

The Contemporary Changes in the Current Scenario : Change Management in the Libraries and Information Centres

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In today's technological environment change has become very imperative considering the sea change in library models and advent of information technology. These days' libraries are doing their best to deal with these changes to serve the latest need of the library patron. This paper discusses the tools and challenges of change management in the libraries to facilitate their expansion, resources management and service performance. Information services have always been under constant pressure to prove the value of their staff, services and existence to management. The key to success lies in the ability to predict, manage, and exploit change in all areas of work, with change management emerging as a key extended skill which must be added to any information professional's repertoire. Despite the tendency for information technology, finance and marketing departments to dominate boardroom thinking, the library and information sector still has the opportunity to take control of organizational information strategies, coordinate and drive the technologies and promote library use and benefits. The paper provides useful comprehensive tools to change the traditional libraries. The W4 tool will allow library professionals to determine informally the degree to which their organizational culture is either transformational or transactional in nature.

Keywords: Library, Change Management

1. Introduction

Change is an inevitable part of life. Everything undergoes change. Man, Monkey, Machine, are all subject to change. Change is a natural process set in motion by various factors like the passing of time, growth and regression, prosperity, poverty, paucity and plenty. Change can be defined as movement from one situation to the other. The world we live in continues to change at an intense rate. Not a day goes by; it seems, without another important discovery or boundary-pushing invention in the scientific fields. The economics of globalization seems to dominate much of our political and corporate thinking. The dynamic trends across the social, technological, and economic landscapes of the Library and Information Service (LIS) environment constantly impose on the traditional management theories and practices that are still employed by some of these institutions. The LIS, like any other business entity must adapt quickly to the unpredictable nature of the society in order to remain competitive if it is to attract and maintain financial support, which has either been decreasing or somewhat elusive within recent years. Hence, the requisites for the LIS' management team, irrespective of the strategic, tactical, and operational level, are to demonstrate the need for professionals who are clairvoyant, versatile, and equipped with skills and knowledge that will propel the LIS' Unit to operate in unison with society.

2 Change Management

Having a change management strategy ready can help the management, keep the levels high, get results quickly, cut expenditures, reduce delays, avoid major staff disruptions, implement changes smoothly, steady the organization instead of rocking while change. It is important to state that there is really nothing called Good Change or Bad Change, the perception of the change as natural, positive and continuous will keep the organization dynamic and energetic. The Change is exhilarating the organization, and managing change is an exciting activity that allows the use of innovative ideas and modern techniques.

2.1 Forces for Change

Forces	Examples
Nature of the work force	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • More cultural diversity • Increase in professional ethics • Many new entrants with inadequate skills
Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Faster library services • Global access to the information • Digital Library, RFID, Scanners etc.
Economic shocks	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Rise and fall funding • Changing cost of services
Competition	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Global competitors • Mergers and Consolidations • Growth of E-commerce
Social trends	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internet chat rooms • Library 2.0 & Online Libraries • Increased interest in urban living • Changing needs of the users

2.2 Development Perspective

Due to globalization, growing competition in the higher education sector and external pressure of market forces, the libraries are undergoing change to stay current and competitive in their areas of operation. Every component of the libraries & information services is undergoing metamorphosis. They are facing funding problems as the cost of running them is constantly going up and the demands for developing additional resources and facilities and rendering more services are also ever growing.

2.3 Changing Face of Indian University Libraries

University libraries in India are hybrid libraries and will continue to act as brick and mortar libraries along with click and mortar libraries although the mix between paper and electronic materials will shift somewhat in the passage of time. Majority of the university libraries offer internet facilities to their users and some are having their web sites and offering web-based library and information services. The UGC's Information and Library Network (INFLIBNET) provided initial grants and manpower to most Indian university libraries to initiate their automation work. Some of them are having connectivity with the Developing Library Network (DELNET). Following the consortia approach, the UGC has also made available the access to a large number of costly e-journals to Indian universities under its Infonet programme along with necessary hardware such as V-SAT connectivity to these universities. A number of universities have also spent enormous amounts of money from their own resources to fully automate their operations and introduce RFID technology.

