

INNOVATIVENESS AND MODERN TRENDS IN HIGHER-EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTIONS AND LIBRARIES AS UNITS OF THEIR STRUCTURE

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Abstract

Innovations are present in all fields of human activity. Therefore, they are an indispensable segment of the activities of higher-educational institutions which are going through a very demanding process of development towards future forms of educational, scientific and research work. Higher education activities imply a continuous monitoring of innovations, and their application in the educational process. The aforementioned activities are also related to the academic library, which is an unavoidable factor in the process of carrying out scientific and educational work, and is, unlike the public library, closely related to innovative processes in education and the performance of scientific activities. Using innovative methods and solutions, along with transformational processes, the library must satisfy its users with knowledgeable staff, who are ready to answer questions and meet the challenges of increasingly demanding modern users. For this reason, employees in higher education libraries are obliged to continuously improve their level of education, and to constantly keep up with modern trends, with a particular emphasis on respecting what is prescribed by the principles of the code of ethics and the legal regulations in the field of library work, as well as in the field of activities of higher-educational institutions and the protection of intellectual property. In order for this entire process to be implemented, the management of these institutions must invest all their effort and knowledge into reaching their goals through efficient organisation and a strategy that will lead to a high quality of service and a competitive advantage in this market.

Key words: innovations, higher education, library, competitiveness, management

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ИНОВАТИВНОСТ И САВРЕМЕНИ ТРЕНДОВИ У ВИСОКООБРАЗОВНИМ ИНСТИТУЦИЈАМА И БИБЛИОТЕКАМА КАО ЈЕДИНИЦАМА У ЊИХОВОМ САСТАВУ

Апстракт

Иновације су данас присутне у свим сферама људског деловања и рада, па су стога незаобилазан сегмент и високог образовања, односно високошколских институција, које пролазе тежак и веома захтеван развојни пут према будућим облицима бављења образовним, научним и истраживачким радом. У високом образовању се подразумевају континуирано праћење иновација и њихова примена у образовном процесу, који се састоји од уочавања промена, развоја организације, креирања иновација и њених имплементација. Све ове активности везане су и за академску, односно високошколску библиотеку, која је незаобилазни фактор у процесу обављања научног и образовног рада и која је, за разлику од народне, односно јавне библиотеке, уско повезана са иновативним процесима у образовању, али и са обављањем научне делатности. Заједно са трансформационим процесима, користећи иновативне методе и решења, библиотека мора да задовољи корисника и виспиреним људством, које је спремно да да одговоре на сва питања, те да одговори на изазове све захтевнијих савремених корисника. Из тог разлога, нарочито поштујући оно што је прописано принципима етичког кодекса и законском регулативом из области библиотечног рада, рада високошколских институција и заштите интелектуалне својине, запослени у високошколским библиотекама обавезни су да непрестано буду у кораку са савременим трендовима и да се континуирано и перманентно едукују. Да би овај целокупан процес био спроведен, менаџмент ових институција мора, поштујући принципе научног менаџмента, уложити сав свој напор и знање у добру организацију и стратегију, не би ли се досегли циљеви који ће довести до високог квалитета услуге, а самим тим и до конкурентске предности на овом тржишту.

Кључне речи: иновације, високо образовање, библиотека, конкурентност, менаџмент

INTRODUCTION

This paper will deal with innovative processes in higher-educational institutions through all segments and principles of scientific management, with special reference to libraries, which are their integral part and a very important link in the process of acquiring and providing knowledge. Therefore, this paper is based on the following views:

- Investments in education have a longer payback period, but their effects are manifold, and multiplied through all areas of social activity;
- Changes that are rapidly accelerating are forcing all market actors to systematically approach their monitoring so as to be able to adequately react to them;
- The imperative of a higher-educational institution is competitive positioning in the education market through the application

of continuous innovation in creating a marketing strategy, while providing the expected level of customer service which is in accordance with the needs of society;

