Library Leadership in India: An Unexplored Area

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Abstract

The Librarianship a noble profession conceived earlier and now has transformed tremendously with regards to collections, technology, staff, finance, users and services. Leadership is one of the specialized area being emphasized today as one of the key competency for librarians managing the academic and research libraries for better productivity, visibility and development of functional and innovative libraries. Unlike the countries like USA and UK, the concept of library leadership is gradually occupying significance in India and as such attempts have been made to explore the significance and growth of library leadership in Indian context and literature generated over a period of time on leadership in library and information science.. Concludes with a note to understand the significance of leadership in libraries and try to emulate and acquire the skills of leadership in order to build congenial atmosphere for better performance of libraries in team spirit.

Keywords

Leadership; Library Management; Human Resource Management.

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INTRODUCTION

Human Resources are very significant resources for the prosperous development of any nation. It is the quality of manpower that can make or mar the name of any institution and as such the concept of `Human Resource Management' has occupied significant in the modern world. Management deals with 4 M's i.e., men, machine, materials and money and managing the men is very critical and sensitive in nature. That's why, management is an art of getting the things done through people and this management is not confined to any particular discipline of Commerce or Management studies, but it has become universal wherever manpower resources are involved. This is not an exception to Library and Information Centres.

`Library Management' is one of the subjects in the Masters Degree of Library and Information Science which is now termed as `MANAGEMENT OF LIBRARY AND INFORMATION CENTERS' aims to build theoretical skills of management of various resources in the library setup. Unlike other departments in an academic and research environment, the nature of Library work is an inter-related and integrated and every activity of services in the library involves team work and not as isolation like teaching a subject to the students and this calls for management skills of strong leadership among the library managers or head of the library.

Ansari and Khadher (2011) reiterated the developments in information and communication technology, economic changes, changes in organizational structures and proliferation of team-based decision-making and participative management, and an increasingly diverse client base and talent pool characterize the library of the future, by identifying competencies that library and information professionals in Kuwait to be successful in their leadership positions. Winston and Dunkley (2002) re-conceptualized the importance of the competencies that librarian leaders will need in the future. Probably Library leadership is not much heard especially in the Indian context unlike in USA or UK librarianship. Although Library Leadership is a part of Library Management, but today the concept of leadership has become more of inter-disciplinary nature and is growing as a specialized subject. The term `Leadership qualities or Leader' is normally a mouth word of the society when there is an achievement either in the political system or higher education or any other system providing credit to the

personality acknowledging his/ her leadership quality or vision or being a good leader.

GROWTH OF LITERATURE ON LEADERSHIP

It is found from the existing primary and secondary sources that, the literature on "Leadership" in library and information science is a new and unexplored area in the context of Indian librarianship, but a considerable body of research literature on traits and competencies of library leaders are found at international level. Most of the literature is in the form of articles or conference papers and the growth of literature on `leadership' is analyzed using J-Gate Custom Content for Consortia (JCCC) @ UGC Infonet a national gateway (http://jgateplus.com/) for UGC Infonet e-journals and databases. Based on its search interface searching the term in title, the growth of existing literature on "Leadership" generated in the field of library and information science subject is shown in table 1-4.

Table 1: Subject-wise distribution of Articles on `Leadership'

Rank	Subjects Category	Number of articles
1.	Librarianship and Libraries	169
2.	Library Management	127
3.	Information Sources and services	71
4.	Digital Libraries	67
5.	Acquisition	40
6.	Library Networks	23
7.	Abstracting and Indexing	21
8.	Archives and Preservation	16
9.	Library Automation	12
10	Cataloguing	8
	Total	442

Table 2: Core Journals containing Articles on `Leadership'

Rank	Journal Name	Number of articles
1.	Academia	35
2.	Library Leadership & Management	28
3.	Journal of Library Administration	21
4.	Library Quarterly	20
5.	Library Management	19
6.	Australian Library Journal	18
7.	American Libraries	17
8.	Access	15
9.	InCite	12
10	Science & Technology Libraries	10
	Other Journals	245
	Library Herald (Indian)	2
	Total	442

Table 4: Year-wise growth of Literature

Rank	Year	Number of articles
1.	2014	12
2.	2013	34
3.	2012	37
4.	2011	46
5.	2010	30
6.	2009	32
7.	2008	29
8.	2007	49
9.	2006	24
10	2005	19
	1917-2000 (1-2 articles per year)	129
	1916	1
	Total	442

Table 4: Prolific Authors contributed on `Leadership'

Rank	Authors	Number of articles
11	Mark D Winston	8
12	Mark Winston	5
13	Pixey Anne Mosley	5
14	James Castiglione	4
15	Laurie Scott	4
16	Peter Hernon	4
17	Maureen Sullivan	3
18	McCallum Ian	3
19	Susan Quinn	3
20	Ainsworth Anette	2
	Other authors with less than 2 articles	401
	Total	442

