KNOWLEDGE BASED INFORMATION RESOURCES FROM LIBRARIES TO HIGHER EDUCATION PROFESSIONALS AND INFORMATION MANAGERS

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ABSTRACT

To-day libraries face an era of turbulent change, the sources of which are varied into different needs and wants. The libraries and information centers are no longer a physical location but instead a conduit for information. With some effort, librarians learnt to cope with the problems that flowed along a reasonable predictable course. The greater challenge by far, is to cope with high speed change subject to frequent alternations in directions, an accelerated pace is the only thing that will keep from being overrun by everyone else on the move. Unless librarians learn to manage dramatic change it will not be possible to survive in today’s conceptual business. The Main Functions of a library are to identify, collect, organize and thus make information accessible to library users. In the past, libraries collected printed materials and organized them to meet user’s needs. The quality of a library was therefore measured mainly by its holdings. Today, the development in computing and telecommunications has made it possible for the library staff to provide their users with a wide range of text, image and sound resources from around the world. Libraries are changing from offering users a limited warehouse of information to a global gateway, leading to infinite net-distributed information resources. We have recognized that the networks will bring about fundamental changes in the ways that people generate, distribute and use information. They will also impact heavily on the ways of the library staff identifying and organizing information resources and offering information to the users. In this case, all the library staff should have some knowledge about the networked information systems, existing networks and know how to integrate these to their jobs. It is hence absolutely necessary that the skills and professional ethics of the library personnel be continuously updated. There has to be a mechanism by which training can be given to the LIS Professionals regularly on the emerging trends.

Key words: Knowledge Based Information Resources, Information Managers.
1. PRESENT SCENARIO

Today the role of Librarian is retrieving the information and providing the same for right person at the right time and the same has not changed through the decades. But over the decades only this aim has been pursued but the technique of retrieving information and providing the same that was used have changed. Outstanding characteristics of the information managers and various professionals who are in connect with higher education through the centuries have been willingly accept to receive the information and an intellectual curiosity arises in their own way. This came in the form of “Why?” “What?” and “How?” etc., have all served to stimulate an effort to find the required answer to many types of quarries and doubts.

2. PROFESSIONAL IMPLICATIONS

One of the functions of any professional education is to impart the attitudes and values of the profession to its users and providers. The professional in the higher education should provide adequate knowledge and skills, which are required in the practice of concerned profession from time to time. The present system of library education does not seem to provide information professionals with the necessary intellectual abilities and interpersonal skills. Looking at the prevailing system, attempts are being made by some schools to include modern methods of information technology, managerial skills and so on in the curricula. Hence information professionals could ensure that the information needs of the users are met and valued added and not merely menu-selected services provided.

2.1. Get Start to Prepare – To meet changed work environment

There are some possible ways and means to get start and go. Such a preparation will facilitate a quick absorption in the changed work environment.

- Move out of the library and find out how information is used and what types of information are needed.
- Keep track of new developments in information technology and the newer media of communication observe newly emerging information needs and target the appropriate information to users.
- Practice co-operative problem – solving as a precursor to the work place environment.
- Have attitudinal flexibility to nurture interpersonal relationships to accept the culture and ethics of the new environment.
- Create the Ability to take along with pressure of competition will be essential ingredients to succeed in the present dynamic work environment.
- Affix any tendency to stay at the surface without having insight to probe deep into intricacies would lead to formation of an idea of lack of maturity in the profession.
- Development of an executive skill is an arduous but achievable task spread over a period of time that requires a constant vigilance against dynamics of change, which has not become more turbulent.
3. VIEW FROM THE USER POINT
Another characteristics associated are the ability to access the views of the users. Although the skill and ingenuity were outstanding, the culture will last only a relatively short time. The reasons, which may account for the failure to maintain the stigma are many, but most important was the lack of utilization of modern technologies. The library services are to be organized and properly operated, taking advantage of the technological developments. Until recently it was enough to acquire the ability to manage complex quarries, and to provide information. But in to-days environment it is essential for library professional to know about recent trends in Information Technology. Hence it is necessary to incorporate changes in Library and Information science curricula.

