DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION IN LIBRARIES: NAVIGATING THE INFORMATION AGE

Sarah Abdulelah Muslim

Southern Technical University Iraq

Technical Institute of Basra Department of Office Management Technical, Iraq

Email:Sarahaljasem32@gmail.com

Abstract

Research activities are being drastically changed by the emergence and growth of digital libraries, which are generally regarded to be carefully, selected collections of electronic materials that are available online on specialized platforms featuring search and discussion capabilities. The abundance of knowledge accessible enables concurrent perusal of a broad spectrum of materials and their ongoing reorganization into fresh knowledge ecosystems via any computer with an internet connection. By offering instruments for analyzing navigation or offering policy recommendations, this study contributes to our understanding of digital knowledge infrastructures and may play a role in their design. The results demonstrate that researchers' authority is rooted in their information knowledge, and that the elevated level of confidence fostered by this proficiency may also be subsequently adapted into the development of an assertive knowledge tradition that fortifies an academic's position in establishing information use conclusions and equips them for the digital age. As a result, a number of digital techniques created by researchers to explore websites and databases—such as searching by keywords, filtering results, and clicking through links—have been added to the traditional methods seen in physical knowledge spaces like archives and library collections, such as searching brochures, looking via shelves, and writing notes. By offering instruments for analyzing navigation or offering policy recommendations, this study contributes to our understanding of digital knowledge infrastructures and may play a role in their design.

Keywords:

Digital libraries, searching, Information management, Digital transformation

1.1. Introduction

A fresh era of ease and connectedness has emerged due to the fast progress of digital technology. But there are drawbacks to the digital world as well, especially when it comes to the influence disparities that are maintained by large technology companies controlling the applications that we consume on every day of our lives [1-3]. Given their substantial impact on data provided by users, conversation among people, and knowledge flows, worries over their effects on

democratic processes and social wellness have surfaced. In response to these worries, a large number of academics and projects push for a change in the advancement of technology that puts democratic principles, morality, and a more equal electronic society first [4].

It is difficult for entities that support democratic and participation by the public to redefine their roles in this changing digital environment. Libraries consistently uphold democratic principles by facilitating openness to knowledge and promoting a diverse and educated public discussion. Libraries are, after all, traditionally primary centers of knowledge. But as civilization becomes more digitally connected and knowledge is more widely available, libraries face new problems that need reassessing their role and goals in the digital sphere [5-6].

The paper explores how libraries are portrayed digitally, emphasizing their function as representative open spaces and their interactions with for-profit companies in the modern economy. Drawing from the knowledge gathered from preliminary interviews conducted with experts in the discipline of librarianship, it might potentially serve as a stimulant for creative thinking regarding alternate routes that are consistent with their democracy purpose [7].

Efficient access to data, evaluation, and application are fundamental skills in the digital era that are essential for both educational achievement and lifetime education. Being the established guardians for knowledge assets, HEIS have changed significantly over time, going from being simple printed archives to becoming complicated data clusters [8-9]. Their function in promoting data literacy, which gives pupils the skills and understanding required for navigating the complicated and always-changing digital world, proved crucial in making this transition.

The latter part of the 20th century gave rise to the Digital Revolution, which is defined by a rapid rise in knowledge, a growing volume of digitally born products, and developing electronic devices. In this setting, advancements technologically have altered the creation, archiving, arrangement, and accessibility of information, hence impacting individual reactions and behaviors related to that data. With a growing number of academic papers being published electronically, a wider range of publishing and accessibility choices, and an increase in technologies such as Web 2.0 supporting academic interaction, this has occurred an important change in the creation and use of knowledge from academia [10].

Amidst the digital change, libraries serve as a conduit for intellectual material and are striving to adapt to changing user demands [11-12]. This change forces us to consider ways "the digital" has affected and changed how people interact with and utilize educational libraries, as well as how to analyze and comprehend the library encounter from an integrated viewpoint that takes both behavioral and experiential variables into consideration [13].

The significant globalization of library patrons against this electronic environment adds even more complication. Since the year 2016, the British Academy recognizes the significant change taking place in British higher learning (HL) institutes and emphasized the necessity for further research on the underrepresented foreign student populations in this framework [14]. The Covid-19 epidemic, which started in 2019, caused a 5% decline in Chinese students' enrolment in UK universities; yet, this group still makes up the majority of all non-EU pupils (32%). Their

academic performance and learning environment have a big impact on how the institution is rated, how satisfied students are with it, and how good its instruction is [15].

