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CONTENTS

Sr. No.	TITLE & NAME OF THE AUTHOR (S)	Page No.
1.	CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT: A CASE STUDY OF BRITISH TELECOM BROADBAND CUSTOMERS HYDER KAMRAN & NITIN RAJ SRIVASTAVA	1
2.	INFLUENCE OF ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE, SOCIAL INTERACTION AND DEMOGRAPHICAL VARIABLES ON ORGANIZATIONAL COMMITMENT: AN EMPIRICAL ASSESSMENT OF TWO LEVELS OF EMPLOYEES OF SAUDI ARABIA DR. NASSER S. AL-KAHTANI	7
3.	FINANCIAL DEREGULATIONS AND PRODUCTIVITY CHANGE IN PAKISTAN BANKING INDUSTRY RAFAQET ALI & MUHAMMAD AFZAL	12
4.	BRILLIANT INTELLIGENCE AND INTERNAL MARKETING EFFECT ON ORGANIZATIONAL CITIZENSHIP BEHAVIOR- STUDY OF EMPLOYEE IN HIGH TECHNOLOGY INDUSTRY FENG-LI LIN, JUI-YING HUNG & KUO-SONG LU	17
5.	AN IDENTIFICATION OF CRITICAL STRATEGIC SUCCESS FACTORS THAT MAKES ETHIOPIA ONE OF THE MOST ATTRACTIVE TOURIST DESTINATION DR. GETIE ANDUALEM IMIRU	25
6.	BARRIERS TO KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT IMPLEMENTATION IN UNIVERSITIES ROYA DARABI & AHMAD GHASEMI	32
7.	AN ASSESSMENT OF BANGLADESHI COMMERCIAL BANKS TREND TOWARDS UNIVERSAL BANKING MD. AL MAMUN	37
8.	COMPARISON OF IMAGE ENHANCEMENT TECHNIQUES ABDUL RASAK ZUBAIR	44
9.	STATIONARY DEMAND CURVE MODEL UNDER JUST IN TIME INVENTORY SYSTEM DR. KAVITA DAVE & DR. NITIN D. SHAH	53
10.	A STUDY OF LEADERSHIP STYLES IN PUBLIC-SECTOR ENTERPRISES (A CASE STUDY OF BHARATH EARTH MOVERS LIMITED) K. V. GEETHA DEVI, DR. G. RAMA KRISHNA REDDY & DR. G. HARANATH	55
11.	A STUDY ON CONSUMER AWARENESS, USAGE PENETRATION AND ADOPTION OF 3G MOBILE SERVICES IN INDIA SARIKA KHANNA & DR. NISHA AGARWAL	64
12.	THE IMPACT OF WORKPLACE STRESS ON HEALTH: THE MEDIATING ROLE OF SPIRITUALITY IN THE WORKPLACE NAGALAKSHMI. P & DR. K. JAWAHAR RANI	69
13.	EMPLOYMENT TO WOMEN IN INDIAN BEEDI INDUSTRY AN OPPORTUNITY OR THREAT: A CASE STUDY OF NIZAMABAD DISTRICT GIRISH KUMAR PAINOLI	72
14.	CELEBRITY ADVERTISEMENT AND ITS IMPACT ON BUYING BEHAVIOUR DR. S. BANUMATHY & DR. M. SUBASINI	76
