HRM in libraries: An Indian perspective
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ABSTRACT

The purpose of this paper is to review human resource management (HRM) in apex institutes of India. It is to determine the level at, and manner by which, HRM issues are handled in Indian libraries and their parent organisations. The paper seeks to discuss the transition from the traditional personnel administration to an HRM approach of focusing on humans as a valuable resource at workplace and the implications. Through literature review, the philosophy and an understanding of HRM plus its branch of human resource development (HRD) were developed. Discussions were held with some Librarians and Library & Information Science (LIS) Faculty members; observations were also made on HRM processes at play. That generated data from prominent institutes of India.

The paper finds that the HRM approach has been adopted in NISCAIR, where library managers' participation varies in each of the HRM core functions, namely, workforce recruitment, HRD, employment relations, health/safety, performance assessment and remuneration. Some librarians handle HRM issues unassisted, others jointly work with HR officers. To the disadvantage of libraries, some others are aloof from HRM. Recommendations include librarians' close interaction with HR professionals; further studies, training plus advocacy in Human Resource Management. The paper has reviewed the strengths and weaknesses over this still fluid HRM approach; raised awareness on desirable levels of participation by library managers; and how working relations among employees and employers may create an environment that enhances institutional performance for effective library management.

Keywords: Human resource development (HRD), NISCAIR, NASSCOM, DRTC.

1. Introduction

Human Resource Development (HRD) is qualitative change in the personality of human being so that the manpower is effectively utilized in the libraries for optimum utilization of resources and for providing better library services. NISCAIR, DRTC and NASSCOM of India among Asia has a rich legacy of resources, both capital and human. Core activity of these institutes is to develop human resource and to store, publish and disseminate scientific and technological information through a mix of traditional and modern means that will benefit the Research and Development community and other segment of society in India and abroad with special thrust areas of Libraries and Information Centres.

2. Review of related literature
2.1 Conceptualizing and contextualizing HRM in libraries

Libraries in all sectors are coming under increasing pressure from governments and other policymakers to cooperate. Various factors might drive this call, including funding constraints in both the library and education sectors; calls for schools to improve links with their local communities; and the trend for public libraries to offer other community services to help attract nontraditional users. Although cooperation might take many forms, including resource sharing, reciprocal access arrangements, joint promotions, and collaborative learning activities, joint use libraries serving two or more client groups in the same building are, as Bundy (2002) has put it, "the ultimate form of co-operation."

Although the concept of joint use libraries dates back to the nineteenth century, their popularity has fluctuated over time and from region to region. There was political support for the concept in South Australia in the early 1970s and in Florida in the 1990s, for instance (see Bundy, 1998; Aaron, 1992). Despite continued reservations from some within the library profession, the current emphasis on collaboration means that joint use libraries have, probably, never been more relevant to public policy. For example, the number of joint use libraries appears to have increased significantly over the last five years; they are seen as a politically attractive option in response to current government initiatives. Even on a small scale, implementing a joint use library can be an extremely complex undertaking. The challenge can be even greater when the project is on a large scale such as a joint university-public library.

Literature abounds with definitions most of which are in consonant with each other on what Human Resource(s) Management (HRM) means in general; and how the idea may be understood within the context of Library management in India. “Human resources”, by the Bloomsbury Concise English Dictionary (2005) definition is the “field of business concerned with recruiting and managing employees … who work in a business or organization” Wikipedia (2014) (www.12manage.com/i_hr.html) defines HRM as “the strategic and coherent approach to the management of an organization's most valued assets – the people working there, who individually and collectively contribute to the achievement of the objectives of the business”. In addition, according to the Society for Human Resource Management (2002, p. 2), HRM denotes:

“The design of formal systems in an organization to ensure the effective and efficient use of human talent to accomplish the organizational goals”. It is further clarified that the term human resource(s) has replaced the traditional personnel management; and that, in simple sense, HRM means “employing people, developing their resources, utilizing, maintaining and compensating their services, in tune with the job and organizational requirement”. Five distinct activities namely, employ, develop, utilize, maintain, compensate are noted from that notion. HRM is seen by practitioners in the field as a more innovative view of workplace management and that seeks to ensure a “fit” between the interests of management and employees where employers consider employees as people and humans that are not to be treated like machines.

