# The Importance of knowledge Management in Academic Libraries

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**ABSTRACT**: In the present information and knowledge age, knowledge has become a key resources in our society. Knowledge management (KM ) is influential as a concept and practice, referring to the capture, codification, and interpretation of knowledge. KM cab be viewed as a form of library and information science (LIS) or a distinct professional area. Academic libraries occupy a central position in an institution to generate knowledge equipped academic community with knowledge to serve the society and enhance knowledge to mankind. Academic libraries with the conventional functions to collect, process, disseminate, store and utilize information to provide services to its users now need to improve the services provided to the academic community by becoming an learning organization that enhance the process of managing knowledge and innovation. KM helps academic libraries and information professionals in improving the services being rendered to their users. The paper highlights KM and the role of KM in academic libraries and also examines the use of IT in Knowledge Management

**KEY WORDS**: Academic Library, Data, Knowledge Management, Information Technology, Information Literacy

## I.INTORODUCTION

In the present world economy, knowledge has become a key resource and very vital for the development and growth of any society. In this information and knowledge age, knowledge is the most important factor in the long term success of both and individual and organization. In fact, knowledge may soon be the only source of competitive advantage for and organization. The knowledge assets reside in many different places such as: database, knowledge bases, filing cabinets and peoples' heads and are distributed right across and organization. Academic are required to share their knowledge and expertise to maintain their place in this era of information age.

Knowledge can be considered useful for the society once it is shared with others. Effective knowledge management strategies must emphasis the role of knowledge sharing to achieve maximum result for academic institutions particularly universities. Knowledge sharing has increasingly become and invaluable asset in education, research, teaching and learning. According to Kumar (2000), the society has gone through four stages namely: pre- industrial society, industrial society, information age was of its highest between 1960 and 1900s and has been superseded by knowledge age.

## II. DATA, INFORMATION, KNOWLEDGE ANDWISDOM

### A. DATA

Data is defined as "facts, concepts instructions in a formalized manner suitable for communication, interpretation or processed by human or automatic means (UNESCO)". Data is distinct pieces of information, usually formatted in a special way. Data as a general concept refers to the fact that some existing information or knowledge is represented or coded in some form suitable for better usage or processing. Data are collected form a study involving observation, experimentations or surveys. Data are the raw materials- the observations, facts, or figures- from which information is obtained. Each library collects a tremendous amount of data every day about the items patrons check-out. During a typical check-out transaction, a library systems may collect the following data element: the name, address, and phone number of the patron, number of library materials checked out, the format of materials checked out ( books ,videos, etc.) , titles of materials checked out, fines if any on the accounts.

Data itself are relatively devoid of context. For example, the name of a particular book is the name of a book regardless of whether it appears in the library's online public access cataloguing (OPAC), a magazine article, a publisher's catalog, or on an advertising bulletin. Data management systems were first used in libraries for automating circulation and serial records, cataloguing, indexing, interlibrary loans, and assisting in the retrieval of bibliographic information. According to a Special Libraries Association survey, by 1966, data processing equipment was being used by 209 libraries, primarily for serials management and acquisitions.

## B. INFORMATION

Information is the process data which can be transmitted between individuals and each individual can use it according to his need. When information is entered into and stored in a computer, it is generally referred to as data. After processing (such as formatting and printing), output data can again be perceived as information. Information is visible, independent from action and decision, different in format after processing, physical product, independent from existing environment, easily transferable and duplicable. In academic library information acquisition, storage, management and disseminating have been tremendously and positively affected by computer technology. All routine activities involved in collection development, readers services( circulation and reference services), serials management and technical services are being accomplished by computer and related technology. Computer and IT application have notable benefit to academic libraries.

### (A) Information Ideas

In day-to day activities, individuals are constantly interacting with information in one form or another. Information is encountered in a variety of modes. It may be received
- *Visually,* through the sense of sight
- *Aurally*, through hearing
- *Tactilely,* through the sense of touch
- *Olfactorily,* through the sense of smell
- *Gustatorily,* through the sense of taste

Some of each person's daily information activities involve transforming information from one format to another.

e.g.,  the sound produced by a piano student from the written notation of music to the sound.

