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**MODERN ACADEMIC LIBRARIES AS AN ASSET FOR  
DEVELOPMENT IN HIGHER EDUCATION:A STUDY OF  
DIFFERENT UNIVERSITIES IN KASHMIR VALLEY**

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**Abstract:** *The present research was conducted for observing and analysing the role played by traditional and modern libraries in the development and enhancement of higher education. Furthermore its purpose was to see the difference in the improvement of higher education with the implementation modern techniques and technology in the libraries. The research was conducted in different government degree colleges of Kashmir valley. Almost 200 respondents were asked about the role played by traditional and modern libraries in the development of higher education.*

**Key Words:** Higher Education, Technology, Libraries, Electronic sources, books, pamphlets, dissertations, articles, computer, print and web.

**Introduction**

The modern academic libraries are generally considered as the most reliable guide for students and teachers. Librarians evaluate resources for authenticity and quality before acquiring them for the use. Thus it is therefore necessary for teachers and learners to become thoroughly acquainted with the libraries available to them and take full advantage of the resources and services they provide on-site and over the Internet.

Some 10,000 year ago the early ancestor of mankind, subsisted by hunting and gathering, started to building agrarian societies. The old agrarian societies began their transitions to industrial societies in mid-18th centuries. Expansion of intellectual activities in industrial societies, such as industrial production, international trade and transactions, and technological advancement, stimulated mass distribution of education and creation of libraries.(Pareek,16)

These libraries usually offer resources in print forms, electronic forms and in other non-print forms like films, sounds, videos etc. Xerox, scan and computer services like word processing, high quality printers and access to internet is also available in these libraries.

Most academic libraries have programs orientation and instruction to meet the need of all students particularly the need of higher education aspirants. Ask about introductory pamphlets or handbooks and guided tours as well as lectures and classes on using the library and on related subjects like developing research strategies and searching the World Wide Web. The library's web site likely contains scheduling information on such classes as well as descriptions of available resources and services. The site may also offer online tutorials.

All these modern libraries have desks staffed by professional reference librarians who can tell us about available instructional programs and help us to locate sources. Specialist librarians often prepare and distribute in print and electronic forms, guides to specific fields of study. These librarians are often available in person for our help or by telephone, e-mail or instant messaging.

The key role played by these libraries in the field of education is discussed in this paragraph. Libraries provide access to education by teaching information skills, by providing leadership and expertise in the use of information and information technologies, and by participating in networks that enhance access to resources outside the school or community. They help ensure equity in education by: helping children start school ready to learn, addressing the needs of student most at risk, providing access to information and ideas unimpeded by social, cultural, and economic constraints, ensuring free and equal access to information and ideas without geographic constraints, helping students stay free of drugs and violence, in an environment conducive to learning. Some other role played by these libraries are impacting academic achievement for individuals and assisting them in lifelong learning, preparing individuals for productive employment, promoting the enjoyment of reading, promoting functional literacy among adults, preparing individuals for responsible citizenship etc.

The present research paper explores the role played by libraries in the development and enhancement of higher education. It sheds light on

the innovative approaches taken by librarians for importing and spreading knowledge throughout the globe without wasting any time and energy. It explores the role played by modern academic libraries for the promotion of higher education. It highlights the role played by these libraries for globalization of education by easy availability of teaching and study material in these modern electronic and virtual libraries. This study was conducted in different degree college of Kashmir valley. Almost 200 respondents were asked various questions about the role played by traditional and modern libraries.

A number of librarians from universities and other institutions made submissions to our study which provided an insight into the multifaceted role of libraries in higher education. We spoke with, and received submissions from, librarians who were involved with the courses selected for in-depth profiling and, from the data collected, it was clear that librarians saw their role as undergoing major transformation as they themselves became agents of change within the university community....librarians are operating at the cutting edge of technological developments in identifying the need for, locating, accessing, evaluating and managing information. ... In order for this vision to be realised, however, two important changes would be necessary. Firstly, academic staff would need to view their role differently, and to see themselves as facilitators of learning; and secondly, there would need to be enhanced collaboration between academic staff and librarians in the design and delivery of programs. (Candy)

### Literature Review

A lot of work has been done on this issue but the objectives and purpose is different. The review of some of the noteworthy works is as under:

**Alan Bundy** in his study *The University Library as Educational Change-Agent: An Australian Perspective* discovered that, Education and society are effectively being re-engineered because of economic and social forces, both heavily influenced by ICT. The re-engineering of the teaching and learning framework is now underway or in prospect in progressive universities. This provides a window of opportunity for their libraries to demonstrate their actual and potential contribution to educational-change, and to educational and lifelong outcomes appropriate to the age of information. Just as the early 21st century is no time for faint-heartedness in higher education, it is no time for

faint-heartedness by librarians in pushing opens that window of opportunity.

