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LIBRARY SPACE: TO BRIDGE THE GAP BETWEEN THE RECORDED KNOWLEDGE AND LIVING KNOWLEDGE

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ABSTRACT

The growing gap between the recorded knowledge and living knowledge has attracted the attention of academicians, thinkers and researchers all over the world. This article presents library space – research ecology as a solution to this problem. The library and information science (LIS) played an important role to spread the knowledge around the world to create a knowledgeable and networked society and to cure the problems of the horizon of knowledge. Information explosion, information overloaded, limited capacity of human brain, etc. are suggested as possible causes of this phenomenon. They are wondering about few consequences of the same such as: data mining, skills gap, knowledge monopoly, stagnancy of knowledge, knowledge filtering and unmanageable amount of information waste.

As the "… university libraries are symbolically considered as the heart that pumps knowledge to every part of its constituent bodies,"[22] they could play unique roles to bridge recorded knowledge and the living knowledge and to protect and promote the quality knowledge by good research.

KEYWORDS: Research ecology, Data mind, Skills gap, Knowledge monopoly, Stagnancy of knowledge, Knowledge filtering, Information waste, Information explosion, Information overload.

1.INTRODUCTION :

When we analyze the growth of humanity and evaluate the role of library, library service, knowledge, information and communication technology, etc., though we can see many positive contributions, there are areas to improve and require regulations for the integrated development of the humanity. They are wondering about few consequences of the same such as information explosion, information overload, limited capacity of human brain, data mind, skills gap, knowledge monopoly, stagnancy of knowledge, knowledge filtering and unmanageable amount of information waste. The library and information science (LIS) professionals have to pay special attention to modulate the sustainable development and to reformulate the life and mission of library in a wider canvas. As the "… university libraries are symbolically considered as the heart that pumps knowledge to every part of its

constituent bodies,"[22] they could play special roles to the bridging of explicit (recorded) knowledge and the tacit (living) knowledge by providing inspiring space for library to protect and promote the quality knowledge by good research.

2.BACKGROUND

It is often observed that there is a large gap between the recorded knowledge and the living knowledge and there are fewer readers for the records at the library. The history of knowledge and the library and information science, though have a healthy and progressive blending in the last century, in the recent past the relation is diminishing by several aspects.

Following the footsteps of the Father of Indian Library Science Dr. S. R. Ranganathan, the horizon of knowledge is the patrimony of LIS. So the library has the responsibility to bridge the gap between the recorded knowledge and the living knowledge. To live, to flow, to keep quality, to produce the knowledge, it must exist in human persons rather than merely in the records.

2.1 Museum to Library

The British Library was started as the British Museum's Department of Printed Books in 1753, in the same year of the foundation of the Museum itself. Library was an important part of the museum and the printed books were exhibits. Over the intervening two hundred years, the Department of Printed Books of the British Museum had grown into one of the largest in the world [2] and was separated as 'British Library' in 1973. Now the British Library is the largest library in the world with around 170 million items. The library thus began with a 'museum spirit' i.e. items to collect, preserve and exhibit.

2.2.Collection, Organization and Retrieval

American Library Association (ALA) has defined "library" in its Glossary of Library and Information Science as "A collection of materials organized to provide physical, bibliographic and intellectual access to a target group, with a professionally qualified staff that is trained to provide services and programs related to the information needs of the target group. A building or structure that houses such a collection… ". [14] It is a place for collecting, storing, organizing, preserving and providing the documents to the users. At the same time, a library is an environment for research and enlightenment. The users and the researchers are as important as the materials in the library.

2.3 Five Laws of Library Science

Dr. Ranganathan presented his Five Laws of library science for the first time in 1928 in a conference of teachers held in the Meenakshi College, Annamalainagar, Tamil Nadu, India. According to him, 'the availability of recorded knowledge is among the rights of humanity'. [20]
The five laws are:
1.Books are for Use
2.Every Reader His Book
3.Every Book Its Reader
4.Save the Time of the Reader
5.A Library is a Growing Organism

Dr. Ranganathan envisioned a library fundamentally is for the use. In the past, books following 'museum spirit' were often chained to prevent their removal because the emphasis was on storage and preservation rather than use. Ranganathan did not reject the notion that preservation and storage were important, but he asserted that the purpose of such activities was to promote use. Without user access to materials, there is little value in these items. By emphasizing use, Dr. Ranganathan refocused the attention of the field to access-related issues, such as the library's location, loan policies, hours and days of operation, as

well as the quality of staffing and mundane matters like library furniture, temperature control and lighting. [20]

3.NEW HORIZON FOR KNOWLEDGE

The awareness as well as a thirst for knowledge was a paradigm shift in the last two centuries. The quest for knowledge increased among the people and the society. Education for all was one of the dreams for them. The primary education opened the door to a large number of people to enter into the horizon of knowledge.

