Re-engineering the Management of Human Resources in University Libraries

A. T. Francis
(Kerala Agricultural University)

S. Humayoon Kabir
(Cochin University of Science and Technology)

Re-engineering

Re-engineering is the fundamental rethinking and redesign of business processes to achieve dramatic improvements in critical, contemporary measures of performance, such as cost, quality, service and speed.

Michael Hammer and James Champy

Re-engineering is a rapid and radical re-designing of processes, services, policies and the organizational structure of an organization.
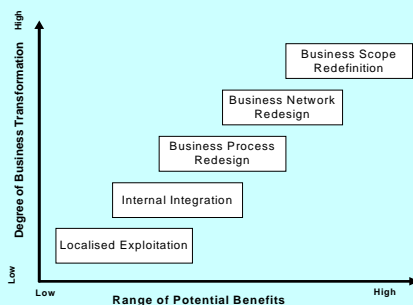

Re-engineering Cycle
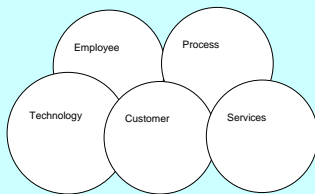
Key Target Areas

(i). Customer Friendly;

(ii). Effectiveness; and

(iii). Efficiency

Levels of Organisational Transformation

Human Resource Requirements of Modern Libraries

- Rapid technological changes, especially ICT demands an ever more adaptive and sophisticated workforce.

- Need to cultivate a new workforce of electronic resources librarians, information managers, system integrators, etc.

- Education and training provides to conceive, build, and implement a wide array of user-oriented applications using innovative information technology.

HRM Issues

- The profession demands for leaders who are not only doers, but also effective communicators.
- The IFLA/FAIFE World Report (2005) points out that the modern librarians should develop skills and competencies not only in content management but also in ICT aspects like Internet protocols and control software, filtering tools, etc.
- Proper emphasis on human resource management is highly crucial in the handling the process of change in a library.

HRM Issues (Contd…)

- An earlier study by Somanathan Nair reveals that librarians consider I.T. not as a means to reduce their workload, but as a device to render effective information service to patrons.
- It stresses the need for participatory style of management to achieve maximum benefit out of the application of IT in libraries.

HRM Issues (Contd…)

- If people who are associated with automation – either who operate technology or who are served with it, respond badly to it, the anticipated effectiveness of using technology will not be achieved.
- The attitudes of people hold towards a proposed technological change determine their response to the change.
- Failure to take these attitudes into account and deal with them appropriately leads may lead to catastrophe and even organizational collapse.

Expert Committee of Govt. of Kerala (V.P. Joy)

- Made several valid recommendations to revamp libraries.
- Librarianship is a highly complex profession warranting specialized and technical knowledge of various sorts like personnel administration / financial management and different bibliographical techniques.
- Librarians also require higher academic qualifications like other heads of the departments of the college as recommended by the UGC.
- Give the college librarians, academic status (non-vocation) and bring librarian also under the definition of 'teacher'.
- Soundararajan (1979) established the necessity for re-designating qualified librarians as Professors and Assistant Professors.

Paradigm shifts in LIS Profession

(i). *Transition from paper to electronic media*

(ii). I*ncreasing demand for accountability;*

(iii). *New forms of work organization*

Special Libraries Association (SLA)

Convergence of LIS and IT

- Operational convergence between the library and computing disciplines is happened.
- Convergence and the subsequent emergence of hybrid form of libraries are the creation of modern ICT.
- Hybrid libraries are described as 'the continuum between the conventional and digital library, where electronic and paper-based information sources are used alongside each other.

Effect of Convergence

- Wilson and Halpin (2006) reported the result of a study done in LIS departments of four British Universities and assessed the strong indication of changing role and duties of academic library staff evolving as new hybrid information professionals.

- The convergence of ICT and LIS has necessitated re-defining many of the roles of the conventional librarian as digital librarian, especially in the context of Digital Information Systems.