In the purview of library and information science, the subject category Librarianship and Libraries (N=169) and Library management (N=127) has more number of articles. Scientific journal Academia (N=35), Library Leadership & Management (N=28) and Journal of Library Administration (N=21) has yielded more number of articles published in these journals. The library leadership has really got its maturity

since year 2000 and onwards and however the number of articles appeared between 1916 and 2000 was found on average of one or two articles only. The key prolific authors contributed research articles on `leadership' are Mark D Winston (N=8), followed by Mark Winston (N=5) and four articles contributed by James Castiglione, Laurie Scott and Peter Hernon.

INDIAN STUDIES ON LEADERSHIP

The Information Society has brought about developments in the way information is created, consolidated and accessed. ICT has produced larger volumes of information, new ways of packaging information and new tools for managing information. These developments require leadership skills of librarians and other information workers to meet the demands of the global economy for information resources and services. The rapid developments in computer technology as well as economic changes have made it clear that the familiar role of the 21st Century Librarian as information intermediaries must undergo immense change, if Librarians are to avoid being displaced by a variety of content providers. Leadership Skills for professional competencies, management, networking and teamwork are the need of the hour (Ramesh Babu, 2012). Prakash and Patil (2011) discussed the leadership skills in the changing management perspectives of libraries and Jagtap and Kapade (2011) highlighted the values of leadership in academic and research libraries.

Jange and Sujatha (2011) explored the challenges faced by library professionals in managing the libraries, technological skills required and leadership qualities needed for present and future Library Professionals to effectively render need based information services to the user community. Further Jange (2012) attempted to identify and explore the significance of Leadership roles among Library and Information Science professionals that can be leveraged as a strategic asset to attract staff, create favorable assessments. The societal, organizational, and competitive changes affecting academic libraries point to the need for effective leadership and the identification of an important component of such a statement of leadership competencies (Krishan Gopal, 2006). Arora (2004) highlighted leadership skills and personal traits that were used successfully for transforming a traditional library into a hybrid library in precarious circumstances and conditions that exist in some of the organizations in India. It describes the management techniques, skills and personal traits of a leader that were used to motivate staff members to computerize the library, to improve library services and to transform a traditional library into a hybrid library. Needham (2001) stresses several important leadership roles to play in creating an environment to nurture a successful transition of libraries into the new roles they will play. Among these roles are helping to create standards and protocols, advocacy, mentoring, creating heroes, and underwriting leadership training for new members of the profession. The willingness to take a leadership role presents several potential traps which must be avoided diligently, through humility and vision.

LIBRARY LEADERSHIP: MODELS AND COMPETENCIES

"Leadership is about listening to people, supporting and encouraging them and involving them in the decision-making and problem-solving processing. It is about building teams and developing their ability to make skilful decisions" - (Stuart Levine and Michael Crom, 1994).

Library Leadership refers to the ability of a Librarian or head of the library to lead the team of subordinate library professionals and supporting staff with utmost confidence and diligence by his/ her act of benevolence showing passion for creativity, innovation and development of library on par excellence creating congenial atmosphere and subordinate staff should also feel and execute duties and responsibilities to achieve the mission of the library moving in the same direction as of library leader. In the words of Boer, Bothma and Olwagen (2012) library leadership as "The ability to be visionary, to embrace change and to anticipate future information technologies, thereby providing strategic direction for their libraries and the ability to motivate their colleagues to share the vision, will empower library leaders for the digital demands of the 21st century".

The Competencies of Successful Leader emphasized by various stalwarts in library profession and here the efforts are made to know the various leadership models for the benefit of librarians to understand, measure and evaluate the strength of leadership and strive to possess the competencies in the light of the existing leadership models.

- **Professor John Adair's Functional Leadership Model**

This a leadership model that is used to assess the extent of strength and weaknesses of an individual in determining leadership competencies possessed. The fundamental elements of this leadership model are

- Achieve the task;
- Develop Individuals and
- Build a team.

- **Bass' Theory of Leadership**

Bass' theory of leadership states that there are three basic ways to explain how people become leaders (Stogdill, 1989; Bass, 1990) and they are

- Some personality traits may lead people naturally into leadership roles. This is the Trait Theory.
- A crisis or important event may cause a person to rise to the occasion, which brings out extraordinary leadership qualities in an ordinary person. This is the Great Events Theory.
- People can choose to become leaders. People can learn leadership skills. This is the Transformational or Process Leadership Theory. It is the most widely accepted theory today and the premise on which this guide is based.

