Knowledge Sharing of Library Professionals in Online Environments

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Abstract

The current research is an attempt to know the information professionals/library professional's knowledge sharing behaviours. Libraries may gain a significant competitive advantage by utilising knowledge, which can result in improved service to patrons. Knowledge management can assist libraries in improving the quality of their services as well as establishing and maintaining a learning culture. This study consisted of academic library professionals from Tamil Nadu, Kerela and Puducherry. The study highlights to what extent professionals use Web 2.0 tools for sharing information and knowledge. It is clear that the professionals tend to opt for different Web 2.0 tools to remain in touch with the clienteles. It also shows the various underlying hurdles that professional encounter in the dissemination of information. The implications of this study shed light on various areas of knowledge management, including training, budgets, staff shortages, and rewards.

Keywords: Knowledge Management, Web 2.0, ICT, Education, Information Services, Libraries

Introduction

Libraries are seen to be knowledge stores and an important aspect of education. Libraries in the twenty-first century are placing a greater emphasis on providing services that allow individuals to access knowledge and information from a range of media that is instantly available through electronic and digitised ways(Marouf,2017). The fundamental tasks of the library are to serve as a knowledge repository and a disseminator of knowledge. The connection between the library and its users has evolved considerably with the introduction of Web 2.0. Web 2.0 features allow users to interact with the library in two-way communication and knowledge exchanges. Rather than having people come to the library, the library provides services to them through the university library's website using different Web 2.0 tools. Academic libraries have the chance to increase their performance, both for themselves and for their parent institutions, thanks to the burgeoning discipline of knowledge management. Knowledge is important to any organization and must be properly managed. It is an important and strategic resource for generating new ideas and spurring innovation. Knowledge management involves the acquisition, exchange and storage of knowledge. But perhaps the most important activity is knowledge sharing. Most of the knowledge is stored in people's minds. Exchange helps to spread knowledge among others. Kumaresan (2010) highlights that "the knowledge management system involves identification of knowledge, capturing, sorting, storing and sharing of pertinent information within the library or various libraries in case of multiple campuses". However, knowledge sharing between organizations is hampered by many barriers. Therefore, a focus on enhancing knowledge sharing will give organizations a competitive

advantage. The success of knowledge management initiatives depends on knowledge sharing. Information and communication technologies (ICT) can improve knowledge sharing by lowering temporal and spatial barriers between knowledge workers and improving access to knowledge information. Viewing ICTs for knowledge sharing from this perspective, however, is of limited value, as it ignores when and how the quality of knowledge sharing will be improved. A more inclusive perspective will emerge if ICTs are studied in relation to the motivation for knowledge sharing. Effective information sharing is significant for the accomplishment of any association. Deciding elements that might impact information sharing conduct establishes a significant space of exploration (Islam, Agarwal, & Ikeda,2014). In the current times, knowledge is an indispensable element and it has become a library which plays an essential role in the sharing of knowledge and resources.Knowledge sharing is one of the difficult processes for knowledge managers and knowledge centres within the user community. Sharing knowledge is not an easy task due to various reasons behind the sharing of resources, such as legal issues, inadequate management of resources and distribution of knowledge resources. Resource managers must follow and obey authors, editors, policies, government directives and everything in between. Knowledge sharing is essential in this current scenario; even a single library cannot provide various resources to user demands, so the consortium is more critical within institutions. Without any expectations, the government should support and promote the library consortium site. Knowledge can be shared with anyone, anywhere, according to their needs; anyone can provide knowledge if they specialize in their field of work. The success of the library lies in the sharing of information and knowledge with others (Davenport, & Hall,2002). Knowledge sharing disseminates knowledge to one another through a specific group of people or community rather than a one-way street. Librarians need to know the expectations of the needs, interests and specializations of their user areas.

Review of Literature

A librarian has a topic specialisation in most big public and academic libraries, and is extremely adept at using numerous indexes and databases in that subject area to assist users in finding scholarly content. The user can receive information on a certain subject with the help of a librarian and, presumably, translate this information into knowledge that can be applied to a specific situation. (Jantz, 2001). Effective knowledge management in an organization usually leads to the exchange of knowledge and gives the organization a competitive advantage. Variant, Nove & Dyah (2013) found that knowledge sharing was not officially accepted by many. Lack of putting together a strategy for that documentation of organizational knowledge, lack of motivation among managers, cycle management administrators' methods and ignorance of the method and content of documentation, and its essence and essence (Javadpour, & Samiei, 2017). However, you need an application that virtually facilitates collaboration. In the library use of compensation systems or incentives for employees who contribute to knowledge divide; it encourages teams to share their contributions and intent to share knowledge. Libraries also lack

maximum knowledge reuse and open access. Research suggested library in planning knowledge exchange strategies according to the intended goal. Libraries need to encourage the creation of knowledge and make it accessible knowledge for future use. Awodoyin, et al. (2016) conducted research on 12 selected academic libraries in Nigeria and found that most librarians, 82.9%, prefer face-to-face interactions and mobile phones- a channel for exchanging knowledge. In addition, studies show that emails and newsletters are often used by most libraries in disseminating the library services. KM can improve the effectiveness of library operations by improving internal and external knowledge sharing and creating new knowledge (Islam et al., 2015)