- Foster (2006) reported that many universities in UK and USA are in the line of integrating libraries and computer services. He quoted the pioneering initiatives done by Columbia University and Carnegie Mellon University using the concept of the 'Chief Information Officer' role that can be traced back to the early 1980s.

- The Follett Committee Report (1993) pushed university libraries in UK to re-evaluate their changing roles and work with IT.

Competencies required for Librarians

- *Professional competencies; and*

- *Personal competencies*

Business Process Re-engineering

- BPR can be applied to manage ICT effectively.

- Special attention is needed on HRM issues to reap the maximum benefits of ICTs.

University Libraries in Kerala

- Out of 7 universities, 6 have permanent libraries and one library functioning in temporary building.

- One university functioned 25 years without library.

- Libraries adopted ICT in varied degrees.

- 4 libraries have access to UGC Infonet and all are providing services in digital format also.

- For exploiting the potentialities of ICTs, web technologies, etc., libraries have to move further.

Professionals in Libraries

Professionals in UGC Cadre

Library Assistant (LA)
Technical Assistant (TA)
Reference Assistant (RA)
Assistant Librarian (AL) Gr.II

Staff Position in Libraries

Library	Staff in UGC-Cadre	Staff in Non-UGC Cadre	Total
UOK	23	46	70
MGU	11	13	25
UOC	12	17	30
KU	01	06	08
CUSAT	14	13	28
SSUS	01	15	16
KAU	01	07	09

Confusing Designations

Librarian (UGC) (in Universities) : 16400-22400 : 06 Nos.
Librarian (UGC) (in Colleges)   : 8000-13500   : 50 Nos.
Librarian Gr. I (in Colleges)   : 7200-11400   : 100 Nos.
Librarian Gr. I (in Govt. Depts.) : 7200-11400   : 20 Nos.
Librarian Gr. II (in Colleges)   : 5800 – 9425 : 40 Nos.
Librarian Gr. II (in Govt. Depts.) : 5800 – 9425 : 20 Nos.
Librarian Gr. III (in Colleges)   : 5000 – 8150 : 150 Nos.
Librarian Gr. IV (in College/Dept.) : 3590 – 5400 : 200 Nos.
Librarian Gr. IV (in Govt. Depts.) : 3590 – 5400 : 80 Nos.
Librarian (Village Libraries): Rs.500/- to 750/-: 15000 Nos.
(Honorarium)

Confusing Designations (Contd..)

Deputy Librarian (in Universities)   : 12000-18300
Asst. Librarian Sel.Gr.(UGC)(in utys.) : 12000-18300
Asst. Librarian Sr. Gr. (UGC) (in Utys.) : 10000-15200
Asst. Librarian (UGC) (in Utys.)   : 8000-13500
Asst. Librarian Gr.II (in Utys.)   : 6675-10550
Asst. Librarian (in few agencies)   : 3590 – 5400
Junior Librarian (in Utys.)   : 7200-11400
Professional Assistant I (in Utys.) : 5800 – 9425
Professional Assistant (in Utys.)   : 5000 – 8150
Reference Assistant (in Utys.)   : 6675-10550
Technical Assistant (in Utys.)   : 5800 – 9425
Library Assistant (in Utys.)   : 5000 – 8150
Library Assistant (in Colleges)   : 2610 – 3680 **(Class IV)**

Training Needs of Professionals

- **Digital library**
- **Web designing**
- **Database Development**
- **Hardware maintenance**
- **Web hosting and maintenance**
- **Network Administration**
- **Internet and Online Search**
- **Library Automation**
- **Software development**

Proposed Designations

Librarian: Lecturer & College Librarian
Assistant Librarian: Asst. Professor & Asst. Librarian
(In Agrl. Universities)
Deputy Librarian: Assoc. Professor & Dy. Librarian
(In Agrl. Universities)
Assistant Librarian: Lecturer & Asst. Librarian
(In other Universities)
Deputy Librarian: Reader & Deputy Librarian
(In other Universities)
University Librarian: Professor& University Librarian
(In all Universities)

Proposed Designations (Contd..)