2.2 People matter

Within the United Nations system as an example, the year 1990 marked the first time that UNDP issued a Human Development Report, which was said to have added a human face to development. According to Griffiths (1993, p. 32), the Report “broke new ground by attempting to measure the quality of life enjoyed by people (my emphasis) throughout the world … rather than measure development by merely the economic performance of
individual states” in which people lived. In the same vein, seemingly organizations, enterprises and services have swiftly and meticulously attended to issues of humans and human resources as indispensable drivers of any business to its success. Organisations have even transformed structurally, adopted HR approach and devised formal systems by which to ensure that HR matters are professionally handled or managed; for, the success of any service depends largely on the wellbeing of its employees.

Within the context of libraries too, Line and Kinnell (1993, pp 317-18) posit that the term “Human Resources” has gained ground in recent years and that HR departments have changed functions that put emphasis on the value of people as workers and employees. Simmons-Welburn and McNeil (2004, p. xi) concur from the point of view of libraries that there has been a shift “from personnel to human resources”, a move that is evidenced not only by substantial growth, since the 1989 publication, of the literature on human resource management in libraries, but also by the term HR being adopted by “corporations in full recognition of changing legal requirements, … ethical issues, and societal and cultural expectations of the work environment …”.

2.3 HRD in HRM

One crucial sub-topic of HRM that we also learn about is Human Resource Development (HRD) which is broadly defined by Smith (2003, p. 2) as “developing the work-related capacity of people – people working as individuals, in teams and in organizations”, arming them with skills, and remunerating them commensurately. He asserts that HRD is a strategic imperative in management. The assumption is that one is recruited already possessing skills for the job; consequently one's skills should be continuously sharpened, in that way developing that person so that s/he remains relevant and valuable to the job which s/he will perform well, be commensurately remunerated, and be retained.

For purposes of this study, Human Resources Management will be understood as the strategic, purposeful managerial approach of focusing on “human beings” as employees, their role in a workplace and workspace; how managers continuously build up employees' capacity; developing them through HRD, manage them through HRM, such that their talents and skills are sustained and retained in a conducive climate that motivates and enables workers to contribute in the attainment of goals and success of organizations. This is an approach of ensuring that employees' wellbeing and work-related interests are in tandem with the organization’s goals. HRM is the function of fully supporting and systematically taking care of those interests of individuals and teams because, as a matter of fact, “work and an employee's personal life are intertwined”. That is why, “Employees and employers are challenged to find a balance between the two” (Simmons-Wellburn and McNeil, 2004, p. xi).

HRM is to be understood as a broader term while HRD is narrower term and a component of the HRM processes.

2.4 Purpose of the study

Although the philosophy and practice of HRM and its branch of HRD have been so extensively debated from the context of Europe and the USA where most of the cited authors have practiced as academic and/or public librarians, there is paucity of literature on what the situation is like in India. It is to the advantage of the library profession in the sub-region too to take stock of its position in that kind of paradigm shift. It is in this regard that the objective
of the study was to make an overview of HRM practices and functions in the NISCAIR of India.

The aim was to find out if HRM approach is specifically in place in libraries or parent organizations of NISCAIR, and establish specifically when HRM was adopted; determine who in those libraries carry out the HRM functions and how; interrogate the existing HRM designs; highlight implications of existence or absence of HRM in libraries; give a general overview and interpretations from the findings; and make appropriate recommendations if any, where they could be of necessity to library managers, society, the sub-region and the profession at large.

The choice of NISCAIR of India is significant as it offers a scope, wide enough for comparative purposes. So is the deliberate choice of major libraries whose HRM issues can provide lessons for the sub-region at large.

3. Methodology

In the second half of 2012, literature review was conducted around the topic of HRM. That exercise informed the authors about concepts on and trends in human resources management in general, and in library services in particular. Closed as well as open-ended questions were designed in order to gather as comprehensive as possible data about those offices, and how they handle HRM functions in the NISCAIR, DRTC and NASSCOM.

National Institute of Science Communication and Information Resources (NISCAIR) came into existence on 30 September 2002 with the merger of National Institute of Science communication (NISCOM) and Indian National Scientific Documentation Centre (INSDOC). Both NISCOM and INSDOC, the two premier institutes of the Council of Scientific an Industrial Research (CSIR), were devoted to dissemination and documentation of S&T information. NISCOM had been in existence for the last six decades (first as two Publication Units of CSIR, later merged to form the Publications Division later renamed as Publications & Information Directorate and in 1996, as NISCOM). Over the years, NISCOM diversified its activities, and through a host of its information products, comprising research and popular science journals, encyclopedic publications, monographs, books, and information services, it had been reaching out to researchers, students, entrepreneurs, industrialists, agriculturists, policy planners and also the common man.