15.	INFLUENCE OF PERSONALITY ON QUALITY OF WORK LIFE OF TEACHERS J. PARAMESWARI & DR. S. KADHIRAVAN	79
16.	LEADERSHIP ENHANCEMENT THROUGH ASSESSMENT AND DEVELOPMENT (LEAD) AT ALPHA PHARMACEUTICALS INDIA PRIVATE LTD. DR. GOWRI JOSHI & DR. BHARATI DESHPANDE	83
17.	ANALYSIS OF CUSTOMERS' PERCEPTION IN INDIAN BANKING SECTOR DR. ROSY KALRA	86
18.	DEMOGRAPHIC CHARACTERISTICS OF EMPLOYEES IN INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY INDUSTRY IN INDIA DR. DEEPAKSHI GUPTA	93
19.	IMPACT OF ANIMATION ON CHILDREN J. J. SOUNDARARAJ & DR. D. V. S. JANAKIDAS	98
20.	A CASE STUDY ON TRAINING AND DEVELOPMENT WITH REFERENCE TO NUTRINE CONFECTIONERY COMPANY LTD., CHITTOOR (A.P) C. RAJANIKANTH	109
21.	SHIFTING PARADIGMS IN TEACHING PEDAGOGY OF B-SCHOOLS PRITAM P. KOTHARI, AVINASH A. DHAVAN & SHIVGANGA C. MINDARGI	116
22.	IMPERATIVES FOR GLOBAL RETAILERS EYEING INDIAN RETAIL MARKET- A STUDY OF WAL MART DR. SIDDHARATHA S BHARDWAJ & DR. MAMTA RANI	122
23.	CUSTOMERS' PERCEPTION TOWARDS E-BANKING SERVICES OF THE COMMERCIAL BANKS IN CUDDALORE DISTRICT RAVICHANDRAN & DR. A. MURUGARATHINAM	125
24.	CUSTOMER RETENTION CHALLENGES IN THE HYPERCOMPETITIVE INDIAN INDUSTRIES NIDHI KHURANA & AJEET KUMAR PATHAK	128
25.	SERVICES INNOVATION INSIDE AND OUTSIDE OF THE ORGANIZATION WITH THE HELP OF ICT DR. RAJESH N. PAHURKAR	133
26.	CREATING A SYSTEMATIC TRADING PLAN WITH AT THE MONEY CALENDAR CALL SPREAD IN NIFTY PRIYANKA VASHISHT	137
27.	GENDER EMPOWERMENT IN PRACTICE: A CASE STUDY OF BHARAT COKING COAL LIMITED, DHANBAD DR. N. C. PAHARIYA & ABHINAV KUMAR SHRIVASTAVA	143
28.	RETAIL STORE SELECTION CRITERIA USED BY CUSTOMERS IN DELHI-NCR: IMPLICATIONS FOR THE RETAILERS ANOOP KUMAR GUPTA	147
29.	CUSTOMER RELATIONSHIP MANAGEMENT IN TELECOM INDUSTRY – WITH REFERENCE TO BHARTI AIRTEL, ANDHRA PRADESH DR. K. RAJI REDDY, DR. D. THIRUVENGALA CHARY & SHATHABOINA. RAJU	152
30.	INITIATIVE TAKEN TOWARDS RETAIL MARKETING IN INDIA WITH REFERENCE TO LUCKNOW CITY (U.P.), INDIA SMRITI SRIVASTAVA & RAJEEV GUPTA	156
	REQUEST FOR FEEDBACK	161