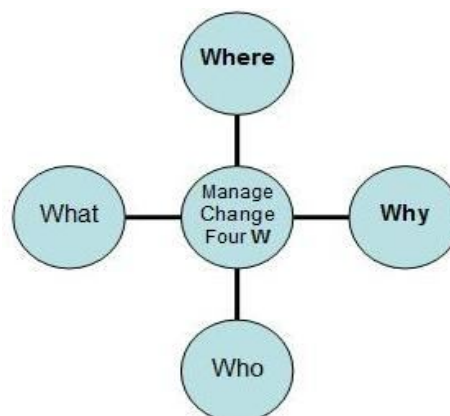
2.4 Changing Face of Corporate Libraries

Corporate with an information and knowledge centre (Library) change the management process, it is estimated that 80% of the companies having full fledged library and information centres. Tata Consultancy Services is one of the best examples of the corporate library. Corporate libraries are the body of corporate sector. It is an independent investment research firm. Corporate company's mainly includes real estate, banking, IT firms, telecom industry, etc. They require all information and happening about their clients along with their own company. They require information without spending much time. Thus, they are also facing change in their existing libraries; they are now adopting Knowledge Management, digital information services and other e-resources.

2.5 Changing Face of Public Libraries

No country in the world can progress without providing free public library services to the citizens. It is imperative on the part of the democratic country like India to establish the service institutions like public libraries in order to strengthen the democratization of information and to promote the social, cultural, historical and scientific and technical knowledge in the public at large. It is an established fact that the public libraries organized by British Council and American Information Resource Centres are the best examples at their services. The British Libraries have impressed the entire nation with changing role of public libraries by providing state-of-the-art and prompt services.

3. Need of Change



3.1 Why Change?

Asking Why change? takes to the numerous situations that spark change. These triggers can be internal or external factor. Before describing the reason Why Change, first one need to identify the change, it can be small or big. Small change which does not affect the library in a major way can be illustrated by in-house reallocation of responsibilities, alteration in Library timings, or minor variations in the library arrangement or change in add-on service or new responsibility etc. It doesn't affect the library negatively. Big Change covers the entire library and will cause the whole operation. To reiterate, major change can be sparked either by internal or external factors. For example Change in librarian/head of the organization, New Goal, reengineering, restructuring, change in the work process, upgrade or use of new technology or automation of entire process etc. External factors of change are mergers, new management, globalization, collaborations, funding increases or cuts, new need of the patron and competition.

3.1 Globalization

The globalization of human activities leads increasingly to interactions across continents, countries and cultures. Technological tools connect institutions, nations, continents and integrate resources and services. Boundaries are blurred. Terms like global villages, global communities and global networks have all become fashionable. For the information professional, the challenge is how to exploit the potentials of IT in order to access information on a global scale. And accessing information on a global scale brings with it the additional responsibilities of obtaining from information that is so abundantly available, the information that is critically relevant to end-users.

3.1.2 Localization

The other side of globalization is localization. Perhaps, in spite of the volume of information available on the Web, the most serious concern of web users is the high mobility and mortality rates of web informa-

tion. Websites for example change location or some are here today and tomorrow gone completely. Ways and means must therefore be designed to archive vital information for future retrieval and use.

3.1.3 Digitization & Preservation

The globalization and localization of information are basically predicated on digital technology. The intervention of RAM (Random Access Memory) and its first use in digital computing in 1948 at the University of Manchester has been described by Richards (1998) as the first digital revolution. In the mid -1900s, the concern was what happens "when the virtual becomes the real". Today, the virtual has not only become real but also created virtual realities. There are now virtual libraries, communities, cyber villages and cyber-cultures. Information professionals must come to terms with how digital systems impact on information storage, retrieval and communication possibilities.

