

Full Length Research

Importance of Academic Performance Indicator (API) on the Professional Development (PD) of Academic Librarians

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This research paper was addressed an importance of Academic Performance Indicator on the Professional Development of academic librarians. The definitions, related terms and concept were discussed in the paper. The author was highlighted an individual and institutional responsibilities for the professional development of academic librarians. Also, suggested the various useful activities for professional development.

Keywords: Academic Performance Indicator (API), Professional Development (PD), Organizational Development (OD), Performance Based Assessment System (PBAS), and Professional Development Activities, etc.

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INTRODUCTION

We live in a rapidly changing world where legislative, social and economic developments directly affect the environment in which we live and work, and where technological advances provide radically different ways of working. Professional Development opportunities provide a means whereby we can keep abreast of these changes, broaden our skills and be more effective in our work.

Librarians the world over are faced with the constant challenge of remaining abreast of developments in their field (ALA, 1980). Rapid changes in technology and workplace roles threaten to make their skills obsolete unless they undertake constant Professional

Development. This international collection presents a comprehensive overview of current continuing professional development theory and practice for those who manage and work in library and information services (Paul and Walton, 2006). The objective behind this research study is to identify various activities and essential skills for professional development.

DEFINITIONS OF TERMS AND CONCEPTS

It is important to define the meanings of concepts form the basis for describing and explaining phenomena and

processes in a field of research study. Within the field of Library and Information Science, many of the concepts used need to be understood in terms of research context, as a variety of meanings can be attached to most concepts (Kulkarni, 2012).

Academic Librarians

According to the American Library Association (1980), "Academic librarians are classified according to the type of library in which they work". This means that a librarian who supports members of an academic community, such as students, researchers and lecturing staff, by managing, organizing, evaluating and disseminating the information they need is an academic librarian and one who perform his/her duties in college libraries he/she defined as a college librarian.

Professional Development

Professional Development is quite simply a means of supporting people in the workplace to understand more about the environment in which they work, the job they do and how to do it better. It is an ongoing process throughout our working lives.

Professional Development can be part of an individual's personal ambition to be a better practitioner, enhance his/her career prospects or to simply feel more confident about their work and make it more personally fulfilling. It can be a step on the ladder to higher qualifications or enhanced job prospects or be required by professional bodies to maintain professional status. It can be part of meeting targets set by workforce performance management schemes or an opportunity for individuals to change their career paths.

Also, PD is an important part of our working lives; it also represents a means for college librarians to support their library staff. Professional Development can facilitate access to specialized structured training, help to review working practices and contribute to a more effective and profitable library services.

Performance Indicator

Performance Indicator is one of many tools to help answer the question: How do you know what you are achieving? The simple definition of a performance indicator from an NSW council of Social Service publication is, "A numerical measure of the degree to which the objective is being achieved. Performance indicators are usually seen as numerical measures of achievement that are easy to collect and use. In theory they can only be derived for things over which you have

control, however in practice people don't have absolute control is really a matter of whether there is enough control for your purpose".

A more sophisticated definition from the office of Public Management given by Lockett (1992) is, "A performance indicator defines the measurement of piece of important and useful information about the performance of a program expressed as a percentage, index, rate or other comparison which is monitored at regular intervals and is compared to one or more criterion".

Academic Performance Indicator

University Grants Commission (UGC, 2010) notifying that "Regulations on Minimum Qualifications for Appointment of teachers and Academic staff in Universities and Colleges and Measures for the Maintenance of standards in Higher Education." Performance of teacher will be assessed on the basis of a Performance Based Assessment System in which scores have been assigned to each sub dimension or Academic Performance Indicator.

As per APIs identified by the UGC and approved by the Human Resource Development ministry, 75% weight-age will be given to "Procurement Organization and Delivery of Knowledge and Information through Library Services" activities which will include library resources organization and maintenance of books, journals, reports; provision of library readers services, literature retrieval services to researchers and analysis of reports; provision of assistance to the department of university/college with the required inputs for preparing reports, manuals and related documents; assistance towards updating institutional websites with activities related information and for bringing out institutional newsletters, etc. Under each category there are certain pre-decided activities which have been assigned certain points. Librarians will have to perform these activities to earn marks or credits. (JNU, 2010)

1. CATEGORY OF ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE

There are three categories on which academic performance will be rated first is, 'Procurement, organization, and delivery of knowledge and information through Library services', second is, 'Co-curricular extension and professional development related activities', and third is, 'research and academic contribution. Under each category there are certain pre decided activities which are assigned certain points. College librarians will have to perform these activities to earn marks or credits. The Academic Performance Indicator system is directly proportional to the Professional Development of college librarians.