3.1 Library as an Instrument for Awakening the Society

The new consciousness of people, emergence of the educational institutions and the different social reformation movements made many changes in the society. The revolutionary philosophy of Dr. Ranganathan's five laws provided the energy for library movements. These library movements helped to widely spread the right of knowledge among the people and society at large.

3.2.LIS Played a Vital Role for Knowledgeable Society

One of the greatest changes happened during the last decades in the humanity was that a good number of people became educated and society became knowledgeable. In this process of becoming knowledgeable society, the library and information science education and service, and the library movements have played an extremely large role.

3.3.ICT Impact on Content

Space and Content are interdependent and existential requirements of library. The drastic changes in the content demand systematic and creative modification of Space. Managing the Space and content in library for the networked society is a challenge for librarians, institutions and library makers. [5]

3.4.Production of Knowledge

Impact of Information and Communication Technology (ICT) had changed the scenario of the knowledge production. ICT is helping the information reach out maximum. As an instrument, ICT is providing highest bandwidth for the dissemination of information. This impact helped the people to produce huge amount of information. Quantitatively, this progress is a great achievement but the quality of the bulk production of information is still challenging.

3.5 Information Explosion

The invention of printing in the mid-15th century, the wide distribution of books by the 16th century, the growth of literacy among the middle classes in the 17th and 18th centuries, and mass education movement in the 19th century increased both the amount and the demand for information. ICT with the invention of electronic media, especially the Internet, has contributed immensely to the information explosion. If the invention of printing has promoted an increase in information generation, ICT has multiplied it. [15]

3.6 Information Overload

There is information overload in the world. "The flood of information that swamps me daily seems to produce more pain than gain. And it is not just the incoming tidal wave of e-mail messages and RSS feeds that causes me grief. It is also the vast ocean of information, I feel compelled to go out and explore in order to keep up in my job." [1] Paul Hemp expressed this idea in Harvard Business Review under the title 'Death by Information Overload'.

3.7 Capacity of Human Brain

Thad McIlroy in the article "The Information Explosion and Its Implications to the Future of Publishing" observed that "The Internet easily defeats advanced filters, delivering millions of words per second to brains that can process only 10 words per second." [7]

4.CONSEQUENCES

4.1.Data Mind

Most of the students are tuning their brain as a storage or carrier for data or information. Brain gathers the information from classrooms, reading materials, etc. Without much personalization or assimilation, students will deliver this gathered information in the exam. Many students are not able to remember, recollect and apply the information which they learned during the course time in practical life. Two important reasons for these phenomena may be: 1) Information overload and 2) Easy accessibility of information at anytime and anywhere. A number of students are keeping their heads empty after the downloading process at exam time. As a result of using brain as 'random memory' for data storing the human mind becomes virtually a 'data mind'.[1]

We can observe some habits as signs of a culture of 'data mind' as follows: 1) Always people keep the data, information and knowledge out and keep mind empty 2) Outsourcing the memory for personal data, information and knowledge 3) Depending upon quick search and its tool at the time of application.

4.2 Skills Gap:
"Skills Gap is the difference in the skills required on the job and the actual skills possessed by the employees is called as skill-gap." [9] It is a gap between qualification and quality. The society is expecting something from the qualified people. But their capacity is far below the expectations. This is a common phenomenon as a result of the present day education. "While more than 11 million Americans are unemployed and millions more are underemployed or have dropped out of the workforce, businesses routinely says they can't find the skilled workers they need." [8]

4.3 Knowledge Monopoly[2] :
The habits and culture of 'data mind' results in overdependence on data, information and knowledge providers. Lack of personal assimilation of knowledge will also promote knowledge monopoly and the clients will be the people of networked society.

4.4 Stagnancy of Knowledge:
By the very nature of the knowledge, after the production it may flow to other. This other may be one or many. According to Indian tradition vidya danam (the flow or providing of knowledge to other as a donation) is considered as a mahadanam (grate donation). K. Ramakrishna Rao explains 'Jnanadara' (the flow of knowledge): 'In the native Indian tradition there is another step called nididhyasana, meditation on the truth learnt through sravana and manana. Nididhyasana, involving an unceasing flow of knowledge (Jnanadhara), takes one beyond understanding the truth. It gives one realization of truth in his/her being'. [12] This flow of knowledge from person to person(s) is very essential. But in the present scenario, the flow is affected by many other agencies. The knowledge becomes stored at its storage place

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[1]There is a company named as Data Mind. They are providing data related services "We provide marketing services in the CRM field, with the main focus on marketing analyses of data. Understanding the needs http://lsrj.in/UploadedArticles/708.pdf of your clients may be a crucial factor in your business". [16]

[2]In nineteen fifties Harold Adams Innis, a political economist used this team 'Monopolies of Knowledge'. Innis extended the economic concept of monopoly to include culture and politics parts of the systems. He directly influenced Marshall McLuhan and continues to be a central figure in communications theory. [10] In this case you would need to bring in more details of McLuhan

or space. If the knowledge flow[3] does not take place, knowledge will become stagnant. The stagnancy of knowledge will pollute the knowledge and create problems.