In addition, the individual would likely have used one or more of the information services.

Information devices and services provide to the individual information that is used for a variety of purposes in the conduct of daily life. Information is used to *make decisions,* both significant and mundane. Information is also used to *resolve uncertainty*.

For many information pursuits, the assistance of information professional is needed. So the roles of information professionals are very important.

In current, developed societies, information is used as an instrument of influence and control, in the lives of individual citizens, in the political structure of the country, and in the relationships among nations. Within the economic sphere, information is used daily to influence behavior.

e.g.,  the use of advertising, wherein information is provided to consumers that will result in increased sales

Information may be undergoing a transformation. However "information" was perceived and treated in the past, it is being treated more and more as a commodity that can be owned, controlled, and traded in the marketplace.

Everyone should have the right to communicate quickly, efficiently, and cheaply.

The rights are in transition and have always been in transition.

### (B) Fundamental Concepts of Information

Information is a term that has become ubiquitous in today's society. The precise definition of information used within various disciplines.  Marc Porat defines information as "Information is data that have been organized and communicated". There are often described in a hierarchy and visually portrayed as a pyramid.

As the base of the pyramid are representational *symbols:* letters, numerals, other codes, such as signs.

As the next level are *data,* which are combinations of the symbols put together according to rules or conventions. Understanding of the codes for symbol combination is critical in access to information. This understanding is called by the term "literacy". Data are way of representing observed facts.

The next level is *information,* which is aggregated data, which become information when processed by the human mind. If the data do not change the knowledge state of the individual, they remain at the data level, i.e., data become information when they are processed. Information and its carrier or surrogate in form of symbols in some medium- paper, disc, etc.– are not the same thing. These two concepts, "information" and the "information record," are often confused in everyday usage, but they are different and have different properties. Information does not necessarily diminish in value through use, but the information record or document may.

The next level in *knowledge,* which is assimilated information.  A possible way of thinking of the relationships among the terms is the following:

Facts are processed into data, *which are processed into information.* Information is integrated into knowledge. Knowledge, then, is what is used for used for decisions.
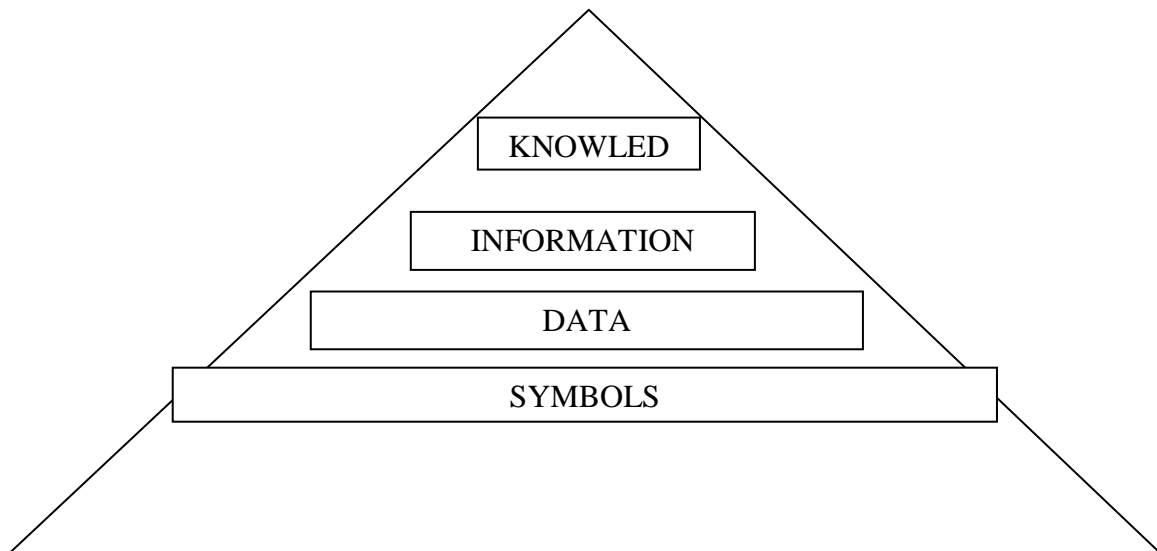


## C. KNOWLEDGE

Knowledge is information transforms into knowledge. Knowledge is organized body of information or facts or data or information. Knowledge is the proper collection of information, such that its aims is to be useful. Knowledge is a deterministic method.  \Knowledge is invisible, closely related to action and decision, different it through after processing, spiritual product, identifies with existing environment, transferable through learning, and not duplicable. In1991Ikukiro Nonaka raised the conception of "tacit" knowledge and "explicit" knowledge as well as the theory of "spiral of knowledge".

