

# **LIBRARY ADMINISTRATION AND MANAGEMENT**

**KRISHAN KUMAR**

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KRISHAN KUMAR

*Professor*

*Department of Library and Information Science*

*University of Delhi*

*Delhi*



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## PREFACE

### 1 PROBLEMS

A library is a 'growing organism'. As a result of this many libraries have over the years grown into large organizations. Libraries have also been influenced by the rapid advances in information technology. Application of information technology has made it possible for these to expand their sphere of activities. However, this has added to the complexities. Many of these have become large and complex organizations presenting a challenge to the managers. Managing a large library is a highly specialized and complicated job. Librarian in such an environment should have a managerial ability of a high order, and possess skills and adequate knowledge to solve problems multidimensional in nature.

The key management issues, which are being discussed in library literature are concerned with accountability, autonomy, optimal use of staff, response to change (due to technology, social, ethical, economic and political environment) and standards for staff. In university libraries, an issue of concern has been whether or not departmental libraries should be separated from the central library. In India, the question of academic status in university and college libraries has been a major issue in recent years. The issue of academic status is linked with salary scales. It is a happy sign that libraries have started using management principles and techniques to solve their problems.

### 2 AIM

Descriptions are as simple and direct as could be possible have been given. The purpose of this book would be well served if the interest of users in the subject is aroused, encouraged and developed along right lines. The work is primarily intended to meet the requirements of students preparing for library science/library and information science/documentation diplomas and degrees (Bachelor of Library Science and Diploma in Library Science). It will also be found useful by practicing librarians/documentalists especially those working in small and medium sized organizations.

## 3 SCOPE

This work presents a framework of basic knowledge of management. Principles of management within the context of libraries have been explained at length. Library routines have been described in brief without giving too many details. A librarian (head of a library) is regarded as a manager. The functions of a manager have been described in details. These functions represent an interlocking system. Within each functional area, there are number of systems and sub-systems. A library is an open system, it is influenced by the internal and external environment involving economic, ethical, social, political and technological factors. The term 'Library' refers to organizations called library, documentation centre, information centre, resource centre, etc. The term librarian has been used in a generic sense referring to librarian, documentation officer, information officer, etc.

The field of management is a vast one. Many of the aspects have been barely touched. Major management issues in the context of libraries have been given special consideration. Therefore, this book will merely serve as an introductory work.

## 4 PRESENTATION

An attempt has been made to make this work readable. As the work is introductory in nature, description of topics has been made as simple as could be possible. As far as possible, the effort has been to present the description of topics in the order of development of ideas.

Large number of headings and subheadings have been provided, each of which has been assigned a number based on sector notation, where 9 has been used as a sectorising digit. Thus the following numbers represent coordinate headings:

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	91	92
93	94	95	96	97	98	991	992	993	... 998 etc.

The subdivisions of 1, for instance, would be represented by the following coordinate numbers:

11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18
191	192	193	...	198	etc.		

Similarly subdivisions of other numbers have been constructed.

Where essential footnotes have been given and at the end of each chapter a list of further reading has also been provided. The aim of

further reading is to stimulate the reader to use these for further study.

The author will greatly appreciate suggestions for desirable changes and improvements, which could be incorporated in the next edition.

KRISHAN KUMAR

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## Chapter 1

# INTRODUCTION

## 1 DEVELOPMENT OF MANAGEMENT

Management has been practised in some form ever since the dawn of human civilization. However, systematic study of management as a separate branch of knowledge is a product of 20th century. Since World War II, it has been increasingly recognized that management is important for the prosperity and welfare of our society. Management is not considered a full grown profession as yet. However, it is slowly progressing towards this aim.

Evans<sup>1</sup> divides development of management history into the following four periods:

- (i) Prescientific period, pre-1880
- (ii) Scientific management period, 1880-1927
- (iii) Human relations period, 1927-1950
- (iv) Synthesis period, 1950-present

People like Frederick Winslow Taylor, Frank and Lilian Gilbreth, and Henry Gantt contributed to the development of scientific management theory and practice. Taylor was the person, who founded the scientific approach to management. The human relations period is represented by rapidly changing scene. This period was characterized by humanism. Most influential person was Elton Mayo. Since 1950, efforts have been made to refine concepts contributed by Taylor and Mayo and also to combine elements from both schools with ideas from other disciplines.