1.2. Background of the Study

Numerous conversations, arguments, and social exchanges have shifted from traditional venues to computerized platforms as a result of our cultures' rapid digitalization. The public realm has undergone a transition that has changed how it operates and is being spearheaded by a few powerful firms [16]. This has led to worries about the consolidation of authority and the effect large corporations have, especially when it comes to influencing public opinion and political participation.

Governmental organizations are reassessing their strategy and significance in light of the changing nature of the general population realm and the impact of networks. One research highlights the ways in which organizations, including the government's mediums, are adapting to a world shaped by independent networks [17]. The situation is similar to the difficulties libraries have always encountered in fulfilling their mandate as republican instructive and informational hubs. Libraries, like government media outlets, must reassess their place in the changing digital landscape. Although the functions of charitable media, including news dissemination, are well defined, the idea of a library's website is still being investigated [18].

In addition, newer studies are looking into other digital frameworks that, compared to their clandestine equivalents, are potentially more representative. The two main types of current structures are decentralized and centralized. Platform like the social network are prime examples of centralized arrangements, which consolidate authority and control of data into one organization—Meta, in this case [19-20]. The authority relations in this strategy are unbalanced, with driven by profit goals frequently taking precedence over user honesty. On the other hand, decentralized systems, such as social media sites Mastodon is, disperse authority among multiple computers or instances, thus empowering individuals [21].

The relationship and contradictions between both digital and physical elements of the public library structure and its offerings are intricate; therefore, occasionally both physical and digital facets of the libraries are viewed as distinct fields, leading to independent studies of the behavioral or practical facets of application [22]. For instance, qualitative techniques like observations, interviews, and ethnographic techniques are frequently employed to look at how users interact with actual libraries spaces [23].

According to the nation's Library Act, libraries play a vital role in fostering the formation of educated views among individuals and the spread of information, both of which contribute to the advancement of an open society. In the past, libraries achieved this goal by giving people accessibility to print items such as books and periodicals. Nonetheless, the distribution of books and media has changed over the last several decades from being done by hand to being progressively computerized and digitized [24-25]. As a result of this change, people and librarian now have higher aspirations for how to navigate the world of digital knowledge. According to

Swedish law, municipal libraries have an obligation to provide details regarding technological innovation and how to use it to acquire learning.

1.3. Literature Review

Prior research has revealed that overseas students exhibit particular knowledge behaviors when utilizing and interacting with educational libraries overseas [26]. These behaviors include a heavy dependence on electronic devices for retrieving data, a predilection for searching engines over higher education library materials, and difficulties navigating native ICTs and spoken languages. The primary obstacles to foreign students' learning and library experiences are widely seen to be language hurdles, cultural disparities, data literacy requirements, and diverse library network designs [27].

With the fast development of Web 2.0 and even Web 3.0 capabilities, students have new demands placed on library infrastructure and amenities [28], which are upgrading and broadening. One such necessity is the growing need for social networking networks with a learning focus [29]. In order to build a more beneficial and accessible system and amenities for its multinational group, a library must continuously evaluate the patrons' behavior and how they interact with it.

But the increased burden of duty brought about by citizens' new electronic needs has spurred debates over how much free libraries should be able to offer to meet the requirements of a varied range of users. Especially in light of the funds, expertise, and obligation for doing so. Social problems posed by the digital transition include varying citizen journeys and providing fair access to the technologies required for digital involvement [30-32]. The 2013 launch of the Digital initiative sought to persuade people to take use of internet's capacity to promote knowledge and more social interaction. The social digital gap was another goal in that endeavor.

The goal of closing the digital gap has nevertheless spurred discussions regarding the part libraries ought to have in positively impacting digital advancement. Previous studies highlight the change between a reactive method to tackling the effects of digital advancements on politics and citizens—namely, granting accessibility to digital tools—to an increasingly constructive one. In order to help individuals navigate new political issues in the digital sphere, a particular argument contends that libraries ought to encourage digital procedural literacy in addition to providing users with technologies [33]. There is constant debate about how the library should be interpreted in relation to its legal obligations to support "the advancement of a society based on democracy."