Personal knowledge may be translated into corporate knowledge that can be widely shared and utilised effectively if knowledge management is used in libraries. Employees may benefit from knowledge management by producing outputs that tap into their skills, talents, thoughts, and ideas, allowing for better decision-making on strategic issues, rivals, consumers, distribution channels, goods, and services (Mphidi and Snyman,2004). As cited in Tella (2016) "the role of motivation, which consists of intrinsic motivators, such as commitment or enjoyment in helping others, and extrinsic motivators, such as reputation or organizational rewards, to determine and explain the behavior of Malaysian academics in sharing knowledge. Their analysis of data from five higher learning institutions in Malaysia found that commitment and enjoyment in helping others (that is, intrinsic motivators) and reputation and organizational rewards (that is, extrinsic motivators) have a positive and significant relationship with attitudes toward knowledge sharing. In addition, their findings revealed that intrinsic motivators are more influential than extrinsic ones".

Objectives of the study

To highlight the ICT tools used in facilitating the knowledge sharing

To highlight the barriers by staff with regard to Knowledge sharing

Methodology

For the current study the data were collected using a descriptive quantitative method. A structured questionnaire was created and the questionnaire was distributed on mail. The questionnaire consists of demographic, educational and professional details. Questionaries were sent using different online tools like email, WhatsApp and Facebook. A total of 85 participants responded to the questionaries. Appropriate statistical analysis after data collection was used

Data Analysis

Gender	Male	72	85%
	Female	13	15%
Age	20-25	13	15%
	26-30	51	60%
	30 and above	21	25%

Qualification	B.Lib.	26	31%
	M. Lib.	48	56%
	others	11	13%
Designation	Librarian	18	21%
	Junior Librarian	61	72%
	Library Assistant	6	7%

Results in the above table 1 show that 85% were males and 15% were female respondents. 60% of the respondents fall within the age group of 26-30 years. 56% respondents had masters in library science while 31% had completed their bachelor's degree. Regrading the designation in the libraries, 72% were junior librarians and 21% were librarians.

Table 2. preferable mode of technology used for Knowledge Sharing

Technology for Knowledge Sharing	Very Important	Important	Moderately Important	Slightly Important
E-mail/Group mail	65	9	7	4
Knowledge Portals	44	15	14	12
Video conferencing/ Teleconferencing/ Video sharing	20	24	30	11
Wikis/Blogs/ YouTube/Facebook/ Twitter/ Web 2.0 tools	71	5	3	6
Instant messaging/Online chatting	22	27	23	13

Table 2 highlights the most preferable mode of using technology for knowledge sharing by the library professionals. The results indicate that web 2.0 tools are the most used platforms for knowledge sharing which amounts to 84% followed by email or group mail 76%. The professionals also used different knowledge portals for information sharing of library services and which accounts to 52%.

Table 3: Barriers in knowledge sharing

Barriers in Knowledge sharing	Strongly Agree	Agree	Disagree	Neutral	Strongly Disagree
Lack of Communication Tools/Software's	43	20	15	2	5
Lack of staff	51	11	7	11	5
Lack of knowledge	11	17	38	15	4
Lack of time	31	26	22	3	3

Table 3 represents the various barriers found by professionals in knowledge sharing. The mist common barrier professionals face is the lack of staff i.e., 60%, followed by lack of requisite communication tools 50%.

Conclusion

In the present information economies information is the main thrust for financial and social turn of events. The consideration of the general public to data and information is ascending because of more popularity for data and information by information laborers in the present social orders. This study found that web 2.0 tools are important for sharing all the knowledge to the clienteles and there is no doubt that web 2.0 tools are the platforms that keeps organisers, employees and professionals updated in the current digital environments as is highlighted by Paroutis and Al Saleh (2009). As new innovations arise and computerized culture advances, scholarly divisions need to choose which advances to take on and when to execute them to keep working successfully. These days, information is viewed as an essential asset in associations; consequently, the influence of information is a key dynamic issue. Research has shown that Web 2.0 innovations, for example, informal communities are not difficult to utilize and natural, permitting students to share and create information inside the little gathering climate. Various academic institutions and business organizations investigate better approaches to develop and take advantage of information imparting to clients, providers and accomplices (Kirchner, Razmerita, & Sudzina, 2009). Using sophisticated web tools can help is to take advantage of a more extravagant type of information resources, including web journals, wikis, and interpersonal organizations utilizing Web 2.0 and zeroing in on the social, communitarian aspect of the Web.

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