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Book Review

Kumar, Krishan. *Library management in electronic environment*. New Delhi, Har-Anand Publications Pvt Ltd, 2007, pp 320, Hardbound Rs 495 US\$ 20 (Har-Anand Publications , E-49/3, Okhla Industrial Area, Phase-II, New Delhi-110020 (India). Tel: 011- 41 60 3490 Fax: 011-41708607. E-mail: haranand (at) rediffmail.com

The interest of library profession in management sciences is nearly half a century old. A library being a service institution all the functions and principles of management are applicable to libraries as well. S R Ranganathan wrote '*Library Administration*' as early as in 1959. G. Edward Evans wrote '*Management technique for librarians*' way back in 1983. Both these works are heavily referred by the professionals in the library world. Now, developments in information technology have had a major impact in the management of libraries. The challenges posed by the electronic environment are profound and learning appropriate management skills to sustain themselves become imperative to library managers. A host of writers have addressed this issue from many dimensions. However, for the first time Krishan Kumar, a notable scholar in the world of library and information science, has written a book combining the functions and principles of library management and administration with the skills needed to handle the libraries in the electronic environment.

The author has made it very clear in the preface itself that this book is primarily intended to address the requirements of students of Bachelor of Library and Information Science and Diploma in Library and Information Science. In the preface the author also says that "*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.*" To that effect the author has fully succeeded in bringing forth before the users the essence of management of libraries in the electronic environment and kindling the desire to learn more.

Structurally the book under review is divided into 31 chapters followed by an index at the end. The first chapter familiarizes the reader with the development of management. The second and third chapters present the different schools of management thought and principles of management in as concise and clear a manner as possible. Functions of the management are discussed at length. However, as the functions are spread into several chapters the reader does not find the read dull or difficult. A full chapter is assigned to the challenges for the managers. This chapter discusses the developments and the trends that have taken place owing to the environmental changes. In the context of the environmental changes a manager has to adopt new approaches and techniques to survive. Thus, a set of guidelines for achieving effective management are presented in this chapter. The chapter on *Total Quality Management (TQM)* explains in detail the three elements of TQM viz. tools, techniques and training. This chapter not only makes the concept of TQM clear but with copious case studies, urges librarians to implement it at the first available opportunity. Chapter 15, which is on motivation, apart from explaining motivation in general, also describes Maslow's Hierarchy of Needs theory and the Motivation-Hygiene theory. The

section on Herzberg's two factor theory is very interesting as one comes to know what would dissatisfy an employee but not motivate. The special feature of the chapter on planning of a library building is the dimensions of different furniture given in millimeters taken from IS: 1829. This would be of great use to the young librarians especially when they start from a scratch. An entire chapter, i.e., chapter 20, is devoted to library automation. Here apart from detailing the planning and implementation of library automation, the author has also presented an overview of available library management softwares. The remaining eleven chapters are devoted to library routines. In these chapters the author also describes how these library routines can be handled in an electronic environment. In Chapter 28 on 'Maintenance Work', the author has taken care to reproduce the circular of 7-2-1984 of Ministry of Finance of Government of India regarding the loss of books. This circular would be of immense help to all librarians which is often not readily available to many.

This book is a splendid contribution to the subject of library management and administration in electronic environment. Krishan Kumar has demonstrated a scholarly rigour by taking up a topic that has come to represent the latest in librarianship. The beauty of his writings is that it is devoid of any word flab. Except for two, all the chapters are very short and strung together in a taut fashion. At the end of each chapter there is a list for further reading. Overall there are about 71 recommendations for further reading.

Issues regarding intellectual property rights, censorship and web content management could be addressed in subsequent editions, which the reviewer is sure the book warrants. This book offers an immensely joyful read perhaps as much for its lucidity and clarity as for its scholarship and intellectual content. Furthermore, the book also covers topics of concern to students of Master of Library and Information Science, though primarily written for students studying for Bachelor of Library and Information Science. The reviewer strongly recommends this book not only to the students but also to the teachers and researchers of library and information science who want to catch up with the subject of library management. Even for students who prepare for UGC NET (University Grants Commission National Eligibility Test) or SET (State Eligibility Test) examinations, this book could serve as a ready help for the subject of library management.

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