

Research Papers



**KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT IN E-ENVIORNMENT
WRESTLE FOR LIS PROFESSIONALS**

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Abstract

Knowledge is power-Knowledge Management (KM) helps us to share, learn and regenerate the new Knowledge. The economical IT potential infrastructure for Knowledge exchange has opened up important Knowledge Management opportunity. The paper speaks about Knowledge management, its process, concept and importance in KM era. Various modules of Knowledge management are discussed. Human resource management (HRM) and its application in Library and Information centers are noted.

Information technology its impact on library and IT as a tool for knowledge management is analyzed. An overview on emerging roles and challenges of Library and information professionals, barrier & requisites for successful implication of Knowledge Management are also highlighted.

Key Words: Knowledge management, Digital Era, Impact of ICT.....

INTRODUCTION:

Librarians had till recently been the “back room” staff- invisible to clients, unknown to top management, irrelevant to business development / marketing groups & insignificant to projects/ business groups in typical corporate organization. Categorized as 'support staff' by personnel departments, the librarians were underused, undervalued & of course, underpaid. Not any longer: The emerging business environments coupled with the explosive technological capabilities of the information era have brought the library profession to an increasingly visible & a more team oriented platform in progressive corporate organization.

Knowledge management is now emerging

trend of leading organization with transformation from manufacturing- oriented economy to service-oriented economy, the role of information & knowledge has become more prominent for all organizations. A knowledge resource is no longer just a factor of corporate status or image-It is now an issue for survival itself. What does this mean to library and information service professionals? Whether librarians not organizing & providing access to knowledge earlier?

Is it a shift from the data-oriented approach? Now it is Knowledge management, discipline initiating the metamorphosis in the librarians role in corporate organizations, of knowledge-based companies call for an integration of librarian's role with business strategies?

Library and Information professionals need to be proactive team player in the emerging area of Knowledge management through various perspectives

1) Librarians should view this emerging phenomenon through focused attention on the process of Knowledge management.

2) Librarians should keep an eye on how other interactive communities perceive Knowledge management.

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3) Librarians should stimulate thinking about the role of library and information service professionals in Knowledge management.

4) Librarian should visualize the role of library management knowledge.

Knowledge management needs to be taken seriously as an issue for Library and Information professionals because it is perceived to offer a substantial enhancement to their role. The leading organizations today are getting aware of the value of knowledge in various forms. Information professionals can play an important role in Knowledge management that will definitely enhance the professional image and their role.

WHAT IS KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT?

Knowledge is the business asset of any progressive organizations that get ahead. The implementation of knowledge management helps the information flow in the organization and in implementing organization-learning practices. Knowledge management is not just managing or organizing books or journals, searching the Internet for users or arranging for the circulation of materials. Each of these can of course, be an isolated part of knowledge management.

Knowledge Management is enhancing the use of organizational knowledge through information management and organizational learning. The purpose is to deliver direct value to the business. The knowledge is embedded in the processes and experiences, skills, wisdom and capabilities of people. Knowledge management rests on two foundations, i.e., utilizing the organizations information and application of people's competencies, skills, talents, thoughts, ideas, imaginations, etc.,

Knowledge Management aims to draw out the tacit knowledge people have, what they carry around with them, what they observe and learn from experience, rather than what is usually explicitly stated. Managing knowledge goes much further than capturing data and manipulating it to obtain information. The aim of knowledge management is for business to become more competitive through the capacities of their people.

DEFINITION:

According to Kalseth "Knowledge Management is about putting information and people's competence to work together."

According to Murry, "Knowledge Management transferred into capabilities for effective action."

KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT PROCESS, CONCEPT AND IMPORTANCE:

The term "Knowledge Management" has been borrowed from the corporate world which was used as a strategy to seek as well as capture the knowledge residing in people's heads and consciousness to help the business remain on the progressive path standing in a keen competitive environment. The main target of application of Knowledge Management in profit-seeking organizations is to gain competitive advantage and to increase turnover to make a profit by enhancing and improving operations systems.

The strategically perspective, today's practice in KM still has some demerits. The reasons for this are manifold. Firstly the existing knowledge is captured and capitalized only to a low degree because knowledge is messy in character. Secondly, time factor- many employees are willing to document and use existing knowledge but pressure of work in enterprise should be allowed to participate in management but not in real practice. As a result, the uncultured knowledge can't be utilized for Knowledge Management purposes.