- Managing innovation in higher education should be approached from a strategic level in order to create an organisational culture which is flexible and capable of all kinds of change;
- The application of marketing management based on innovations enables the quality of the system of higher education to be raised. The promotion of higher-educational institutions implemented through modern promotional channels significantly contributes to creating a more positive image for an institution by clearly sending the target group the message that the higher-educational institution is capable of responding to the challenges of the future;
- Competitive advantage is increasingly based on the realisation and monitoring of the preferences of service users, and their satisfaction through the innovation of the teaching process;
- By breaking down the time and space barriers, information technologies provide tremendous opportunities for the improvement of services in higher education;
- All these activities are best reflected in the teaching process, as well as in the work and organisation of the library, which should provide all the information related to the performance of scientific activities and ensure an unhindered teaching process.

The degree of education, the ability to adapt to the daily changes occurring at a time of technical-technological development, and the expansion of information technologies are an unavoidable indicator of the level of social development achieved in every social community. Acquiring a formal and informal education, and mastering a wide range of different skills enables an individual to better perform complex and responsible jobs in modern society, resulting in a better position on the social and professional ladder. The innovations that we encounter, even though they may seem too complicated at first glance, accelerate the flow of information and actually enable us to carry out everyday activities more easily. Thus, an individual is capable of responding to all the challenges they encounter faster and better. By noticing the necessity for innovation through the aforementioned prism, and starting from the fact that technological competitiveness and innovativeness have become the key determinants of success, we get better and more effective work results, and we are more efficient in the processes of learning and coming up with new ideas, with the goal of realising them.

Change management is considered to be one of the basic functions of modern management, with the aim of identifying directions of devel-

opment which optimally establish the correlation with changes in the business environment.

New innovation models must take into account the basic relation of strategic innovation management, which connects the capabilities of higher-educational institutions and the possibilities of the environment – the market, through strategy as an indirect guiding force for achieving the goal of effectiveness and, by extension, business development.

All the previously mentioned influences on modern society contribute to the fact that higher-educational institutions are faced with a series of difficulties and limitations, which may reach so far as to threaten their survival. In order to deal with all the obstacles and challenges imposed on them, partly through legal regulations and partly through the growing demands of modern users, the management of these institutions is forced to give quick and efficient answers, to find effective ways of following modern trends, and to modernise the conditions and ways of performing work by introducing modern innovative solutions to all sectors of an organisation. This task is by no means easy, because there is currently a deficit of intellectual potential in the workforce on the market, as well as a lack of financial power, which further complicates this problem. In order for a higher-educational institution to be able to compete on the market with educated staff, who must not lag behind staff educated and trained in other institutions in the world, it must implement innovative processes through all segments of its organisation. This will probably mostly concern the teaching process, scientific work, the qualifications of staff, and, inevitably, libraries which must be staffed to respond to the needs of all actors in the educational-scientific process. Therefore, in order to take a closer look at this issue and try to reach certain conclusions, we should first look at the concept of innovation itself, at models of innovative organisations based on knowledge, and at the possibility of their implementation.

INNOVATIONS IN THE “NEW AGE”

The beginnings of the development of innovation theory in the first half of the last century are connected with the analysis of J. A. Schumpeter, who identified innovation as a basic factor of technological progress and economic development, in terms of replacing old technologies with new ones, which Schumpeter called *creative destruction*. This syntagm refers to the process in which the basic impulse, which sets the capitalist system in motion and keeps it moving, leads to new consumer goods, methods of production or transportation, and new markets and forms of industrial organisation which are created by capitalist enterprises.

The term innovation comes from the Latin word *innovatio*, which denotes a new invention that improves a product or work method; addi-

tionally, the term denotes novelty, newness, and change. (Klajn & Šipka, 2006, p. 516) Innovation is the application of a new and improved idea, procedure, good, service, or process, which brings new benefits, new values, or quality in application. This term can denote:

- a *product* – innovation as a product or service that has market verification; and
- a *process* – innovation as an innovative process from idea to realisation, i.e. from idea generation to implementation.

