

Concepts of Knowledge Management in Library & Information Services at Central Forest Library: A Case study.

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Abstract. This paper presents a Study on Library and Information services at Karnataka forest department Central Forest Library. The growing need for knowledge management has influenced every component and operation of a library. Knowledge management requires more effective methods of information handling, speedy transfer of information and linking of information with individuals and their activities. It demands library patron centered development of information systems and services. Development of information communication technology (ICT) and its applications in Library and Information Centers, the concept of document management has changed to information management and the entire scenario of information management has started its change to knowledge management.

Keywords: Knowledge Management, Information communication technology, Library services, Digital Library

1. Introduction

Knowledge management has rapidly moved beyond the stage of a trend and has established itself as a key part of many libraries' knowledge strategy. The concept of knowledge-based economy has generated tremendous interest now-a-days. A library's status is no longer defined by the collection it housed it is extended to include online and seamless access to information resources. The right amount of information at the right time has long since been an important factor for all kinds of libraries

The applications of knowledge management have now spread to the not only academic field but also organizations like government agencies, research and development departments and others. Knowledge embedded in the organization's business processes and the employee's skills provides the firm

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with unique capabilities to deliver customers with a product or service. The management of information has long been regarded as the domain of librarians and libraries. Librarians and information professionals are trained to be experts in information searching, selecting, acquiring, organizing, preserving, repackaging, disseminating and serving. However, professionals in information technology and systems have also regarded information management as their domain because of the recent advances in information technology and systems which drive and underpin information management.

2. Information, data and knowledge

Data are simple, discrete, facts and Figures, such as names, characteristics and amounts. Data might be a table of circulation statistics, but once those statistics are arranged, charted, annotated, or organized in a meaning-full way to describe say trends in library use, you have information.

Information is a bit more complex, for it organizes data for a meaningful purpose. Marc Porat states that "Information is data that has been organized and communicated".

Stehen Abram sees the process for knowledge creation and use as a continuum where data transforms into information, information transforms into knowledge and knowledge drives and undergoing behavior and decision making. Information is visible, independent from action and decision, different in format after processing, physical product, independent from existing environment, easily transferable and duplicate. Knowledge is invisible, closely related to action and decision, different in thought after processing, spiritual product, identified with existing environment, transferable through learning and not duplicate.

Knowledge is an intellectual capital when people out of creation, add value to information. It is generated. Know-ledge is classified and modified. It may be indexing. It is shared. Sharing of knowledge is a core element of knowledge management. IT has provided with number of possible solutions for sharing via e-mail, intranet Local area networking etc., knowledge is much more complex and a working definition of it was given by Davenport and Prusak in their book on knowledge management entitled Working Knowledge. According to Davenport and Prusak, "Knowledge is a fluid mix of framed experience, values, contextual information, and expert insight that provides a framework for evaluating and incorporating new experience and information. It originates and is applied in the minds of knower. In organizations, it often becomes embedded not only in documents and repositories but also in organizational routines, processes, practices and norms." While data and information are in a sense bound objects, knowledge is much more a process, a dynamic, or an ability to understand and to share understanding

3. Librarians and information science

Librarian will continue to serve some of their current roles, what are some of the new or changing roles they will play in an increasingly networked information environment? To build effectively this technological library, this electronic

community librarian must collaborate more with personnel from other departments of the institution. In today's networked information environment, any library action must be part of a wider institutional Infrastructure committed to furthering new educational approaches.

As users are accessing more and more bibliographic and full-text databases as well as utilizing the vast resources of the internet from outside the library, librarians will need to reach out to them to offer the help they need. Librarians can help in the design of technology based information services and share their intimate knowledge of what users want and need. As an example, the users could benefit greatly from database help screens that have been designed with input from library professionals. One reason why library users still seek the face-to-face assistance of librarians is that they understand users' need and the difficulties they can encounter in learning new electronic tools. Skilled librarians now have years of experience in helping patrons utilize electronic media, an experience that equips them well to work closely with information technology personnel on the design of systems interfaces, help screens, computer instructional programs and other software that user institution constituents will use.