4.5 Knowledge Filtering[4] : Explain the term first. Normally we do filtering or fix filters at the user end. We assume that the things after the filtering become pure, even if it is not pure at the source. The best example for this filtering culture is water filtering system as it is used widely in the society. For example, the people of Kerala are blessed with natural mineral water in almost all the areas of the state. Around 50 years back water filtering, machine for water filtering and filtered bottle water for drinking etc. were normally not used in the state. Entire water sources were clean and good for drink. There was no possibility to buy filtered water bottle for drinking also. In those days, people were very vigilant about the source of the water to be pure and protect it away from pollution. Presently, however, now filtering culture is very common and most of the people are using filtered water for drinking. This filtering culture teaches us to forget about the source and be careful about the using water after the filter point. The same problem may happen in the case of the horizon of knowledge within a few decades.   Some of the problems regarding the filtering culture that can be expected in the future are: 1) Source of the knowledge may remain always polluted. 2) Over dependency on filtering agency. 3) Indirect slavery to the knowledge filtering agencies. 4) May lose confidence in one's own knowledge / self-knowledge. Today or tomorrow all of us will become   directly or indirectly the clients of filters of knowledge.

4.6 Unmanageable Amount of Information Waste: The phenomena like information explosion, knowledge filtering, knowledge monopoly, etc. may be a burden for ordinary people. They cannot handle the enormous amount of information. It will create a kind of 'information numbness', leading to a generation without balanced information or knowledge. That means a kind of ignorance become common to the majority of the society. This state of life will create another set of problems like deterioration of the value system with utility deciding the value of information and knowledge, decline of human dignity, abandoned records, and information slavery.

5. LIBRARY SPACE AS A BRIDGING FORCE

Instrumentally the Library Space is the source for bridging the recorded knowledge and the living knowledge. The space should have minimum qualities like: attractive, conducive, inspiring, comfortable for long sitting, accessible for fast reference, with research ambiance, nature friendly, etc. The important reason for this fact is 'the space' become more complex and the new generation people / users are space sensitive. So a quality space is necessary to do the knowledge production with quality.   Information can exist in record form but the knowledge can live in the human person. Knowledge is a phenomenon happening in human being with the help of multiple components closely related to their life. To preserve the knowledge and provide it the others, we need an eco system; it is always superior to the record form and information storages. The librarian, the library space and the university have to be alert to realize this mission.

5.1 Research Ecology: Inspiring Space for Production and Protection of Quality Knowledge
It is important for the university library to create a space for 'research ecology'. It is not a simple physical space, but an atmosphere of research with many components to inspire the scholars and researchers. If the university is giving paramount importance to the research then only the research environment may actualize in a classical way. By this innovation, the higher education should become qualitative, library centred and

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[3]Knowledge flow is a term widely used by the business people like Peri. G. [11] on business innovation.
[4]In 2015, Jan http://lsrj.in/AuthorProfileNew.aspx?AID=708 27, US, patent issued to KL internet applications for California inventors for this IT invention – Knowledge Filter. [23]

research oriented. If the high quality universities and institutions start to think about this qualitative space - research ecology – definitely it will reflect in the horizon of knowledge.

5.2 Reawakening Role of Library

The patrimony of Dr. Ranganathan is not a building (library), not a set of books, not the technology, etc. but the horizon of knowledge. Now the knowledge is in a dangerous situation. We have to own it and cure it.

6. CONCLUSION

This article is a call for reawakening the real mission of librarianship. When we look into the history of knowledge and evolution of library and information science, we can observe that 1) both horizon of knowledge and LIS had a healthy and energetic blending in the past century; 2) now it is going through unbalanced situation; and 3) this situation is leading to a kind of information numbness. This numbness may be expanding the gap between the recorded knowledge and living knowledge. This is a serious issue which the library has to address. It is the right time to interact with the knowledge: in its production, flow, quality and the life, with the capacity of library and information science profession.

LIS had a great role in the process of making people knowledgeable and networked society. Now the libraries have to reawaken to protect the horizon of knowledge and to bridge the gap between the recorded knowledge and the living knowledge. So let the knowledge lives; let the knowledge flow; let the knowledge grow; let the knowledge be pure; let the knowledge be constructive.

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8

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