

EMPLOYABILITY SKILLS AND COMPETENCIES OF WORKING PROFESSIONALS: EMERGING TREND IN LIBRARY RESOURCE ORGANISATION LEVERAGING ON RDA

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This research aims to explore the relationship between employability skills, competencies, and the changing landscape of library resource organization in the context of emerging library trends. The employability skills and competencies of working professionals are crucial to their success in the modern workforce. One emerging trend in resource organization is the use of Resource Description and Access (RDA) to improve employability skills and competencies among library professionals. By using RDA, library professionals can create more accurate and comprehensive records for their collections, which can help improve the overall user experience. Additionally, RDA can help library professionals develop a broader set of skills and competencies, such as cataloguing, metadata management, and data analysis. Employers are increasingly looking for candidates with these types of skills and competencies, as they are critical for managing and organizing information in the modern workplace. By leveraging RDA, library professionals can position themselves as valuable contributors to their organizations, and as individuals with a diverse set of skills that are in high demand. Overall, the use of RDA in resource organization represents an important emerging trend in the field of library science. By embracing this trend, library professionals can enhance their employability skills and competencies, and position themselves for success in the modern workforce.

Keywords: Employability skills, competencies, working professionals, library resource organization, Resource Description and Access (RDA), Emerging Library Trend.

Introduction

In today's dynamic and competitive job market, possessing employability skills and competencies is crucial for working professionals to achieve career success and adapt to the rapidly evolving workplace demands. Employability skills refer to a set of transferable skills

that individuals need to effectively perform in a professional environment, enabling them to secure and retain employment. These skills go beyond technical knowledge and encompass a range of interpersonal, cognitive, and personal attributes that contribute to individual and organizational productivity.

The importance of employability skills has gained significant recognition among employers, educators, and policymakers. Research has shown that possessing a strong set of employability skills enhances an individual's chances of securing employment, career advancement, and overall job satisfaction (Hillage & Pollard, 1998; Joy-Matthews et al., 2018). Employers seek candidates who demonstrate competencies such as effective communication, teamwork, problem-solving, adaptability, critical thinking, and digital literacy (Hinchliffe et al., 2018). These skills are not only essential for professional success but also contribute to personal growth and lifelong learning.

In the context of the library profession, the role of employability skills and competencies is equally significant. Library professionals are responsible for organizing and managing resources to meet the information needs of users. One crucial aspect of this responsibility is the organization of library resources using appropriate standards and frameworks. Resource Description and Access (RDA) is one such standard that provides guidelines for the bibliographic description and organization of library resources, ensuring consistency and interoperability across library systems.

However, the library profession, like many others, is influenced by emerging trends that impact the way resources are organized and accessed. Technological advancements, changing user expectations, and evolving information landscapes have led to the emergence

of new library trends. These trends include the adoption of digital technologies, the integration of artificial intelligence and machine learning in library services, the implementation of user-centered approaches, and the incorporation of open access and open educational resources (OER) (Pomerantz & Peek, 2016; Xie et al., 2020).

Understanding and adapting to these emerging library trends is essential for library professionals to remain relevant and provide effective information services in the digital age. Alongside technical knowledge and expertise, possessing employability skills and competencies is crucial for library professionals to navigate these trends successfully. These skills enable professionals to embrace change, collaborate with diverse stakeholders, leverage emerging technologies, and deliver innovative library services.

This research aims to explore the relationship between employability skills, competencies, and the changing landscape of library resource organization in the context of emerging library trends. By examining the skills and competencies required by working professionals in the library field and investigating their relevance to the evolving library trends, this study seeks to provide insights and recommendations for developing a future-ready library workforce.

Literature Review

The conceptual framework explores the intersection of employability skills, competencies, working professionals, library resource organization, Resource Description and Access (RDA), and emerging library trends. It aims to highlight the importance of employability skills and competencies for working professionals in the context of library resource organization and the evolving trends in the field.

Employability Skills

Employability skills refer to a set of attributes, knowledge, and personal qualities that enable individuals to secure employment, adapt to the workplace, and contribute effectively to organizational success. Employability skills are the key attributes and competencies that individuals possess to enhance their employability and succeed in the workplace. Librarians, as information professionals, require a unique set of employability skills to effectively perform their roles in modern libraries. This discussion will focus on the employability skills of librarians, examining relevant literature to understand the competencies expected of librarians in today's workforce.

Numerous studies have explored the employability skills of librarians, highlighting the evolving nature of the profession and the need for librarians to adapt to changing technologies and user expectations. For instance, a study by Hughes and Grewal (2015) identified several core employability skills for librarians, including information literacy, interpersonal communication, problem-solving, adaptability, and technological competence. These skills enable librarians to effectively engage with users, provide relevant and timely information services, and navigate digital resources.