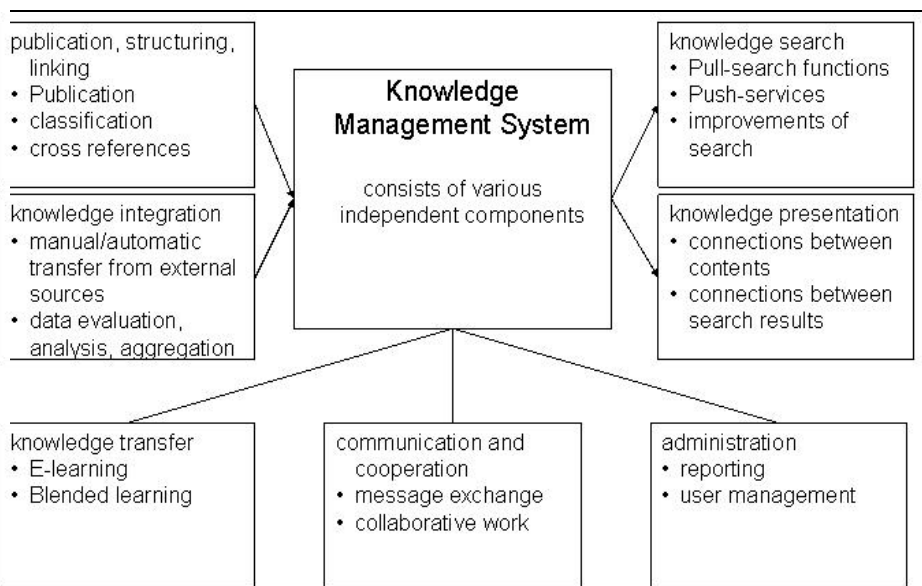
3.1 Knowledge management in library-information centers

As a learning organization, libraries should provide a strong leadership in knowledge management. Libraries should improve their knowledge management in all of the key areas of library services. To cope with the exponential growth in human knowledge, libraries need to develop their resources, access and sharing strategies from printed to electronic and digital resources. Limited by 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. In the current digital and networked knowledge age, the size of information sources on the web is growing exponentially.

3.2 Classification of knowledge management tools

There are numerous attempts at classifying the software used in knowledge management in the literature. In fact, almost every author uses his own classification, since the classification is usually closely linked to the subject treated and the insights desired. In the following, we will adapt the system proposed by Maier (Maier 2002) which classifies the IT tools based on the functions they serve in the knowledge management system. It is based on current research and covers all fields of technology used in practice. Besides, it is free from overlaps between the categories. It offers a higher degree of clarity than categorizations which use only two categories based on dichotomies or strategies such as codification. In this classification, the tools which are

combined to form the knowledge management system are grouped into seven categories (cf. fig. 1). These are the input-oriented functions of publication, structuring and linking as well as integration of knowledge from external sources. The output-oriented functions include search and retrieval as well as presentation of knowledge. These groups are supported by infrastructure functions categorized as communication/cooperation and administration. The seventh group, imparting knowledge, which mainly consists of e-learning and related concepts, will not be examined in detail in this paper, as it mainly belongs to personnel development and not primarily to knowledge management.



Groups of IT tools for knowledge management

3.2 Importance of ICT and Knowledge Management in user services.

Electronic document selection as simply expressed and generally understood is a function which, relates to the choosing of reading material. It must be documents in all forms and reading materials comprising not merely traditional forms, but also serials, government documents, manuscripts, reports, patents, statistical datasets, knowledge bases, software etc. which are the ingredients of a modern library’s holdings. Librarian must select material according to his user requirement. Librarian must possess reasonable knowledge of electronic resources and adequate grinding in the techniques of their evaluation and selection. Today more and more information is being stored digitally and disseminated electronically and all types of materials are available CD ROM and online. The librarian should have knowledge of electronic sources of information, knowledge of users’ needs. While selecting electronic documents the librarian should obviously refer to the users of the library, both actual and

potential, and their needs or demand for reading material, either expressed or anticipated.

Digital library is an online collection of digital objects, of assured quality, that are created or collected and managed according to internationally accepted principles for collection development and made accessible in a coherent and sustainable manner, supported by services necessary to allow users to retrieve and exploit the resources. Digital library forms an integral part of the services of a library, applying new technology to provide access to digital collections. Within a digital library collections are created, managed and made accessible in such a way that they are readily and economically available for use by a defined community or set of communities. Collaborative digital library allows public and research libraries to form a network of digital information in response to the needs of the Information Society. The systems of all partners in a collaborative digital library must be able to interoperate digital library complements digital archives and initiatives for the preservation of information resources.