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SERVICES INNOVATION INSIDE AND OUTSIDE OF THE ORGANIZATION WITH THE HELP OF ICT

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ABSTRACT

The organization follows specified framework which constitutes of various elements in it. All these elements are interdependent and have specific flow of authorities and responsibilities. Organizations are under constant pressure to create synergies in the resources under their control. There are various approaches to understand the nature of the organizations framework. This paper explores the various frameworks of organizations and attempts to find out the possibility of service innovation in each framework. It explains how ICT can be used to implement innovation inside and outside of the organizations. This paper also discuss about the various problems associated with innovation implementation in the organization and application of various ICT tools at appropriate places in the origination.

KEYWORDS

Framework, Innovation, ICT, Organization.

INTRODUCTION

Today in all types of organization there is increase in automation due to the rise of information and communication technologies (ICT) which has shifted traditional organizations into knowledge-intensive service industries (Chesbrough, H., Spohrer, J., 2006). This has given great scope for inside and outside organizational innovation. This paper will deal with the question of how to innovate inside and outside of the organization. An attempt will also be made to answer various other sub questions like how to innovate, where to innovate and how to deal with the various hurdles in innovation implementation in the organization with the help of ICT.

All kind of innovations are originated after processing the information and knowledge (Miles, I., 2008). The successful innovations transform the existing activities into more superior activities inside and outside the organization. Hence organizations need to have very strong information and knowledge management system which stores valuable data and information. ICT has enabled the information management and information access very efficiently to support various innovative organizational transformations (Terri L. Griffith, 2003).

All type of organizations has their own predefined structure. The structure constitutes of different elements which are linked together to execute regular activities in the organization. While working inside of the origination all departments and individual working in it are responsible for production of services and products. All the activities associated with production of services and products needs various resources. If organization doesn't provide all the resources efficiently it will hamper its future growth. Many organizations are striving hard to find out the best services to manage their resources, to cut down production cost and improve profitability of the organization.

Outside of the organization there are many other elements like vendor/suppliers, distribution channels and customers etc. All these external factors provide various services to help the organization to keep running profitably. This is also very critical task to maintain proper communication among all the external agencies and coordinate their efforts for more profitability.

In both inside and outside of the organization there is always great scope for improvement in existing process and practices. The innovation plays important role for the further development of process, practices and products. The various ICT tools and techniques are useful for innovative developments. The resources inside the organization can be managed for more productivity and profitability. The external elements can be coordinated efficiently to generate more profit.

The plan of the paper is like; section 1 gives briefs idea about the organization and possibility of innovations. Section 2 focuses light on possible ICT innovations inside the organizations having different framework and four dimensions of innovations. Section 3 speaks about possible ICT innovations outside the organizations, it discuss about competencies and vectors of innovation. Section 4 talks about the hurdles in organizational innovation and how to deal with it. And at last Section 5 concludes the research paper.

INSIDE INNOVATION

Organizations have different elements which are interlinked together. These elements are interdependent and provide varied services to each other to facilitate the functioning of the organizations. There are different theories proposed to explain the concept of service system in the organization. (S. Alter, 2008). These frameworks help to understand the nature of service systems to make all the services more productive to the organization. These frameworks are also useful to find out all the possibilities of innovations inside and outside of the organization. The various frameworks and the innovation through it is explained as below-

WORK SYSTEM FRAMEWORK

A work system is a system in which human participants or machines perform work using information, technology, and other resources to produce products and services for internal or external customers. Information systems, projects, and supply chains are all special cases of work systems.

In this type of approach ICT is important tool to coordinate the activities of human being and also to control the machines. The information system in the organization is major data house to support the system approach. The all sort of information stored in information system can be used strategically.

To support work system organization we can also use another ICT tool know as supply chain management (SCM).

A supply chain is a network of facilities and distribution options that performs the functions of procurement of materials, transformation of these materials into intermediate and finished products, and the distribution of these finished products to customers. Supply chains exist in both service and manufacturing organizations, although the complexity of the chain may vary greatly from industry to industry and firm to firm. Supply chain management is typically viewed to lie between fully vertically integrated firms, where the entire material flow is owned by a single firm, and those where each channel member operates independently. Therefore coordination between the various players in the chain is key in its effective management. Cooper and Ellram [1993] compare supply chain management to a well-balanced and well-practiced relay team. Such a team is more competitive when each player knows how to be positioned for the hand-off. The relationships are the strongest between players who directly pass the baton, but the entire team needs to make a coordinated effort to win the race.

THE SERVICE VALUE CHAIN FRAMEWORK

This service system approach focus on value creation inside and outside of the organization. While working as system the interdependent elements offer different services to each other through the various activities. All these activities are considered to be helpful for value creation to each element in the system.

The service value chain framework augments the work system framework by introducing activities and responsibilities that are associated with services. Every element of the framework is important for many service systems, although some may not be important for specific service systems. The service value chain

framework outlines service-related activities and responsibilities of both the service provider and the customer. These activities may occur before, while, and after a specific service is delivered to a specific customer.

