Continue to strive

OCTOBER 29 through to November 3, LIAJA marks the eighth staging of Library and Information Week. Since its inception on October 20, 2016, this event has served as a beacon, shining a spotlight on this noble profession and exposing to the world those often invisible individuals who work so hard to provide quality service to the Jamaican society.

The guiding theme for this year's activities (for Library Week) is 'The role of GLAMRs in Critical Thinking: From Ancient Scrolls to Artificial Intelligence'. GLAMRs is an acronym for galleries, archives, museums and records centres. These information centres have served as the guardians of societal knowledge from the rudimentary days of information preservation to the present age of artificial intelligence.

In context, scrolls were seen as symbols of wisdom to the ancients, a testament of the search for and preservation of acquired knowledge. The long and laborious process of collecting and preserving knowledge, as was done in the ancient world, is today replaced by the efficient and constantly evolving use of artificial intelligence.

This week, through our various GLAMR institutions, we will explore the synergy between traditional means of knowledge preservation and artificial intelligence. Ultimately, it is my hope that as we celebrate Library and Information Week, and Library Information Professionals' Day on November 2, that we all recognise the work and worth of the professionals who function in this industry across the island in various public and private institutions.

I hope also that our society will come to an understanding of the ways that GLAMRs have been working to help persons to think critically from as far back as the time of the scrolls to the current age, where artificial intelligence is the next frontier for information acquisition and distribution. I, therefore, encourage all our stakeholders to continue to strive nobly for the provision of access to credible information; digital access services and resources; the preservation of our nation's rich heritage; and the facilitation of good governance.

Have a wonderful day!
KERRY-ANN RODNEY-WELLINGTON
President
Library and Information Association of Jamaica

Academic integrity and artificial intelligence – the role of the librarian

Ruth Baker-Gardner
Contributor

THERE IS no doubt that the emergence of generative artificial intelligence such as ChatGPT is signalling a new era in the approach to academic integrity taken by tertiary institutions, and by extension, the academic library. Tertiary institutions are now in a frantic search for strategies to harness the opportunities posed by generative artificial intelligence, while simultaneously minimising the impact on academic integrity.

Librarians have always been champions of academic integrity. They have demonstrated this involvement through searching for resources that have been plagiarised, as requested by administration, teaching about plagiarism, and helping students develop the skills of citation and referencing, usually through information literacy sessions. The emergence of generative artificial intelligence tools, with its many challenges to integrity, provides new opportunities for librarians to further hone their skills and continue to contribute to academic integrity within their institutions.

While society continues to explore the new frontiers opened by artificial intelligence and grapple with its ever-expanding capabilities, librarians must continue to do what they have always done best – educate themselves and their clients. Every librarian needs to keep abreast of the developments in artificial intelligence and their likely impact on the various areas of information work, including academic integrity. There is no dearth of channels and resources to accomplish this goal.

Education is the most effective way to help students develop academic integrity. It provides students with the knowledge of academic integrity, and identifies and describes the various forms of misconduct. Education in academic integrity can be enhanced through the use of case studies, which provide students the opportunity for viewing the behaviours of others in a non-threatening way, and though this avenue, they can also reflect on their own behaviours. Even as the rules are changing to accommodate the many uses of the new technology, and even as some argue that we are now in a post-plagiarism age, through education librarians are able to engage users in critical discussions regarding the ethical use of artificial intelligence, keeping in mind that this goes way beyond ChatGPT and its capabilities. These discussions should help users to effectively assess the many situations they will encounter and apply critical thinking to make the right decisions. The discussion must be cast against the backdrop of the role of education in equipping users to effectively participate in a rapidly changing society.

Librarians, let us help our users to embrace artificial intelligence…with integrity.

The OUR Information Centre – Transforming to meet your needs

Coleen Mignott
Contributor

KNOWN TO many as the space to browse and discover all things related to public utility regulation, the Office of Utilities Regulation Information Centre (OURIC) has recently undergone a transformation as it continues to meet the needs of those who browse its collection.

Its digital transformation started several years ago and now, OURIC has a new look and feel, placing its contents in digital spaces for the convenience of users.

One such transformation is the development of OURIC's webpage on the OUR's website, which was designed and developed to establish a strong online presence for the information centre that would effectively market its products, operations, activities, and services to its desired audience. The promotion of OURIC's cutting-edge technology, primarily its databases, online catalogue, e-books and magazines, research materials, multimedia content and digital library to stakeholders via this medium, is critical to OURIC's visibility and ultimate success.

