Continuous professional development programs for the University libraries in Sri Lanka

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This paper is an attempt to study the Continuous Professional Development (CPD) programmes for the University Libraries in Sri Lanka (ULSL). Modern Human Resource Management (HRM) specifies that the CEOs, Chief Executives, the middle and lower management staff are required to pursue the continuous learning process owing to the changing nature of subject knowledge, skills, and competencies. Learning is a life long process the learner himself or herself is involved in with the relevant stakeholder supports. CPD is a concept that members of a profession individually or collectively are devoted for life-long education and learning. Each member of the profession is to be dedicated for learning through; teaching, practicing, consulting, advising and getting an experience. From Assistant Librarians (ALs), Senior Assistant Librarians (SALs) up to Librarians in universities have been categorized as professional staff and they require CPD.

Objectives of the study were to identify what CPD is, to study what types of CPD programmes are presently practiced, to study the most appropriate CPD programmes required and to develop a suitable CPD model for the staff of ULSL.

Descriptive research methodology was applied. The population of the study was the professional staff working in ULSL. There was no necessity of using a sample, since the population was finite. Two questionnaires were circulated among the Librarians, SALs, and ALs respectively in order to collect primary data followed by an interview. 90% Librarians endorsed the CPD policy proposal. 100% of Librarians stressed additional funding required for staff training and development. 60% of ULSL are yet to allocate training hours for their staff. Therefore suggestions are made to utilize training hours for staff. 100% of librarians endorsed that there must be a separate fund for staff training and development. The most appropriate CPD programs for ULSL are *seminars/ workshops ; in-service training programmes ; external study programme (Degree, Diploma etc); job rotation; orientation/ induction programmes and attendance at pre/post conference with library support.* ALs and SALs category of staff prefer '*Support for research and publications by 85%.* It is proposed to library authorities to give the fullest support for conducting these programmes in ULSL. 60% Librarians were dissatisfied with the existing education and training opportunities available for the library professional staff. The study recommends the CPD programmes be given priority in the present context.

Keywords: Human Resource Management, staff training, University libraries, job rotation