"Knowledge Management is a conscious strategy of getting the right knowledge to the right people at the right time and helping people to share and put information into action in ways that strive to improve organization performance. "Knowledge Management is nothing but cupping knowledge". Knowledge Management is used in LIC's (library and information centers) for communicating knowledge between levels of management and who are directly involved to work processes as well as in service sectors.

According to Davenport Knowledge Management process is about acquisition, creation packaging and applications or reuse of knowledge. Whereas according to Probst it consists of identifications acquisition, developing, sharing and distributing, using and preservation of knowledge. The Knowledge Management process basically consists of four steps. These steps include all the terms and terminology described below:

→ Tacit Knowledge: includes the individual employee's expertise, memories, values and beliefs, view points and values.

→ Explicit Knowledge: is the process of communication from one place to another in a systematic way through documents and is more formal and codified.

→ Corporate memory: is the connection of know-

how of an organization. This know-how relates to problems –solving, project experiences, and human resources management.

→Intellectual assets/ knowledge assets/capital: similar terms, which comprises knowledge assets regarding products, technologies, and market that a business owns.

→Information economics: a study of the clear value of information to an organization.

→Data mining: is the exploration and analysis of automatic and semiautomatic means of large quantities of data in order to discover meaningful patterns and rules.

→Knowledge representation is the process of describing and presenting usable way of knowledge that is known by a person.

→Knowledge mapping is finding existing knowledge in an organization and creating a detailed picture of skills. Maps can be simple directories of names to search online databases of human expertise, research materials and prerecorded information.

→Concept mapping: is the visual summary of ideas or topics and these ideas or topics are related to each other.

→Knowledge engineer is a person responsible of acquiring knowledge and developing data and rules for expert systems.

STEPS IN KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT:

1.Knowledge capture: systematic procedure for organizing, structuring knowledge to make it accessible and usable to people.

2.Knowledge organization: An organization that values and uses its own knowledge in reflective ways that lead to profound shifts in directions, values, beliefs and operating assumptions.

3.Knowledge preservation: Once the knowledge is collected, and codified it has to be stored in a suitable form in the organization's knowledge base. The knowledge can be stored in forms such as individual employees, and by computer knowledge base. The advantage with the computer is its unlimited memory and instant access. Intranets and the knowledge bases are the tools, which store the organizational knowledge.[1,2]

MODULES OF KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT:

The Knowledge Management system is primarily based on eight vital modules

(1)**INFORMATION:** The most important bezel acts as an instant access to update and customize information

(2)**EXPERTISE :**Connects in real-time experts in an organizations to members who earn assistance and even the tacit knowledge can made explicit

(3)**COLLABORATION:** Plays an important role to facilitate on-line brain storming sessions and preserves information

(4)**TEAM:** Ensures efficient and systematic management among share skills

(5)**LEARNING:** Abridges skill gap with the help of on-line sessions

(6)**INTELLIGENCE:** Deals mainly with the explicit knowledge among shares skills

(7)**KNOWLEDGE TRANSFER:** In a structure electronic form according to William Saffady relates to (a) Machine-readable data files (b)various on-line databases and CD-Rom information resides in the shape of optical disks, juke boxes or magnetic tape autoloaders and (d) Computerized networked systems

(8) **KNOWLEDGE MAPPING:** Identifies the body of knowledge within the organizations, which is primarily concerned with mute knowledge base and makes a repository of all skills and expertise in the organization.

HUMAN RESOURCES MANGEMENT (HRM) IN LIBRARIES:

Human resources management takes it as its basic starting point to train high quality specialized talents and to revitalize the library undertaking. In practice, we should pay full attention to diversity and variation of library staff's requirements, strengthened management of different library staff by applying contingency management approach i.e. to some people, rigid management method is applied, rigorous supervision and control imposed, and quality requirements of work according to regulations and procedures are made clear, and to the rest of the people, more flexible management method is applied to let them participate in decision –making and consultation and undertake more jobs so as to bring their management abilities into full play and realize organizational and personal objectives.[3]

APPLICATION OF KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT IN LIBRARY AND INFORMATION CENTRE:

Libraries and information centers (LIC) are best by fractionalized systems and services (e.g., integrated library systems, disparate commercial online databases and CD-ROM products) that "... Create ... problems for knowledge workers... faced with integrating

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information delivery systems in order to do their work". Knowledge Management systems comprising commercial news feeds, numbers of generic, open ended discussion databases and passive document libraries threaten to simply compound our problems. At great cost, companies and organizations build these systems only to become disenchanted when they fail to deliver the productivity gains tout in the literature. They fail because they do not provide information in a work-centered context that magnifies its utility several folds.