OURIC's webpage provides remote access to the wide range of resources as well as information available at OURIC.

WHAT'S NEW ON OURIC'S WEBPAGE?

On the updated OURIC page, users can book appointments to visit OURIC's physical facility or register for library programmes and events, among other features. The current design improves on the ease of scrolling, and the page leverages hover animations that change how elements appear, behave, and respond as the cursor is moved over them. Hypertexts and hyperlinked images serve to improve navigation. There are now engaging videos embedded in the page to incorporate sound and motion into the page, thus making it easy to navigate and utilise available resources effectively.

The page also serves up information regarding the library's digital resources and services and guidelines regarding their usage. Users can learn about membership and borrowing requirements and updates to library operations. It's also used to update users on OURIC news and announcements.

Another significant highlight is that the page facilitates research support through online resources, instruction and self-help guides or tools made accessible to patrons, researchers, and lifelong learners. With the improved page users can now leave their feedback, submit suggestions, or ask questions through online forms.

WHAT'S NEXT FOR OURIC?

Developing an OURIC webpage fosters community engagement by providing a platform for users to interact with the information officer. To accomplish this, there are plans for the integration of chat services in future. A glimpse of other plans include:

- Information-sharing partnership with universities and regional regulators;
- Regional conferences and workshops on relevant topics
- Implementation of learning management systems and sensitisation tools to build awareness about OURIC products.

OURIC has a lot more in store, but for now, browse through the webpage http://bit.ly/OURICweb and rediscover the cutting-edge publications the OUR's very own library houses.

Colleen Mignott is coordinator (OURIC)/information officer at the Office of Utilities Regulation.

What's in librarianship?

Dr Sasekea Harris/Contributor

THIS ARTICLE provides a simplified overview of what is involved in librarianship for the purpose of awareness. As such, it begins with an uncomplicated definition of librarianship, illustrated by a matrix of typical activities of the profession; broad categories of practice and a non-exhaustive list of specialisations for librarians follow; the article ends with a straightforward hierarchy of the profession.

Librarianship is an interdisciplinary profession centred on using universal standards to organise/record the literature of a specific community, for the purpose of posterity, access, management, and use.

SOME BROAD CATEGORIES OF PRACTICE FOR LIBRARIANS INCLUDE:

• University/academic librarian: Tertiary level
• School librarian: Primary/preparatory and secondary levels
• Public library/community librarian: Community level
• National librarian: Country/nationwide level
• Corporate/special librarian: Industry/business/organisations

Within the aforementioned broad categorisations, the following enumerates a non-exhaustive list of specialisations for librarians:
• Teacher librarian/instructional librarian
• User experience (UX) librarian
• Metadata and discovery services librarian (cataloguer)
• Rare books and special collections librarian
• Systems librarian
• Online/web services librarian
• Digital resources librarian
• Acquisitions/collection development librarian
• Medical/health librarian
• Science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM) librarian
• Law librarian
• Humanities and social sciences librarian
• Outreach and engagement librarian
• Entrepreneurial/intrapreneurial librarian
• Data manager/leader
• Library administrator/manager
• EDI engagement librarian
• Digital humanities librarian
• Children/youth/tween/adult services librarian
• Research librarian
• Open scholarship librarian
• Reference librarian
• Genealogy services librarian
• Knowledge service manager

Not everyone working in a library is a librarian. Librarians usually have a bachelor's degree in library & information studies (LIS). University librarians typically hold a master's degree in LIS.

Within the Caribbean, the Department of Library & Information Studies, The UWI, Mona, is the chief recognised/accredited trainer of librarians, from the baccalaureate through to doctoral level. Librarianship is a clandestinely rewarding profession on many levels.