There has been a scarcity of study material that specifically addresses Chinese students' library experiences, despite the fact that a great deal has been published on foreign library users generally and foreign Chinese students in relation to higher learning in particular [34]. A research that looked at how Chinese students sought data at a Canadian institution discovered that their behavior differed compared to other international student' on the basis of factors including academic achievement, English competence, and cultural readiness [35].

1.4. Statement of the Problem

- Digital libraries have several drawbacks as well, including those as follows: Accessibility to resources through user identification; digital conservation; equal accessibility; interaction designing; application and network compatibility; data organization; instruction and growth [36].
- Yet, the outcome demonstrates that among the main obstacles impeding the successful and effective the digital age of assets in university libraries are insufficient funding, the expensive nature of equipment purchases, a lack of skilled staff, a power supply that is unreliable, insufficient access to the internet, and intellectual property concerns or supervisors.

1.5. Research Question

In the current digital world, what are the primary issues and conflicts that free libraries face as they work towards the digital age?

In light of their political role, what tactics and remedies can libraries use to deal with the issues posed by the digital ecology?

What cutting-edge techniques for community evaluation do libraries employ to determine the requirements of its patrons?

Which cutting-edge innovations and developments should libraries in general embrace and be conscious of?

1.6. Research Objective

Examine the effects that the incorporation of digital technology has had on the provision of services by libraries. Analyze how much the digitization of libraries has improved customer service, availability, and general efficacy. Determine and examine the difficulties libraries are facing as they undergo a digital shift [37]. Examine possible avenues for growth and standards that might help ensure a seamless shift to a digitally changed library setting. Examine what makes users more engaged in computerized library settings and pinpoint areas that require to be improved to meet the changing demands of library users.

1.7. Research Methodology

In order to thoroughly examine the phenomena of digital transformation in libraries and its repercussions for navigating the knowledge age, this investigation uses a mixed-methods research approach to research. In order to provide a comprehensive grasp of the various facets around this transforming manipulate, the study employs qualitative as well as quantitative techniques. Deep conversations are conducted as part of the qualitative aspect with key players, including consumers, staff, and executives of libraries [38]. The goal of partially structured interview methods is to extract insightful information on the difficulties, advantages, and attitudes around digital transformation. The qualitative data will be subjected to a thematic examination, which will enable the discovery of recurrent motifs and trends.

A systematic survey will be given to a representative sample of library employees and patrons in order to gather quantitative data. The purpose of the survey instrument is to gather quantitative information about user happiness, perceived effects on library services, and the adoption of digital transformation. A thorough analysis of the dynamics of digital transformation is ensured by the combination of qualitative and quantitative data, offering a sophisticated knowledge of the challenges libraries confront in embracing the knowledge age [39].

1.8. Results

The findings of the thematic analysis, which encompassed the main concepts and their associated subdivisions, will be provided in this portion of the paper. We'll also talk about opportunities and issues that came up throughout the cooperative session [40]. The research paper will begin by looking at different viewpoints about the role that libraries should play in addressing issues related to digital democracy. Subsequently, the issues pertaining to digital literacy in this particular situation will be introduced. Ultimately, the paper will explore the aforementioned prospects for the library, based on the notion that they ought to assume greater accountability regarding digital social issues [41].

