



INCREASING USE OF AUDIOBOOKS AND ITS EFFECT ON TRADITIONAL LIBRARIES

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ABSTRACT:

In recent years, popularity of audiobooks has vastly increased because of advancement in technology and changing user's preferences. This paper explores the rising trend of audiobook uses and its impact on traditional libraries. This study examines the factors contributing to the increased use of audiobooks, such as convenience, mobility, and the growing appreciation for multitasking in today's fast-paced society. While audiobooks are becoming more and more popular, this creates both opportunities and problems for innovation and collaboration in traditional library structures.



KEY WORDS: Audiobooks, e-book, digital literature, Libraries.

INTRODUCTION:

Due to their many advantages for education, cultural enrichment, and both individual and group well-being, books and reading play a vital role in society. Books are vital resources for knowledge acquisition. They act as informational warehouses, holding knowledge on anything from science and history to philosophy and literature. Furthermore, reading is a vital component of education since it promotes intellectual growth, analytical abilities, and critical thinking. Another essential ability that is directly related to literacy is reading. As a result, reading and books are essential to society since they have an impact on culture, education, personal growth, and the general wellbeing of people. A society that is better informed, enlightened, and connected can result from promoting a reading culture.

Recent technological advancements and changes in consumer behavior have had a significant impact on the reading habits of readers. In recent time the way we read literature is changing. By the help of digital devices we read literature in the format of e-books and audiobooks. The reading landscape has changed as a result of the popularity of e-books and digital content. With their portability and convenience, e-readers, tablets, and smartphones have become popular devices for accessing digital books. Online platforms such as Kindle, Audible, and other e-book and audiobook services have changed the way readers discover, purchase, and consume content. According to Spjeldnæs, K., & Karlsen, F. (2022) advantages like availability, weight and the possibility of personal customization make digital literature a better option for daily reading than paper.

AUDIOBOOK PUBLICATION:

Dimitrije Curcic (2023) in his study stated that Book publishing has gone through some major innovations over the last decade. It was predicted that e-books will revolutionize the book publishing

industry when they first became popular in the early 2000s. Meanwhile, audiobooks made their debut and are currently outpacing the e-book industry. Dimitrije Curcic (2023) also found that Audiobooks are the fastest-growing format in the publishing industry and also will be the driving force behind the growth of book publishing in next ten years. According to Shannon Maughan (2022) over the past 25 years, developments in digital technology have driven an unparalleled spike in the demand for and sales of audiobooks, revolutionising the audio category in almost every aspect, including production, packaging, and distribution. Data from the Audio Publishers Association shows that this publishing sector has had double-digit sales increase for nine years running. Additionally, according to the Association of American Publishers, audio sales increased by 157% between 2015 and 2020.

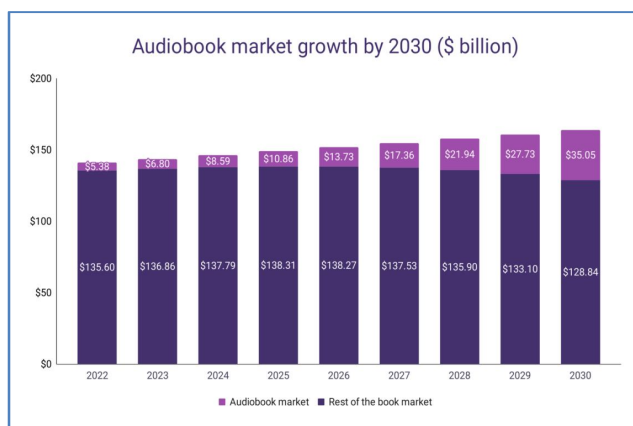


Fig.1 Dimitrije Curcic (2023), Audiobook Statistics.

Audiobook Platforms:

The publishing and entertainment sectors have witnessed a notable trend with the emergence of audiobook platforms, primarily due to developments in technology, shifting customer preferences, and enhanced accessibility. Here are key factors contributing to the growth of audiobook platforms:

1. Digital Technology and Accessibility:

- The increasing accessibility of digital content, including audiobooks, has been facilitated by the widespread use of smartphones, tablets, and other digital devices.
- Digital technology is used by audiobook services to give users a portable and easy way to listen to books while on the go.