- Explicit knowledge
- Tacit knowledge
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*Tacit Knowledge:* Tacit knowledge remains in the minds of people. The acquisition of tacit knowledge is usually improved through a process of trial and error during practical experience.

*Explicit Knowledge:*  Explicit knowledge easy to communicate to others and it is the knowledge unity.

## D.WISDOM

When knowledge is applied to make and improve decisions, processes, and productivity, or to yield profits, it is transformed into wisdom. Wisdom requires individuals to be willing and able to absorb information, evaluate, and reflect on that information, decide whether or not to use that information for the specific problem or situation, and understand why they made that decision. To be wise, individuals must not only possess knowledge, but must also have a thorough understanding of the principles embodied within that knowledge. In summary, data, information, knowledge and wisdom are four stages along the information continuum. Data are devoid of context and consist of observations, facts, or figures from which information is obtained. When data are organized is analyzed to reveal unusual patterns or hidden trends, it is transformed into knowledge; and when knowledge is applied to real life situations to make decisions, it becomes wisdom.

## III. KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

### A.KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

Knowledge Management is a "process, which deals with knowledge creation, acquisition, packaging and application or reuse of knowledge". It is basically consists of knowledge four steps:

- Knowledge collection
- Organization
- Data protection and presentation
- Dissemination of Knowledge Information.

Knowledge Management is the way to keep knowledge growing through sharing and such sharing is best done either in material or human terms.

### (A) Objectives of Knowledge Management in Academic Libraries

The main objective of knowledge management is to ensure that the right information is delivered to the right person just in time, in order to take the most appropriate decision. The objectives are as follows;

- To promote collection, processing, storage and distribution of knowledge
- To promote scientific research
- To promote relationship between library and users
- To protect the intellectual property right, in information technology era
- To create knowledge repositories and manage knowledge as an asset
- To organize the value of knowledge and improve effective research
- Faster and easier recovery of data and disseminate the information

The important of KM in academic libraries

- Knowledge about library's information sources for assets, products and services.
- Knowledge about where these sources stored are and what is its use
- Knowledge about user including teaching staff, researcher and, who is using these sources and how to increase its uses.
- What are the current usage of these sources and how to increase its use?
- Creativity and ability to learn and adapt the new technologies to provide better services to its clients and ability to create, share, harness and utilize knowledge
- Understanding of knowledge creation process and impact of knowledge
- Information literacy skills creating, finding, sharing and using
- Understanding of the principles of "Organization of Knowledge".

## IV. INFORMATIONTECHNOLOGY AND INFORMATION LITERACY

### A. INFORMATION TECHNOLOGY

Information technology is a very important tool for A knowledge management. In academic library information acquisitions, cataloguing, circulation and OPAC, CDs, DVDs, Microfilm, E-Books, E-Journals, Databases, Library Co-

Operation and Resource Sharing, (Inter-Library loan) Networked digital information resources sharing, ( web OPAC, SDI, CAS, Article alert services),etc. An academic library is library that is attached to a higher education institution which serves two complementary purposes to support school's curriculum and to support teaching and research of the University faculty and students. The support of teaching and learning requires materials for class reading and supplement lectures as prescribed by the lectures. Academic libraries are information center established in support of the mission of their parents institutions to generate knowledge and people equipped with knowledge in order to serve the society and advance the well being of mankind. In the digital age, academic libraries face challenges from both within academic and without the business sector.

