Research Paper MANAGEMENT

A Study on Knowledge Management Practices Among Self-Financing Arts and Science Colleges in and Around Tiruchengode

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ABSTRACT

Knowledge Management is engaged in enriching organizational knowledge by means of applying sound practices of organizational learning and information management. Knowledge management deals with developing and maintaining information which creates value. With a flourishing growth of self-finance arts and science colleges all over the country and their potential to transform the arts and science education as such, it was estimated fit to focus on these colleges with regard to knowledge management practices. The study was limited to select arts and science colleges in and around Tiruchengode. The literature survey identified a number of variables and certain relevant variables were chosen and formulated a well structured questionnaire. Both primary and secondary data were collected and analyzed using appropriate statistical tools. From the analysed data, interpretations were drawn. Findings and conclusions were based on the results and formulated suitable suggestions. This study also presents directions for future research.

KEYWORDS | Knowledge management, Organisational knowledge, Information management, organizational learning, flourishing growth.

Introduction:

Human Resource is considered to be very vital and essential in an organization's betterment. Nowadays organizations are taking atmost care upon Human Resources, the most important of all the assets based on the emerging values of humanization. Progress is considered to be the essence of the HRM function, which replicates on the organization's efficacy. Being a developing nation, India is in need of such efficient system to attain its height soon. The most instrumental sector for India's economic development is Educational sector. It is vital and need of the hour to develop the human resources for these sectors which can be done through enhancing their knowledge. In spite of the rapid technological advancements, Human Resource ruins as the backbone of the organizational structure everywhere, especially self-financing arts and science colleges in India which undertake the key responsibility of transforming their operational system into a modern one that suits the present requirements.

KM involves systematically managing vital knowledge and its associated processes of creation, organization, accessing, sharing, diffusion, use, and exploitation. It is identified as a recognized field for academic research and has urged to continuing demand for information systems. Organizational expenditures on IT have generated significant benefits for the employees and are growing at a faster pace. In parallel to the organizations growth, certain challenges are fostered by rapidly changing economic forces and emerging competition that demands the development of faster and more précised responses. Yet, the information detonation threatens to overwhelm and overload individual and corporate response mechanisms. Effective usage of information is meant through knowledge so that they can come out with successful decisions. Some organizations are in the way to implement Knowledge management programs after facing the issues. On the contrast, some organizations are managing their knowledge in a professional, proactive and systematic manner and become more innovative and successful. These companies are able to bond a high percentage of their human resources and keep them focused on the enterprise strategy and goals.

Review of Literature

The review of the literature is deemed pertinent and timely to the research topic. This review is derived from established managements, information systems and various other journals and publications.

Michael J.D.Sutton Et al, (2002) in a session "Evolution of knowledge management education" have discussed on the current scenario of knowledge management. Every organization has to manage their knowledge efficiently to gain competitive advantage. Institutions of higher learning have to design a separate system and body for knowledge management.

Mamta Bhusry and Jayanti Ranjan (2011) in their study "Implementing KM in HEI in India: A Conceptual framework" have disclosed that today's higher educational institutions need to be made efficient to deal with problems from cross functional, cross organizational, ethical and cultural perspectives and equipped with tools to achieve excellence. The study also explores the various functional domains in higher education institutes and the indicators that determine these domains.

Objectives of the Study

- To study the KM climate prevailing in Self-Financing Arts and science Colleges.
- To analyze the need for KM practices in Self-Financing Arts and science Colleges
- To suggest ways and means how best the faculty in arts and science colleges can be taken care of so that they can in turn contribute to their academic growth.

Research methodology

The study involves exploratory research design. It explores the contributing factors towards a more knowledge oriented approach in the arts and science colleges. A multistage sampling technique is employed in this study. Purposive sampling has been employed in selection of colleges during the first stage and random sampling has been used in the second stage to select faculty members in those institutions .Both primary and secondary data collection techniques have been used in this study. Primary data was collected using a well structured questionnaire and secondary data was collected from records, various journals, magazines, books and websites.

Limitations of the study
This study is confined to faculty members working in self-financing arts and science colleges in and around tiruchengode. The study does not focus on students or management of self-financing arts and science colleges. Department wise grouping and analysis were not carried out because the focus of the study was faculty members in general.

DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION
FACTORS OF NEED FOR KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT
In self-financing arts and science colleges, factors such as, 'Prerequisites', 'Imperatives', 'Change Management' and 'Restructuring' determine the need for knowledge management. All these factors are mostly practiced by the self-financing arts and science colleges; it is necessary to identify the major factor, which is the basis for knowledge management need.