## 2 ADMINISTRATION VERSUS MANAGEMENT

There has been sharp difference of opinion among scholars over the question of whether or not there was any difference between administration and management. It may be emphasized that in actual practice, neither it is possible nor of any practical value to demarcate a distinction between these terms. In a given organization, these are

<sup>1</sup>G. Edward Evans, *Management techniques for libraries*, 2nd ed., New York, Academic Press, 1983.



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not clearly identifiable. However, here the administration has been used as a broader term than management.

According to *ALA glossary of library and information science*, "Management may be defined as the process of coordinating the total resources of an organization toward the accomplishment of the desired goals of that organization through the execution of a group of interrelated functions such as planning, organizing, staffing, directing, and controlling. So defined, management is usually used synonymously with administration in current literature. Administration may be considered to be a broader term, emphasizing the planning function, involving goal setting and major policy formulation, with management variously limited to the process of coordinating certain functions and activities of an organization toward the accomplishment of its goals"<sup>2</sup>. Thus the term management is used variously as a term narrower than administration or as its synonym.

According to Evans, "administrators establish fundamental patterns of operation and goals for an organization, while managers primarily carry out the directions of the administrators"<sup>3</sup>. In a profit making body like company, the board of directors, as administrators, are empowered to give overall direction. The officers of the company (from the president to downwards), are the managers. Librarian of the company's Library is one of the managers. A university librarian is also a manager. All librarians in their role as librarians are managers rather than administrators. In practice, senior officials of the company (including Librarian, provided he is a senior official in the hierarchy) can be members of the board of directors. In rare instances, a university librarian might become a member of the executive committee of the university.

Board of directors of a company or executive committee of a university or governing body of a college would formulate a body of rules, regulations, policies, procedures, guidelines, objectives etc. for the whole organization including library (as a part and parcel of the organization). The library would have to operate within these. It is just possible librarian as a manager would have influenced the administrators in their formulation. Often, the manager of the library initiates the need for a change and makes a suggestion to the decision makers (administrators). Given mutual respect, there can exist excellent rapport between them.

<sup>2</sup>*ALA glossary of library and information science*, edited by Heartsills Young et. al., Chicago, ALA, 1983, p. 139.

<sup>3</sup>Evans, *op.cit.*, p. 25.

It may be mentioned that persons at the top spend more time in performing administrative functions and those at the lower level devote more time in carrying out routine work. At the same time, people at the top level spend more of their time and efforts to determine the broad objectives while people at the lower levels spend more time in executing those policies and objectives.

### 3 IMPORTANCE OF MANAGEMENT

In an organization individuals work in groups. Managing becomes essential to coordinate individual efforts. In a large organization, the number of groups would be large. As a consequence the task of coordination becomes increasingly complex. Managing would also gain added importance.

Managing is an extremely important human activity. It is the job of a manager to design, create and maintain conducive environment so that personnel working in groups are able to perform effectively and efficiently to achieve selected group goals. A manager operates in an environment affected by internal and external factors.

According to Peter Drucker, during the last 50 years society in every developed country has become a society of institutions, where every major social task has been entrusted to large organizations. This is also true to a large extent in case of less developed countries. In these institutions, management constitutes a specific organ. He further goes on to add that if these "institutions are to function responsibly and autonomously, then management and managers must perform." It is certainly the performance of management and its managers which shapes our culture and society.

### 4 SCIENCE OR AN ART

In the field of management, there has been a controversy about whether management is an art or science. The answer will largely depend upon the understanding of the terms 'art' and 'science'.

According to Terry, art is "bringing about of a desired result through the application of skill".<sup>4</sup> In any activity identified as art, the emphasis is on applying skills and knowledge to accomplish an end through deliberate effort. A manager uses his skills and knowledge to solve many of the problems faced by him. In order to take a

<sup>4</sup>George R. Terry, *Principles of management*, Homewood, Ill., Richard D. Irwin. 1960, p. 86.