**Namita Pareek** in his study *Role of the Libraries as Information Resources in Globalization* observed that, the future of the automated libraries in the developed/ developing countries seems to be very promising and it can be hoped that more and more libraries will adopt automation techniques/systems in the very near future, sooner rather than later. The new generation of computers and its use in libraries is not only modernization but it has become a necessity. In coming times, computers hold good future. It is expected they would be found useful in handling information explosion and respective routine jobs in libraries economically. The remarkable growth of Internet has made significant Revolution in all the areas of science and technology. Rather than using it as a tool for searching and retrieving information, Internet has become the king of all media, by which we can access virtual information and can build a virtual library to provide timely, quality service to the users. Librarians of this digital era are in the position to change their role as arbitrary information scientists/gatekeepers and to meet the Challenges of the Internet, World Wide Web, and online access in the knowledge society. So they must enrich their knowledge with special skills of the latest IT developments, to browse, access and retrieve particular information across the global networks and to organize and manage the information by building digital libraries and by which they can provide quality-information service to the knowledge society. Library staff must be capable of working effectively in partnership with faculty members to enhance the strength of teaching and research.

### Purpose

The purpose of the study is to find out the role played by Libraries in general and modern academic libraries in particular in development of higher education. It will also shed some light on Librarian's role and credibility in helping the learners to find the required material and also help the learners in choosing the requisite material only. The main focus of this research work is on the differences between traditional libraries and new, innovative modern libraries and their role in the enhancement and spread of knowledge among teachers and learners.

### Objectives

1. To determine the role played by modern libraries for the development of learning.
2. To determine the role played by modern libraries in the enhancement of knowledge.

3. To determine the role played by modern libraries in the globalization of education.
4. To determine the credibility of librarians for the enhancement and development of education.

### Methodology:

The study took both qualitative research approaches. Qualitative approach was carried out through interaction with students and teachers of different Govt. Degree Colleges of Kashmir valley.

The methodology also includes:

1. Collection and thorough study of critical or secondary works.
2. Study of reference material available on the topic.
3. Study of different research projects conducted by researchers on this issue.
4. Interaction with eminent teachers and scholars on the topic.
5. Documentation, citations and references according to MLA style sheet 7<sup>th</sup> edition, is strictly adhered.

### Discussion

In the present study, it is been observed by the researcher which approach of teaching and learning is better, traditional or new. In this chapter of the study the role played by traditional libraries and innovative, modern libraries is explored individually as well as in comparison with each other.

### Electronic Sources

The modern academic libraries probably offers reference works in electronic form, full-text databases and may also recommend useful website. These libraries likely subscribes to journals available in electronic form. It is an accepted fact that the information technology has influenced all the components of a library system: information sources, services, human resources and users (Banwell, 167).

Out of 200 respondents, almost everybody said that electronic sources or facilities are available in the libraries from last 10 years. The role played by the modern academic libraries in the easy availability of material is for better than the traditional libraries. These new modern libraries are very rich sources of study material, it facilitates all forms of material print, electronic and virtual (audio and video). While the traditional libraries were facilitating only print material. Physical presence of the person in the library was necessary but in modern libraries physical presence is not mandatory.

### Books, Pamphlets and Dissertations

These libraries typically house a vast number of books as well as similar publications such as pamphlets and dissertations. All these sources of material are available in both print and electronic form. In traditional libraries it was available in print form only but in present times, it is available in the modern libraries in both forms.

Out of 200 respondents most of the students believe that modern libraries are not much useful than traditional libraries. They believe that both are facilitating books, pamphlets and dissertations which one will like to study in print forms only. But around some 30 students actually scholars believe that modern libraries are much useful than traditional, they believe modern libraries are saving out time, money and energy and helping us to get through variety of literature while traditional libraries were hectic, costly, time consuming and facilitating less material. "...changes could catapult the library into a central role within the teaching/learning enterprise if appropriate adaptations are made; if not, they could further remove the library from the institutional centre" (CETUS).

### Articles and periodicals

The modern libraries gives access to numerous articles and similar writings e.g. reviews editorials etc. published in print periodical such as school journals, newspapers, magazines etc. Not most of the students but almost all the students believe that access to these article and periodicals is possible in modern libraries only; it was not possible in the traditional libraries.

### Conclusion

Education and society are effectively being re-engineered because of economic and social forces, both heavily influenced by ICT. The new educational paradigm has created the need for a reconceptualization of the roles and responsibilities of librarians. According to the present study it is been observed the role played by higher education is significant. Its role is noticeable in every field of higher education, teaching, learning and research purposes. The study was conducted in different degree colleges for Kashmir Valley. Most of the students, teachers and researchers believe that technological advancement is seen in most of the higher educational institutions particularly in libraries. This development and technological advancement of libraries have played a prominent role in the globalization of education. These modern academic libraries have saved the energy, time and money of teachers, learners and researchers.

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