3.1.4 Great Migration

Electronic books (e-books), electronic journals, electronic universities, electronic learning, electronic publishing, electronic commerce, electronic banking and electronic libraries are all systems that represent the great migration from conventional and familiar systems to electronic formats. How does a digital library affect the provision of reference service? How does electronic publishing impact on academic scholarship? These are the emerging issues for professional debates, discussions and deliberations.

3.1.5 Changes in Scholarly Communication

As new media for scholarly communication become diverse, the challenge will be to manage the new media in a hybrid environment along with traditional paper-based resources. New skills in handling of multimedia, electronic, digital or virtual resources will become increasingly in demand.

3.1.6 Information Technology Perspectives

The change of information systems in modern libraries and observes that hi-tech information systems have influenced all spheres of human endeavour. They are used in high-speed supersonic jets, war-planes, industrial machine, weather forecasting, medical research, food processing, warehouse control, space travel, military reconnaissance and network coordination. A major scientific breakthrough of the last millennium, hi-tech information systems seem to control the present and will definitely shape the future. And certainly their impact on library and documentation centres can no longer be ignored. The reasons why the impact of the changing information environment cannot be ignored need to be put into context. The main features of IT changes & techniques include:

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- Increased computer usage to speedier processing
- Good data storage - for example, optical storage media
- Digitization of information - text, graphics, photographs speed, sound video
- Data transfer between different systems and media
- Improved telecommunication, such as ISDN with greatly increased capacity for decreased size of equipment; increasing reliability of hardware and software
- Easy integration of various activities; cooperation, Consortium and formation of network systems

3.2 Where

We are living in a period of significant change. Major corporations are significantly downsizing, rethinking strategic plans, re-engineering and merging together to form corporate monoliths. Our work places are also changing from hierarchical closed systems to a new open, flexible and often virtual environment. Our communities are changing and learning that one company or one industry cannot sustain their viable economic growth. Where we can implement change in the information professionals' work environment can be viewed from various perspectives as follows:

Areas	To Change
Collection	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • E-Resources, Latest and Updated Collection • Online Resources, internet, Intranet Access • Need based Collection
Cataloguing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • E-Cataloguing, Metadata, Bibliographies • Bibliographical Database, Online Databases • OPAC and Web OPAC, Union Catalogues
LIS Professionals & Staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approachable, Knowledgeable, Competent, Skilled • Customer Service Excellence, User Friendly
Services	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to other Libraries, DDS, ILL, Flexibility • Reading Promotional Activities, Events • Book Readers Clubs, E-Newsletters, E-mailers • Library Orientation, Feedback and Suggestions
Information Technology	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • High speed computers, Servers, Web servers • Automation, Internet Access, Wi-Fy, • Library Web Page, RSS, Library 2.0, RFID • Digital Library, Blogs, Institutional Repositories
Helpdesk	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Customer Service Desk, Dedicated Help Tele. Line • Integrated Information Desk, Research Desk • E-Helpdesk, Enquiries, Global Reach

3.3 What

To focus on ends requires the posing of “what” questions. What are we trying to accomplish? What changes are necessary? What indicators will signal success? What standards apply? What measures of performance are we trying to affect? What to change in the library and information service environment can be viewed from various perspectives as follows:

3.3.1 Digital Libraries

Digital library is not only digitization of physical resources, but also thoughtful organisation of electronic collection for better access. Such organisation provides coherence to a massive amount of shared knowledge base. The access point as well as the graphic records are in electronic/digital form when these electronic/digital libraries are connected via various networks, particularly the INTERNET, this is called virtual library. Essentially a digital library deals with organisation and access of a large information repository. In all probability, digital libraries are likely to augment traditional libraries, such as an on-line card catalogue augments, rather than strictly replacing, a book collection. The reason for this could be than the digital medium tends to be better for searching and the physical medium better for reading. Lets us know about digital library and the skills required to build up digital collection

3.3.2 Distributed Library System

It is a new area of public library to provide collection delivery at the doorstep. Distributed Library is the new version of the Mobile Library and available at Internet. The members don't need to visit library to borrow books, they can easily search online catalogue on internet and also can raise request to borrow the books or documents. The library delivery person will deliver that book at the doorstep and keep process cycling. The BigFlix DVD library, Librarywala, Call Library are the best existing examples in India. These changes can be implemented at other Public Libraries to improve their services and full fill the need of the readers at their door.

