



CHANGE MANAGEMENT IN LIBRARY SCIENCE: NEED & IMPORTANCE

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ABSTRACT :

Presently, the fast pace of technological changes in the domain of information generation, management and dissipation has warranted that the existing information management centers i.e. libraries be prepared for this change to meet the user demands (of information). In view of this, present study was carried out to unearth the various aspects related to Change Management principles in different domains, with focus on library and information science. To achieve this, literature published in the reputed journals was collected and reviewed using the principles of deductive reasoning. The findings of this study point towards an urgent need to make sure that the library staff, systems, library management, resources be studied in detail for ensuring effective and seamless change management implementation for hurdle free transition, wherein the users don't suffer.

Keywords: Technological changes, information, libraries, Change Management.

INTRODUCTION :

Currently, libraries and information services face many challenges from changes in the information environment as well the techniques and technologies used to manage the information. Most of these services and technologies have developed in view of the advancements in electronic information resources and the evolution of the "digital age". In the backdrop of wide scale changes that are taking place in the domain of library and information science (LIS), the job of a librarian or an information scientist is becoming more and more challenging. Not only this, the constant pressure of delivering in a dynamic situation is also taking its toll in the form of adverse impact on his (LIS professional's) health. In view of this, the established concept of change management





(which is mainly practices in industrial sector) offers a ray of hope for improving the professionalization and better service in a library.

The change management process is the sequence of steps or activities that a change management team or project leader would follow to apply change management to a project or change. Based on published literature, the most effective and commonly applied change management process contains three phases like,

- Phase – I Preparing for change (preparation, assessment and development of strategy)
- Phase – II Managing change (thorough planning and change management implementation)
- Phase – III Strengthening change (data gathering, corrective action and recognition).

Although many past studies have identified numerous ways for effective change management implementation, there appears to be a dearth of literature and an established body of knowledge pertaining to change management vis-à-vis LIS processes. Hence, in the backdrop of above information an attempt has been made in this study to critically review the change management related literature

METHODOLOGY :

In view of the aims and objectives of this study, the collected literature was reviewed by following standard methodology. For the purpose of the review aspects like the research question being posed, theoretical background, methodology used, findings, conclusions, etc. were considered. All the literature reviewed in this study was accessed from the reputed journals having science citation index number. The discussion is presented in a chronological order, so that it also indicates the underlying pattern of evolution of thoughts and ideas in the focused





domain i.e. change management in different fields. The discussion on the basis of the review is presented in the following section.

DISCUSSION :

The concept of change management has seen more interest during last couple of decades, when the technological advances occurred very rapidly and the existing employee base became worthless, especially in the high end services. Furthermore, the change management traditionally has been coupled with the quality management related aspects in the industry as well as academics. For example, Ahmed and Simintiras (1996) developed a business process re-engineering model based on the elements of process, radical transformation and sociotechnics interaction, increasing the level of sharing and collaboration and reducing the number of sequences within organizational processes. Sinclair and Zairi (1996) introduced a model of total quality-based performance measurement that can be used for initiating and implementing change management in an organization. The model includes five sections: strategy development and goal deployment; process management and measurement; performance appraisal and management; break-point performance assessment and reward and recognition systems.

Moreover, Al-Mashari et al., (2000) conducted a holistic review of the literature related to business process re-engineering, which is part of total quality management. Author has suggested that the integration of business process re-engineering with total quality management offers great results to the industry as well as institutions for achieving desired change management results. Furthermore, the authors further state that business process re-engineering implementation, conceptualizes the major role of IT in business process re-engineering. Judge and Douglas (2009) have stated that prior to change management initiatives, there is a need to systematically develop a reliable and valid construct that can





facilitate and enhance the organizational change process. In addition to this, this measure provides a tool for assisting employees (LIS professionals as well) to lead organization change initiatives.

Mannion (2009) has reported that change management success are highly structural in nature, where, analysis of data indicates that dramatic improvements in productivity are readily, and universally, available to all institutes simply through the adoption of globally existing best practices. Karin et al., (2009) have indicated that a critical element of leadership is the capacity to tolerate uncertainty, both one's own and that of followers, which affects the change management process. They have mentioned that the degree of complexity is directly related to the responsibility of a position in an organization, resulting in greater time-span of uncertainty and hence the leadership's ability to live and work with it becomes very important. Results of the study by Khaleelee and Woolf (1996) indicated that transformational leadership helps greatly in the management of institutes undergoing technological change. The importance of leadership to the change management process is underscored by the fact that change, by definition, requires creating a new system and then institutionalizing the new approaches. While change management depends on leadership to be enacted, to date there has been little integration of these two bodies of literature (Eisenbach et al., 1999).

Kamble (2011) has stated that librarians have been pioneers in adapting themselves to new technologies, however, the rapid pace of technological developments have made this adoption very challenging. Particularly in this era of Information and Communication Technology, Libraries are evolving into information or resource centers and the role of librarian into that of facilitator from that of custodian of books. The user groups being heterogeneous and the demand being varied the role of new age librarian is very challenging. In view of this the author has advocated





a need to look into the different aspects of change management in general and its relevance with regard to libraries in particular. Kamila (2009) has stated that fast-paced change in technology particularly the origin of Information and Communication Technology and social, political, economical changes require an appropriate managerial change in Libraries and Information Centres to survive in twenty first century. In this context, the author suggested that managerial change towards structure, technology, task, people, library policies, objectives and functions of information system and process of managerial change should be studied in details to delineate change management models for the LIS professionals. On the basis of her study author concluded that 'Change Management' is the only feasible solution to overcome all the difficulties and problems created in ever changing environment for the overall development and progress of Libraries and Information Centres in the Information and Communication Technology era.

Currently, technological environment change has become very imperative considering the enormous 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 user. In view of this Pandya and Pandya (2010) discussed the tools and challenges of change management in the libraries to facilitate their expansion, resources management and service performance in their study. They have further stated that the information services have always been under pertinent pressure to prove the value of their staff, services and existence to management. However, 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.





CONCLUSION :

The characteristics of the information society are changing very rapidly resulting in various challenges for libraries, both externally and internally. In view of this, it is imperative that meaningful research be carried out to know the library manager's preparedness to tackle these changes within their organisations in order to ensure that they retain their place in the information world. Furthermore, the complexity of today's academic environment has made it necessary to evaluate all the alternatives before committing resources to an improvement process in the LIS department. The literature reviewed in this study showed that there is a necessity to address the different issues pertaining to the current and expected changes in the libraries by following the principles of change management. Furthermore, it is also concluded that these studies should not just be descriptive but culminate in a model that can be utilized in many libraries.

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