Now a day's information service activities are going through the digitization in present era because library is one of the important thing of the many sectors also now a days we are followed many software adapting the digital resources then we are giving the rapid moving services in digital libraries in the sense we have getting huge amount of opportunities and facing the many challenges in present criteria like we are knowing the digital resource in ongoing library activities we have to see some of the digital services in library i.e., institution repositories web –OPAC, e-journals, web of content service, e-books, online e-resources. The concept of service quality in the context of a digital library can be defined as the difference between user expectations and perceptions of service performance. The information services in digital libraries involves various activities like information searching by web OPAC and e-resources are also available in digital libraries so its increase the quality services of the library. In the library, quality may be recognized by the customers in terms of digital resource activities. Quality can also be seen as relating to the fitness of a service or product to its intended purpose or use, subject to the expectations of the customer or user. The information service Quality becomes a big issue when digital libraries try to expand their scope and improve their service. Quality, therefore, must be in conformity with the customer's requirements or needs.

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. In recent years, many of the newly developed information technology for databases and information/document management can be utilized in knowledge management such as data warehousing, data mining, text mining etc.

Library and information centers should be developed / modified based on the perfect environment for new media applications. Due to impact of globalization, economic competition and revolution of ICT, the libraries are undergoing tremendous change in its environment. ICT tools and techniques, knowledge management systems, internet, web resources, digital libraries have made a significant change in the existing 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 of IT enlarges the scope of knowledge acquisition, raises knowledge acquisition, speed and reduces knowledge acquisition cost. It is impossible to accomplish such important tasks by using man's brain only in the modern society in which the knowledge changes with each passing day.

As a learning organization, libraries should allocate annual funding to provide continuing education and staff training to all staff members. Knowledge must be renewed and expanded to prevent it from becoming stagnant. Libraries should also encourage the transfer of knowledge and experience from experienced staff to new staff members. A mentoring system should be in place to help new comers to learn from experienced library staff. Informal seminars, discussion sessions for staff can interact and exchange "lessons learned" "best practices" and other experiences at convenient time. The libraries should be attending to favorable working conditions and environment, which will contribute to better staff retention. The utmost goal of knowledge management is to provide users with a variety of quality services in order to improve the communication, use and creation of knowledge. Information about each user can be obtained by analyzing the records of user registration, surveys, circulation and inter library loan, frequently asked reference questions and the use of e- journals and digital resources etc. User satisfaction and needs should be collected through periodical user's surveys. The findings should be used for the planning and redesign of the existing library services. Some of the manual services of the library such as "new publication alert" and "dissemination of information". Should be done automatically by employing the "push technology" with great efficiency and convenience. Each library user can also set up his virtual "my library/portal" for new information/resources provided by the library

4. Central Forest Library Information its users.

The Central Forest Library was established on 24.4.1984. It is located in the ground floor of Aranya Bhavan, 18th cross, Malleswaram, Bengaluru. It has collection of Forestry and allied concepts, and is one of the best in the State for Books and Journals in the Fields of Research. The library houses a collection of

books, bound volumes of periodicals, Rare books, technical reports, Working Plans, Reports, Lecture notes, Videotapes, CD ROMs and Manuals, etc.

The library also subscribes to Several Indian and Foreign Periodicals to provide the latest information to its users.

The library caters to the needs of its Officers and Officials, Scholars and Environmentalists, Schools and Colleges Students, Civil Service Examinations, External Members and Visitors.

5. Conclusion

There are a few basic changes that pose challenges to modern libraries towards acquiring and managing larger and larger bodies of knowledge; they are: globalization, decentralization, customization and acceleration. Modern libraries are dependent on technology, which is highly diversified in their product and services they offer. These factors make decision making extremely difficult. These problems can be overcome with the effective utilization of traditional resources (manpower, materials and money) as well as information and knowledge resources. That is where the role of knowledge managers comes into play. Knowledge management is a buzzword turned business phenomenon, 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. , knowledge management will help to increase libraries operational efficiency and later to the ever increasing needs of our Users.

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