

Libraries in the Wake of the Fourth Industrial Revolution: A Portrait of Roles, Challenges, and the Prospects

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Abstract

In the world today, especially in academia, the Fourth Industrial Revolution has been a matter of discussions. Emerging smart technology has been the key component for such a revolution. This chapter describes the changing landscape of libraries at the awakening of the Fourth Industrial Revolution and intensive use of emerging technologies. The chapter highlights the role of libraries as an agent for change, as well as the challenges libraries do face and the prospects for the future. Critically, the chapter focuses on ways libraries can adopt emerging technologies and recommends the ways libraries can act to speed up the adoption of the emerging technologies. Some challenges have also been pointed out together with the ways to overcome them, while ensuring the Fourth Industrial Revolution in progress. Since information is power, and librarians possess both retrospective and current information, librarians have a strong power to influence changes for the new phase of the industrial revolution. Also, the chapter highlights some recommendations to librarians as individuals, non-governmental, and governmental organizations about investing in libraries and preparedness for the fourth phase of the Industrial Revolution. Hence, this chapter is an important input into the developmental policies, developmental planning, and a working tool for knowledge management experts.

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