Abstract
Format whichever, word is to survive. We may shift from one mode to another, but books have a value which will remain there. The buzzword, in the bibliographic world these days is the e-book and digital Library. The advancement in digital technology and electronics has set many a professional and commoners thinking about the future of the books and the libraries. The advancement of electronics and digital technology and its impact on traditional books and libraries shall be the focal point of this paper. The author shall be examining whether the traditional books would fade out to the mist of history or they will survive the high tides of electronic and digital revolution. I shall also be examining the symbiotic relationship that the traditional and new medium can establish for the survival the book culture in the information and digital age.

Introduction
Influence of electronic and digital technology may lead to less-paper society, but both books and electronic documents are going to stay side by side, and each has a definite role to play in “Information Communication”. Today we are having INTERNET as a powerful tool of communication. Radio, TV and Newspapers are also important disseminating agencies for the dissemination of information.

Books and libraries will survive for all the times to come, but in different formats. Presently we are having electronic libraries and electronic books. Libraries were in existence even during the time of ancient civilizations of Babylonia, Mesopotamia, Egypt, Assyria etc. before Christian era. The meaning of the word “Library” has changed considerably in recent times. So far, this word has been used for organized collection of books for consulting and reading purposes. Now, it can be described as the organized collection of books, documents and non-book materials viz. Microfilms, Floppies, Video Cassettes, CDs etc.

A major breakthrough in the history of mankind was the transformation of man from Homo Sapiens to Homo Febra which means a man who thinks. The records of thinking were preserved by one generation for the other and thus passed on to posterity. What we have today is, undoubtedly, the result of thousands of years of thinking, experimentation and rethinking. There were darker times, too, as many civilizations got devastated prematurely. But despite all the setbacks, the human race continued to grow and multiply the available knowledge. We usually term the current rate of knowledge growth as Information Revolution and consider it a contemporary phenomenon, but its roots are there in the history. The Information Revolution did not start 21st Century we are passing through. It began when the hunter painted pictures of animals on walls of his cave. It took a step forward when speech was invented and further when early societies carved symbols first on stone, then on pottery, papyrus palm leaf, birch bark, cloth and paper to record individual impressions. Several media of communication have been used for transfer of Information. The earlier ones had durability but lacked portability. This was achieved with the invention of paper. Even after the invention of paper, we now use electronic media which contributed in reduction of size of documents and made mass transfer of information possible. The electronic media has the capability to store, manipulate and transfer information in the form of text as well as audio-visuals. It is also possible to combine both of them. Multimedia can be cited as example. Presently we are having audio visual /multimedia libraries. In large academic institutions, viz. universities, IIT’s, and other specialized educational institutions, they have separate audio-visual divisions/sections in their central libraries.

When the Library of Alexandria was plundered and its collection thrown away in the river Nile, it stopped the flow of water. In India, the University of Nalanda had an eight-storied library building. Does it mean that two thousand centuries ago the quantum of the knowledge available was so large? This was because
the bulk of documents was in the form of stones, clay tablets and tree leaves. With the explosion of knowledge or we can say information explosion, the traditional libraries of today face a serious problem of shortage of space. This is going to be more serious if suitable steps are not taken at the appropriate time. Paper has undoubtedly been the companion of learners and the main medium of communication of ideas for more time in comparison to any other medium. But the improved technology for storage and dissemination of information has made available a wide range of products that accommodate a fairly larger body of information. The advances in electronics and telecommunications has brought newer technology capable of accommodating very large quantities of information in a very little space.

It is also to be mentioned that great books of great men will survive for all the times to come whether they are in print media or in electronic media. The readers enjoy their reading. Let us not try to appear modern by jumping headlong into the bandwagon, created around us today in the name of Digital Library / electronic library environment. “Electronic Library” a technological development in recent times can not be ignored, but let us keep our heads fixed firmly on our shoulders. There is a danger that in our pursuit for digital/electronic information system, we may tend to ignore our traditional print-on-paper libraries which still constitute the overwhelming majority of the library population. They will continue to serve the requirements of their “less-privileged clients to the best of their abilities for many years to come. In India, “pockets of poverty” have the ability to co-exist with pockets of affluence’ what is necessary is try to push the poverty line a bit upwards.

Challenges

One would like to mention that Information Technology should not be considered as a challenge to the survival of the books and libraries but as a boon making the library work more efficient, fast and accurate from where no user will go unsatisfied.

After Radio, Television, Satellite Television and Cable Channels it has been the growth of internet and that has been seen as a challenge to the survival of books and traditional libraries. Some Professionals fear that computers and bookstores will increasingly draw users away from libraries. These fears what in precise terms could be called “techno fears” are like what have been termed as pre-metaphoric shocks. Shocks that are felt much before change actually takes place. This techno fear is haunting many a library professional. It is the fear of “mental castration” the fear of the being outdone in those areas in which we must pride ourselves. The question arises should we fear the Internet and take it as a challenge to traditional books and libraries or not.

Internet, also known as “Network of Networks” has changed the entire spectrum of the modern society and earned it appellations like “Information Society” and “knowledge based society”. It has also now brought within its ambit major aspects of human activity. In its womb it now carries concepts like digital economy, electronic commerce, e-business, digital commerce, cyber markets and also e-books.

The birth of net and e-book is also being seen as a challenge the traditional book and libraries. The fact that the importance of digital libraries has been recognized by all the nations of the world, notwithstanding. To the author’s understanding, establishment of alternative sources of information should not be a cause of anxiety amongst the people especially connected with this profession. Some libraries have been offering Internet access to the public for several years and have found that instead of replacing conventional use of library, electronic access has stimulated book borrowing, browsing and use of printed material.

The question arises are the e-books going to change the traditional spectrum of books and libraries or it is going to add some more color to it. “E-books in some way will compete with traditional books. The developments of writing systems, scripts and printed books are, in spite of new technologies, among the greatest achievements of mankind”. It has taken more than five centuries for the traditional book technology to evolve and at present e-book cannot beat traditional book as reading technology.

Conclusion

The tidal changes that have been taking place in the development of information need to be understood in their right perspective. Instead of watching these changes as mute spectators plans need to be drafted for adopting the technological advancement in our academic libraries. It is true, it will take sometime for e-book to arrive in a big way to our country and the traditional book will continue to dominate the academic libraries. But, to make our academic libraries viable there is need for dovetailing the modernity with tradition. There is need to leave a room for accommodating on-line books and e-books for our libraries and for there is a need for drafting plans in advance.