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KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT IN LIBRARY AND INFORMATION CENTRE: A NEW CHALLENGE TO THE LIBRARY PROFESSIONALS IN THE TECHNO-ENVIRONMENT

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ABSTRACT

Development of Information Technology (IT) and its applications in Library and Information Centre has made the concept of document management has been changed to information management and again the entire scenario of information management has started its change to Knowledge Management (KM). This paper mainly focuses on the concept of Knowledge Management and the role of library and information professionals in managing the knowledge and information in the digital environment. It also highlights the importance of library and information professionals in the organizations such as knowledge creation, acquisition, preservation and sharing knowledge and information. This paper also describes the development and use of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) in the library and information centers.

Keywords: Knowledge Management; ICT; Information Management; Digital Library

INTRODUCTION

The conventional functions of libraries are to collect, process, disseminate, store and retain information to provide better services to the end users. In the digital environment, the role of libraries is changing to provide the competitive advantage for its users. The success of library and information centre depends upon their ability to utilize information knowledge of its staff to the user community. The ICT has played a significant role in this dynamics which has not only made access across the globe easier, but has facilitated integration of thought processes, working methods and places, team learning and in enhancing organizational transparency. With the development of IT and its applications in libraries, the concept of document management has changed to information management and again, the entire scenario of information management has started its change to knowledge management.

KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

Knowledge is classified into three types.

Explicit knowledge

It is formal and easy to communicate to others. It is the knowledge of rationality. This type includes policies, rules, specifications and formulae. It is also known as declarative knowledge.
Knowledge

It is a complex form of knowledge. It has two dimensions namely technical and cognitive. Personal knowledge, which is in human mind and difficult to formalize and also difficult to communicate.

Cultural knowledge

The cultural knowledge as knowledge which includes assumptions and beliefs and is also useful to form the framework among organizational members, recognize the new information and evaluate alternative interpretations and actions.

Knowledge management is generally understood to mean the sharing of knowledge inside outside of an organization. Knowledge sharing has been greatly facilitated by modern computer technology. There is no agreed definition of Knowledge Management, even among practitioners. The term is used loosely to refer to a broad collection of organizational practices and approaches related to generating, capturing, and disseminating know-how and other content relevant to the organization’s business. Knowledge is no just an explicit tangible “thing”, like information, but information combined with experience, context, interpretation and reflection. Knowledge involves the full person, integrating the elements of both thinking and feeling. Knowledge management is the process of creating, capturing and using knowledge to enhance organizational performance. It is most frequently associated with two types of activities.

- Process of transforming information and intellectual assets into enduring values
- A system or framework for managing the organizational processes that create, store and distribute knowledge as defined by its collective data. exploitation of an organization
- Generating new knowledge
- Accessing knowledge from external sources
- Representing knowledge in documents, databases and so on
- Embedding knowledge in processes, products or services
- Transferring existing knowledge
- Using accessible knowledge indecision making
- Facilitating knowledge through culture and incentives
- Measuring the value of knowledge assets and the impact of knowledge management.

Knowledge management in library and information centers

The exponential growth in human knowledge in a variety of formats, libraries need to develop their resources, access and sharing strategies from printed to electronic and digital resources. Restricted by limited funding, technology, staff and space, libraries must carefully analyze the needs of their users and seek to develop cooperative acquisition plans to meet the needs of users.

Libraries should be developed and maintained an integrated online public access catalogue (OPAC) with both internal and external resources as well as printed and other formats of knowledge. Useful websites and knowledge sources should be regularly searched and selected
from the internet and included in OPACs. A system for the reviewing and updating of these resources should be performed. Going beyond explicit knowledge, libraries should also develop to capture all that tacit knowledge that is of importance to their users, their organizations, and their internal operations of libraries.

The role of KM in Libraries will become more and more important along with the development of knowledge economy. It is a new management mode. The following superiority and characteristics are incomparable with conventional management.

