USE OF STRATEGIC MANAGEMENT TO OVERSEE THE LIBRARY

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Abstract
This article explores the idea, definition, and guiding principles of managing a library through strategic management and service execution. In the dynamic and evolving landscape of information and technology, libraries face significant challenges and opportunities. This review explores the application of strategic management principles in library oversight, highlighting their importance in maintaining relevance and effectiveness. Strategic management provides a structured approach for libraries to set goals, allocate resources, and proactively adapt to changes. In addition, the study examines the connections with outside settings, assesses the present situation, the implications of potential changes, the difficulties and rewards of implementing strategic management in libraries to increase output and efficiency. This paper examines key concepts of strategic management, the strategic planning process, implementation phases, and the importance of monitoring and evaluation. It also addresses common challenges and offers solutions for successful implementation. By embracing strategic management, libraries can improve service quality, enhance user satisfaction, and foster innovation, ensuring they meet the diverse needs of their communities and remain vital in the digital age.

Keyword: Strategic management, libraries, strategic planning, library management, digital transformation.

1. Introduction

In today's rapidly evolving information landscape, libraries face unprecedented challenges and opportunities. The digital revolution has transformed how information is accessed, disseminated, and consumed, necessitating a strategic approach to library management. Strategic management, traditionally a concept within the business world, has found its way into various organizational contexts, including libraries [1]. This shift underscores the need for libraries to not only adapt to changes but also to anticipate and proactively address future demands. [2]

The role of libraries has expanded beyond mere repositories of books. Modern libraries serve as community hubs, centers of learning, and gateways to digital resources. Consequently, effective management strategies are essential to ensure libraries remain relevant, efficient, and capable of meeting the diverse needs of their patrons [3]. The rationale for this review stems from the growing recognition of strategic management as a vital tool for library administrators to navigate the complexities of the contemporary information environment.

1.1. Definitions

Strategic management: Strategic management is the management of an organization's resources to achieve its goals and objectives. [4]

An organization's strategic management process includes goal-setting, competitive environment analysis, internal organization analysis, strategy evaluation, and strategy rollout oversight.

1.2. Evolution of Strategic Management

Planning and directing massive military operations is where the idea of strategic management first arose. Over time, these principles were adapted for business use. In the mid-20th century, strategic management began to emerge as a distinct field of study within business management. Initially, the focus was on long-term planning, but as business environments became more complex and dynamic, the emphasis shifted to strategic thinking and adaptability. Mission and vision statements, strategy implementation, and result monitoring are all part of modern strategic management. [5]

1.3. Strategic Management in Libraries

Over the last hundred years, library strategic management has come a long way. Initially, libraries were primarily seen as repositories of books and other materials. Their main objective was to collect, catalog, and provide access to information. However, as the information landscape began to change in the mid-20th century, so too did the role of libraries. The advent of new technologies, such as computers and the internet, transformed the way information was stored and accessed. This shift necessitated a more strategic approach to library management. In the 1970s and 1980s, libraries began to adopt strategic planning techniques borrowed from the business world, aiming to improve service delivery and ensure long-term sustainability. During this time, user-centric models were also introduced, which placed an stress on knowing and satisfying the requirements of library users. [6]

Current Trends and Practices

In modern times, strategic management in libraries covers a broad spectrum of actions with the overarching goal of bringing library services in line with community expectations and requirements. One key trend is the emphasis on digital transformation. Libraries are increasingly integrating digital resources and services, such as e-books, online databases, and virtual reference services, to meet the growing demand for remote access to information. Another significant trend is the focus on community engagement. Libraries are adopting participatory approaches, involving community members in decision-making processes to ensure that services are relevant and responsive. Additionally, there is a growing emphasis on sustainability, with libraries implementing green practices and policies to reduce their environmental footprint. Libraries are increasingly forming strategic collaborations with other groups to expand their reach and improve the services they provide. [7]