Organization can implement various innovative ICT tools for value creation like ERP (Enterprise Resource Planning) is a way to integrate the data and processes of an organization into one single system. Usually ERP systems will have many components including hardware and software, in order to achieve integration, most ERP systems use a unified database to store data for various functions found throughout the organization.

The term ERP originally referred to how a large organization planned to use organizational wide resources. In the past, ERP systems were used in larger more industrial types of companies. However, the use of ERP has changed and is extremely comprehensive, today the term can refer to any type of company, no matter what industry it falls in. In fact, ERP systems are used in almost any type of organization - large or small.

In order for a software system to be considered ERP, it must provide an organization with functionality for two or more systems. While some ERP packages exist that only cover two functions for an organization (QuickBooks: Payroll & Accounting), most ERP systems cover several functions.

Today's ERP systems can cover a wide range of functions and integrate them into one unified database. For instance, functions such as Human Resources, Supply Chain Management, Customer Relations Management, Financials, Manufacturing functions and Warehouse Management functions were all once stand alone software applications, usually housed with their own database and network, today, they can all fit under one umbrella - the ERP system.

WORK SYSTEM LIFE CYCLE MODEL (WSLC)

Both the work system framework and the service value chain framework represent static views of how a service operates at a particular point in time. The WSLC is an iterative model based on the assumption that a service system evolves through a combination of planned and unplanned changes. The planned changes occur through formal projects with initiation, development, and implementation phases. Unplanned changes are ongoing adaptations and experimentation that change aspects of the work system without performing formal projects.

The real challenge organization faces for this kind of service approach. This explains about the change which is uncontrollable over period of time in future. There are many factors responsible for changes inside and outside the organizations.

Organizations themselves are responsible for majority of changes. Most of the organizations plan for expansion, diversification, and modernization. All these changes have effect on the organizational elements.

There are various innovative ICT tools available to accommodate above mentioned changes. Organization planning for change can make provision in existing processes with help of own development team or can take the help of experts and seniors in the organization who can work with internal team. The team formed should have proper mix of senior and junior experts working in the organization. This is very good strategy of knowledge management in the organization. This will help to transfer all tacit knowledge to the various members of development team. All the team members can use the various ICT tools like MIS (Management Information System), Project Management Software and Data Warehousing software to design and implement all future changes.

According to Den Hertog (2000) that the service innovation is better thought of in terms of four dimensions of novelty: Service concept, Client interface, Service delivery system, and Technology. Innovation in each dimension involves particular sources of creativity and knowledge, raising issues of organization and management. Many service innovations involve some combination of these four dimensions. For instance, a new IT system (technology dimension) may be used to enable customer self-service using a web site or automatic teller machines (interface dimension), or to enable a customer to determine the location of an item handled by a freight service (new service concept). A new service will often require a new service delivery system and changes to the client interface. A service innovation mainly involving one dimension may trigger the need for changes in other dimensions (Miles, I., 2008).

OUTSIDE INNOVATION

Outside of the organization both technological and non-technological forms of innovations are possible (Gallouj, 2002a). In majority of the organizations the services and products are sold together and there is always scope for innovation in both (Gadrey et al., 1995; Grönroos, 1998; Shostack, 1987; Sundbo, 2001).

Gallouj and Weinstein proposed the model in which services and goods are represented by four vectors of characteristics and competencies: a vector of outcome characteristics, a vector of the provider's competencies, a vector of the provider's technological characteristics and a vector of the client's competencies. Innovation is defined as any change affecting one or more terms of one or more of the vectors. According to this model outcome characteristic of any organization depends on what kind of technology the organization is using to produce the outcome; and what experience is having as expertise (Competencies) in the respective area of operation is major concern. This model also focuses on the client competences to facilitate the innovation.

The further study by Erik J. de Vries (2006) proposed modification in above model which suggested one additional vector of client technology. According to this model clients can use their own technology in innovation of outcome of the organization. This model proposed outside innovation with customer involvement in service development and innovation. Organizations can think of developing user friendly technologies which can be used in service delivery. User can have access to these newly developed technologies and will be able to use in value creation through it.