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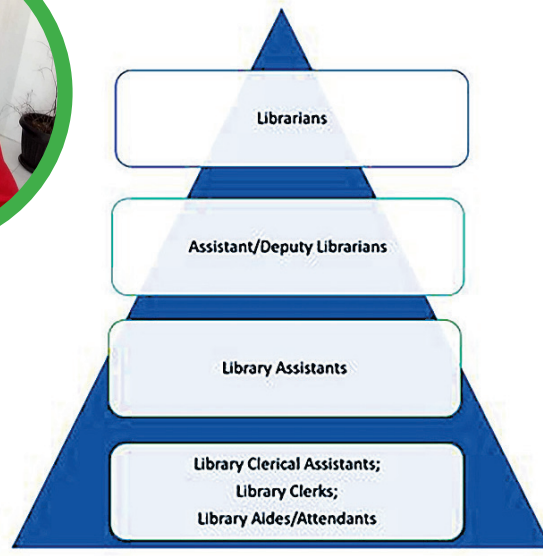

Fig 2. Librarianship Hierarchy (Simplified)

Pyramid top to bottom:
- Librarians
- Assistant/Deputy Librarians
- Library Assistants
- Library Clerical Assistants; Library Clerks; Library Aides/Attendants

Public Service	Technical Service	Administration
• resource/information discovery & access	• resource description using metadata standards	• human resource management: evaluation & assessment
• information / knowledge management	• subject analysis and assignment of subject headings using cataloging standards/codes	• business administration
• research support	• data entry using bibliographic framework & standards	• operations management
• literature search/reviews	• assignment of classification number using a classification scheme	• property management
• research document preparation/review	• abstracting & indexing	• strategic planning
• bibliometrics	• ICT: automation, manual/digital preservation, web development, digital access	• space planning/design
• reference (citation) management	• digitization, digitalization & digital transformation	• financial literacy, planning & management
• exhibition/displays	• Digital Humanities (DH)	• entrepreneurship/intrapreneurship
• customer service	• digital rights management	• fundraising
• events planning	• licensing and access management	• change management
• social media management	• graphic design	• sustainable development
• public relations management	• collection assessment and development	• writing: minute taking, report writing, proposal writing, grant writing, editorial
• networking	• Open Educational Resource (OER) management	• project management
• marketing and promotion	• electronic resources management	• conflict management
• advocacy	• conservation and preservation	• team building
• outreach and engagement	• disaster management	
• scholarly communication	• procurement	
• public speaking	• reprographics	
• presentations	• IP & copyright advisory/management	
• scholarship and publishing	• data curation	
• teaching and training	• data management	
• information literacy	• records management	
• digital literacy		
• readers advisory		
• Selective Dissemination of Information (SDI)		
• Equity, Diversity & Inclusion (EDI) engagement		

Table 1 What's in Librarianship (Simplified & Non-exhaustive)

Transforming libraries: The impact of AI

LIBRARIES HAVE been an enduring symbol of knowledge preservation and dissemination, but the landscape of these institutions is evolving rapidly. In the digital age, libraries are embracing artificial intelligence (AI) to enhance their services, streamline operations, and offer an enriched user experience. This transformation is a testament to the adaptability and resilience of libraries, ensuring they remain relevant in an ever-changing world.

One of the most significant applications of AI in libraries is in cataloguing and data management. AI-powered algorithms can efficiently categorise and tag materials, making it easier for librarians and patrons to locate resources. This reduces the burden on library staff, allowing them to focus on more complex tasks such as curating collections or providing personalised assistance to patrons.

AI-driven recommendation systems have also become invaluable tools. These systems analyse user preferences, borrowing history, and reading patterns to offer tailored suggestions, much like popular streaming services. For librarians, this means offering a more personalised service, fostering engagement, and helping patrons discover hidden gems within the library's vast collection.

Moreover, chatbots and virtual assistants have revolutionised patron interactions. AI-driven chatbots can answer routine inquiries, guide users in using digital resources, and provide assistance around the clock. This not only enhances user satisfaction but also enables librarians to dedicate more time to assisting with research and complex information needs.

The integration of AI in libraries also extends to data analytics. AI tools can mine vast amounts of data to identify trends, usage patterns, and areas for improvement. This data-driven decision-making empowers librarians to allocate resources more effectively, curate collections based on user demand, and improve services.

In conclusion, AI is reshaping libraries in fundamental ways, offering librarians powerful tools to enhance user experiences and streamline library operations. By embracing artificial intelligence, libraries are not just preserving their legacy, but they are also ensuring their continued relevance in an increasingly digital and data-centric world. Librarians, as the gatekeepers of knowledge, play a pivotal role in harnessing the potential of AI to create the libraries of the future.

Ruth Baker-Gardner