Case Studies of Successful Implementation

With the help of strategic management methods, many libraries throughout the globe have been able to improve their services and have a bigger influence on their communities. One notable example is the New York Public Library (NYPL). In recent years, the NYPL has undertaken a comprehensive strategic planning process aimed at modernizing its services and facilities. This has included the expansion of digital collections, the renovation of branch libraries to create more welcoming and functional spaces, and the introduction of innovative programs such as the Library HotSpot program, which provides free internet access to low-income families. Another example is the Helsinki Central Library Oodi in Finland. Oodi was designed with extensive input from the community and has become a vibrant public space offering a wide range of services, from traditional book lending to digital media production facilities. The library's strategic focus on community needs and sustainability has made it a model for 21st-century libraries. These examples show how strategic management is crucial for libraries to adapt to new situations and keep serving their patrons' requirements. [8]

Libraries in particular need to focus on metrics that emphasize the results or impacts on the individual and larger organizational context rather than the inward-looking focus that arises from the gathering and use of input, process, and output measures. Having an outward-looking or customer-focused approach has multiple implications: [9]

Firstly, consumers are the most valuable asset of an organization;

Secondly, meeting their requirements is essential to bringing in new business and keeping hold of current clientele. Without knowing what their needs are, the library is unable to meet them. The library needs to think about acquiring client data in novel ways. To enable the provision of more individualized services, the client may be asked for extra details. Additionally, the library may get more precise data regarding who is additionally by forcing patrons to scan their library ID cards each time they enter and leave the library may be able to get more precise information about who is utilizing the space. Then, by combining this data with the information gathered, more accurate reports can be produced, specifically breaking down the possible user base into segments.

1.4. SWOT Analysis in Libraries

Organizations may benefit from using SWOT Analysis, a method for strategic planning, to better understand their own possibilities and threats, as well as those from the outside world. For libraries, conducting a SWOT analysis can provide valuable insights to enhance service delivery, improve strategic planning, and better meet community needs. Libraries possess several inherent strengths that form the foundation of their service offerings. One of the primary strengths is their extensive collections, which include books, journals, multimedia resources, and increasingly, digital content [10]. These vast collections support a diverse range of informational and educational needs. Additionally, libraries benefit from skilled staff who possess specialized knowledge in information management, research assistance, and customer service. The community's trust in libraries as reliable and equitable sources of information is another significant strength. Libraries also offer a variety of educational programs, from literacy classes to technology training, that serve the community's educational and developmental needs. Finally, libraries play an important role as community centers because they provide inviting physical places that promote study, cooperation, and community activities. [11]

1.5. Implementation of Strategic Management in Libraries

The goal of strategic management in libraries is to chart a course for the institution's future by studying and adapting to both its internal and external settings. There are primarily three components: [12]

- **Formulating the library's future mission**

This should take into account external factors like regulation, competition, technology, and users. [13]

- **Developing a competitive strategy**

This strategy should help the library achieve its mission, vision, and goals.

- **Creating a library structure**

This structure should be able to deploy resources to carry out the competitive strategy. [14]

The five-step procedure that constitutes strategic management is as follows: [15]

1. Identify goals
2. Analyze the current situation
3. Form a strategy
4. Implement the strategy
5. Evaluate the process

A library may benefit from having a well-thought-out strategy that lays out its present and future assets, objectives, and methods for reaching those goals. Additionally, it need to have a means of evaluating advancement. Keep the broader view and the library's ability to meet community needs in mind while making plans and establishing priorities. [16]

2. Literature Reviews

The research aimed to examine academic library network strategies and offers a method for assessing the efficacy of such plans and their execution. Organizations discuss and execute their strategic strategies using the balanced scorecard technique. This research proves that the balanced scorecard is useful for evaluating strategy and performance from a variety of angles. The goals of the library consortium's long-term plans are shown using the strategy map idea. Research like this helps fill gaps in our understanding of library strategic planning and informs current practices. Those looking to attain cost-efficiency via improved and networked library collaboration may find the study's conclusions valuable. [17]

Research on the application of strategic management to library administration in India has been going on for over 30 years, with 167 publications that have resulted in PhD degrees, according to a literature and database review. The study examines these 167 studies using a number of criteria and finds that studies investigating the use of strategic management to library administration are becoming more popular. [18]