All of the above leads us to the realisation that innovation is nothing more than the transformation of ideas into new organisational systems, a new approach to services, or new or improved technological processes or products with market entry. New ideas can also refer to a new or improved product or service, and to the way in which the product or service is delivered. As Williams et al. (2010) explain:

Any means with the help of which entrepreneurs can profit, thanks to the possibilities that are hidden in the changes in the environment, are innovations. They are preceded by inventions, and they are actually applied inventions. Innovations can be directly applied by entrepreneurs, in production or in any other field of human activity.

(Williams et al., 2010, pp. 391-412)

Being innovative does not only mean developing a new high-tech product. For many organisations, innovation is the management process of systematically exploiting new ideas in order to gain a competitive advantage. For all the aforementioned reasons, it is evident that investing in knowledge and innovation means investing in the future. Thus, it is important to consider the innovative processes related to the educational process, primarily those which are applied in the educational process of higher-educational institutions and all its organisational parts. It is important to regard them as sensitive organisations that, through innovation and by following innovative trends, create new innovations and a basis for an easier future.

Innovativeness is the ability to transform existing ideas into useful new forms or combinations that differ from their original form to such an extent that they appear new. This enables the achievement of development goals as completely new things, and ensures the use of scientific and technological results and potentials. The concept and process of harmonising goals are valid only if they are performed on a clearly defined structure and hierarchy of strategy. In today's complex conditions, the role of *innovation and development* is twofold. Innovativeness is characterised by the need to reinforce the multiplication of ideas on the one hand, and the need to transform them into technological innovations on the other hand. Using the benefits of information technologies contributes

to an accelerated increase in productivity and, unlike previous technologies, affects globalisation by strengthening real and financial ties. On the other hand, it not only encourages product turnover but also creates IT products of great market value. What is important about information technologies is the effect of knowledge on knowledge itself, as the main source of productivity, while innovativeness contributes to providing adequate qualifications for performing certain jobs in the economy and society (Williams & McGuire, 2010, pp. 391-412). The best way to approach this problem is to base it on the thesis that innovation is initiated by wisdom. In that sense, innovation is seen as an extremely complex issue, because it does not always fit into the social context, and because every innovation creates completely new living conditions.

Important activities that define an innovative organisation are systematic problem solving based on the application of scientific methods, experimentation with new knowledge and approaches, learning from one's own experience, as well as the experience of others, and the efficient transfer of knowledge throughout the entire organisational structure.

KNOWLEDGE AND INNOVATION MANAGEMENT IN A HIGHER-EDUCATIONAL INSTITUTION

A modern organisation based on know-how knowledge and innovations is one that learns, acquires competencies, and acts in the best possible way based on information and available scientific achievements. The global spread of innovative activities is a consequence of the organisation's need for new knowledge and skills. The biggest problems in knowledge management in innovative organisations are balancing between the knowledge possessed by the individual and the collective knowledge of an organisation or team, and harmonising the relationship between theoretical knowledge and applied knowledge. Knowledge integration is a process in which individuals share and combine the information gathered to collectively create new knowledge. Knowledge integration is important in the context of innovative project teams, and crucial in innovation processes.

Learning organisations are the ones that have the best chance of success and progress in the future. In such organisations, people continuously expand their capacities to create the results they want, new and expansive ideas are nurtured, collective aspirations develop, and people constantly practice how to learn together. The permanent need for highly qualified, independent and trained staff, and the necessity for requalification and additional qualification, broaden the field of business activities and the application of knowledge and education. The degree of investment in knowledge and education is becoming an increasingly crucial indicator of the understanding of modern business management tendencies, and a prerequisite for realising competitive advantages on the entire market.

Terms denoting concepts such as 'learning organisation', 'innovative organisation', 'knowledge creating company', or 'knowledge-based organisation' are terms which are increasingly used in contemporary literature dealing with the field of change management in organisations, and which, in the most vivid way, express the attitudes of the most successful modern organisations and their managers towards the knowledge and education of all employees. Interest in the study of learning organisations is mentioned in the economic literature of the late 1980s, and it is the result of the realisation that learning is necessary for gaining and developing competitive advantages.