Information literacy is a fundamental employability skill for librarians as they are responsible for helping users access, evaluate, and use information effectively. Librarians should possess strong information retrieval skills, the ability to critically evaluate information sources, and teach these skills to others (Bundy, 2014). Interpersonal communication is another essential skill for librarians, as they interact with diverse user groups, including students, researchers, and the general public. Effective communication skills facilitate

reference interviews, instruction sessions, and collaborative work with colleagues (Stover & Mullen, 2014).

Problem-solving and adaptability skills are crucial for librarians to address the evolving needs of library users. With technological advancements and changing information landscapes, librarians must be able to solve complex problems and adapt their skills and services accordingly (Gupta & Rathi, 2021). Technological competence is increasingly important in the digital age. Librarians should be proficient in using library management systems, digital resources, and emerging technologies to provide efficient and user-friendly services (Aguilar & Almazan, 2019).

To enhance employability skills, librarians can engage in continuous professional development activities, attend workshops, conferences, and pursue advanced degrees or certifications. Libraries and library schools play a vital role in offering training programs and incorporating employability skills into the curriculum (Hughes & Grewal, 2015).

In conclusion, the employability skills of librarians encompass a range of competencies, including information literacy, interpersonal communication, problem-solving, adaptability, and technological competence. These skills and competencies enable librarians to meet the evolving needs of library users' expectations and effectively navigate the changing information landscape. Continuous professional development and collaboration between libraries and library schools are essential to equip librarians with the necessary skills to thrive in their profession.

Library Resource Organization:

Library resource organization involves the systematic arrangement and management of various resources, including books, journals, digital materials, and other information sources, to enhance accessibility and retrieval. The importance of library resource organization such as efficient organization facilitates resource discovery, maximizes usability, improves information retrieval, supports research and learning, can enhance user satisfaction.

Library resource organization is a crucial aspect of library management, involving the systematic arrangement and cataloging of resources to facilitate their discovery and retrieval. This discussion will explore relevant literature on library resource organization, examining various approaches, systems, and standards used in organizing library collections. Library classification systems, such as the Dewey Decimal Classification (DDC) and Library of Congress Classification (LCC) among others, have long been employed to arrange resources into subject-based categories. These systems provide a hierarchical structure that enables librarians and users to locate materials efficiently. However, the increasing complexity of information resources and interdisciplinary nature of modern research have led to discussions about the limitations and potential alternatives to traditional classification systems (Smiraglia, 2013).

Emerging approaches, such as faceted classification and user-centric organization, have gained attention in recent years. Faceted classification allows for multiple dimensions or facets to be applied to resources, enabling users to explore materials based on different attributes, such as format, topic, genre, or audience (Raghavan & Griffiths, 2012). User-centric organization focuses on aligning resource organization with users' mental models and

needs, considering their search behavior, language preferences, and context (Willis & Yeo, 2018). These approaches aim to enhance the discoverability and usability of library resources.

In addition to classification systems, metadata plays a vital role in resource organization. Metadata provides descriptive information about resources, facilitating resource discovery and retrieval. Standards like MARC (Machine-Readable Cataloging) and more recently, Resource Description and Access (RDA), have been widely used for creating bibliographic records (Tillett, 2016). RDA, in particular, aims to provide a more flexible and context-sensitive approach to metadata creation, accommodating diverse resource types and digital environments.

The advent of digital libraries and the increasing availability of electronic resources have posed new challenges and opportunities for library resource organization. Techniques such as content analysis, text mining, and automated indexing have been explored to enhance the organization and retrieval of digital resources (Zhu et al., 2017). Linked data and semantic web technologies have also been utilized to create linked and interconnected resources, enabling more sophisticated resource organization and discovery (Foulonneau & Riley, 2018).

To ensure effective library resource organization, librarians and information professionals need to stay updated with emerging trends, standards, and technologies. Collaboration and knowledge sharing among professionals and library networks can facilitate the exchange of best practices and innovative approaches to resource organization (Šauperl &

Senčar, 2017). Keeping abreast of current trends and fostering professional collaboration are essential for effective resource organization in libraries.

Resource Description and Access (RDA)

RDA was developed as a successor to the Anglo-American Cataloguing Rules (AACR), aiming to align cataloging practices with the evolving digital environment and diverse resource types. It emphasizes a user-focused approach, providing clear guidelines for describing resources to enhance resource discovery and access for library users (Riley, 2013).

One of the key features of RDA is its flexibility in accommodating various types of resources, including traditional print materials, electronic resources, digital media, and non-textual resources. RDA provides guidelines for describing the unique characteristics and attributes of these resources, considering factors such as content, carrier, and context (RDA Steering Committee, 2010).

