Strategic Management and Evaluation of Libraries – A Study

V. Rama Chandra Murthy **,** Research Scholar, University College of Commerce & Business Management, Osmania University, Hyderabad

Abstract: *All libraries must look into the future to be able to develop long-term strategies to meet user needs. Libraries are an integrant part of the national informational system and strategic institutes ensuring access to any kind of information. The librarians accept evaluation as a key concept underlying the development and improvement of information services, that can ensure the provision of better products and services. The managers have to value qualitatively and quantitatively the resources being managed, as well as to plan services to accommodate functionality improvement derived from research and development. A changing user population, technology enhancement, transformation of the scholarly communication system, digital libraries, new approaches to management and renewed commitment to planning and assessment throughout the organization are propelling the library environment. On the strategic level libraries on average have developed the ability to collect process and assimilate technological innovation.*

Keywords: *Strategy, Quality, Efficiency, Effectiveness, Innovation and Design.*

"My library is the place where I find inspiration, information, and connection with the world - and peace."- Ruth W. Crocker

Introduction

Strategic planning determines where an organization is going over the next year or more, how it's going to get there and how it'll know if it got there or not. The focus of a strategic plan is usually on the entire organization, while the focus of a business plan is usually on a particular product, service or program. There are a variety of perspectives, models and approaches used in strategic planning. The way that a strategic plan is developed depends on the nature of the organization's leadership, culture of the organization, complexity of the organization's environment, size of the organization and expertise of planners. Libraries today are involved in a wide range of activities, including encouraging reading and providing books, supporting learning across all ages, brokering access to a wide range of types of information, acting as a community space, linking to other public and community.

An overview of the literature shows that the core issues discussed have been insufficient funds, inadequate size of collections, problems in acquisition, lack of standards, poor planning for automation, importance of resource sharing, shortage of competent professionals, and lack of standards. It seems imperative to throw light on status of collection evaluation and to furnish workable suggestions for establishing the culture of evaluation. Since it is an almost untouched area in literature, the study will create awareness, and recommendations will help create user-centered collection evaluation.

Objectives of the study

➢ To know the strategic application in libraries

> ➢ To understand management and evaluation of libraries
> ➢ To offer suitable conclusions

Strategic Management

"Designing a desired future and identifying ways to bring it about "Involves ideas and actions that are directed to the long-term future of the organization. The library's mission setting of the library's goals and objectives.

According to Chandler (1962), strategy is "the determination of the basic long-term goals and objectives of an enterprise and the adoption of courses of action and the allocation of resources necessary for carrying out those goals. Strategic management is a top-level and business-level function Tactical management is at the functional and operational levels However, personnel at the tactical level provide information input to management for use in making decisions.

"The process by which the guiding members of an organization envision its future and develop the necessary procedures and operations to achieve that future" (Goodstein, Nolan, and Pfeiffer, 1992)

Strategic management is not a clean, step by step process. It is not linear, but a .messy. Iterative process that requires hard work and dedication from most people in the organization to move it toward the future. It represents a new focus for the organization; a focus on a compelling vision of the future.

Source: www.maine.gove/doe/plan.com

Benefits of Strategic Planning: Strategic planning serves a variety of purposes in organizations, including to:

Clearly define the purpose of the organization and to establish realistic goals and objectives consistent with that mission in a defined time frame within the organizations.Communicate those goals and objectives to the organization's constituents

Develop a sense of ownership of the plan.

➢ Ensure the most effective use is made of the organization's resources by focusing the resources on the key priorities.

➢ Provide a base from which progress can be measured and establish a mechanism for informed change when needed.

➢ Listen to everyone's opinions in order to build consensus about where the organization is going.

➢ Provides clearer focus for the organization, thereby producing more efficiency and effectiveness

➢ Bridges staff/employees and the board of directors (in the case of corporations)

➢ Builds strong teams in the board and in the staff/employees (in the case of corporations)

➢ Provides the glue that keeps the board members together (in the case of corporations).

➢ Produces great satisfaction and meaning among planners, especially around a common vision.

➢ Increases productivity from increased efficiency and effectiveness.

➢ Solves major problems in the organization.

Libraries have to answer a Series of Challenges:

➢ Informatics Assimilation in Librarianship Activities content;

➢ Moving the emphasis from document to information;

➢ The intersection between digital and traditional libraries provides

➢ Fertile territory for adapting traditional library measures for use in the digital

➢ Environment. The digital libraries process evaluation derived from decision

➢ Making considered a previous stage to action, when of several alternatives

➢ Must choose the best option in relation to goals, the available resources and

➢ Digital libraries evaluation.

➢ Identifying areas of activity which require changes

➢ Making constructive changes and improvement of library activity

➢ Discovering techniques to increase efficiency

➢ Planning activities and services

➢ Reasoning funding requests by the tutelary bodies

➢ Redefining the objectives of the system (if applicable)

➢ Developing a database for future research

Management and Evaluation of Libraries

Evaluation management is the relationship between people and the physical environment in the context of a

specific institution and how this relationship affects its programs, Activities, and users' goals. Library evaluation is a powerful tool for management and change. It enables learning from an existing facility about the effectiveness of past actions and design decisions. At the same time, it can give directions for future building construction and/or renovation, target preventative maintenance, suggest facility or operational changes, and offer insight into organizational health. The methods and scope of evaluations vary according to how the information is intended to be used, the client and audience for the findings, and the institutional context within which it is conducted.