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decision, a manager develops his own personal style. Style of management can be more associated with art than science. In management, one has to use one's judgment and common sense. There are no fool-proof rules to replace these.

Science is "a body of systematized knowledge accumulated and accepted with reference to the understanding of general truths concerning a particular phenomenon, subject, or object of study".<sup>5</sup> Thus science is an organized body of knowledge. Knowledge in science has been systematized through application of scientific method. In order a subject is identified as a science, it must have a body of principles and techniques to explain the truths concerning a particular phenomenon. Management has developed a systematized body of knowledge consisting of principles, laws, rules, etc, which are universally applicable. These have been developed after being tested in different situations. However, management is not an exact science because it deals with human beings. Behaviour of human beings can not be predicted precisely.

A manager uses scientific approach to solve problems. He defines his objectives; formulates hypotheses; collects analysis and interprets data to arrive at conclusions. Thus he tackles his problems scientifically. He also applies various mathematical and statistical methods to solve problems.

From above, it is to be concluded that management is both an art and science. It has elements of art as well as characteristics of science. Management combines both art and science to achieve predetermined goals.

#### 5 MANAGEMENT AS A PROFESSION

A profession is considered as a vocation requiring significant body of knowledge which can be applied with a high degree of consistency to some relevant segment of society either in instructing, guiding, or advising others. A profession is thus required to have a body of codified knowledge, which can be taught and applied with a certain degree of universality.

If we apply the criteria of a profession then we find that management does not fully meet the requirements of a profession. However, it is fast progressing towards this goal. In India, there is a trend towards professionalization of management. Some of the forward looking organizations are turning to professional management and

<sup>5</sup>Ibid, p. 84.

are sending their senior personnel for management training. In actual practice, persons selected as managers are usually trained on the job.

## 6 OBJECTIVES OF A MANAGER'S WORK

L. Gulick and L. Urwick have listed the following seven functions which underlie all management activities, in some form or another:

- Planning
- Organizing
- Staffing
- Directing
- Coordinating
- Reporting
- Budgeting

They coined the acronym POSDCORB, which stands for the above functions. These functions merely identify the objectives of the work of a manager. These indicate as to what does a good a management tries to accomplish.

The functions of a manager are the same irrespective of the kind of organization and the kind of culture in which it operates. Thus, the above functions are equally applicable to a manager of library. It should be kept in view that the functions of a manager are essentially the same, whether he is the top executive (University Librarian) or a supervisor (Assistant Librarian, Head of the Circulation Section). However, environment, authority, responsibilities and types of problems faced do vary a great deal from one level to another one.

## 7 ROLES OF A MANAGER

A manager has to perform a number of roles, depending upon the situation. Henry Mintzberg<sup>6</sup> has identified ten basic roles of a manager:

(1) figurehead, (2) leader, (3) liaison, (4) monitor, (5) disseminator, (6) spokesman, (7) entrepreneur, (8) disturbance handler, (9) resource allocator, and (10) negotiator.

Although, many of the above roles do contain some element of political process but Evans points out that "the librarian in a publicly supported library needs to add a role to Mintzberg's list—politician".<sup>7</sup> In a public library, attached to a local body (may be a

<sup>6</sup>H. Mintzberg, *The nature of managerial work*, New York, Harper, 1973, p. 11.

<sup>7</sup>Evans, *op. cit.*, p. 31.

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corporation or municipal committee), the manager must understand the political process and should also be a bit of a politician so as to be get maximum support from the local body and leaders of the community.

### 8 THEORETICAL BASE OF MODERN MANAGEMENT

The most accepted theoretical base of modern management is General Systems Theory (GST). GST is emerging as a movement. It integrates knowledge from biological, physical and behavioural sciences into one system.

Ludwig von Bertalanffy is the founder of GST. He first talked about "system's theory of organism". According to him a system is "a set of elements standing in interrelation among themselves and with the environment"<sup>8</sup>. Thus a system is essentially a set or assemblage of elements that are interconnected, or interdependent, forming a complete whole.