1.8.1. How a representative role of the library should be interpreted in the digital age:

All of the respondents echoed the idea that the library serves as a facilitator for the public. "The library's role remains to be a catalyst in society that individuals require," says one librarian, perfectly capturing this idea. (R1). This makes one wonder what the modern equivalent of such a demand is. The goal of the library is said to be broad and diverse, covering a range of topics and intended to be within the grasp of every person. According to one interviewee, "The purpose of the library is fairly broad [42]. It may be made quite detailed. Every audience that we come across desires a portion of the library.
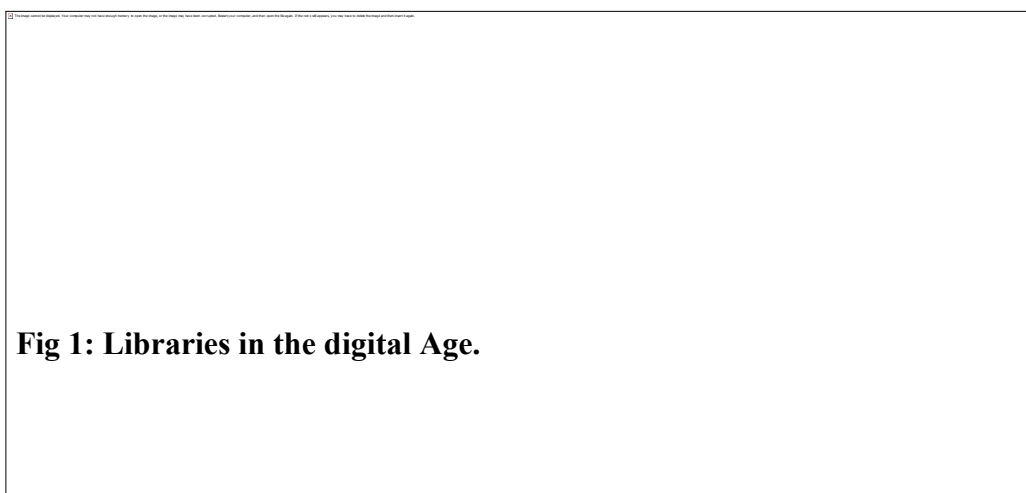

Fig 1: Libraries in the digital Age.

According to the library legislation, general libraries ought to encourage the growth of an open culture by promoting the free exchange of ideas and the spread of information. The mission's

second pillar emphasizes literature dissemination and igniting passion for academic studies, and society at large [43]. The community library is responsible to offer access to and understanding about technology, according to a clause of the Libraries Regulation.

1.8.2.   Navigating social networking sites: an essential contradiction

Regarding the realistic approach, the library's use of social networking sites presents a stated dichotomy. On the one together, TikTok—a site well-known for its links to government for knowledge sharing—was deemed ideal in terms of appealing to a newer demographic. This aligns with the goal of the library, which is to encourage reading for a wider audience [44]. However, this zeal conflicts with the goal of advancing information and media literacy while also protecting user data. There is a conflict between utilizing the popularity of social media sites like Instagram and Facebook and the moral quandaries that come with it.
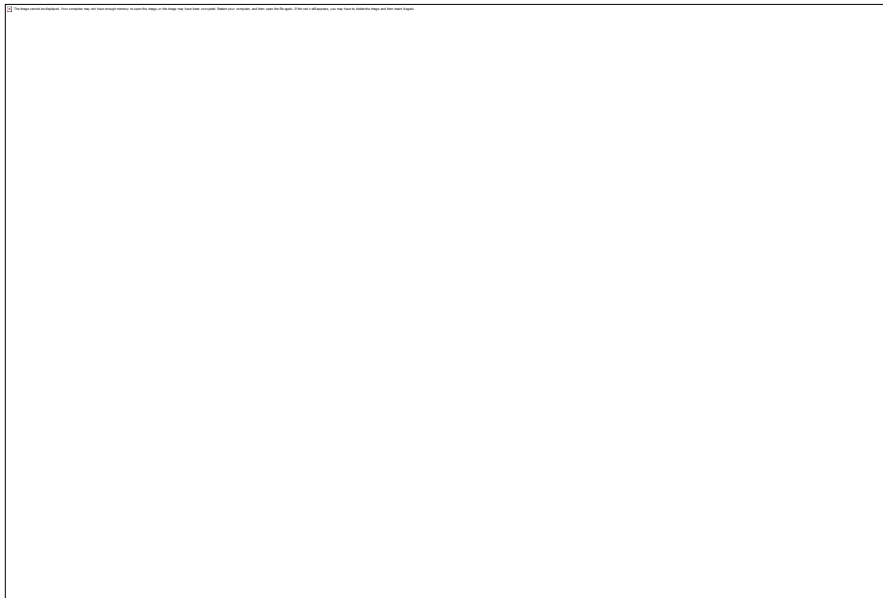
Fig 2: Types of social networking sites

1.8.3.   Digital knowledge in libraries:

The importance of digital proficiency for library workers is explored in this subject, which focuses on librarians [45]. It draws attention to the new demands that our digital society has on the knowledge that librarians must possess, as well as the frameworks and requirements for developing digital competencies. It was also mentioned that ambiguity over the required degree of digital competency at work stems from the absence of clear expectations regarding the digital abilities needed of librarians [46].

Fig 3: Areas of expertise and degrees of skill in 2019.