2. CONCEPT OF CHANGE AND ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE INDICATOR

Change is rule of nature. Change is the only one phenomenon that never Change, so we have to accept Changes, Challenges, and enjoy it. Some changes are also occurring in librarianship profession such as working nature of librarianship and performance of librarians. Now a day's performance of college librarians will be assessed on the basis of a Performance Based Assessment System in which scores have been assigned to each sub dimension or Academic Performance Indicator.

3. RESPONSIBILITY FOR CONTINUING EDUCATION AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

It is responsibility of individuals to mentor new professionals and the responsibility of working institutions to provide mechanisms which enable academic librarians to plan and undertake learning and other development activities. Mentoring programmes to assist members in their ongoing professional development. The responsibility for continuing education and professional development is shared by-

- Individual Practitioners (Librarians)
- Their Employing Institutions
- Professional Associations (ILA, IASLIC, IFLA etc.)
- Government Regulating Agencies (UGC, AICTE etc.) and
- Library and Information Science education programmes

4. LEARNING ACTIVITIES FOR INCREASING ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE INDICATOR

Learning activities are very important for increasing Academic Performance of academic librarians. Keeping current with new developments, issues and gaining expertise and more knowledge or skills by –

- Job rotation
- Attending formal courses or distance learning programmes (IGNOU-MBA, PGDLAN), tutorials etc.
- Independent self study
- Reading professional literature in print or online such as e-newsletters, web-based resources such as magazines, journals, full text articles
- Attending professional conferences, especially those sponsored by library professionals association, publishing groups, or academic

societies

- Joining sponsored training sessions on additional skills
- Monitoring new developments in the field by joining appropriate List-servs, e-discussion groups, networking and Social (Whatsapp) groups
- Participating in conferences, seminars, webinars, workshop etc. as a speaker, facilitator, reactor, trainer or mentor.
- Through scholarly research, writing and collaboration with other librarians, information professional and publishers
- Study visits local, national and international libraries and information centers.
- Visiting major book exhibitions or book fairs (Pustak Mela).
- Master new technologies, earn advanced degrees, audit relevant courses and learn new languages and learn about library space planning.

5. PARTICIPATIVE ACTIVITIES FOR INCREASING ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE INDICATOR

The following are the participative activities for increasing Academic Performance Indicator of academic librarians.

- Get formal management training
- Lead local, national, and international professional committees
- Publish in the literature Ex: Book Writing.
- Active participation in professional conferences
- Edit professional journals and other publications in the field
- Organize professional conferences
- Participate in leadership institutes and fellowships
- Write for research grants Ex: UGC-MRP, CSIR etc.
- Consult for government agencies and international organizations

TECHNICAL COMPETENCE FOR INCREASING ACADEMIC PERFORMANCE INDICATOR

The Technical competence is also essential for increasing Academic Performance Indicator of academic librarians. These are:

- Learn Text mining and text analytics
- Learn software installation and hardware courses
- Achieve greater technical competence such as:

Table-1: Importance of Skills for Professional Development

Skills	Importance
Administrative/management skills	To perform managerial role efficiently
ICT skills	For Automation, Digitization, and institutional repository
Curriculum Knowledge	For acquire latest development in subject knowledge
Information Literacy /Integration Skills	To increase awareness of users
Leadership Skills	For the organizational development
Assessment or evaluation skills	For Performance Evaluation
Presentation skills	For presentation of views and thoughts
Promotion or marketing skills	For marketing library services and products
Subject expertise	For updating knowledge and perform duties
Research or writing skills	For conducting field research and publish papers
Teaching skills	To teach new comers/users and increase footfall in library
Negotiation skills	Negotiate with vendor/publishers for quality services
Analytical skills	To perform SWOT or PEST Analysis
Logical skills	To increase interpersonal relations
Project Management Skills	To get and complete various projects in library

process design and visualization of workflows for use in workflow re-envisioning

- Scripting and programming skills that allow manipulation of disparate data sources into metadata for use in discovery systems; XML, RDF and semantic web/linked data concepts; and how to work with big data (Anderson, 2007).

7. IMPORTANCE OF SKILLS FOR PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

The skills are vital importance while performing job of librarian. Due to advancement in technology and its vast use in the library the complete nature of working is changed. So, there is strong need to acquire various skills and knowledge. The Table 1 shows the skills and their importance for the professional development of academic librarians.

CONCLUSION

The Academic Performance Indicator is directly related to the Professional Development of academic librarians. Hence, to increase the academic performance the professional development activities such as Learning, Participative and Technical Competence activities are essential. It plays a vital role in increasing the academic performance of librarians.

The professional development is never ending process; it is continuous such as lifelong learning process. Though, the performance of academic librarians was assessed on the basis of a Performance Based Assessment System

their participation in professional development activities was increased. It is a good sign for librarianship profession.

Abbreviations: Professional Development (PD), Performance Indicator (PI), Performance Based Assessment System (PBAS), NSW council of Social Service (NCOSS), Academic Performance Indicator (API), Human Resource Development (HRD).

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