## THE ROLE OF THE LIBRARY IN THE INFORMATION AGE

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*Annotation. This article examines the role and importance of libraries in modern society in the information age. The transformation of libraries from traditional knowledge repositories into modern information and resource centers under the rapid development of digital technologies is analyzed. The article also highlights the significance of electronic libraries, digital resources, and the development of information literacy.*

*Key words: library, information age, digital technologies, electronic library, information resources, information literacy.*

### Introduction

Today, human life is developing in close connection with information and technology. The rapid increase in information flow and the accelerated development of digital technologies are placing new demands and responsibilities on all sectors of society, including library services.

Traditional libraries are no longer merely places where books are stored; instead, they are transforming into modern information and resource centers.

In the information age, the primary function of libraries is to provide users with reliable, timely, and high-quality information. At the same time, libraries play an important role in shaping knowledgeable, independent-thinking individuals with a high level of information culture. This article examines the role of libraries in the information age, their modern functions, and their significance in the development of society.

### Literature Review and Methodology

In this article, a literature review was conducted based on both local and international sources to examine the role and significance of libraries in society in the information age. In particular, scholarly literature on librarianship and information activities, textbooks, government documents, and electronic resources were analyzed. These sources extensively address the traditional functions of libraries, their transformation within the modern information environment, the impact of digital technologies on library services, and the role of libraries in enhancing information literacy.

During the literature review process, special attention was given to regulatory and legal documents related to the development of the library system in the Republic of Uzbekistan. In addition, the results of scientific research focused on transforming modern libraries into information and resource centers were analyzed.

Articles published through online sources and information available on official websites were also examined using a comparative analysis approach.

The research methodology employed methods such as analysis and synthesis, comparison, generalization, and logical reasoning.

Through these methods, the role of libraries in society during the information age, changes in their functional responsibilities, and future prospects were identified. Furthermore, based on the reviewed literature, the theoretical aspects of the issue were explored and conclusions were drawn.

These methodological approaches ensured the scientific validity of the article, facilitated a systematic and comprehensive analysis of the topic, and helped to highlight the relevance of libraries in the information age.

Manuscripts and books created by knowledgeable individuals should be preserved under appropriate conditions and in suitable places. In particular, it is advisable that books be stored in libraries equipped with special environmental controls—such as regulated temperature, humidity, ventilation, and other technical facilities—and maintained by qualified specialists, namely librarians. This ensures the long-term preservation of written heritage and the effective use of information resources.

At the core of the library's mission lies a commitment to the preservation of information and knowledge and to ensuring equitable access to them. In a world where the Internet is filled with information of varying levels of reliability, libraries select, preserve, and disseminate trustworthy sources for the public. They assist people in navigating the labyrinth of information, meeting users' informational needs, and developing critical thinking skills by providing appropriate tools and guidance.

Traditional libraries are increasingly being transformed into digital libraries in response to contemporary demands. The development of information and communication technologies has become an integral part of the daily operations of libraries worldwide. As society evolves, readers are increasingly turning to libraries as centers for accessing information, both in print and digital formats. The role of the Internet as a key source of information has also expanded significantly.

Meeting the needs of modern society requires coordinated and collaborative efforts, in which libraries play a vital role as information and knowledge hubs.

This requires the joint efforts of governments, organizations, communities, and individuals.

Libraries also play a crucial role in enhancing information literacy, guiding users through the vast ocean of information, and enabling them to distinguish reliable sources from unreliable ones. Libraries ensure access to information, support its preservation and dissemination, and contribute to the development of an educated and enlightened society.

The information age has profoundly influenced all spheres of social life, fundamentally transforming the processes of acquiring knowledge, accessing information, and disseminating it.

Within this context, libraries have moved beyond the boundaries of traditional activities and are evolving into multifunctional centers based on modern information and communication technologies. Today, libraries are not only places where printed materials are stored, but also important information spaces that provide electronic resources, digital databases, and online services.

In the information age, libraries are not losing their relevance; on the contrary, they are becoming increasingly important strategic institutions. They play a vital role in shaping knowledgeable, critically thinking individuals who are capable of using information consciously and responsibly. Therefore, the development of libraries is one of the key factors in societal progress.

In the information age, the role of information in social life continues to grow significantly.

Modern technologies, the Internet, and digital information tools have expanded people's opportunities to acquire knowledge, search for information, and use it effectively.

Under such conditions, libraries are also updating their activities in accordance with the demands of the time and functioning as important centers of information and spirituality within society. Whereas libraries previously focused mainly on preserving printed books and manuscripts and providing them to readers, today they are transforming into modern institutions that offer digital information resources. Electronic books, online databases, and digitized scholarly sources now constitute a major part of library services. This, in turn, enables users to access information from any place and at any time.

One of the key challenges of the information age is the excessive volume of information.

Not all information available on the Internet is reliable or scientifically grounded.

Therefore, libraries play a vital role in enhancing information literacy. They help readers develop skills for selecting, analyzing, and using information correctly. In particular, libraries serve as reliable scholarly resources for students and young researchers.

Furthermore, libraries make a significant contribution to the development of education and science. They support the learning process by providing the necessary literature and information resources for scientific research. Today, many libraries organize seminars, training sessions, and cultural-educational events, which serve to broaden the knowledge and worldview of young people.

**Conclusion**

In conclusion, in the information age, libraries have not lost their significance in social life; rather, they have evolved into an important social institution at a new stage, both in content and form. Modern technologies have expanded the scope of library activities, transforming them from mere repositories of information into centers of knowledge, innovation, and culture. Through libraries, the information literacy of society's members is enhanced, providing a solid foundation for the development of science and education.

Moreover, libraries contribute to reducing the digital divide, facilitating access to reliable and high-quality information, and supporting the development of a democratic society. Thus, in the information age, libraries serve as culturally and educationally strategic institutions, crucial for preserving, disseminating, and passing knowledge to future generations.

In an era of advanced digital technologies, libraries are not only places for storing books but also trusted sources of information, centers supporting education and scientific research, and institutions that foster information literacy. Their activities play a vital role in shaping the younger generation into knowledgeable, independent-thinking individuals capable of using information effectively. Therefore, the development of libraries, their integration with modern technologies, and the continuous improvement of their services are key factors in societal progress.

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