Emphasis is placed on the value of organization and assisting structures in setting standards and rules. "The localities employ various approaches," says one respondent. While some set aside the opportunity to do research or further learning, some lead groups of learners, give resources, or engage in other career-enhancing activities [47]. However, executives and the executive director of the library must set an example and provide the framework for an organization that learns, much like in the field of instruction."

When taken as a whole, those related topics highlight how modern libraries are navigating the digital world with ever-changing dynamics. Organizational obstacles, the incorporation of digital skills, personal learning accountability, and striking equilibrium among specialized and generalized learning are all characteristics of a revolutionary period [48].

1.9.   Discussion

The investigation of the democratic function of libraries in the age of technology produced a wide variety of pertinent subjects that addressed many viewpoints, difficulties, and possibilities. The ensuing conversation will initially tackle the essential issues raised by the participants. A conversation about the potential stated will ensue, with the underlying assumption being that libraries need to assume greater political accountability [49]. These possibilities will be considered in light of the artistic philosophy and conceptual framework of the dissertation.

1.9.1. Overarching issues
The library sector is having difficulty reinventing its position in response to new political problems, highlighted by the numerous related topics associated with the topic of the political role of libraries in the digital age. The library legislation, which outlines its complex function,

presents issues in terms of construction [50]. A compromise is struck among new technological requests for more accountability and conventional responsibilities.

But accessing the internet poses challenges to upholding and adhering to its constitutional principles and practices. In a perfect world, libraries would take on greater accountability for digital democracy and would aggressively contribute to the advancement of democracy and digital society. However, problems include limited assets and ambiguous tactics [51]. One may think of clearing up any confusion regarding the digital functions that libraries play as a prerequisite for designing fresh initiatives. Libraries might serve as public hubs for digital possibilities and perhaps be a place that stimulates public creativity benefiting citizens by articulating their position on digital democracy concerns along with being provided with the means to more effectively address such challenges.

In order to improve residents' knowledge of technology, libraries work with collaborators such as local organizations and IT instructors, utilizing information from the Swedish Broadcasting Commission among additional sources. The analogy of "digital broccoli" is used here to illustrate the difficulty of inspiring the general public to interact with complicated digital issues. The combination of these difficulties creates a difficult environment for raising citizens' knowledge of technology. Crucial components of this endeavor include figuring out how to handle resource limitations, accommodating a range of skill levels, encouraging teamwork, and conquering the "digital broccoli" obstacle. Determining the library's responsibilities in this regard, as well as those of other society customers, is crucial to tackling those problems once more [52].

1.9.2. Possibilities for exploration:

The librarians noted that the experimental route of developing an autonomous digital accessible venue for the library is both intriguing and extremely difficult. Although the goal of this endeavor seemed to provide a substitute to the dominant commercially controlled channels, it was thought of as a challenging undertaking because the intended use of this digital environment was not quite obvious [53]. The actual availability of publications, the internet, and librarian staff members who can assist patrons in navigating the wide range of available sources of knowledge demonstrates the library's position in connection to its political mandate.

The idea of transferring situations may be used in opposite in addition to constructing digital worlds. Following the session, a brilliant concept for graphically illustrating digital movements in the library's actual area came to mind [54].

This creative strategy was explained as providing library patrons with a learning opportunity by highlighting the frequently unseen frameworks that influence online relationships. A tangible illustration of computational rationale might start a discussion about the fundamental processes that intentionally influence our public dialogue and relationships in the digital domain. This could be achieved by using transferable situations as a way and working to improve citizens' knowledge of technology [55-56]. This strategy emphasizes the need of comprehending the factors that shape how we communicate online in addition to highlighting the participatory benefits of openness.

1.10. Conclusion

This research has examined the intricate relationships that exist in our modern digital society among archives, the internet, and politics. The examination of libraries' roles in the digital era has shown an environment characterized by possibilities as well as problems. The ambiguity within the function of libraries in the age of technology constitutes one of the main issues. In order to successfully satisfy the needs and political nature of the present day, libraries must reinvent their mission and adjust to these uncertainties. In addition, the disparities in knowledge of technology amongst librarians highlight the necessity of taking preventative steps to deal with this ambiguity. Another layer of complexity is added when citizens are educated about digital events, which may be considered the necessary knowledge for effective political involvement in the digital world.

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