

Application of Knowledge Management in Academic Libraries

Mr. Waghare Vishnu S
Librarian
Dahiwadi College Dahiwadi
E-mail:- vis.waghare@gmail.com
Mob.No.9673474530

Abstract:-

Academic libraries are information centers established in support of the mission of their parent institutions to generate knowledge, and people equipped with knowledge in order to serve the society and advance the well-being of mankind. Development of Information Technology (IT) and its applications in Library and Information Centers, the concepts of document management has been changed to information management and again the entire scenario of information management has started its change to Knowledge Management. The library will play a very crucial role in the extension and modification of knowledge. The growing need for knowledge management has influenced every component and operation of a library.

This paper mainly focuses on the concept of Knowledge Management and its role in Academic Libraries, Objectives of Knowledge Management in Academic Libraries. And what are the challenges is being met during implementation of knowledge management practices.

Keywords: Information Management, knowledge management tools, Library, web 2.0, Academic Libraries.

Introduction

In the present information and knowledge era, knowledge has become a key resource. The conventional function of academic libraries is to collect, process, disseminate, store and utilise information to provide service to the community. However, the environment in which academic libraries operate today is changing.

Academic Libraries are pinched on both sides: reduced budget and increased demand from faculty and students. The success of academic libraries depends on their ability to utilize information and knowledge of its staff to better serve the needs of the academic community.

Knowledge management is a viable means in which academic libraries could improve their services in the knowledge economy. This can be achieved through creating an organisational culture of sharing knowledge and expertise within the library. However, organisations face innumerable challenges in nurturing and managing knowledge. The challenges occur because only a part of knowledge is internalised by the organisation, the other is internalised by individuals.

Definitions of Knowledge Management:

Ron Young, CEO/CKO Knowledge Associates International: "Knowledge Management is the discipline of enabling individuals, teams and entire organizations to collectively and systematically create, share and apply knowledge, to better achieve their objectives".

Knowledge Management

Knowledge Management is "a process, which deals with knowledge creation, acquisition, packaging and application or reuse of knowledge." It basically consists of the following four steps:

- Knowledge Collection
- Organization
- Data protection and presentation
- Dissemination of Knowledge Information

Knowledge Management is the way to keep knowledge growing through sharing and such sharing is best done either in material or human terms.

Types of Knowledge

Knowledge is classified into two types.

- Explicit knowledge
- Tacit knowledge

Explicit knowledge: It is formal and easy to communicate to others. It is the knowledge of rationality. That is, policies, rules, specifications and formulae. It is also known as declarative knowledge.

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

Objectives of Knowledge Management in Academic Libraries:

The main objective of Knowledge management is to ensure that the right information is delivered to the right person just in time, in order to take the most appropriate decision.

The objectives are as follows:

- To promote collection, processing, storage and distribution of knowledge
- To promote scientific research
- To promote relationship between library and users
- To protect the intellectual property right, in information technology era
- To create knowledge repositories and manage knowledge as an asset
- To organize the value of knowledge and improve effective research

Skills Needed by the Library & Information Professional:

- IT literacy, that is knowing how to use the appropriate technology to capture, catalogue and disseminate information and knowledge to the target audience and knowing how to translate that knowledge into a central database for employees of the organisation to access;
- A sharp and analytical mind;
- Innovation and inquiring;

- Enables knowledge creation, flow and communication within the organization and between staff and public.

Characteristics of Knowledge Management in Libraries:

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

- Human resource management in KM
- Information technology is a tool for KM
- Knowledge Resource Management
- Resource Sharing and Networking
- User Services in KM

Need for Knowledge Management in Academic Libraries:

Knowledge management is the most important asset for a company/ organization/institution because KM provides access to various aspects like experience, knowledge and expertise that create new capabilities which enable better performance, encourage innovation and enhance customer value. Today every organization needs to know their knowledge assets, how to manage and make use of these assets, how to manage and make use of these assets to get maximum benefits. Environmental pressure, technological advancements and the ability to create valuable information are responsible to adopt knowledge management. Globalization and geographical library and information centres, KM needs to be knowledge, improve services to users and enable users to share and learn. The need of KM is arising due to following reasons.

Benefits of Knowledge Management in Academic Libraries:

Km applications could benefit in research process, curriculum development process, student and alumni services, administrative services and strategic planning in the following ways:

- Enhanced ability to develop up to date and market focused strategic plans
- Enhanced faculty development efforts, especially for new faculty
- Facilitation of interdisciplinary research in libraries
- Improved effectiveness and efficiency of administrative services
- Improved responsiveness and communication capabilities
- Improved services for students
- Improved speed of curriculum revision and updating
- Improves service capability of faculty and staff

Conclusion:-

Knowledge Management can help libraries to develop into more efficient organizations, taking advantage of the new demands of the Knowledge Society leading to the improvement and development of new services to users, in addition to increasing the use, creation and sharing of knowledge among the library staff. Implementing KM in academic libraries leads to perfecting the ability of these organizations to learn, The KM in academic libraries will also lead to the generation of new knowledge, development of new procedures and practices to improve the integration and sharing of knowledge within organizations.

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