3.3.3 Institutional Repositories

The currently unprecedented progress of modern technology in fields of information and internet has made Institutional Repositories a prime field to carry out open access resources. The vital target of IR is the optimization and sharing the digital resources, information and knowledge via web based network technologies to satisfy user's demand for instant full text information retrieval from any desk, even out from the library also. An Institutional Repository is an online locus for collecting, preserving, and disseminating in digital form the intellectual output of an institution. For library this would include materials

such as research journal articles, before (preprints) and after undergoing peer review, and digital versions of theses and dissertations, but it might also include other digital assets generated by normal academic life, such as administrative documents, course notes, or learning objects.

3.3.4 Library 2.0

Library 2.0 is a loosely defined model for a modernized form of library service that reflects a transition within the library world in the way that services are delivered to users. The focus is on user-centered change and participation in the creation of content and community. The concept of Library 2.0 borrows from that of Business 2.0 and Web 2.0 and follows some of the same underlying philosophies. This includes online services like the use of OPAC systems and an increased flow of information from the user back to the library.

With Library 2.0, library services are constantly updated and reevaluated to best serve library users. Library 2.0 also attempts to harness the library user in the design and implementation of library services by encouraging feedback and participation. Proponents of this concept, sometimes referred to as Radical Trust expect that the Library 2.0 model for service will ultimately replace traditional, one-directional service offerings that have characterized libraries for centuries.

Key Features of library 2.0 environment

- ☉ Write and post BLOGs
- ☉ Social network knowledge - basic understanding of Facebook, Myspace, Twitter, etc
- ☉ Shoot, upload and edit Photos, Videos & Podcast
- ☉ Instant Message or SMS
- ☉ Use of RSS
- ☉ Knowledge sharing

3.4 WHO

The readily availability of information on the Internet, and its widespread use, really presents Librarians with an opportunity, not a threat. Technology Savvy users realise they need help, which Librarians can provide. Librarians now face difficulties and complicity challenges due to new trends in information access.

In the present technological/Internet era the professionals have to change themselves as the information profession is being changed. Now information specialists have to work as e-information resources in

which various professional groups are expected to map strategies that leads to produce, manage, maintain and service the information. Information professional has to work as:

- **Librarian-** In addition to being library manager, they also act as collection development, technical processors and so on, taking care of information quality.
- **Information Manager-** To meet information need of the user they should know how to manage and deliver appropriate information services.
- **Information adviser/instructor-** Ensure that user/staff know how to access relevant sources of information (literacy).
- **System & Networking-** For delivery of information to their users in an appropriate manner develop and design appropriate systems.

The contemporary Library and Information Services (LIS) environment employs a multifaceted group of employees who are better educated and more expensive to recruit than in previous times. In order to maximize these talents and resources available, this modern setting requires managers – at all levels – who are versatile and fitted out with the right skills and knowledge to maintain group cohesion and to propel this dynamic environment to continuously move in unison with the society.

4. Conclusion

Rapid changes are taking place in the information environment and managing change in the libraries and information centres is the greatest challenge of libraries. As this article points out, library change management tools and perspectives appear to be making an effort to utilize new ideas that encourage library learning and adaptation. Libraries that are managed exclusively by traditional “command and control techniques” may not have the flexibility to adapt to environments characterized by continuous change.

Library personnel play key role in managing the process of change in the libraries. Change management and staff development go hand in hand. Information professionals must be ready to move with the challenges of digital technology, globalized information access, networked resources, a changing economy, new learning and research systems and the demands of the user communities for information that adds value to their work and libraries should act on the new area of Library 2.0 environment.

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