4. TRADITIONAL VS MODERN - KNOWLEDGE BASED LIBRARIES

4.1. Traditional Outlook
The traditional libraries as we know are basically and fully dependent on human operation from acquisition to dissemination. Current and up-to-date information were not up-to-date because it looks lot of time for the information to be published and put into a book form. All the library services like Inter library loan, CAS, SDI, literature search were not up-to-date. Libraries were considered powerful instrument of democracy and non-formal education. Thus, father of library science in India, Dr. S. R. Ranganathan, and Propounded 5 laws of library science in order to promote the quality of library services. But, Dr. S.R. Ranganathan’s laws worked out not so well and traditional libraries lacked in many works and services. Gradually the fast growing Information technology touched and landed in library. This overcomes all the drawbacks in the traditional libraries and evolved into modern IT based libraries. The modern age of telecommunication has changed the traditional library services to a diversified nature. This fulfills the social role and carries out its social obligations, in tone with the progress of civilization; libraries have introduced many modern technologies to serve its users. The advancement in technology has helped traditional library to increase the quality of library services, which can satisfy all demands of present day. By this technological advancement library services has entered a new era of service called as ‘Information service’.

4.2. Modern Outlook
Today’s libraries are in transition from manual to electronic based information systems. The computer has greatly affected libraries and promises to increase the effect. Information has been stored in the libraries over centuries for the use of interested patrons but the method of obtaining information has changed during the last 500 years from hand written to printing material to microforms and now to on line services. This spectacular development has occurred with advances in the application of computer and telecommunication technology in libraries or in information centres. This has been promoted and accepted by all higher education professionals and information managers because, the following advantages are support their activities.
5. MODERNISED INFORMATION SERVICES AND ITS ADVANTAGES

- Nearly 75% of libraries have replaced card catalogue by online catalogue. The fully integrated online system has improved the operation of acquisition, cataloguing circulation, etc.
- The full text electronic databases have brought revolution in the library for researchers and scholars. Networks are helping the users to find needed information material as much as faster. This also helps to get comprehensive and exhaustive information.
- The fax machine, e-mail have become an important tool for librarians for their correspondence. It is faster and cheaper as compared to the postal services especially for document delivery. This technology helps resource sharing among various libraries and to higher education professionals and information managers within a few seconds.
- The “online search usually produces more current information than use of the printed, equivalent as databases are updated regularly, some even daily”; online searching is certainly on the increase trend.
- Advancement of technology has not restricted library service to books only. But to audio-video material, computers print out copies, etc.
- Traditional library providing information now is called as information centre. Access to precise and reliable information on scientific, technological, commercial and managerial at the right time, to the right person in a form most conveniently usable by him (print out from online can help to minimise wastage of resources).
- Computer is mainly used in libraries and information centres for collecting informations from various sources and to organise it to till disseminating it. And also useful to indexing, translation etc through online search. These are certainly improving the qualities of library service.
- Informations available in other countries are also got through satellites and scanned the same in no loss of time. As vast amount of literature in the world is covered through this technology sake.
- It is expected that these informations provided to the world would be appropriate and pinpointed. As well as duplication of work is avoided in all the system this accesses related informations.

6. MODERNISATION OF LIBRARY SERVICES – ISSUES AND REMEDIES

There is no much problem with regard to the implementation of technology for rendering various knowledge based library services. In spite, if any issue arises, it would be the problem of training and a customizing the librarian to the new change, financial problem and nothing more. If this is the issue then, the remedies and solution for those are easily adaptable and is sure to give better results. There is no way that we can stay away from introducing technology in our libraries and libraries can’t avoid their joining in this information age. Therefore, librarians, educators and administrators should prepare to join in the group for the benefit of all the users. We must educate and create awareness to our administrators, professionals and librarians in this regard. We all know that technology is expensive, but in a long run its rewards are greater. Technology becomes inexpensive because both the traditional and modern roles of libraries are continues and adds new one in the existing infrastructure. Without technology the future of libraries would be very difficult and very bleak.
Librarians in the developed countries have another obligation and responsibility to support the efforts of all librarians in the developing nations to introduce technology into their libraries. They must be given enough training, equipment’s and financial help to make it a true international development of library and information science with technology. Also the librarians must develop the attitude to attend regional, state, national, international conference and refresher, courses which are nowadays basically based on technology, and this will help them to update with the developments and implement them in their library. This responsibility would help not only to the libraries and librarians, but research scholars and students also who will take full advantage of this technological revolution by remaining in their countries and getting the much needed material for all of us for our success in this new global environment of co-operation and development. Thus, one cold final that changes in library work has more advantage and fewer problems. Change management in libraries is not a big issue or a problem, which can be easily over come with the help of Information Technology.