A library is a system. It is made up of a number of subsystems. The set of elements for a library consists of personnel, materials and finance. A library is an open system, it interacts with its environment. It is influenced by it and in return influences other parts of environment. A library is influenced by many other factors in the external environment in which it operates.

### 91 LIBRARY AS A SERVICE ORGANIZATION

A modern library, with a few exceptions is regarded as a service institution. Its aim being to enable the users to make the most effective use of the resources and services of the libraries. This type of library acquires material, processes it, and makes it available for use rather than preservation. It allows open access to its collection and provides service to its users. A distinguishing feature of a library which makes it different from other organizations is that it is a non-profit making organization. Its sources of finance are derived from sources outside the organization itself. Public libraries are a part of a governmental system. Therefore, a public librarian must understand politics and public administration. A public library serves the community or region free of charge or for a nominal fee. Services provided by a public library are free but questions are beginning to be raised in this regard. Academic libraries mainly perform educational

<sup>8</sup>Ludwig von Bertalanffy, "The history and status of general systems theory", *Academy of Management Journal*, 15, Dec. 1972, p. 417.

function. These are a part of the large organization, served by these. These provide free service to its clientele. A special library is attached to an organization, may be a company, an industry or a society or a research organization. It exists to serve the needs of its parent organization. Its patrons get free service. A manager of a special library must understand the needs of its parent organization. He must become aware of the objectives and activities of the parent body. The services are organized to meet those goals.

## 92 QUALIFICATIONS OF A LIBRARY MANAGER

A professional manager is expected to possess fundamental knowledge of concepts, principles and theories of management. Theoretically speaking, given this knowledge and requisite experience, a professional manager should be able to manage almost any organization, irrespective of its setting. A library is an organization. Therefore, a professional manager should be able to manage it with the same basic skills as are required in managing any other type of organization. However, a library is somewhat different from other organizations especially because a library is a non-profit making organization and usually provides free service to its patrons. Another feature of a library is that it is a bureaucratic organization bound by rules and regulations of various kinds. Libraries are generally part of a larger organization, governed by the rules and regulations formulated by the parent organization.

Manager of a library is supposed to be a professional librarian with some training in management, which may prove to be sufficient for a small set up. But in a large set up, it would be a useful idea to send senior managers for training in management at a library school. For instance, Graduate School of Library and Information Science, University of California, Los Angeles provides specialized management instruction for selected senior library managers.

## 93 ORGANIZATIONAL CONFLICT

Conflict is a universal phenomenon in all human societies. It describes "a situation in which persons or groups disagree over means or ends, and try to establish their views in preference to others".<sup>9</sup> It occurs among social institutions. It takes place among organizations and also within organizations. It may occur among members of an

<sup>9</sup>Dalton E. McFarland, *Management foundations and practices*, 5th ed., New York, Macmillan, c 1979, p. 403.

organization and also within the personality of an individual.<sup>10</sup> The forces that generate conflict sometimes succeed in creating turbulent and hostile environment within an organization. Organizational conflict is concerned with maintaining of identity, achievement of goals, etc., of sections, divisions or other kinds of groups.

Indian libraries are faced with serious conflict situations within libraries. A manager must study the conflict situation carefully and should gather all the necessary information including information regarding background of the conflict. He should take necessary steps to resolve the conflict situation keeping in view (a) nature of conflict, (b) type of conflict, (c) local situation, (d) style of management followed by the manager and (e) image of the manager.

Style of management followed by manager depends upon the philosophy of management of the manager. His approach may be to give a threat, to pursue, to follow gamesmanship (rules of the game), to bargain, to create a split, to compromise, to take no action, etc.

The following are the alternative courses of action:

**Give a threat.** Give a threat and carry out action using power and authority. This may lead to reorganization, which may take the form of transfer of person (s), change of functions, withdrawal of authority, etc.

**Pursue.** Pursue the person(s) or groups to resolve the conflict through discussion/negotiation, etc.

**Gamesmanship.** Follow the rules and regulations strictly and take necessary action accordingly. This involves bureaucratic approach.

**Bargain.** Through discussion, a bargain (an agreement) may be struck.

**Create a split.** Sometimes a manager may follow a policy of divide and rule. He would aim at creating groups that would be fighting among themselves. This is not ethical. In the long run, the manager would get exposed.