INSDOC came into being in 1952 and was engaged in providing S&T information and documentation services through myriad activities such as abstracting and indexing, design and development of databases, translation, library automation, providing access to international information sources, human resource development, consultancy services in setting up modern library-cum-information centers. INSDOC was host to the National Science Library and the SAARC Documentation Centre. Now, with the formation of NISCAIR, all the above multi-faceted activities have been amalgamated, making NISCAIR, an institute capable of serving the society using modern IT infrastructure in a more effective manner and taking up new ventures in the field of science communications, dissemination and S&T information management systems and services. The core activity of NISCAIR will be collect/store, publish and disseminate S&T information through a mix of traditional and modern means, which will benefit different segments of society.

3.1 HRD Programmes
Equipped with necessary facilities and manpower, NISCAIR is ideally placed to train and prepare science communicators, R&D personnel, library and information professionals for meeting the challenges of current times. NISCAIR’s HRD Programmes can be categorized as follows:

1. Short-term training courses
2. Attachment training programs
3. On-site training programs

3.2 Mission statement

To become the prime custodian of all information resources on current and traditional knowledge systems in science and technology in the country, and to promote communication in science to diverse constituents at all levels, using the most appropriate technologies.

Services

1. E-Publishing
2. Editing
3. Indexing
4. Print & Production
5. Herbarium Techniques
6. Taxonomical Identification of Plants
7. Identification of crude Plants-based products
8. Contents, Abstracts and Photocopy Service (CAPS)
9. Document Copy Supply Services
10. Literature Search Services
11. ISSN
12. Translation Services
13. Training Programmes
14. Short term courses in Science Communication
15. National Science Library Services
16. Reader's Service
17. Technical Query Service
18. Copying Service
19. Inter Library Loan Service
20. E - Journals Access
21. National Science Digital Library NSDL
3.3 Associate ship in information science (AIS)

The institute has been offering an advanced master's degree level course in Documentation and Reprography since 1964. The course was renamed in 1977 as Associate ship in Information Science (AIS). The course has been revised and redesigned to incorporate the expanding dimensions of documentation and information science to suit the changing information needs of the country as well as other developing countries. From the academic session 1999-2001, one seat has been earmarked for each member country of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC). The course is run under overall guidance of the Board of Studies, which consists of eminent information professionals, industry personnel and academicians of the country. The objective is to train the students in techniques of information handling and management with special emphasis on application of information technology for designing, implementing, operating and managing information systems. An important feature of this two-year course is the periodic holding of colloquia and seminars, which provide opportunities to students for debating, articulation and collective thinking. Besides, the students are also given the opportunity to participate in seminars, workshops and short-term courses conducted by NISCAIR from time to time. Opportunities are also provided to the students to visit, observe and study the working of a variety of institutions such as documentation and information centres, libraries, government departments connected with industrial development, planning, etc. The course comprises theory classes, practical, training in different divisions, seminars and the final examination in the first year. In the second year, research work is assigned to students and they are required to submit a dissertation based on their work.

For the 2007-09 batch, 22 students (20 Indian and one each from Bangladesh and Nepal) have joined the AIS Course that commenced from 5 September 2007. The Indian students were admitted on the basis of qualification, written test and interview. The students from Bangladesh and Nepal have been sponsored by the SAARC Documentation Centre (SDC). This is the flagship course of the institute and is highly acclaimed in industry and academia. The past students of this course are serving the national and International level. Now NISCAIR has stop take admission from session 2011.

3.4 Admission procedure

A national level competitive exam generally happens in June the notifications publish in the Employment News in February, this test followed by interview is the criteria of selection. Several links provide HRM information at:

