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January 2022

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ABAH, Mercy; Asiedu, Nasir Koranteng; and Dei, DeGraft Johnson, "KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES IN LIBRARIES: A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW" (2022). *Library Philosophy and Practice (e-journal)*. 6779.

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KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT STRATEGIES IN LIBRARIES: A SYSTEMATIC REVIEW

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ABSTRACT

Knowledge has been used by several organizations to plan smart and effective actions. Knowledge Management (KM) research has been undertaken in a variety of fields or disciplines. The goal of this review was to examine knowledge management strategies in libraries and information centres and barriers that prevent these strategies from being implemented. A systematic review of 42 articles from 2001- 2021 was conducted. The review covered studies on both quantitative and qualitative research approaches. Findings of the study revealed that much has not been written on the concept of knowledge management strategies. Lack of knowledge on the concept coupled with lack of knowledge sharing and lack of technological infrastructure were identified as some of the barriers to knowledge management practices in libraries and information centres.

Keywords: Knowledge Management; Knowledge Management Strategies; Strategies; Libraries; Systematic review

Introduction

The role of knowledge management in promoting the success of institutions, libraries and information centres cannot be belittled. It is a vital concept that deserves the much-needed attention since it plays an important role in knowledge economy. Knowledge Management (KM) refers to adequacy in recognizing, procuring, creating, resolving, utilizing, storing and sharing knowledge (Ebisi & Arua, 2018). Branin (2003) looked back over the last fifty years in the field of collection management and saw a progression from "collection development" to "collection management" to "knowledge management." When it comes to libraries, knowledge management is frequently used to manage recorded knowledge, specifically library materials. Yaacob et al., (2011) attest that knowledge management has been in operation for some time. Its fondness for libraries and information management is undeniable. Development of modern skills of KM is fundamental to get to modern trends of learning, working and living productively. Syysnummi and Laihonon (2014), affirms that knowledge is the foremost important resource that can make an institution superior to what it is today and better than what it will be tomorrow. The skills and knowledge base of an institution is the premise for its projection to higher levels. To achieve KM requires investment, the information centres business strategy must recognize the need to capture knowledge and actively support the effort to improve upon it. Knowledge exists in people rather than technology therefore it requires massive human effort. KM enhances knowledge sharing in order to support and streamline organisational focus. Participants' knowledge sharing in the organisation is influenced by their personality and situational characteristics (Aharony, 2011). It concentrates on exploiting and harnessing available but necessary knowledge to advance the course of an institution at the right time while ensuring quality and saving cost. Knowledge is very important; therefore, it needs to be managed as we go through the processes of processing data to

information to gain knowledge. There are no answers in which you simply obtain by acquiring new technology and straightaway you have KM. It is important for us to gain a deeper understanding of KM and work out a plan or strategy towards it.

Nowadays, students and the scholarly community are anticipating enhanced access and support to information services. Tertiary institutions are making significant changes to keep up with the present knowledge economy (Jain, 2013). Libraries still play their role as knowledge and information providers, it is therefore important to note that, a well-planned strategy, which includes the library and administration of the institution might give noteworthy impact to realize the KM goals (Yaacob et al., 2011). Conventionally, libraries are noted for advancing a perusing culture rather than managing and advancing indigenous knowledge (Sarkhel, 2017). If indigenous knowledge is well recorded, packaged and kept in information centres and libraries, it would be easily accessible to users. Since KM is an impalpable component, it is not easy to understand some aspects of its importance (De Bem, 2016).

