REENGINEERING UNIVERSITY LIBRARIES AS THE GATEWAY OF LOCAL AND GLOBAL INFORMATION

by

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ABSTRACT

The paper attempts to measure the level and status of best library practices and services of university library systems amidst drastic and dramatic changes in the global information environment. Describes that dynamic changes in the environment upset the static balances in the users, provides services, products and consultations. The library paradigm is shifting from storehouse model of information provision to "access" or "Gateway" model. Emphasizes that some sort of intervention is needed to put the same in order and bring equilibrium between the users and providers. Also describes that TQM is an intervention to bring radical changes in the system. With that aim in mind this paper examines and ausits the strengths and weaknesses of nine university libraries through TQM. Conceptualises the term TQM and reengineering in the context of library and information services. Points out that the aim of TQM and reengineering in the context of university libraries is to provide local and global information as a unified transaction from the same terminal. The induction of IT in all spheres of human activities have forced the university libraries to attain require competencies and information infrastructure to interface the problems, challenges opportunities and impending threats. Information management of this sort is nothing but application of information technology (IT) in all house keeping, networking, resource sharing and other advanced information handling activities. To cope with the changing needs of information the forms of information resources are also changing at a fast pace that is clearly visible from the long journey from 'shruti'in vedic age to the Internet and digital resources. Library literature also reveals that convergence of print and digital technology is necessary condition for qualitative library services. To that end an attempt is made to measure that level of IT application with regard to forms of reading material, forms of periodicals, hardware and software facilities initiation of computerisation, status of housekeeping operations, retrieval services, application in library administration and management (MIS), size of in-house databases, and access to major networks and their services, particularly the use of Internet based services in all the nine university libraries under study. This is a sort of auditing of the existing scenario. Also suggests measures to reengineer the library management, structure, organisation, services, information infrastructure, and competencies to cope with the situation.

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