

Chapter 27

Webrarian: A Librarian on the Web

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ABSTRACT

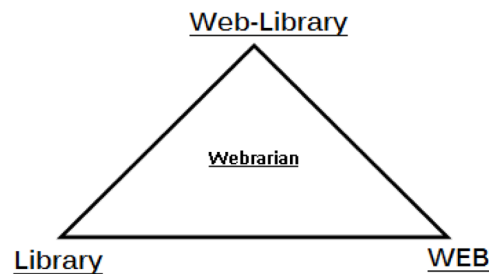
This chapter presents the current trends of Library on the web and the importance of the Librarian in the web-library as a webrarian (web-librarian). In the modern technological era, Ranganathan's five laws of the library may be extended to the web using information and communication technologies (ICTs). When the fundamental laws of library science are applied to the web, then the professional responsibilities and duties of a librarian will be enhanced in order to effectively and efficiently manage the web and serve the web users. Realizing the differences between the web and the library? An idea of the joint venture has been the practicalities of creating another platform for the both and the initiative is a library on the web which is well known as a web-library. Mostly libraries have their websites to organize information and resources and provide access to users for the collections of quality resources. The role of librarians is to adopt the Web technologies into the profession of librarianship. Librarians have been induced by technological developments to become more efficient as but not limited to the role of organizers, indexers, abstractors, archivers, data brokers, and webrarians.

1. INTRODUCTION

The world is going digital, where are we? The classic libraries have been serving users using modern technologies, however, the printed books and documents have become digital and the manual services become automated and digitised. Libraries are serving their users through internet on the World Wide Web (WWW). Where the web serves the users as a library, it is necessary to organize, classify and manage the web contents, documents in a systematic way as expected in the Library and Information Science practice. The responsibilities of a library could be better executed by a Library and Information Science professional. Either the web works as a library or the Library will be accessible from the web but the necessity of a librarian is an essential and indispensable factor for the realisation of both purposes.

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Figure 1.



Realizing the differences between “the Web” and “the Library”? These two are purely different entities, but the notion of creating another platform accessible through the WWW. The initiative is *a library on the Web* which may be referred to as a **Web-Library**. Currently, most libraries have developed active websites to organize and manage data, information, resources and provides access to quality resources for the benefit of their users. Generally, library websites have active web-based links with information on library timings, content, rules and regulations, Policies and contact details for assistance. The role of a Librarian on a web-library will be as usual as in a traditional library, but the duties and responsibilities will be fully based on digital technologies, digital library’s e-resources and e-services. Just think about the word webinar, what is it? **Nath (2020)** mentioned the word ‘**webinar**’ as a blend of ‘web’ and ‘seminar’. A **webinar** is a seminar held on the internet which is attended exclusively by an online audience. Like this, a Librarian of a web-library may call as **webrarian**. This word webrarian will be a blend of ‘web’ and ‘librarian’. Till yet, the word webrarian is yet to find its place in the conventional lexicon. It is just a blended word but it has been used by some people earlier. The word webrarian was used by Cray, et al., “Two model netizens,” Time, June 1, 1997 and by Lockwood, “Web-savvy lawyers are taking care of business,” The National Law Journal, July 26, 1999. In the year 2014, this keyword is also found in a book chapter “**Towards Educational Support: Library Services in the Era of Contemporary ICT Resources**” by **Kathryn, Philip, and Okon (2014)** in the book **Harvests from the Grown**, Volume-2. It is a Festschrift in Honour of Professor Comfort M. Ekpo, former Vice-Chancellor, University of Uyo, Nigeria. Noted here, Prof. Ekpo was a successful Librarian who started her career from Librarianship (www.comfortekpo.com.ng/) before she joined as Vice Chancellor in University of Uyo.

Later this word was used by some scholars within the novel profession of librarianship, for example, library and information science, library science, information science, documentation science among others.

The following example reflect the use of the word webinar:

- Chris Goddard (2003), a retired chartered Librarian having a website/blog on this word www.webrarian.co.uk/. He has created his website address as ‘webrarian’. He also having other social media accounts i.e. Instagram, YouTube, Twitter, Flickr, Discogs etc.
- Joshua Lynch, a library and information science professional who has a personal blog/website www.webrarian.org/ e mentioned the display name as well as the address as ‘webrarian’. His twitter handle also mentioned as @webrar1an, who may be trying to write webrarian, but not the availability of the username forced him to keep this handle name.
- Stacie L. V. Davis, a librarian in her twitter handle as @la_webrarian and Facebook profile link as @webrarian.

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