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Continuing education programme for LIS professionals: Need resources and administrative support

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Abstract

Continuing education which is necessary for the professional development growth, it is in the form of upgrading knowledge and skills of teachers in their profession. The paper discuss the need, resources and support for acquiring knowledge and new skills to manage the modern day academic libraries.

Keywords: LIS professionals, administrative support, professional development growth, academic libraries

Introduction

The Information Age has changed the way people look at libraries, librarians, and information, in general. Library science is so closely related to information technology that the traditional definitions no longer accurately reflect the discipline without incorporating the conceptual elements of information technology. Starting from the 1970s and 1980s, the impact of technological advancements has been increasing, changing the readers habits in accessing and retrieving information. In order to provide better client services, accommodations to, and acquisition of new technology have been made in all library transaction models. The application of new technologies extends to acquisition, cataloguing, collection development, circulation, reference, information literacy education, information retrieval, library services promotion, institutional internal communication and so on. Thus, all library professionals, regardless of department affiliation, face an imperative to upgrade their knowledge, improve their skills and to adapt and broaden service models. They have no other option if they wish to maintain a role both in the profession and, by extension, in the vitality of the library as an institution.

What is continuing education Programme (CEP)

Continuing Education is a lifetime learning process, which is both universal and individualization. It is the main requirement of all librarians due to the rapid changes in the library field. Continuing education Programme means continuing professional development refer to the additional training that many professionals go through in order to improve upon skills, understand new techniques, and maintain previously learned knowledge. In order for a professional to stay abreast of developments within his or her field, continuing professional development is crucial. Although every professional can benefit from continuing professional development, certain professionals are required to enroll in development programs on a regular basis.

Need for Continuing Education Programme in LIS profession

At the entry level of academic librarian, a basic degree in library science is the required qualification for a library professional in the state universities. In the changing electronic environment, higher qualification especially in information technology related areas is to be made mandatory for serving the IT perceptive academic community. For a new librarian, training begins from the moment he/she steps into the profession. Formal classroom instruction covers primarily generalized knowledge about the fundamental concepts and theories of library systems and operations. Each individual library, however, exhibits its own unique identity composed of organizational structure, types and arrangement of information

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resources, clientele characteristics and needs, and international relations that all from the work place culture. There is always something new to be learned or a way to improve an existing skill and also development of information communication technologies (ICT) have revolutionized the information handling capabilities of academic libraries and information centers all over the world. Librarians, especially academic librarians have been facing challenges in the profession due to the rapid technological changes with the development of information technologies, particularly the internet. Now Librarians have to play the role of mediator between the vast network of resources and its users. To meet the ever changing demands of the users, library professional require continuously updated knowledge and skills for effective performance. Hence, it is important to access the library professionals needs for continuing education and professional development in the changing electronic environment of an academic library. That is why it is essential for library and information science professionals to continue their education as long as they are in the business.

Resources for Professional Development

The Library science departments and the professionals associations have to take the initiatives to organize on a regular basis, continuing education programmes to ensure that the working professionals are competent to face the challenges of the profession. In addition to the basic qualification and requirements for a career in library and

information science, library professionals on their part, have to continuously update their skills to maintain and support user centered applications and face the challenges of ever increasing demands for wide-ranging IT oriented services from the academic community. The facilities like study leave and other incentives provided to teaching faculty must be extended to library professionals also, to encourage them to acquire higher qualifications. As refresher courses and career advancement is mandatory for professionals in the UGC cadre only. Professionals for whom the attendance is mandatory for attaining senior grades mostly attend the conference and workshops. The number of professionals who have attended such training programmes purely for attaining knowledge may be very few. A continuous programme of professionals development must be compulsory for all library professionals. The training programmes and orientation programme to develop skills of library professionals are to be organized by the institution in a regular manner and equal opportunities are to provided to all library professionals irrespective of experience to participate in workshops, seminars, conference etc. conducted by various other institutions and library association. Professionals development activities ought to be encouraged from the junior most level to develop the competence of all professionals in providing various technological based services.

In the LIS profession, national and international bodies are arranging CEPs for professional development.

Sr. no	Name of the Bodies	Agency
International Level		
1	International Associations	The International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA), the American Library Association (ALA), the Library Association (LA), London
National Level		
2	National Institution	Defense Scientific Information and Documentation Centre (DESIDOC), National Social Science Documentation Centre (NASSDOC), National Medical Library (NML), All India Institute of Medical Sciences (AIIMS), National Information System for Science and Technology (NISSAT).
3	Libraries	Indian Institution of Sciences (ISSc), Indian Institute of Technology (IITs), Central Universities.
4	Professional Associations	Indian Library Association (ILA), Indian Association of Special Libraries and Information Centers (IASLIC), Society for Information Systems (SIS).
5	Library School and Training Centers	All LIS Schools, Indian National Scientific and Documentation Centre (INSDOC), Document Research and Training Centers (DRTC).
6	UGC	Human Resource Centre of different universities, INFLIBNET.
7	Library Networks	Delhi Library Network (DELNET), Ahmadabad Information Network (ADINET), Mysore Library Network (MYLIBNET), Pune Library Network (PUNENET), Bombay Library Network (BONET), Madras Library Network (MALIBNET), etc.

Other than this there are many additional free online resources available that you can use to help you move your level of knowledge forwards.

Administrative support

Administrative support is an obvious and essential element in the professional development process. Library administration provides funding releases time, and the positive evaluation for achievement, but the real and necessary contribution of administrative is that it confers structure to the entire enterprise.

Conclusion

There's no doubt that mastering the field of librarianship is worth doing, but it does contain many more challenges than most people realize. CEPs are one of the main means through which Indian colleges and university librarians are keeping up-to-date in their profession. HRCs of the Indian

universities are playing prominent roles in imparting CEP courses to LIS professionals along with national institutions and libraries, professional associations, and library networks.

Continuous education is not only a systematic and continuous schooling, but also a process of development and human consciousness in all its aspects It follows the philosophy of "lifelong education".

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