As a result of societal, economic, and technical shifts, university libraries have come to see information product and service marketing as an essential aspect of management. The profession of university libraries is being pushed to adopt a more professional marketing strategy in its operations and services due to the information explosion, technological change, and rising library expenses. From a collection management, infrastructure, human resources, and information services perspective, this paper conducts an impartial SWOT analysis of four university libraries in Kerala: KUL, MGUL, CUSATL, and CHMKL. The libraries in question are located at the following institutions: KUL, MGUL, Cochin University of Science and Technology, and the University of Calicut. It also included

an analysis of the university libraries' strengths and weaknesses based on the chief librarians' opinions. [19]

A librarian's use of strategic planning was the focus of the article. Academic libraries have faced several conflicting difficulties and challenges over the last two decades, but very few studies have looked at their planning papers to determine which ones are most important. A void exists in the literature, theory, and practice, and this study seeks to fill it. The study contended that knowing one's library's domain, evaluating one's relevant resource base, and coming up with a common vision of the future are all necessary components of good strategic planning. According to this study, strategic planning entails doing things like collecting and analyzing data, coming up with goals, developing and executing a strategy, and checking in on how things are going along. This article found out how well strategic planning concepts are keeping an eye on the library's conventional and new demands, as well as how well they handle service delivery, by doing a content analysis of academic library strategic plans. In order to guarantee that all library workers are committed to their libraries' plans, the article suggests that library executives and the planning team collaborate on a system. [20]

Academic libraries need to be strategic if they want to succeed in today's information landscape. There will be a growing expectation that academic libraries will coordinate their strategies with those of their respective institutions, and vice versa. As a last point, effective academic library leadership calls for a modern leadership portfolio that shows how to rally the troops behind the library's goals and inspires them to work toward them. [21]

The methods used for strategic management in university libraries were the focus of this study. Research done in 2009 and 2010 forms the basis of the article. The purpose of this case study was to examine the USIU library in order to draw conclusions about the nature of changing paradigms in information management, the main obstacles, and the methods used for strategic management. A total of 153 individuals, including students, library personnel, and instructors, were surveyed using a descriptive study approach. Data was analyzed using descriptive statistics, inferential statistics, and factor analysis. The use of strategic management concepts in information management has become imperative due to the instability of the information business. This is marked by the far-reaching effects of information and communication technologies, changes in user behavior that cause paradigm shifts, and changes in the responsibilities of librarians that affect the formulation,

implementation, and assessment of library strategies. Concerns for the well-being of employees and strong leadership are essential for carrying out the intended plan. The research found that academic library leadership's actions, structures, and processes, as well as the absence of policies that support strategies, are limiting strategic activity. [22]

The authors of this research built their Strategic Management Model for Academic Libraries using a qualitative methodology that included content analysis of literature and in-depth interviews. According to the literature, there are a plethora of strategic management models, often tailored to various types of businesses. We discovered that these models are missing key components that academic libraries need to align their strategy with the overarching objectives of their respective parent institutions. So, to try to close this gap, the current research presents a Model that has three primary phases: pre-planning, planning, and post-planning. These stages provide a new way for academic libraries to articulate and execute plans. Educating the planning group or committee on strategic management principles and practices is the first step. Step two of the Model is reached when both steps—strategy formulation and strategy implementation—are completed. In the end, however, it's all about evaluating the strategy to make sure that the Mother Institution's overarching goals are in line with the library's vision and objectives and that all departments and staff members are working toward the same goals. [23]

3. Conclusion

Strategic management is quickly rising in popularity within the library and information science community. To keep up with the rapidly changing information and technology world, libraries need to implement strategic management. Strategic management offers a methodical framework that libraries may use to proactively adjust to changes, create objectives, and distribute resources. Strategic planning allows libraries to better serve their patrons, anticipate their needs, and remain competitive by coordinating their goals with those of their patrons. Weaknesses and strengths must be identified, goals must be defined, and employees must be involved for strategic management to be effective. Measuring achievement and making required modifications requires effective monitoring and assessment. By adopting these techniques, libraries may boost creativity, patron happiness, and service quality. Libraries may greatly benefit from strategic management, despite obstacles like little funding and a lack of enthusiasm

for change. It helps libraries simplify complicated situations, enhance their operations, and provide greater service to their communities. Strategy management methods should be further studied and used in the future with an eye on improving library operations via their incorporation. This kind of administration is suitable for use in libraries and information centers.

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