1. NISCAIR
2. CSIR India
3. Traditional knowledge digital library

The questionnaire focused on HRM activities such as recruitment, employment relations, health and safety, remuneration and HRD area like training. The questionnaire was circulated by email. The issue of how staff performance appraisal is done was discussed with only five respondents. The authors held face to face as well as telephone and online discussions with seven respondents; more details were sought as additional information to data collected through the annual report and for some follow-up and clarity on certain issues. More information came from the authors' observations and experience. Intensive final round of literature review was done to fill the gaps and enhance findings.
DRTC was established in January 1962 as a division of the Indian Statistical Institute. It developed as a result of social forces. Soon after independence, the Government of India created the Indian Standards Institution in 1947. In the same year, its Documentation (Sectional) Committee was formed with Prof. S R Ranganathan as chairman. A proposal was made to Union Ministry of Education for the establishment of a National Documentation Centre. The proposal was referred to a committee of professors which included Prof. S R Ranganathan. In 1949, the files were taken over by Dr. Shanti Swarup Bhatnagar. There was a keenly felt need for document services to support the work done in the national laboratories that were just being established. In 1950, Dr. K S Krishnan, the then Director of the National Physics Laboratory and Prof. S R Ranganathan were authorized to negotiate with UNESCO for aid in setting up a National Documentation Centre. The result was the establishment of Indian National Scientific Documentation Centre (INSDOC) in September 1951. By about 1955, some industries had been established. The research activities in the national laboratories had also begun to accelerate to a higher pitch. Specialist Libraries to support research activities were being established in some of these institutions. Thus the time appeared to be ripe for the formation of a special library association to support specialist library activity and documentation. Thus was born IASLIC. Prof. P C Mahalanobis, member of the Planning Commission and then Director of Indian Statistical Institute, had all along been engaged in perspective planning. He sensed the dependance of productivity of industries and of research in the country on prompt and pinpointed documentation services. As early as 1956, he requested Prof. Ranganathan, who was then in Zurich to come back to India and to establish a training school. Prof S R Ranganathan was imparting training in librarianship at Malleshwaram, later under the goodwill and support of Prof P C Mahalanobis, it was merged with Indian Statistical Institute. Thus, born DRTC at the Bangalore centre of Indian Statistical Institute. By leap and bounds, DRTC grown into a centre of higher learning, today it stands as advocacy centre for research and development of libraries.

Documentation Research and Training Centre has been at the forefront of research and development of libraries, made a niche name for itself right from its inception. Since from April 1962, the year it was established, by the father of librarianship in India, Padmashri Prof. S R Ranganathan has several international credits to its fold. ADISMS-LIS students have been placed with reputed institutions, R&D centres and MNCs. Well established name for training library professionals with a special emphasis on IT. Has been putting in latest teaching aids and cutting edge technologies for education and research. Articles and Books: The faculty in DRTC have been constantly publishing their research work in several noted journals as well as in reputed publications.

The faculty of DRTC have been involved in teaching, course delivery and undertaking research projects in LIS programmes in various universities, both in India and abroad. DRTC conducts workshops and seminars annually on the latest trends and developments taking place.

3.5 Mission

As the millennium unfolds to the new era of change for 21st century, we at DRTC strive to be a change maker for the emerging society to endeavor and contribute to the development of Library and Information Science in India, with a special emphasis on the following but not limited to Information and Systems Sciences Documentation Library Science.
3.6 Objectives

Effectively carrying out, guiding and supporting research and development activities in these fields through education, consultancy and research. In facilitating development of libraries and Information centres through effective management techniques, research & development, advocacy and information skills development and training. DRTC always strives hard to achieve this through:

1. Organizing world class training and workshops.
2. Strengthening information industry and mobilizing resources and support for libraries and information infrastructure development
3. Improving the existing infrastructure through advocacy, policymaking and goodwill
4. Preparing for the digital economy by research
5. Developing human resources for the career as industry-ready and place students as a trained professionals

4. NASSCOM

National Association of Software and Service Companies (NASSCOM) is the industry association for the IT-BPM sector in India. A not-for-profit organisation funded by the industry, its objective is to build a growth led, sustainable, technology and business services segment in the country. Established in 1988, NASSCOM’s membership has grown over the last 25 years and currently stands at over 1400. The member organisations represent 95 per cent of industry revenues and have enabled the association to spearhead initiatives and programmes to strengthen the sector in the country and globally.

NASSCOM members are active participants in the new global economy and are admired for their innovative business practices, social initiatives and thrust on emerging opportunities. NASSCOM is headquartered in New Delhi, India, and has offices in seven other cities Bengaluru, Chennai, Hyderabad, Kolkata, Mumbai, Pune and Thiruvananthapuram.

4.1 Objective

To be an effective and engaging global trade organisation, complimented by the pillars of trust and credibility.