7. PROFESSIONAL TRAINING – ESSENTIAL TO FACE CHALLENGES

Some Conceptual Definition for Training:

- Training is a practical education, which involves a process of learning to enhance the level of practical knowledge in one’s mind. It is learning to do or practice.
- Training is the practice of applying methods and techniques to execute plans and programs effectively.
- Training is a process, which the personnel in an organization are deliberately offered, to enable them to absorb some new perspectives to cope with the emerging trends and techniques.

As important aspect of training is that, it entails the deliberate and structured presentation of experience, which may be considered in aiding to change the knowledge, attitude and behavior of a person.

8. NEEDS FOR TRAINING – IN THE IT ERA

The impact of Information Technology (IT) to information professionals has become deeply rooted that, it demands continuous improvement in their professional skills. For example, users now expect that library services should render to them through twenty four hour network access to a growing number of bibliographic and full text databases as well as other electronic materials, and that information in any formats from anywhere in the world should be delivered at a very short period of time. Moreover, library users also expect that the library staffs should offer some kind of workshops to instruct them for effective use of the information resources from the Internet. As the information providers and instructors present needs, many librarians are not well prepared for their new role due to various reasons. They have felt strongly that the need to be acknowledgeable through the networks and resources available on the Internet in order to serve the users. The managers of libraries have also recognized that, it is essential for the library to train their staff so as to develop and deliver successful knowledge based network services.

http://www.iaeme.com/IJLIS.asp
9. METHODS IN TRAINING – SOME SUGGESTIONS TO IMPLEMENT

Most of the Libraries in the developed countries have taken steps to provide training to their staffs in various levels using Information Technology are:

- Attending related technical conferences
- Vender training
- In-house training
- Hiring newly trained professionals from library schools
- Continuing education if a library school is nearby
- Training with IT tools

And one of the significant characteristics involved in the Internet training is hands-on practice. There are a good number of Internet training materials available in the Internet. In India, view of this situation, INSDOC and NISSAT have been encouraging and supporting a variety of short – term courses in the areas of LIS. Equipped with the necessary facilities and manpower, INSDOC, which has manpower organizing HRD Programs since 1964 is ideally placed to train and prepare library, information & documentation professionals for meeting the challenges of the new millennium.

The training programs can be broadly categorized as follows:

- Short-term training courses
- Attachment training programs
- On-site training programs
- Associateship in Information Science (AIS)
- Workshops & Seminars

10. AREAS OF TRAINING – NEED TO BE ADEQUATE FOR DEVELOPMENT

It is very important to identify the areas of training that are to be imported to the LIS professionals within a library. This should be based on the objectives and developments that a taking place in a library. Some of the most important areas that require immediate attention are discussed here.

I. Project Management

The Project management process includes:

- This deals about planning and execution /implementation of the projects that are designed for a library.
- How to plan the computerization process with the available resources?
- Evaluation of the requirements
- Planning new services using IT
- Networking and network-based services
- Availability of electronic information through network based resources
- Implementation of the project in a sustained phase
- Elimination of manual process in a phased manner without affecting the library routine functions
II. Marketing of Information

To satisfy the users and improve their utilization of the library services and resources LIS professionals must be able to market these facilities and services to their uses. Training can be given in the following areas:

- Content management
- Enrolling external membership of library – finding the library profit oriented
- Organisation of Institutions-Industries Interactions
- Bulletin Board Service
- Access to free e-journals
- Inter library loan

III. Database Management Skills

Training has to be given on the importance of database management systems and how best to utilize them in servicing to the users. The areas should import information like:

- About Database?
- Database management
- On-line databases; CD-ROM databases
- Bibliographical / Non-Bibliographical Databases

IV. Hardware and Software Literacy

This is a Grey area in which most of the LIS Professionals lack adequate knowledge and proper training has to be given in the following areas:

- Hardware / Software selection; PC maintenance and Troubleshooting
- Operating system selection / Network OS selection
- Selection of software and Packages for library; Network Topology

V. E-Publishing

E - Publishing is the process of publishing information to be viewed electronically or from online. Such information is delivered via E-books, E-journals, and CD-ROM or over the WWW.

The librarians should be trained in locating and downloading.