**No action.** A manager might decide to ignore the conflict. Under the circumstances, he may allow the conflict to take a natural course without interfering with it. With the passage of time, such a conflict might get resolved or may flare up.

It may be kept in view that above alternatives are not mutually exclusive. If found necessary, a manager can use more than one alternative. If the manager is not able to resolve the conflict himself by means of above approaches, then he can form a committee of senior

<sup>10</sup> *Ibid.*

library officers to advise him or he can utilize third party intervention. He can use these latter approaches directly without using the alternative courses of action listed above.

*Form a committee.* A manager may use his leadership or co-ordinating function and form a committee of senior officers of the library to advise him.

*Appoint an arbitrator.* In a university library, a manager can appoint a Dean of a Faculty or a senior teacher or a university administrator as an arbitrator. A decision of an arbitrator is binding on parties involved in the conflict.

*Appoint a mediator.* In a public library, a manager may appoint a respected member of the society to serve as a mediator. He pursues the parties involved to resolve the issue in the spirit of give and take.

*Appoint a consultant.* A college librarian may request a professor of library science to assist in resolving the conflict, using his expertise and objectivity in his approach.

Conflicts are very often the result of power struggle that goes on in an organization. Outcome of power struggle depends on performance of roles played by the concerned individuals. Dominant individuals take aggressive roles and weak ones play submissive roles. Power struggle at the top (say among Deputy Librarians in a University Library) can be really fierce damaging reputations, causing immense harm to the organization. In such a situation, proposals and actions by one individual or group are blocked or diverted by another individual or group. There may be no logical or technical reasons for such an approach. This may be done for emotional reasons or personal advancement or self-protection or sadistic pleasure.

Conflict is multidimensional. If a conflict is not resolved at the early stage, then it can lead to the formation of cliques and coalitions, which are too bad for health of any library.

What is the best solution? Can management provide an answer? It can not offer a ready made solution but provide an approach which can enable a manager to discover a solution best suited for his style of management. Conflicts can not be eliminated altogether but those conflicts which can take a serious turn damaging the institution or threatening the very welfare of its employees must be minimized. Energies behind conflicts must be diversified into fruitful channels towards achievement of goals of the enterprise. A manager should aim to create a healthy climate conducive for healthy growth of the individuals. He should have the ability to influence others to achieve goals. However, it must be finally admitted that there is no simple



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solution to conflicts but these must be minimized to become less harmful.

Luthans and Martinko have suggested contingency approach as the newest, approach to supervision. According to them "techniques and philosophy of effective supervision depend upon the circumstances that supervisors find themselves in." They further add, "the contingency approach can be thought of as a technique whereby the supervisor selects and applies from the scientific-management, human relations, and/or principles of management approaches the appropriate concept or procedure for the situation at hand."<sup>11</sup> This approach is getting wide acceptance. Library supervisors can use contingency approach as a conceptual and practical method of supervision. The concept or procedure to be chosen would depend upon the situation.

### 94 CONCLUSION

Libraries exist in great variety. These vary in size, goals, financial stability, structural patterns, complexity, and such other characteristics. From management point of view, these vary in management style, employee morale, organizational health, environment for innovation, etc. In the late 1980s, libraries are operating in a setting, which has become more complex than ever before. New technologies have become available as a means to improve library services and operations. A large number of information services and products are available commercially for a library to choose from. In this environment, library's role in technology and information oriented society is beginning to be reexamined. But the main concern is to find out how libraries can adopt themselves to the new environment so as to fully support the nation in achieving its goals. Many of the problems and issues implied in the changing environment are related to management. The major issues include budgeting, funding, costing, objectives, accountability, efficiency, etc. In the present context, application of management techniques has acquired added significance. We need good managers, who can manage libraries, responsibly and imaginatively, to accomplish the objectives. Libraries are costly ventures. Costs must be justified by providing effective and efficient services through efficient and effective management.

<sup>11</sup>Fred Luthans and Mark J. Martinko, *The practice of supervision and management*, Auckland, New Delhi, McGraw-Hill International, 1979, pp. 10-11.