Knowledge used to be associated with personality, while nowadays it is associated with work, because knowledge has also become a resource. According to the current criteria, knowledge is a public good. Initially, it was applied to process tools and products, which were the basis of the Industrial Revolution. The goal of a modern organisation is to view all business processes as knowledge processes, which includes the creation of knowledge, its dissemination, and its upgrading and application throughout the organisation. Modern organisations are finding ways to create added value through identifying, applying, and using knowledge in a unique way, and that is a process based partially on science, partially on skill, and partially on pure luck. Modern organisations, and managers in those organisations, should strive to create as much explicit knowledge, collective in nature, as possible. Such knowledge, implemented through operations, cannot disappear in the way an individual can leave an organisation. What the knowledge management system will look like, that is, how it will be established and how it will function, depends on the specific situation in which the organisation finds itself.

Knowledge management models are numerous and diverse, and one of the basic ones consists of four interrelated phases:

1. knowledge creation, which refers to the input of new knowledge into the organisation, and includes the sub-phases of discovery, collection and development of new knowledge;
2. storage of knowledge, which represents a set of activities related to the proper storage of collected knowledge and its preservation within the system;
3. knowledge transfer, which refers to the activities of knowledge transfer between parts of the organisation and individuals, such as communication, translation, conversion and knowledge filtering; and
4. the use of knowledge, which is characterised by activities related to the practical application of acquired knowledge in everyday business.

In institutions and educational organisations, higher-educational and other institutions, management has the task of making available all the resources and capacities of an organisation to the users of its services in a maximum way, using a good business strategy and good management.

Encouraging the innovativeness of employees implies the management's ability to create the ambiance suitable for the creation of innovations and the adequate evaluation of employees for achieved successes. In other words, it implies the managers' ability to create an appropriate innovative culture in the organisation. An innovative organisational culture is characterised by the belief in innovations and ideas, marketing orientation, teamwork, loyalty to the organisation, readiness to take risks, and a high sense of responsibility.

The effective management of organisational knowledge requires five elements, namely: paying attention to permanent learning; combining knowledge and experience; sharing existing organisational knowledge, mutual cooperation and communication; availability of information; and use and development of existing knowledge. The survival of organisations and individuals in an uncertain and changing environment depends, above all, on their ability to learn.

THE ACADEMIC LIBRARY AS SUPPORT TO THE TEACHING PROCESS AND DISTANCE LEARNING

All ideas, as well as all changes, make sense and become acceptable only if everyone involved in the processes has a part in them. In particular, this refers to the introduction and implementation of innovative processes, which are, in higher-educational institutions, especially applied and reflected in their libraries and in the teaching-scientific process. Therefore, special support should be given to libraries, which are the starting point of the teaching-scientific process, and in which new technological services, their use and application, and the human factor as the basis of a good flow of information, are interwoven. They function in such a way that they should be a centre for the exchange and collection of precisely this information, but at a high scientific and ethical level. The ethical level must be maintained as a prerequisite for the correctness of scientific work and research, and it is reflected, above all, in the respect of all laws and regulations that define the area of copyright, the moral principles of correct citation of scientific texts, the respect for other people's intellectual effort, and the fair use of already established scientific information.

Respecting all of the above, which is mainly the responsibility of the library and its employees, the library becomes the focal point of the environment in the academic profession, and it can be valuable for the students and the entire academic staff for this reason. It should be a meeting point for all the needs of intellectual work, especially as concerns the

planning and implementation of teaching programmes, making decisions about enriching the library collection, introducing innovative technical and informational activities, exchanging and determining relevant information, and referring students to the verified and valid information necessary for acquiring new knowledge and skills, as well as information about the subjects of their interest and research. Therefore, certain equipment and technical capabilities, as well as the training of employees, help make knowledge available to everyone and ensure that knowledge is used in the right way. The modern library provides special support to the teaching process by referring users to electronic resources. As a support for distance learning, although it seems almost impossible to us, it has had a long development path.