E-books
- Subject books
- General books

E- journals
- Free journals
- Fee base journals
- Subject journals

General magazines
E- newspapers
E-documents and E-articles
Scanning of information

VI. Web Technology
Internet is perhaps the single big information resource even available to an ordinary layman today. Everyday score of information are added to the net using various tools and techniques. Hence basic ideas must be imported to the LIS professionals on the following:

- Web design
- HTML, URL and WWW
- Uploading and downloading of information
- Search engines & on-line search
- Web OPAC
- Indexing & Directories
- On-line acquisition
- Internet resources

VII. Modernizing the Libraries
Librarians must be trained adequately on how to plan, procure process, implement and handle the digital / electronic library and serve it users through:

- E-library
- Digital resources and electronic equipment’s

VIII. Networking
Network information system is the future of information storage, dissemination and retrieval. Hence, librarians must have adequate knowledge in the areas such as:

- LAN, MAN and WAN
- Internet and Intranet
- Resource sharing
- Network co-operation of different libraries.

IX. Knowledge Management
Knowledge management is a process that continuously and systematically transfers knowledge from individuals and teams, who generate them from the brain to the organization for the benefit of the entire participants. The central theme of KM is to lineage and reuses knowledge resources that already exist in the organization so that; the people will seek out best practices rather than reinvent the wheel.

The librarians and other library & information professionals must be trained on:

- Knowledge management
- Tools and Techniques of KM
- Content analysis and management

X. Intellectual Property Rights
Intellectual property right is universally acknowledged that can be sought, secured, protected and transacted like any other property. It includes patents, trademarks,
copyrights and design rights. IPR is the most important area to the LIS professionals and they must be trained properly on:

- Intellectual Property Right
- Censorship
- Authorship
- Patent
- Trademark
- Copyright
- Cyber law
- How to protect all these in a library?

10.1. Training Resource Persons
Selection of resource persons for the training is as important as the training itself. This has to be done in accordance with the objectives and purpose of the training programmes. Hence, professionals who are experts in the concerned fields such as IT, KM, Library practices & procedures etc, have to be identified and invited for imparting the training programmes to the LIS professionals.

10.2. Funds for Conducting Training Programmes
The most important requirement for the programme is finance, which the ministry of education has to support by providing budgetary allocation of funds for training and continuing education. The UGC, AICTE and the governing body of all the universities and institutions have to allocate reasonable funds for the training programmes. INFLIBNET, ILA and IASLIC are organizing these training courses through different agencies. (Like Regional level, State level or district level library association). The programme should be organized on a date / place that is convenient to all the participants.

10.3. Changing Role of Librarians in Changing Environment
Today the word “Library “itself is being replaced by the term “Information Center” and the word “Librarian” has been replaced by different terms. It is interesting to note that all these terms have been associated with librarians to “Information”. This stress that in the years to come, documents or published volumes will give way to the information available in it.

- Library & information science Professional
- Information Manager
- Information Educator
- Information Researcher
- Information Analyst
- Information Distributor
- Information Scientist

The librarian of the current century is defined as a “Social informer”, charged with functions of acquisition to dissemination of information to all its possible users. When compared to traditional librarian, the present day librarian has changed a lot. These changes in libraries are because of the introduction of technology and this is creating
many problems and challenges too. This is being called as the ‘Information Age’, ‘Electronic Age’, and even ‘modern Era’ of libraries.

11. CONCLUSION

New Technology has led to a dramatic increase in the use of electronic information and created an environment where quick response to changing circumstances is often more advantageous than careful planning. The conventional medium is to be replaced in the existing system by making use of different technologies depending upon the availability and circumstances. This will greatly enable the students to the different technologies and methods of effective utilization of the same. It is time to shift gears and add new electronic dimension to the library’s traditional mode of operation in order to increase access to library collections and the means of making them and other electronic information resources available to users. One must keep pace with the changes in the profession to fulfill the needs of users, otherwise libraries will loose their support base and their role as the principal providers of information services will became worthless. In the words of Dr. Wayne smith, “the future of libraries is very bright if they properly use technology”. One’s commitment to the technology is a must, “Technology has a strong appeal, but it cannot be adapted willy-nilly only. Much thought has to go into decisions about how technological changes can be implemented and how the promise of technology can be fulfilled. The information technology has helped to enlarge the role, capabilities and importance of libraries. Libraries are essential and a critical link between faculty and students. Therefore, if we neglect the possible and feasible application of modern technology to library and information work then we would soon endanger the usefulness, the reputation and the recognition of libraries and information centres.

REFERENCES

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