2. Mobile/Smartphones Applications:

- Due to the widespread usage of smartphones and the creation of user-friendly mobile apps Users may now find, buy, and listen to audiobooks from almost anywhere
- Mobile applications offer various features like offline listening, playback speeds bookmark facility, and enhancing the overall experience.

3. Proliferation of Streaming Services:

- Audiobook streaming services have becoming more and more popular, much like streaming music and movie platforms.
- Through subscription-based services like Kuku FM, Audible, and Storytel, consumers can access a large collection of audiobooks.

4. Narration and Production:

- Now a day's many famous writers/authors, professionals and actors lend their voices to audiobooks.
- Advancement in sound effect, background music and enhanced production quality gives rich listening experience.

5. Multitasking and Convenience:

- Audiobooks offer a convenient way for people with hectic schedules to read while driving, working out, or doing housework.
- Audiobooks helps user to make productive use of their own time.

6. Marketing and Promotions:

- To attract and retain users Audiobook platform companies always use innovative marketing strategies like free trials, exclusive content, and partnerships with influencers.

7. Global Reach and Language Accessibility:

- Audiobooks Platforms makes their products available in a number of languages, to increase their accessibility to a worldwide audience. And this is convenient to user who would prefer to their own native language.

The popularity of audiobook platforms, which provide a versatile and interesting substitute for conventional reading techniques, demonstrates a change in how people consume literature. Audiobook platforms will probably become more and more important in the literary world as technology advances.

Impact of audio books on traditional libraries:

The positive and challenging type of impact of Audiobooks is shown on our traditional libraries. The Accessibility, technology, budget, Copyright and Licensing Issues are the key factors which are needs to consider while discussing the impact of audiobooks on libraries.

Positive impact:

1. Accessibility:

Audiobooks gives more accessibility to individual user who has visual impairments or learning disabilities. For this type of user audiobooks provides easy access to enjoy literature.

2. Audience:

The users who don't have time to read traditional book is easily attracted towards Audiobooks. Through audiobooks libraries also reach to users to broader demographic.

3. Integration of new Technology:

Libraries have integrated digital audiobook systems in response to technical advancements. As a result, there has been a greater incorporation of technology into conventional library services.

4. Educational Benefits:

Particularly for the development of literacy, comprehension, and language skills, audiobooks can be very useful teaching resources.

5. Collection Development:

As per the preferences of different users Libraries can expand the variety of materials in their collections by providing print books, e-books, and audiobooks, among other formats.

Challenges:

1. Limitation in Budget:

Purchasing digital rights for audiobooks can be expensive. Libraries might not be able to provide a wide enough collection of audiobooks due to financial limitations.

2. Technological Barriers:

Certain consumers can encounter technological obstacles, such limited internet connectivity or unavailability of appropriate equipment. This may lead to a digital gap in the accessibility of audiobooks.

3. Copyright and Licensing Issues:

Publishers of audiobooks may set limits on how many times a digital copy can be borrowed or increase the cost of licencing. Libraries must resolve these problems in order to offer popular titles on a regular basis.

4. Changing Role of Librarians:

Librarians might have to adjust to new forms and technology. This entails helping customers with digital platforms, resolving technological problems, and educating them about audiobook services.

5. Preservation:

Digital media, in contrast to traditional books, have preservation issues. Concerns about the preservation and long-term accessibility of digital audiobook collections need to be addressed by libraries.

CONCLUSION:

As technology develops and reading habits shift, the effect of audiobooks on libraries is probably going to keep changing. To serve the diverse needs of users libraries needs to remain vibrant to navigate the challenges and embrace opportunities presented by audiobooks. In conclusion, librarians cannot ignore the growing trend of the use of eBooks and audiobooks. Librarians can assist users in achieving academic success and maintaining interest in the subject matter by adjusting to this shift and giving them access to digital resources. After the popularity of Podcast peoples are now accepting audiobooks for entertainment and also for getting information. As an Audiobooks is a great option for those who might not have the time or want to sit down and read a typical printed book, young generation giving more preference to digital formats and audiobooks.

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