Organizations can think and find out the most suitable form of change in any of the vectors to develop organizational innovation.

Innovation in organization is most of the time considered as product innovation happens in R & D department. This is very narrow view of innovation in organization. The Consortium for Service Innovation has observed that innovation in services cannot happen in R&D labs nor be engineered in ways we have engineered products. We feel this is true for two reasons. First, the customer is not sufficiently present in the R&D and product engineering process. Second, the traditional approach is based on a manufacturing model that is good at producing tangible products, but not well suited to intangible, value-based services. We believe business has to develop organizational models or systems where customer involvement and innovation is both persistent and inherent in the system.

Organization can involve their customers by knowing their requirements through market research. The conventional market research is how to economize on the acquisition of reliable need-related information that allows product developers to create exactly the products consumers want. Product developers, however, face the problem that need-related information is inherently ambiguous—consumers may not be able to articulate their needs clearly (von Hippel, 1986), or their needs may change as they use a given product (Rosenberg, 1982).

Von Hippel (1998) has proposed alternative option as a possible way of bypassing information acquisition for product development. The idea has now been concretized in the notion of "user toolkits for innovation" (Thomke and von Hippel, 2002; von Hippel, 2001; von Hippel and Katz, 2002), which solves the problem by simply offering consumers the tools they need to customize essential parts of products themselves. This leaves some essential problem-solving activities up to consumers, which in turn may call for renewed considerations concerning the organization of product development.

It is often a very costly matter for firms to understand user's needs deeply and well. Need information is very complex, and conventional market research techniques only skim the surface. Deeper techniques, such as ethnographic studies, are both difficult and time-consuming. Further, the task of understanding user needs is growing ever more difficult as firms increasingly strive to learn about and serve the unique needs of "markets of one," and as the pace of change in markets and user needs grows ever faster. Indeed, firms at the leading edge of these trends such as custom products manufacturers are finding that conventional solutions are completely breaking down, and that a whole new approach is needed if they are to be able to continue to produce products and services that accurately respond to their users needs. Fortunately, an entirely new approach is being developed on the basis of patterns evolving in a few high tech fields. In this new approach, manufacturers actually discard their increasingly frustrating efforts to understand users' needs accurately and in detail. Instead, they learn to outsource key need-related innovation tasks to their users, after equipping them with appropriate "user toolkits for innovation" (Lars Bo Jeppesen, 2005).

To solve a problem, needed information and problem-solving capabilities must be brought together-physically or "virtually"-at a single locus. The need to transfer information from its point of origin to a specified problem-solving site will not affect the locus of problem-solving activity when that information can be shifted at no or little cost. However, when information is costly to acquire, transfer, and use - is, in our terms, "sticky" - we find that patterns in the distribution of problem solving can be affected in several significant ways. The application of user toolkits can be useful to develop sticky information for the organization at very low cost.

The changes in the organization continue to rush in from all directions. Organizations taking the advantage of the global internet which is flooding the marketplace and commoditizing services. The new technologies release new offerings far faster than the timeframe. The traditional communication service providers are launching new value-added services. Scores of subscribers are switching from traditional land-line services to new service options available over high-speed internet. And many are dropping landlines altogether in favor of wireless services.

All organizations are now expecting innovative services and offerings. The ICT companies not only need to deliver these new services—and deliver them more rapidly—they must also find ways to operate more flexibly and efficiently in the face of the challenging competitive environment.

We can find out the various forces that are shaping the ICT landscape and the role collaboration technologies can play in overcoming service challenges and reining in costs.

CONVERGENCE, MARKETPLACE FORCES AND NEW REALITIES IN ORGANIZATIONAL INNOVATION

The more advancement in the internet and the telecommunications industry has evolved rapidly and dramatically. Traditional voice services have been commoditized, replaced by people communicating in ever richer, more complex ways that are enabled by new technology. It has made possible for organizations to provide more live and interactive communication, and advanced automation in all areas.

The rapidly changing behaviors of organizations and the degree of choice as a subscribers organizations have in providers and the ease with which they can switch made all ICT innovations possible at all corners of the organization.