A search for literature relevant to library design, management, and evaluation provided detailed discussions on the process and issues involved in library design and management. Most authors are library consultants, librarians, architects, and/or interior designers who have drawn on their experience in library design and management rather than on empirical research.

Evaluation of existing facilities and services, however, was frequently recognized as a vital component in the needs assessments phase of planning for library buildings. The literature emphasizes how and why one should understand library functions such as user services, staff requirements, and materials processing. It also emphasizes the importance of identifying current problems, the design and service impacts of new technologies, and management of planning, design, and change processes. On the basis of this review and our own research, we conclude that there are seven key issues that describe the comprehensive nature of these design considerations.

Materials processing : To understand how a particular library functions one must know how books, periodicals, other "hard" materials which form its collections, and mail are physically acquired and subsequently processed through the organization and building space The rationale for why particular processes and sequences are used is fundamental for understanding staff functions, interrelationships, adjacency requirements, and security measures for future environmental and organizational change.

Behavior Settings: Patterns in the relationships between people and particular places can be analyzed through the concept of "behavior settings". Behavior settings are places such as study areas, circulation desks, and staff workstations occupied by specific groups of people in which recurring and predictable patterns of behavior occur. According to behavior setting theory, one can predict certain types of behavior in a setting, especially places with cultural continuity such as libraries   Misfits between people, place, and behavior result in poor working conditions, discomfort, inefficiencies in building use, and other problems. Libraries consist of many behavior settings to support staff and users' activities, materials processing, and the library's role in its immediate community and organizational context .Library design literature tends to focus on one or more of these recurrent behavior settings. These behavior settings include, but are not limited to individual staff workstations with computers, users' study and reading areas, materials processing areas, book

and periodicals stacks, reference and circulation service desks, community meeting rooms, and exhibition spaces.

Resolution of Public, Private, and Interface Functions: While most libraries exist to serve their users, they must delineate areas for public access to library services and materials, areas for staff processing of materials and information that are secure and separate from public access, and areas for staff and user interactions such as reference and service desks. Resolution of these functional distinctions in spatial terms and zones within the building requires careful consideration of issues such as material and personal security, staff's need for uninterrupted and quiet work areas, behavior settings for user / staff interactions for access to materials and user service, and differing architectural requirements for storage, user, and staff areas.

Design: Design issues such as the building's relationship to its physical and institutional context, entry and control points, the flexibility and adjustability of the building to future changes in function and technology, and building image are important design considerations for evaluation and recommendations. The issue of designing flexible versus purpose-built spaces within library buildings is currently receiving attention in the architectural and library design literature.

Interface with Technology: Evaluation and planning for the impacts of technological change is an important issue to consider in evaluation and design. Microform and computer technology, for instance, have generated more types of materials and support

spaces for accessing them. They have not replaced hard copy materials or reduced libraries' space needs but have generated new types of spaces and needed infrastructure. On the other hand, the increased availability of materials through speedy inter-library loan programs has reduced on-site requirements for complete collections, most notably in special-purpose libraries. Power and cabling requirements for the exponential increase in computer terminals for staff and patron use, ergonomic considerations in work station design, and lighting considerations are all related to the impacts of continued technological change.

Environmental Controls: Lighting, temperature and humidity controls, noise, wiring, fire safety and security affect people's health and well-being, task performance, and material preservation. Types of lighting and lighting-level standards, access to windows, energy conservation measures, humidity control, and use of operable windows in libraries require evaluation for future recommendations and design guidelines.

Managing the Processes of Change

The process of planning for changes in library facilities has been the subject of several books that outline needs assessments, planning, design, construction, and moving processes. Librarians are often the managers of the library facility and its processes of change. Literature exists on "how to work with an architect, "managing the move process, and developing an understanding of the range of issues and behavior settings in libraries. Management issues are not typically included in post-occupancy evaluations, but they are important mitigating factors in staff's,

and to some extent users', satisfaction with the resulting facility.

Conclusions : Libraries in recent years have witnessed an important development because the use of strategically ICT systems, the process evaluation becoming indispensable since it generates data and information on various aspects such as resources, activities, services, collections and their budget. Resulting conclusions have value only in an integrative vision, so it can be argued that assessment is a complex form of knowledge of all organizational realities. By creating a "culture of evaluation", library and library services are continuously evaluated to enable a clear understanding of weaknesses in service delivery and open the way for possible improvements. allow a library manager to quickly and easily evaluate the quality of service provided in different functional areas, during various periods of time, by monitoring the quantitative performance indicators and targets.

➢ To allow data of these quantitative measurements released on to be easily inserted and loaded into the system.
➢ To allow the documents and quality management procedures to be created modified, approved and disseminated.
➢ To allow useful links to be established between such documents and also to create a culture of excellence in providing library services,
➢ To help libraries to understand better the user perceptions of library service quality, also systematically collect and interpret the library-user feedback;
➢ To provide libraries information on assessments carried out in the same type of institutions in order to compare experiences;
➢ To identify best practice in library services
➢ To develop analytical skills of employees to interpret and act on data

Finally, strategically management and evaluation library services have a valuable role to play in supporting information management, service development, reporting, designing, marketing and advocacy. Also, it can demonstrate the value of digital library services and their contribution to institutional goals. One of the main contributions of this paper is the identifications of strategic management and evaluation

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