be electronically connected either by satellite communication, electronic mail/or the traditional telephone in a global village network, that transcends geographic and physical boundaries. The world has already entered a new revolutionary phase, where the circuit switched technology of the Integrated Services Digital Network (ISDN) takes over as the primary means of access. In this system each telephone is potentially a 64 K bps link and its use need not be restricted to voice traffic-data of any kind. Universal connectivity, low cost and high data rates are three basic factors, which can have a profound impact on current information services. It is possible that the fibre optical cable and ISDNs will make the technology readily available in the last decade of this century and into the 21st century.

"By the year 2000, to all intents and purposes, information technology will be able to create a nearly information transparent world where fibre optics will carry libraries of information to anyone, anywhere, who pushes a button".

Information networks are sets of interconnected information systems based on formal or informal agreements between the participating institution with a view to accessing and utilizing all the data and information resources of these institutions. Such networks enable access to other data bases both outside and within the country.

Multimedia

Multimedia is a technology that allows the integration of image formation, text video, graphics, automation, speech synthesis and other audio into a final product. There is increasing emphasis on the creation and storage of multimedia documents. The nature of this technology merits that there is a need for sophisticated user appliances, since media require, selecting and manipulating graphical items on the screen. High-bandwidth is required for efficient operation of the system. To provide ubiquitous high-bandwidth over large geographical areas, there is a need for a technology which will perform like LANS. An attempt has been made to address this through the introduction of ISDN and its expansion as Broadbandwidth Integrated Services Digital Network (BISDN).

The development of CD-I (Compact Disc-Interactive) claims to be able to bring the world of multimedia to a general audience. Ubiquitous highband networks, will make multimedia the technology of the future, Communication and infrastructure especially in the Third World will continue to be a deterent to the control of intellectual property and copyright. Therefore access to multimedia especially for developing countries will be via the CD-ROM technology, and it will be very difficult to exercise control in this area.

Networking

Information particularly scientific and technological data on both national and international resources should be utilized for socio-economic, scientific and technological progress of mankind as a whole. the growing demand for information is ever increasing. Information is the resources of resources. In this case "the transfer and use of information to serve development raise two important issues; firstly, the right of all nations to have access to the international flow of information; and secondly the recognition that each nation should develop indigenous systems suited to its own development process" (Horowitz R.G. de. Librarianship: A Third World Perspective. New York. Greenwood Press. 1988)

The tremendous growth of literature in various physical formats in multifaceted areas, on the one hand, and the lack of awareness on the other hand, lead to the danger of fragmenting into a mass of repetitious findings. However the problem of identifying right information pose the danger of an information gap. To avoid such circumstances the free flow of information must be ensured leading to its universal availability. The problems of free flow of information, such as awareness, identification, location and availability could be solved if the information system is planned and well designed and arranged to operate through the concept of networking.

Information networks are sets of interconnected information systems based on formal or informal agreements between the participating institution with a view to accessing and utilizing all the data and information resources of these institutions. Such networks (eg. OCLC and CLASS) enable access to other data bases both outside and within the country.

Future Trends

Some current trends will intensify and open avenues to make major changes in the way that our libraries operate and the way that users benefit the information technologies in the next century. The change is more evolutionary rather than revolutionary.

Information seekers will find their needs satisfied through the information market place developed around the world. There are products, services and access to information in the market. Possibility of developing personal library systems in addition to organizational library systems is clear in the future.

Information infrastructure has been changed and will be required timely adjustments by librarians and information service providers. The nature, format and financing patterns of information are changing remarkably. Today user at the work station become a wired scholar with the facility of access to the wholeworld.

The remote access is feasible in the present environment. CD-ROMs and other products could be used to reduce the gap between the information rich and information poor countries in the future.

Local Area Networks and International Networks are developing rapidly. For an instant Internet Communication System has connected with more than a hundred countries in the world. E-mail facilities are available to supplement the systems.

Book production has become an expensive and time consuming task. Work processing and other production techniques are developing. Authors may prefer to use compact discs for writing in the future. CD-ROMs are playing a major role in libraries in the modern world. The market segmentation is clear and various types of publications are increasing at a rate. Poor librarians may face difficulties with budget cuts and unavoidable inflation situations.

It is essential to think globally to get the maximum benefit for the users. Users may prefer more sophisticated systems rather than existing static systems. Librarians cannot become so carried away by information technologies, that are far ahead of their users. Information has become a function rather than a format. It is not a new challenge. It is happening as a evolution rather than a revolution. Librarians have to accept the challenge and go ahead with the new environment, created in the library and information science.

Reprodced from "SRI LANKA LIBRARY REVIEW" (New Series).

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