NASSCOM’s mission is to deepen the IT-BPM industry’s footprint in its core markets and beyond, building strategic partnerships with its customers. It seeks to establish India as a hub for innovation and professional services.

NASSCOM’s mission is also to expand the country’s pool of relevant and skilled talent and harness the benefits of ICT to drive inclusive and balanced growth. ‘Transform Business, Transform India’ is the overall objective of NASSCOM and its member organizations. NASSCOM members are organizations in India engaged in the business of IT Services, BPM, Software Products, Engineering Design, Internet, E-commerce and Gaming. Organizations that provide services to the IT-BPM industry are institutional members of NASSCOM. India headquartered organizations, multinational service providers with an India presence, and global in-house centers (GICs) of foreign corporations are equally represented in the membership of NASSCOM.
NASSCOM undertakes several initiatives and works with multiple stakeholders within the
global IT-BPM ecosystem: NASSCOM collaborates with the Government of India at the
centre and states to build a policy framework that is conducive to the growth of the IT-BPM
industry in the country. NASSCOM works closely with its member organisations,
encouraging them to share best practices and experiences, and mentor smaller organisations
that are still on the learning curve. NASSCOM undertakes several development initiatives to
spur the growth of the sector.

4.2 Research

It conducts industry research, surveys, and studies on emerging IT-BPM trends and sector
performance to provide factual perspectives on the industry and the growth opportunities
ahead.

4.3 Events

It organizes national and international events to showcase new opportunities, collaborate,
build thought leadership and facilitate networking.

4.4 Forums

Industry Forums launched by NASSCOM cater to the needs of diverse segments and build
specific programmes that can help these sectors to realize their potential. The Forums at
NASSCOM include:

Business Process Management (BPM) The Forum focuses on the high-growth BPM industry,
finding solutions for the policy, people and process challenges it faces, identifying new
growth opportunities and showcasing value addition opportunities.

4.5 Findings, analysis and discussions

Of the three options of handling HR matters, first, within the library, second by the central
HR office of the parent body and third through the combination of the two, the most common
is the combination arrangement that dominates in recruitment; training, employment relations,
health and security plus the compensation areas; with some variations on suitability of the
arrangements as expressed by the discontent, indifferent or complacent and content librarians.
Details are discussed in the following.

The situation obtaining in these institutes and parent bodies confirm that HR matters are a
new phenomenon even in the sub-region because where they exist, none was established
earlier than 2004, which, by 2013 is only nine years ago. These findings are crucial because
they may imply that the HRM as a change is still a fluid situation even in the library services.
Cases that were cited as exemplary challenges are captured in this discussion.

4.6 From personnel to human resource management

The Indian libraries and their parent bodies too, are going through the transition from
 personnel to HR management. In the institution under review, HRM has been adopted by 50
per cent, the earliest being in 2004. Many gives the impression that they are passive about
these changes which they should be part of. Elaborating from the point of view of academic
libraries in the USA, Nancy Baker (Simmons-Welburn and McNeil, 2004, p. 159) has
highlighted three major roles of HR professionals in relation to those libraries and library managers, namely:

To ensure that the libraries are operating in compliance with university policies and procedures with respect to human resources issues and that the library managers are applying those procedures appropriately, consistently, and equitably. To become critical consultants for library managers and staff on how best to handle the wide range of human resources situations and problems they face while under the employ of … Retaining the individuals that can best influence the university's human resources policies and procedures to reflect the needs of the library (Simmons-Welburn and McNeil, 2004, p. 158). These major roles are also probed into, vis-à-vis the indian libraries that are in the transition processes of HRM.

4.7 Workforce planning/recruitment (full- and part-time staff)

After adopting the HR approach, the first step to be considered in HRM is workforce planning that involves deciding on the size and caliber of staff required in a service. Attracting skills through adequate HR procedures in selection and recruitment processes, as mentioned should be stringent so as to ensure that skills match work to be performed. Yet in the majority of south asian countries this HR function still remains far removed from the jurisdiction of library managers who should take the lead in screening skills that fit the library work. On the question of how staff selection and recruitment processes are handled in their libraries, the majority agreed that it was the centralized arrangement and it was suitable.