Librarian Grade IV : Junior Technical Asst. (JTA)
Librarian Grade III : Technical Asst. (TA)
Librarian Grade II : Senior Technical Asst. (STA)
Librarian Grade I : Technical Officer II (TO-II)
Senior Librarian : Technical Officer I (TO-I)
Library / Profl. Asst.   : Technical Asst. (TA)
Technical / Profl Asst. II   : Sr. Technical Asst. (STA)
Reference Asst. / Jr. Librarian: Technical Officer II (TO-II)
Asst. Librarian Gr. II / Ref.Asst. (Hr.Gr.): Tech. Officer I (TO-I)
Asst. Librarian Gr. I   : Senior Tech. Officer (STO)

Findings

- **Radical re-design in the HRM of libraries is essential.**
- **13-31% professionals has experience in digital information management and only 2-6% has experience in latest Web technologies, network administration, etc..**
- **Professionals need rigorous training in modern topics of ICT.**
- **Thorough re-structuring and frequent revision of LIS curriculum is an immediate need.**
- **The present structure of existing UGC refresher courses and other training programmes are inadequate to meet the challenges of modern knowledge management.**
- **No regular system to train the professionals in the Non-UGC Cadre.**
- **Professionals also need skills in general management, communication and public relation, psychology, presentation and teaching skills, etc.**
- **The management of modern ICTs in all libraries is functionally vested with few professionals and others have either not shown enough interest in these aspects or they have been automatically sidelined because of lack of training and confidence in handling such systems.**

Findings (Contd…)

- The university libraries in Kerala did not have comparable staff strength. It varies from 10 to 107 and some libraries are facing acute shortage of staff and this affect the quality of services.
- Posts of University Librarian in Kerala, except in one University, are vacant for several years. This causes lack proper leadership, dynamism, continuity, etc. and adversely affects proper adoption of ICTs.
- Kerala is experiencing dearth of professionals with 18 years experience in the UGC cadre to consider for appointment as University Librarian. As the UGC scheme has not been implemented properly for librarians, the retirement age is still continuing as 55 years, outside candidates are not interested to come to Kerala.
- The existing rules for appointment, promotion, etc. of library staff are not scientific and hence it creates many litigation and staff dissatisfaction. As ratio promotion exists for professionals in Non-UGC Cadre, this is mainly based on chance rather than performance or experience.
- The nomenclature of designations of library staff created utter confusion and misunderstanding among the general public and even the educated persons.
- Professionals consider that BPR can be applied for HRM.

Recommendatons

- Mandatory clauses should be there in UGC/ICAR Regulations for the establishment and maintenance of libraries with the required minimum infrastructure and facilities in terms of documents, services, staff, fund, etc. in all universities, colleges and similar institutions of higher education in the country.
- College Libraries should be re-named as the Dept. of Library and Information Services and made them as the Statutory Teaching Depts. with enough staff and resources.
- The experience criteria fixed by UGC for the post of University Librarian should be amended as 18 years in libraries with PhD compulsory.
- UGC refresher courses should give more stress on modern ICT topics with enough practical sessions. Courses should be arranged in libraries having all modern facilities.
- Exchange of teachers/librarians between universities within and outside the country may be arranged.
- UGC may introduce compulsory refresher courses for professionals in Non-UGC Cadre also.

Recommendatons (Contd…)

- Implement a Flexible Complementing Scheme of Career Advancement as prevailing in DRDO, CSIR, ISRO, etc.; in universities and colleges.
- The Higher Education Council may effectively interfere in the formulation and implementation of standard and uniform policies and regulations for the establishment and maintenance of quality libraries.
- There should be minimum one professional in the UGC faculty cadre to head the library dept. in (i) all colleges; (ii) all department libraries of the teaching depts. of the universities; and also in (iii) all divisions / dept. of university libraries.
- All recommendations of the V.P. Joy Committee should be implemented.
- LIS courses to be thoroughly restructured with compulsory internship and accreditation system.
- The designations of the professionals may be re-designated as listed in table: 5.

Thank you

A.T. Francis, KAU