- **ALA's *Emerging Leaders*' Library Leadership & Management Association's Leadership Model:**

This models known as LLAMA Emerging Leaders group has presented the indicators of library leadership as under:

COGNITIVE ABILITY
Problem-Solving
Decision Making
Reflective Thinking

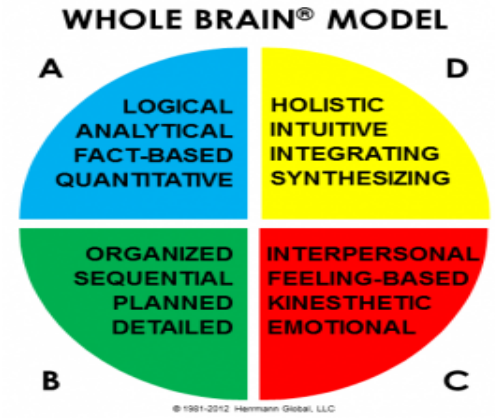
VISION
Global Thinking
Creative/Innovative
Forward Thinking

INTERPERSONAL EFFECTIVENESS
Culturally Competent
Accountability
Team Building
Development
Inspirational/Motivational
Communication Skills

MANAGERIAL EFFECTIVENESS
Manage Change
Resource Management
Strategic Planning
Collaboration
Flexibility/Adaptability

- **Herrmann's Whole Brain Model**

This model developed by Ann Herrmann Nehdi that contains 120-question Herrmann Brain Dominance Instrument assessment defines and describes someone's thinking preferences across the Whole Brain® Model.



Source: (http://www.herrmannsolutions.com/what-is-whole-brain-thinking-2/)

- **Drotter's Leadership Pipeline**

Ram Charan, Stephen Drotter, and James Noel developed the Leadership Pipeline Model that encompasses six key transitions which help the organizations like library to develop good leaders. They are



Source:http://www.mindtools.com/pages/article/leadership-pipeline-model.htm

- **Ammons-Stephens - Core Leadership Competency Model**

Ammons-Stephens et *al.,* (2009: 68-71) designed a Core Leadership Competency Model which includes four central leadership competencies for library leadership i.e.

- cognitive ability,
- vision,
- interpersonal effectiveness and
- managerial effectiveness,

It is difficult to have consensus as to what a leader should contain. This is because "Librarians have listed debated, revised, and negotiated lists of competencies for 125 years, since the beginnings of formal education for librarianship" (Helmick & Swigger, 2006). Existing literature have encompassed various traits or skills that make a good leader to manage the library effectively Christopher Soo-Guan Khoo (2005) has analyzed literature in the Library and Information Science Abstracts (LISA) from 2000 to 2005 and enlisted competencies required for library professionals.

Tufts University has developed Tufts Leadership Competencies (http://hr.tufts.edu/wp-content/uploads/ODT_Leadership_Guide.pdf) that identify knowledge, skills and personal characteristics for administrative managers to ensure outstanding performance in the people management component of their job are

- Communicates a Compelling Vision and Direction
- Creates an Environment of Trust and Integrity
- Drives Results
- Manages Change
- Develops Relationships with a University focus
- Develops Self and Others

In this direction, Jordan, Mary Wilkins (2011) has provided a list of skills required for an effective leadership are:

o Vision	o Creativity
o Flexibility	o Self-awareness
o Communication skills	o Ambition
o Teamwork	o Previous experience
o Interpersonal skills	o Conflict resolution
o Employee centered	o Tenacity
o Risk taking	o Planning
o Customer service	o Personal energy
o Multicultural awareness	o Accountability
o Problem solving	o Delegation
o Motivating others	o Self-confidence
o Commitment to the profession:	o Emotional intelligence
o Integrity	o Mentoring
o Enthusiasm	o Demonstrating leadership
o Modeling values	o Resource management
o Intelligence and	o Time management
o Diplomacy	o Sense of humor
	o Credibility

1.5 CONCLUSION

Library leadership is the need of the hour but this is still a very primitive stage in Indian academic librarianship, which is more heard than practiced. This calls for specialized training for library managers for their better productivity and performance. It is our normal practice to acknowledge in terms of his/ her leadership, when librarians outclass development or performance of library on par excellence. Library leadership though part of curriculum of `Library management' but is not a specialized area. Unfortunately, especially in the state university setup, most of the libraries lack appointment of University librarian and is mainly managed by Deputy or Assistant Librarians. In Karnataka state, out of 16 state universities, only three universities has full time librarian. The question of leadership becomes secondary to some extent, as it requires a full fledge librarian. It is said that leaders are born not created. But what so ever, the reason as to why lot of hue and cry of leadership is for better productivity, visibility and strengthening of libraries and this can be achieved only with the strong leadership of head librarian who shows, excels and leads the team with utmost diligence and act of benevolence to meet the customer expectations.

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