4.8 Contemporary versus the aging professional activities

As noted under job titles mentioned previously, the ongoing changes introduce designations that depict the latest activities in the library services. We learn that in the USA in 1986 for example, cataloguing as the traditional role, boasted the youngest professionals in the ARL data (Simmons-Welburn and McNeil (2004, p. 24). But 14 years later, it was an aging category of a job and being replaced by the functional specialists. As recruitment tools in HRM, advertisements for current vacancies in south asia are expected to reflect titles like managers, directors of library specialists in ICT, institutional repository, digital information and the like. Seemingly, specialists' titles are overtaking traditional ones.

4.9 Short-term engagements

In order to arrest the prevailing shortage of skilled and full-time staff, several Indian libraries supplement their workforce with student/volunteer workers on a short-term basis. Most library managers seem to be comparatively at liberty in this respect to hire as they wish without having to follow rigorous HRM policies. However, Labour Laws exist to govern minimum wages as well as the period that one can remain in a “short-term” job.

4.10 Training and development

As shown in the definitions, HRD carries so much weight in HRM, and interlinked so closely to other HRM functions that it may even be mistaken for a synonym with the latter. But HRD is a distinct strategy in HRM to better the employees' skills, which need to be sharpened continuously in line with the changing needs of a library job. In response to the question as to who handles library staff training and development in India, all respondents confirmed that this activity is jointly well handled by the HR professionals and the library, with only a few
fortifying the arrangement by placing its own Staff Development officer within the library building, and a design that was found suitable to these library managers.

4.11 HRD and IFLA CPDWL

Within the Indian universities, which predominantly also use the committee systems of management, training is initiated by library management then processed and approved by a specific committee that categorizes types of training and sets rules and regulations. Although important, it was not within the scope of the study to scrutinize areas in which to train and develop library staff in the region. That notwithstanding, under the ambit of IFLA, ILA, IASLIC embraces all aspects of professional development and learning in the workplace. Member institutions, organisations and services are to become the “learning organizations” and to “develop their staff by providing opportunities for continuing professional development training” where they work, as middle or senior managers as well.

No cases were cited to indicate whether or not there was any mentoring or training towards coaching staff for succession into managerial positions in the Indian libraries. This is another important area to be considered in HRM. Individual library workers by themselves are also urged to try to develop their own careers while library managers support those training efforts and HR directors act as consultants on how best all can play their part. This is a magnanimous managerial task for directors and university librarians. Implicitly, it is expected of them to:

Put in place library training policies that are approved by parent bodies so that relevant structures facilitate such staff development; Systematically provide induction or orientation to new staff, using for example, Library Guides/Manuals, as it is a norm in the corporate world;

Formally allow staff across different cadres, even from junior to seniors to grow professionally at all times; and organize own refresher courses or involve staff in external programs that will ensure that individually, in teams or otherwise, employees are not getting stale/redundant as for instance, some who trained in the 1970s and never retrained are said to have become ICT illiterate by 2013.

4.12 Factors for and against training in India

The credo on training alone does not guarantee a smooth route in HRD processes. There are other factors. Library schools, their up-to-date programmes too, have a part to play in the Indian universities to promote or impede librarians' career development. For example, there is no full time library training within many districts of Indian states. This might be a constraint to the local staff. In some states, librarians lost their academic status, which would give the usual rewards and incentives to employees that advance themselves. Respondents expressed their dissatisfaction that where funds for training have to be competed for with the faculty staff, the latter are given a priority. Staff low morale was readable from the responses, and a great challenge in HRM. In many states, the ambiguity over the academic status may work against both the library manager and the employee who will not be certain even about the promotion criteria to follow at any given time. Although senior librarians under UGC/ICAR/MCI/CSIR/AICTE/BCI etc. in India are categorized as academics and the library budget, similar to those of the faculties has a vote for research grant by which librarians research, publish and get honoraria for publishing, librarians are not paid a retention allowance which is said to be for teachers and researchers only. This might be regarded as a subtle discrimination. These conditions break a coherent continuum in the HRM for Indian
libraries, and discontent staff may hardly contribute optimally to these library services attaining their goals.

4.13 Employment and labour relations

Employment/Employee and labour relations is key in creating harmony for workers, clients and organizational success. Indian libraries like others, find themselves at the centre of this equation where serving, meeting and satisfying diverse library information users is a factor. Not only relations of all these parties are to be managed. Also the rights of various groups are to be protected. Elasticity of management from senior-most to the apprentices should enable staff to be managed and for each to manage oneself in all respects. It is here that the library manager's style of weaving the desirable tapestry of relations from among all stakeholders is required. Although no relevant case was cited in south Asia, employment opportunities by 2013 are a subject of an affirmative action that reverses the old order that favored male workers in most sectors. It is unclear if in the new dispensation the transforming employment relations are affecting library services.