All the organizations are now more intertwined with media and IT widespread convergence. It has occurred both inside and outside of the organization.

HURDLES FOR INNOVATIONS IN THE ORGANIZATIONS

People involvement and knowledge managements are prime concerns for organizational innovations. Peoples in the form of team and knowledge management are two areas that are often fruitful in providing increased value when carefully managed. Teams can increase capability, flexibility, and responsiveness (for a review, see Leavitt 1996), while knowledge management is believed to be crucial to organizational performance (Berman et al. 2002; Kogut and Zander 1992; Liebeskind 1996). It is big challenge to form the team of people scattered at different physical locations and transfer and share the knowledge. The ICT made it possible to tackle the above mentioned problem of team formations and now virtual teams can be formed globally to work together on common platform of innovation. Technology may provide a means of structuring teamwork, enhance the information available to the team, and provide a communication system (McGrath and Berdahl 1998).

Most of the time people working in the organizations resist both technological and non-technological innovations. In this case an innovation as management fad or fashion makes it easy to accept and implement successfully (Abrahamson, E., 1991). Benders J. and Kees van Veen (2001) proposed that management fashions are best conceptualized as 'the production and consumption of temporarily intensive management discourse, and the organizational changes induced by and associated with this discourse'. This has been explained explained on the basis of variety of empirical work on Business Process Reengineering in the Netherlands.

CONCLUSIONS

Information and knowledge are considered as major source of innovation in all type of organizations. The existing activities and process can be transformed into more productive and efficient form with the help of successful innovations. Hence organizations need to have very strong information and knowledge management system which stores valuable data and information. ICT has enabled the information management and information access very efficiently to support various innovative organizational transformations.

All type of frameworks of organization have scope for innovation at appropriate places.

In work system framework organizations follow system approach in which human participants or machines perform work using information, technology, and other resources to produce products and services for internal or external customers. In this type of organization ICT enabled innovation like SCM (Supply Chain Management) is very appropriate to improve the efficiency of the organizations.

All the activities in organizational framework are supposed to be performed for more value creation. In services value chain framework companies can think of more interactive type of innovation. ERP (Enterprise Resources Planning) is one such innovative tool which is more comprehensive and helpful to create more value through various company operations.

Over period of time organizations think for various changes like expansions, merger, and diversifications etc., like in the work system life cycle model. These types of changes require huge information and data management which can be used strategically. Organizations can form team of experts from all levels to facilitate efficient tacit knowledge transfer with various ICT tools like MIS (Management Information System), Project Management Software and Data Warehousing software to design and implement all future changes.

The various researches shows that the service innovation is better thought of in terms of four dimensions of novelty: Service concept, Client interface, Service delivery system, and Technology. The change in any one dimension can lead to successful innovation.

All the services and goods can be represented by four vectors of characteristics and competencies: a vector of outcome characteristics, a vector of the provider's competencies, a vector of the provider's technological characteristics and a vector of the client's competencies. The change in any one of the vector can led to the organizational innovation. Hence organizations can think of changing the above mentioned vectors strategically to innovate. The further research also proposed the one more additional vector of client technology which gives more scope of innovation outside the organization.

The innovation in the organizations is not considered a complete innovation until the organizations involved their customers into innovation process. Organizations can use various user toolkits to know the customer requirements and can generate valuable information (Sticky) for the organization.

The advancement in the internet and the telecommunications industry made possible the more live and interactive communication and the advanced automation at all corners inside and outside of the organizations.

The major hurdle in any innovation is to get people together in the form of team. It is big challenge to form the team of people scattered at different physical locations and transfer and share the knowledge. The ICT made it possible to tackle the above mentioned problem of team formations and now virtual teams can be formed globally to work together on common platform of innovation. The ICT tools also facilitate knowledge management among the various teams across the globe.

People working in the organizations resist both technological and non-technological innovations. In this case an innovation as management fad or fashion makes it easy to accept and implement successfully.

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