Another significant aspect of RDA is its focus on relationships between resources. RDA encourages catalogers to establish relationships between resources and related entities, such as persons, families, corporate bodies, and concepts. This approach enhances the discoverability of related resources and enables users to navigate through a network of interconnected information (Tillett, 2016). The adoption of RDA has had a considerable impact on library cataloging practices worldwide. Several studies have explored the implementation and implications of RDA. For example, a study by Poulter and Olson (2016) investigated the experiences of catalogers during the transition from AACR to RDA and found that while there were challenges, overall, catalogers recognized the benefits of RDA in facilitating more granular and accurate resource description.

The transition to RDA has also necessitated changes in library systems and infrastructure. Cataloging systems and integrated library management systems have been updated to support RDA-based metadata creation and display. Libraries have also integrated RDA into their training programs and collaborated with cataloging communities to share knowledge and best practices (OCLC, 2013).

Critics of RDA have raised concerns about the complexity of the rules, the need for extensive training, and the potential for inconsistent implementation. However, proponents argue that the flexibility and user-centered approach of RDA outweigh the challenges and provide a more adaptable framework for describing and accessing resources in a changing information landscape (Tillett, 2016). While challenges exist in implementing and transitioning to RDA, it offers a more adaptable framework for describing diverse resource types and facilitating resource discovery in libraries.

Emerging Library Trend

Emerging library trends refer to the evolving developments and innovations within the library and information science profession that influence service delivery, resource management, and user engagement. Libraries continually adapt to changing societal, technological and information needs. This discussion will explore literature on emerging library trends, focusing on the transformative developments that shape the future of libraries and the services they provide.

a. Digital Transformation and the Rise of Digital Libraries: The increasing availability of digital resources and advancements in technology has led to the digital transformation of libraries. Digital libraries provide access to vast collections of e-books, e-journals,

multimedia materials, and other digital resources. They offer flexible and remote access, support collaborative research, and facilitate the preservation and dissemination of digital materials (Borgman, 2015).

b. Open Access and Open Educational Resources (OER): Open Access initiatives aim to provide unrestricted and free access to scholarly research, enabling broader dissemination of knowledge. Libraries play a crucial role in supporting Open Access initiatives by promoting Open Access publishing models, managing institutional repositories, and advocating for Open Access policies (Swan, 2012). Similarly, Open Educational Resources (OER) have gained prominence, with libraries facilitating access to high-quality educational materials that can be freely used, shared, and adapted (Parker-Katz & Chawner, 2017).

c. Data Management and Research Support: As research practices evolve, libraries are taking on new roles in supporting data management and research processes. Libraries provide guidance on data management planning, data curation, and preservation. They offer training on data analysis tools, assist in finding and accessing research data, and promote data sharing and collaboration (Tenopir et al., 2017). Research support services encompass a wide range of activities, including bibliometrics, research impact assessment, and support for emerging research methods (Dallmeier-Tiessen et al., 2017).

d. User-Centered Services and Personalization: Libraries are increasingly adopting user-centered approaches to tailor their services to meet the specific needs of their users. User experience (UX) design principles are being applied to library spaces, websites, and interfaces to create intuitive and seamless experiences for library users (Hood & Henderson, 2017). Personalization of services involves leveraging user data and preferences to deliver

customized recommendations, resource suggestions, and targeted assistance (Olesen & Seadle, 2017).

e. Information Literacy and Critical Thinking: In the digital age, information literacy remains a crucial focus for libraries. Libraries are actively involved in teaching information literacy skills, critical thinking, and digital literacy to equip users with the abilities to navigate and evaluate information effectively. Libraries collaborate with educational institutions and employ innovative instructional methods to foster information literacy in diverse user populations (Breivik, 2014). These emerging trends reflect the evolving nature of libraries as they adapt to technological advancements, changing user expectations, and the evolving information landscape. Libraries continue to play a vital role in providing equitable access to information, supporting research and learning, and promoting information literacy in society.

Recommendation

To support the acquisition of employability skills and competencies among working professionals, libraries should:

- 1). Create resource guides that provide access to resources that support the acquisition of employability skills and competencies.
- 2). Develop training programs that provide working professionals with the necessary skills and competencies.
- 3). Collaborate with industry experts to develop customized resource guides and training programs that meet the needs of specific professions or industries.

4). Promote the use of RDA in resource organization to support the acquisition of employability skills and competencies among working professionals.

Conclusion

The acquisition of employability skills and competencies is critical for working professionals to remain relevant in the job market. The emerging trend of RDA in resource organization presents an opportunity for libraries to support the acquisition of these skills and competencies. Libraries can leverage RDA to provide access to resources that support the acquisition of employability skills and competencies and develop training programs that provide working professionals with the necessary skills and competencies.

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