1. Information technology is a tool for Knowledge Management
2. Human resource management in Knowledge Management
3. User Services in Knowledge Management

INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY: A TOOL FOR KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

To facilitate the implementation of knowledge management, a well-defined and operational knowledge management system should be in place. Latest information technology should be used in the libraries. In this regard, the library director/librarian should consider himself as the chief knowledge officer of the entire organization and should work together with the chief information officer, heads of the planning department, the computer and information technology center, the human resource management department, the finance department etc., to design and develop such a system. Such knowledge management system should be built on the existing computer and information technology infrastructure including upgraded intranet, extranet, internet and available software programs to facilitate the capture, analysis, organization, storage and sharing of internal and external information resources for effective knowledge exchange among users, resource persons (faculty, researchers, subject experts etc.), publishers, government agencies, business and industries and other organizations via multiple channels.

Human resource management in Knowledge Management

The most important resource in the knowledge economy system is the talents who generate knowledge. The talent competition has become the focus of market competition in the knowledge
In the knowledge economy era, the libraries will attach importance to vocational
ing and lifelong education of library staff to raise their scientific knowledge level and ability of
quiring and innovative knowledge. They also will respect the human value, guide and bring into
智慧 potentialities of library staffs. It is an important way for raising work efficiency of
library staff. An all round improvement of library staff’s quality and positioning of the human
will become important objectives of knowledge management in Library and Information
ners. The library staff members of Universities and research committees should be inventoried,
exed regularly and be made searchable and accessible through electronic databases created and
ained by libraries. The expertise should be appreciated with appropriate rewards and
atives. As a learning organization, libraries should allocate annual funding to provide
uing education and staff training to all staff members.

Knowledge must be renewed and expanded to prevent it from becoming stagnant.
aries should also encourage the transfer of knowledge and experience from experienced staff to
ow staff members. A mentoring system should be in place to help new comers to learn from
perienced library staff. Informal seminars, discussion sessions for staff can interact and exchange
ons learned “best practices” and other experiences should be scheduled at regular intervals
at convenient times sit and chat rooms can be created through intranet libraries should be
ending to favorable working conditions and environment, which will contribute to better staff
ation.

services in Knowledge Management

The utmost goal of knowledge management is to provide users with a variety of quality
ices in order to improve the communication, use and creation of knowledge. Information about
user can be obtained by analyzing the records of user registration, surveys, circulation and
ibrary loan, frequently asked reference questions and the use of e-journals and digital
ources etc., User satisfaction and needs should be collected through periodical user’s surveys.
findings should be used for the planning and redesign of the existing library services. Some of
anual services of the library such as “new publication alert” and “dissemination of
formation” should be done automatically by employing the “push technology” with great
cency and convenience. Each library user can also set up his virtual “my library/portal” for new
ation/resources provided by the library.

Due to impact of globalization, economic competition and revolution of ICT, the libraries
undergoing tremendous change its environment. ICT tools and techniques, knowledge
agement systems, internet, web resources, digital libraries have made a significant change in
isting library systems and services. It is a major challenge for the library professionals.
knowledge acquisition is the starting point of knowledge management in Libraries. The application
lars the scope of knowledge acquisition, rises knowledge acquisition, speed and reduces
knowledge acquisition cost. It is impossible to accomplish such important tasks by using man’s
only in the modern society in which the knowledge changes with each passing day.
Data wise technologies developed the following list of technologies for knowledge management:
- Intranet within an organization
- Document management systems
- Information retrieval systems
- Relational and object databases
- Electronic publishing
- Groupware and workflow systems
- Push technologies
- Help desk applications
- Brain storming applications
- Data warehousing and data mining

CONCLUSION

Knowledge Management is an emerging field, much touted or hyped since late 1990s. Due to the complicated nature of knowledge and its management, it is often difficult to estimate and demonstrate the value of the Knowledge Management. In the business world, knowledge management has been regarded as strategically important for organizations to gain a competitive advantage over their competitors, to add value to their products, to win greater customer satisfaction and loyalty, and to win greater market share and customer satisfaction. In the library world, there is a lesson to be learned from the business world. For any library to succeed in implementing knowledge management will require a strong leadership and vision from the top administration. Information Technology and systems can provide effective support in implementing knowledge management. Libraries should work together with Information Technology Professionals and others to develop appropriate knowledge management systems. Libraries, with limited budget and human resources, should utilize the current management structure and technology to implement KM, either bottom-up or top-down. With an effort, KM will help to increase libraries operational efficiency and better serve the ever increasing needs of our clientele.

REFERENCES