Successful KM systems are those that "package knowledge" in the process of doing real work. Packaging knowledge involves the "... filtering, editing and organizing pieces of knowledge...in such a way that it's insightful, relevant and useful" such actionable knowledge however, isn't cheap.

- 1.The topic(or request) itself,
- 2.Key constraints influencing resource selection and use(e.g. urgency, chronological and geographical coverage, purpose),
- 3.Analytical notes on the resources used in the course of the research,
- 4.All exchange between the researcher and his/her client or client group, and
- 5.All supporting and working documentation up to and including the finished products.

End-to-end support for the research process requires an extensible standards-complaint platform; (not a single application) but what Watson and Harty call an "infrastructure". Groupware was the clear choice. Within a groupware infrastructure, the value of case histories as a form of KM is markedly increased through the capability to add integrated access to directory and messaging services, external information resources and services, corporate applications and local file systems. Given the innovative nature of RIM- r, it was essential that librarians be capable of actively participating in the application development process. Accordingly, we chose a mature groupware infrastructure with significant end-user development capability.[4]

CHARACTERISTICS OF KNOWLEDGE IN LIBRARIES:

Human resource management is the core of Knowledge Management in libraries. In the knowledge economy era, the libraries will attach importance to vocational training and lifelong education of library staff to raise their scientific knowledge level and ability of acquiring and

innovating knowledge. An all-round improvement of library staff's quality and positioning of human value will become important objectives of Knowledge Management in libraries. The objectives of Knowledge Management in libraries is to promote knowledge innovation, to promote relationships in and between libraries, between library and user, to strengthen knowledge internetworking and quicken knowledge flow. In the knowledge economy era, libraries will carry out researches on development and application of information resources, construction of virtual libraries, protection of intellectual property rights in the electronic era, etc. thus founding the base for knowledge innovation.[5]

IT A TOOL FOR KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT:

It is impossible to accomplish such important tasks by using man's brains only .In the modern society the knowledge changes with each passing day. It will be possible to link closely knowledge sources and knowledge workers by computer networks, thus constructing knowledge networks in libraries based on realization of single-point information.

Contents of Knowledge Management in libraries: as a completely new method of management, Knowledge Management in libraries leaves much to be desired in its theoretical system. In general, Knowledge Management in libraries should include such aspects as follows:

- Knowledge innovation management: Knowledge innovation management in libraries refers to the management of the production, diffusion and transfer of knowledge as well as the network systems constructed by related institutions and organizations. It includes aspects, namely, theoretical innovation management and organizational innovation management.

- Knowledge dissemination management: Knowledge management is of equal importance as compared to knowledge innovation .knowledge creators do not have much time and energy to look for knowledge users, Though there are a multitude of knowledge users, it is very difficult to acquire knowledge that already exists in the minds of knowledge creators as restricted by various objective and subjective conditions. Therefore, libraries may play the part of knowledge leader diverse media and channels to disseminate new knowledge. In the 21st century, the internet ,with its mass information and extensive contents, will provide people with the main approach to searching knowledge and acquiring information

· Knowledge Application Management: In the 21st century libraries should also attach importance to provision of services for people to acquire knowledge and achieve maximum functions and efficiency of knowledge information. Therefore, knowledge services based on high-speed information networks should be carried out by:

· Setting up virtual libraries or information centers for enterprise, governments, public organizations and scientific research institutions. It is difficult for an enterprise or a social organization to put sufficient manpower, material and financial resources on information gathering, organizing and developing. It is also impossible and unnecessary to spend a large amount of funds on information resources for their own use. Libraries can create virtual libraries or information centers for these organs separately according to their respective information requirements by using abundant information resources on the high-speed information networks.

· Settings up digitized knowledge services, which is actually a development trend of libraries in the 21st century. This presupposes: creating steps for users-oriented information.

· Service systems such as information dissemination, information search and special supply of information; quickening the creation of digitized libraries; studying the methods, means and techniques of information distribution and search with the internet as the base and web techniques as the core.