The four factors obtained from the variables of 'Need for knowledge management' are tested with the parametric one sample t-test. The values of mean, t-test value and t-value and significance from the test are enunciated in the table given below:

Table1: Need for Knowledge Management

Factors	N	Mean	Test Value	t-value	Significance
Prerequisites	114	4.31	4	6.575	.000
Imperatives	114	4.13	4	2.710	.008 *
Change Management	114	3.98	3	22.093	.000
Restructuring	114	3.65	3	14.405	.000

* Insignificant

From the table above, the mean values 4.31, 4.13, 3.98, and 3.65 are obtained for the factors 'Prerequisites', 'Imperatives', 'Change Management', and 'Restructuring respectively. The t-test value for the test value 4 confirms that the mean value of prerequisites and imperatives is significantly greater than 4 at 5 percent level of significance. This again confirms that the respondents strongly agree to the factor 'Prerequisites' and have agreed to the Imperatives like corporate restructuring, changed teacher expectations, and renewed focus on students.

It is also inferred from the above table that the t-test value for the test value 3 reveals that the mean values of Change management and Restructuring are significantly greater than 3 at 5 percent level of significance. This shows that the teachers in self-financing arts and science colleges have agreed that the Change management and Restructuring are important for knowledge management need. The comparison of the mean values of these four factors reveals that prerequisites have emerged as 'predominant factor' of knowledge management need. It is concluded that the Prerequisites like new arts and science college's products/services; Quality awareness, increased competition, IT revolution, and Liberalization, Privatization, and Globalization are predominant variables among other variables of knowledge management need. It is also observed that the imperatives accelerate the knowledge management practices towards constructive Change management system and Revitalizations of their teachers' potential.

KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT CLIMATE SURVEY
Cultural Change, General Climate, Knowledge Management Mechanism Climate, Empowerment, Risk Management are the five factors of knowledge management Climate Survey in self-financing arts and science colleges. These five factors obtained from the variables of 'knowledge management Climate Survey' are tested with parametric one sample t-test. The values of mean, t-test value and t-value and significance from the test are exhibited in the table given below:

Table2: Knowledge Management climate survey

Factors	N	Mean	Test Value	t-value	Significance
Cultural Changes	114	3.55	3	12.235	.000
General Climate	114	3.88	3	20.831	.000
Knowledge Management Mechanism Climate	114	3.77	3	17.518	.000
Empowerment	114	4.19	4	5.565	.000
Risk Management	114	3.76	3	17.747	.000

From the above table, the mean values 3.55, 3.88, 3.77, 4.19, and 3.76 are acquired for the factors 'Cultural Change', 'General Climate', 'Knowledge Management Mechanism Climate', 'Empowerment', and 'Risk Management' respectively. The t-test values for the test value 3 reveals that the mean values of Cultural Change, General Climate, knowledge management Mechanism Climate and Risk Management are significantly greater than 3 at 5 percent level of significance. This means that the respondents have agreed with the factors Cultural Change, General Climate, knowledge management Mechanism Climate, Empowerment and Risk Management as the basis for creating conducive knowledge management climate in their private arts and science colleges.

However, the t-test value for the mean value of 'Empowerment' with the test value 4 is significantly greater than 4 at 5 percent level of significance. This implies that the respondents have strongly agreed with the factor 'Empowerment'. The inference drawn is that experimentation and confrontation are the foundations for empowerment in the self-financing arts and science colleges.

The comparison of the mean values of all the five factors of knowledge management Climate Survey confirms that the mean value of the factor 'Empowerment' is more than the other four factors. It is concluded that the self-financing arts and science colleges emphasize a process replete with positive notions to trigger a powerful dynamism among the teachers.

Findings
The major finding establishes that the self-financing arts and science colleges have initiated with the practices for the effective implementation of knowledge management practices. They focus mainly on the imperatives to join the mainstream of liberalization. The innovative changes in management have emerged in the form of quality of service through the enhanced knowledge of workforce. The process of restructuring in self-financing arts and science colleges helps to attract students' community towards their service domains.

Suggestions
The teachers, especially in the higher cadre, need to update their knowledge and skills constantly, and consciously. Technology is changing the world at a frightening speed. Therefore, the ongoing process of training and learning should not only be based on sound and proven theories and concepts, but also tied with practical aspects and implementation. Ultimately, these concepts should be practiced and demonstrated by the teachers in their day to day functioning in the colleges.

Conclusion
Managing human resources is the key to success of self-financing arts and science colleges. The behavioral aspects and personal qualities have to be taken care of in KM. Various case studies have proved that proper KM can only ensure a commitment to total quality, meet responsibilities to customers, can encourage open communication, can make possible the team work and team development. The dedicated teachers are given recognition for their contribution to the institution. Overall, the KM enables the teachers to make a long-term commitment to all the managerial values narrated above and to build a good employer-employee relationship. This is a win-win situation both for the Colleges and Teachers.

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