With Gutenberg's invention of the movable-type printing press, the processes of the technological revolution began, and it is in this invention that we find the beginnings of today's distance learning. Although it seems a bit odd, Gutenberg's invention made it possible to print books and distribute them widely. Therefore, the possibility of distance learning was created, because this is how knowledge was multiplied and transported to the user. Although it underwent a series of transformations during the 19th century and the Industrial Revolution, and another series of transformations later on in the 21st century in the era of high-tech revolution, digitalisation, the Internet, and IT sciences, this concept has not been abandoned to this day, because it only facilitates the distance learning process and enables maximum benefits with as little investment as possible. This is because new technologies not only change but also facilitate ways of working in all social spheres.

As Nedić et al. (2018) explain:

The impact of information and communication technologies (ICT) on people's lives far exceeds their effect on productivity growth. They act as a vector of economic growth and development, but also far more broadly, as a vector of transformation of society as a whole. ICTs can improve access to basic services and create new employment opportunities. They have significant potential to improve people's quality of life and fundamentally change the way they communicate with each other.

(Nedić et al., 2018)

Therefore, both in higher-educational institutions and in libraries, innovative processes are of great importance for the institution. But if we focus only on libraries, it is obvious to us that every higher education library must have a certain number of scientific and professional publications, and other library materials that are necessary both for engaging in scientific activity and for engaging in the educational process. Therefore, as an important link in that process, libraries, together with the institutions of which they are part, are forced to go through a process of trans-

formation and innovation via the influence of information and communication technologies, so as to become InDoc centres with a wide range of materials, either conventional or electronic, which can fulfil the needs of its users – researchers, lecturers and students.

Zlatanović et al. (2020) note that:

A knowledge-based system that implies a strategic approach to innovation with intensive cooperation of the Higher Education Institution with external stakeholders, new models of organizational structures, innovative organizational culture, continuous training and development of employees in the Higher Education Institution, as well as greater participation of students in decision-making and production, which contributes to the improvement of innovativeness and efficiency of higher education institutions as the basis of sustainable development.

(Zlatanović et al., 2020)

In all of this, libraries have been transformed and adapted to contemporary trends through centres for collecting and systematising information which librarians, with all the necessary support, provide to their users. These transformations are particularly reflected in higher education libraries, because they must be an unavoidable factor in education, science, and the process of acquiring knowledge. For this reason, one of the basic tasks of higher education libraries is to teach users to search for information and to learn, as well as to use the electronic, digital, and virtual libraries of the 21st century in addition to traditional forms, as we mentioned previously. As Vraneš (2004) explains:

With the inclusion of new media in library collections, emerged a need to harmonize terminology, therefore, the terms media library, phono library, photo library, and even hybrid library were used. We are witnessing a similar process nowadays in the English language, in which the phrase ‘teaching library’ is closely followed by the term ‘teaching cybray’, currently untranslatable into Serbian, which denotes both teaching for the use of information technology and the use of information technology in teaching. Not only terminologically, but also essentially, this process was started at the University of Southern California in 1994, following a different approach to the understanding of the role of the library with the new distribution of space. Namely, the space where students, teaching and library staff can communicate with each other with the help of modern computer equipment, the latest software and technical support staff is twice as large as the library's warehouse space. All this has a stimulating effect on the introduction of innovations in the teaching itself, and the library serves as an experimental training ground.

(Vraneš, 2004, pp. 222-223)

CONCLUSION

Innovations in the academic library are primarily reflected in the broadening of the information database available via the global network, and in the digitalisation of the scientific material owned by the library and its placement in virtual space. This means that the library uses the resources of other libraries, while making its resources available to others. This is primarily visible in the expedient organisation of library consortia, which, through association, enables access to interested users for whom it is thus easier to search for information in expansive databases such as IDEAL (International Digital Electronic Access Library), EBSCO, which has a large number of journals in its database, Thompson abstract-citation database, and the like.