### B.INFORMATION LITERACY IN THE LIBRARY AND INFORMATION SCIENCE DISCIPLINE

Library and Information Science (LIS) is an academic discipline, aging over 50 years in Nigeria and more than 100 years globally. It is fully a profession of its own with series of professional duties that only trained personnel titled librarians can perform; such as cataloguing and classification, bibliographic description and compilation, and indexing and abstracting. Knowledge Management, as a function of libraries, refers to the duties of determining, identifying, negotiating, collecting, describing, organizing, disseminating and preserving of various kinds of knowledge materials, both of print and non-print formats. Presently, librarians and information professionals are teaching information literacy education everywhere it is taught. The important of information literacy are:

- Introduction to information literacy: The objective of the teaching should be to introduce the course to LIS student, fully outlining the origin of information literacy, the conceptual definitions of information literacy, the importance of the teaching and how the teaching will influence the career performance of LIS professionals.
- The Concept and Characteristics of Information: the objective of this teaching should be to explain and define to students the broad and scholarly (academic oriented meanings of the term information. To describe the characteristics and types of information, the importance of information, the various formats information can take as per print, electronic, etc.
- Sources of Information: the objective of this teaching should be to narrate to students the various sources/ channel/ carries of scholarly information in general and per subject area in particular. Thus, LIS students should be able to understand and become acquainted with samples of information sources that specifically carry information in definite subject areas, the kind of information they carry and what information problems they solve.
- Information Access Tools: the objective of this teaching is to teach students the various information access tools (a general definition), the finding tools in traditional libraries, information search tools in digital/ electronic libraries, information gateways (its brief meaning, content and how to use them), online databases (its brief meaning, content and how to use them), a model table of various information resources and corresponding tools to access them.
- Information Search Strategy: the objective of this teaching is to educate students on how to search for online information resources, database resources, and subject/ gateway resources, as subscribed by the student's library and also as are freely available on the internet. The various search techniques and quires, along with meaning of signs and symbols used for searching information should be taught.
- Access and Use of Fee-Based Online Information: this teaching should focus on describing how certain online information resources that are fee-based can be accessed. Thus, students should know how to identify and determine the reliability of sites holding such information and how to pay/purchase and / or subscribe for such information. Channels for receiving hard copies of information materials purchased online should also be taught.
- Knowledge of Critical Thinking, Evaluation and Synthesis of Information Resources: the objective of this teaching should be to teach students how to identify and explain evaluation criteria, explain how to evaluated information resources in general (print, non-print alike), explain, in details, how to evaluate on-line resources, how to determine the credibility and reliability of internet information.
- Ethnical Issues in Using Information Sources: the objective of this teaching will be to introduce and define citation, referencing and plagiarism to the students, to explain the reasons for citation and referencing, to identify and explain citation and referencing elements such as Author, Title, Date of Publication, Publisher, Place of Publication, etc. to discuss their arrangements according to APA , AMA, MLA, Turabia, Chicago, etc. and to differentiate between references citation and reference list ( stating the location of each) .

- Legal Issues in the Use of Information: the objectives of this teaching should be to defines and explain "intellectual property" and "intellectual property right". To explain what copyright is, what ownership, coverage, statement, period of validity of copyright, fair use of coy righted work.
- Knowledge Communication in the Digital Environment: the objective of this teaching should be to outline and describe the various technologies for sharing or communicating knowledge. The new teaching and learning media should be discussed. Channels for disseminating knowledge finding should also be highlighted.

The outline above is a model of what LIS students learn as information literacy. And interestingly, this book contains all the outlines-both for the general teaching and for the LIS students and thus, would perfectly serve students at general studies level and at LIS discipline

## V.CONCLUSION

Knowledge and Knowledge management (KM) are playing a very vital role in academic libraries.KM enables an organization to compete better while retaining the knowledge acquisition, knowledge documentation, knowledge transfer, knowledge creation, and knowledge application even in cade experience personnel happen to leave the organization. Knowledge is growing very fast in every aspect of life and it is becoming very difficult for knowledge professional to capture and disseminate the available information to the deserving person without using the emerging technologies. Librarian should work together with IT professional and others to develop the proper knowledge management system. As a learning and knowledge organization to develop campus- wide knowledge management systems. It now time for library to reposition themselves in the central stage of and as a leading player in knowledge management.

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