· 'Digitizing libraries resources'. the electronic libraries or digitized libraries are the technical modes and development trends of libraries in the knowledge economy era. The knowledge services of Libraries in the future will start with creation of databases comprising electronic journals and books in different languages that have discipline features and can operate on high-speed information networks. Great efforts should be made to transform all existing large non-electronic information resources into electronic information and integrate them into electronic libraries.[3,6]

EMERGING ROLE OF LIBRARIANS AND INFORMATION PROFESSIONALS:

Traditionally, library professionals are assigned to take care of direct roles such as catalogue cards, classified tools help to find right books needed. The tools for thesaurus construction and controlled vocabulary are already helping us manage knowledge. Document management such

as content management and accessibility of images play role in knowledge management activities. However with emergence of knowledge management in almost all services organizations, librarians and information professionals have to take on additional participative roles in expert systems, artificial intelligence and knowledge base management system(KBMS) lessons learnt through these technologies are directly applicable to knowledge management. By helping knowledge workers in the performance of cognitive tasks. Decision support systems is like the knowledge management systems. Information professional need to broad base their expertise in the library to include communication, facilitation, training and management skills. They also require a basic understanding of computing and network architecture. All knowledge-based organizations today survive and grow on the strength of their knowledge workers, rather than floor workers or administrative staff. Where are the librarians placed in their segments? Are they being treated as-till recently- just support staff in administrative workers category, or do they too qualify as knowledge workers? The answer depends on who is seen as a knowledge worker? Almost everyone is, because either you are using the knowledge or contributing in gathering knowledge in the organization's business. There is hardly any hierarchy among the knowledge workers. The knowledge work is about the acquisition, creation, packaging or application or reuse of knowledge.

BARRIERS TO IMPLEMENT PROPER KM SYSTEMS:

Knowledge management is in reality a difficult process to implement particularly for an organization whose employees have been conditioned to the idea that knowledge equates power. In such an organizational culture little or not at all sharing of knowledge and information takes place between departments or even among colleagues within the same section. The staff in this organization would tend to hoard information, practice, and hence the "superiority" of their enlightened position, form being taken away from them. It is clear that the employees of different organizations require adjusting in values, culture and behaviors. These adjustments take time-often years and require commitment from the top, clear focus, and persistent application within library units. However, there are some barriers to the implementation of KM in organization cited by O'Dell and Grayson include:

1. Ignorance- not knowing who has the right

information required for the job;
 2.Lack of time to find out and absorb the best practices recommended;
 3.Lack of a relationship between the sources and recipient of knowledge;
 4.Time lag taken to implement best practices recommended across departments.

To overcome the above barriers in connection with the implementation of KM in organizations need some changes according to organizational structure, co-operation with each other for sharing knowledge, elimination of bossism, mutual understanding among colleagues, eradication of superiority minded attitude, expertise to new information technology and ultimately involve the employees in participative management. Some other important factors in favors of the implementation factors of KM are:

- 1.Set up the right people in the right job at the right time without any biases.
- 2.Tackling personnel to solve the complex as and when they arise in the organization by cultivating their tacit knowledge.
- 3.Authority and responsibility should be delegated as per level of position to professionals by which they can react immediately according to the situation with their professional experiences and efficiencies.
- 4.Developing professionals by training, introduction of new technologies and know-how who try to keep up with them as a knowledge person.
5. Develop sharing of knowledge system between units as well as among organizations as a whole through cooperation of the professionals.[7]

REQUISITES FOR SUCCESSFUL KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT:

The last five years have seen a rapidly growing interest in the topic of knowledge management. Several articles and books are published on the subject that provides strategies for knowledge management like sharing best practices, improved customer services, faster problem solving and more rapid adoption to market changes etc., The recurring success factors for knowledge management like sharing best practices, improved customer services, faster problem solving and more rapid adoption to market changes, etc. The recurring success factors for knowledge management include:

- 1.Support from top management, who recognizes the value of information or knowledge as a resource;
- 2.Identification of the link between knowledge

and the new measures of performance;
 3.A knowledge leader who can actively drive the knowledge agenda forward with commitment ;
 4.Policies that drive the agenda forward;
 5.Creation of an environment or work culture that supports innovation, learning and knowledge-sharing.[8]

CONCLUSION:

Economic environment and information environment are changing quickly today. Knowledge management has become a powerful tool for promoting innovation and realizing reengineering the various walks of life. It occupies an outstanding position in the creation of the Knowledge innovation systems of a country. How far the library circles meet the challenge of knowledge economy and build the knowledge management systems of libraries is a subject that demands our urgent study and solution.

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