In the first instance, the discovery that HR sub-topic of employee or employment, and, labour relations is seemingly the most unclear to librarians under review could be interpreted in several ways. It could mean that library managers are deliberately shying away from the subject, timidly giving it a blind eye; or coerced from participating or associating in industrial relations.

Library managers may not unionize but must allow staff to do so admittedly, as a matter of policy, senior librarians in government and in universities are part of the management that may not individually be members of trade unions. Respondents were senior libraries. But this does not mean that library managers be unaware of industrial relation issues, as respondents appeared to be. The HRM principles demand that all managers should establish sound industrial/employment relations (Swanepoel et al., 2005) for the benefit of all.

The shift to HRM brings with it, the empowered societies including librarians that know and exercise their labour related rights. Some librarians enjoin associations and unions that become a force for library managers to reckon with. Library associations advocate for professional development, for fair salaries, conditions of service, and good conduct of librarians at workplace all of which are positive functions that are central to the library HR management.

As employees in the Civil Service or universities, librarians may go further to join trade unions. In all these wide-encompassing unions, membership for librarians is embraced by the unions, for teachers, lecturers, professionals, academics and senior support staff. This wide spectrum of trades that welcome library workers shows that the profession has a platform from which it can, in unison with others professions participate significantly in union matters, and to the advantage of library services. As a matter of principle, while on duty, an employee is duly insured by employers. Employers will do so on a holistic advice of librarians in consultations with HR offices, on library pro-risk areas to be covered by insurances.

4.14 Health hazards

Discussions indicated that some library managers are aware of certain sections of their libraries that may pose health hazards. The examples were: bindery units that apply highly toxic substances like glues whose continuous exposure to workers are unsafe; archives
preservation procedures that continuously entail fumigation; very low temperatures suitable for storing fragile archival collections but unsuitable for humans; and Frequent malfunctionality of some escalators and lifts operating on multi-storey library buildings. Library managers’ attention was thus drawn to those HRM issues that require a special handling jointly with the HR directors in their respective organizations.

4.15 Conclusions

The paper concludes that organizations, including library services in south Asia are undergoing a change from personnel management to strategic approach of HRM and HRD. Yet, the participation of library managers ranges from zero, very low to average. Participation has varied with different libraries in the areas of recruitment, HRD, employment relations, health/safety, and performance appraisal, to compensation. Discussions have enumerated advantages of incorporating HRM, sensitized library managers to relevant HRM matters. It is therefore recommended that: library manager’s work as a team with HR professionals to focus fully on HRM as affecting library services in the sub-region; more studies or in-depth research and sensitization mechanisms should be carried out on HRM in BLNSAS libraries; and theoretically and practically, HRM/HRD strategies be incorporated at all levels of training.

5. Conclusion

The paper concludes that organizations, including library services in India are undergoing a change from personnel management to strategic approach of HRM and HRD. Yet, the participation of library managers ranges from zero, very low to average. Participation has varied with different libraries in the areas of recruitment, HRD, employment relations, health/safety, and performance appraisal, to compensation. Discussions have enumerated advantages of incorporating HRM, sensitized library managers to relevant HRM matters. It is therefore recommended that: library managers work as a team with HR professionals to focus fully on HRM as affecting library services in the sub-region; more studies or in-depth research and sensitization mechanisms should be carried out on HRM in Asian libraries; and . Theoretically and practically, HRM/HRD strategies be incorporated at all levels of training. Premiere institutes in India provides short-term courses, attachment training programs for persons requiring specialized training in the field of ICT. During the year, one batch of students completed their training under this programme. These organisations also utilize these young minds to develop programs for automation of in-house activities. Manpower is also trained through Short-term Courses on Computer Applications, Website Designing and Library Automation. NISCAIR also provides six-months training to M.C.A. students and to other students pursuing Computer Science/IT course leading to M.Sc., B.E., B.Tech., M.E., and M.Tech. Degrees to work on projects in the area of application of IT as part partial fulfillment of their degree course requirements. In India a few organizations are well-equipped with the necessary facilities and expert manpower to impart training and develop human resource in the domain of science communication, and library and information sciences for meeting the challenges of current times.

6. References