The process of the association of libraries has its own history, which started in 1967 when OCLC (Online Computer Library Center) was organised, followed by the CORC (Collaborative Online Resource Catalogue), the centre for the organisation of websites and other digital resources, the RLG (Research Library Group) and RLIN (Research Library Information Network), which were created in the 1970s. In 1997, a new global library consortium, ICOLC (International Coalition of Library Consortia), was formed, and it had the same goals as its predecessors.

Such platforms, through the association of libraries, exceed the boundaries of space bounded by walls, expand into virtual space, and enable the exchange of information on a global level. All these consortia and pooling of information are innovative processes of the modern age, which on a global level “instead of offering unverified and short-lived information from the Internet, post reliable, accepted and valued texts, through the reading of which it is possible to enter the world of knowledge” (Vraneš, 2004, p. 223).

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ИНОВАТИВНОСТ И САВРЕМЕНИ ТРЕНДОВИ У ВИСОКООБРАЗОВНИМ ИНСТИТУЦИЈАМА И БИБЛИОТЕКАМА КАО ЈЕДИНИЦАМА У ЊИХОВОМ САСТАВУ

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Резиме

Савремено доба, ера дигитализације, информатичка ера, или данас популарно названа „Њу Ејџ“ ера, донела нам је низ промена које су се дешавале убрзано и које су биле тешко прихватане, али које су захватиле све сфере друштвеног деловања. Како би се максимално искористили позитивни ефекти иновација, особље запослено у свим организацијама било је, и данас наставља бити принуђено и упућено на перманентно образовање, како би било кадро да одговори савременим начинима рада. Кроз призму иновација сагледавамо све друштвене процесе и односе, а њиховом применом долазимо до олакшавања процеса рада и достизања конкурентске предности на пољу деловања. Ови процеси нису заобишли ни високошколске институције, као најосетљивији део људске делатности, јер управо су оне иницијална каписла људског развоја и развоја знања, а самим тим и боље будућности. Руководство ових установа има велики задатак да, користећи сва знања и вештине савременог менаџмента, добром стратегијом и организацијом правовремено одговори на све изазове и промене које се дешавају. Будући да је оваква институција спој одељења која интерактивно делују и чије је деловање, иако наизглед различито, међусобно уско повезано, добра организација људских ресурса је један од задатака руководства установе. Увођење иновација у ове установе огледа се, на пример, у организовању наставе на даљину, што је уско повезано са функционисањем наставног особља које мора

добро да влада начинima организовања научних информација, да буде спремно да организује наставу на даљину, и да буде обучено да користи савремене технологије. Из овог разлога смо упућени на чињеницу да је овај иновативни процес скоро па немогуће постићи и спровести без усмерености на библиотеку, која се налази у саставу високошколске установе и која може да да смернице за обављање овог процеса. Ове смернице огледају се у људству, које је виспрено у свом раду и у могућности да да правовремене одговоре на постављене задатке. Библиотека академског нивоа мора да иде у корак с техничко-технолошким захтевима, а библиотекари запослени у овим библиотекама морају бити спремни да, користећи све благодети савременог пословања, дају и пруже правовремене и проверене информације, те да упуте на базе података које су организоване на глобалном нивоу. Ово је могуће само уколико библиотекари иновативно приступају пословању. Удружујући се у конзорцијуме, библиотеке омогућавају да информације и знање буду доступни свима, што је свакако основни циљ образовног и научног процеса. Такође, пратећи процес дигитализације, оне омогућавају и да информације које оне поседују буду доступне ширем кругу корисника, а упућивањем на принцип етичности презентују фер и коректно искоришћавање до сада стечених знања, која се користе за стицање нових. Из тог разлога, сви актери овог процеса морају деловати синхронизовано, подржавати једни друге, размишљати иновативно и тежити променама.

Стога можемо закључити да су едукативне организације засноване на знању сврха и циљ будућег развоја друштвене заједнице. Како бисмо овај циљ постигли, морамо ићи у корак са свим благодетима које нам стоје на располагању.