For every organization to succeed in the area of knowledge management, it is imperative for such organization to properly consider and choose the correct strategic approach (Kakhki, 2021). Libraries and information centres are confronted with challenges in implementing KM systems effectively due to infrastructural, institutional, organizational, and psychological obstacles (Siddike & Munshi, 2012). Clients in most of the libraries and information centres are also not mindful of the positive impact of knowledge management and therefore they find it difficult to effectively contribute towards making it a success (Islam et al., 2020; Daneshgar & Parirokh, 2012). Mavodza (2010) asserts that at Metropolitan College of New York (MCNY), KM concepts

were not universally understood. Although the MCNY library practices were not designed with KM in mind, the study found that they were amenable to it. The rapid growth of knowledge and ICT has brought a massive transformation in libraries and information centres in the areas of acquiring, processing, storing and disseminating information (Jain, 2007; Jain, 2009). This has changed the roles of information professionals; therefore, it is important for libraries and information centres to put in place the right KM strategies to improve on their services. KM can be used as a competitive advantage; hence information managers must appreciate the opportunity KM brings to the comprehensive enterprise (Duffy, 2000 cited in Jain, 2009).

The purpose of this paper is to conduct a systematic review on KM strategies in libraries and information centres. Precisely, examining KM strategies in libraries and information centres and barriers that prevent these strategies from being implemented. The aim is to bring to the fore, those KM strategies being used in libraries and information centres to help facilitate a better understanding of the concept and create the awareness on the need for information professionals to always be at the forefront in the quest to manage knowledge.

Methodology

This study systematically reviewed literature on knowledge management strategies in libraries and information centres in the past twenty years. Searches conducted by the researchers were not limited to only knowledge management journals. This was done to purposely retrieve peer-reviewed articles that used either quantitative or qualitative research approach. The systematic review was conducted using academic search engines to search for the required research publications. The main academic search engine used was “Google scholar”. The researchers also used the “Emerald” database to search for additional research publications. The search strategies

used were “knowledge management”, “knowledge management strategies”, “knowledge management strategies and libraries and information centres”. The bibliographies of the articles selected were assessed for its relevancy. A total number of 76 were first selected, however, upon further screening, 42 met the inclusion criterion. The subject matter was the main standard for selection. All articles consulted were organized in a structured form with the author’s name, year of publication, title of publication and the key research findings. The summary of the findings is indicated in **Table 1**.

Table 1. Summary of Systematic Review for KM Strategies in Libraries and Information Centres			
AUTHOR	YEAR	TITLE	FINDINGS
Jantz, R.	2001	“Knowledge management in academic libraries: special tools and processes to support information professionals”	KM ensures competitive advantage in libraries which can be used to provide better services to patrons
Teng, S. and Hawamdeh, S.	2002	“Knowledge management in public libraries”	KM encourages and inculcate a culture of sharing
Ajiferuke, I.	2003	“Role of information professionals in knowledge management programs: empirical evidence from Canada”	Provision of effective research services to patrons
Branin, J. J.	2003	“Knowledge management in academic libraries: building the knowledge bank at the Ohio State University”	KM helps to efficiently manage recorded knowledge
Koenig, M.E.D.	2003	“Knowledge management, education and librarianship”	Insufficient user training and education in knowledge management

Gandhi, S.	2004	“Knowledge management and reference services”	There is a need for KM for reference services
Lee, K. C., Lee, S., and Kang, I. W.	2005	“KMPI: measuring knowledge management performance”	There is a need for a KM performance index in information centres
Maponya, P. M.	2005	“Knowledge management practices in academic libraries: a case study of the University of Natal, Pietermaritzburg Libraries”	KM is a viable way for academic libraries to improve their services
Sarrafzadeh, M.	2005	“The implications of knowledge management for the library and information professions”	Understanding KM practices is important for information professionals
Baskerville, R., and Dulipovici, A.	2006	“The theoretical foundations of knowledge management”	An examination of the theoretical underpinnings of KM sees it as a solid field which information professionals must really embrace
Sarrafzadeh, M., Martin, B. and Hazeri, A.	2006	“LIS professionals and knowledge management: some recent perspectives”	Information professionals should be made aware about the relevance of KM
Hamid, S., Nayan, J. M., Bakar, Z. A., and Norman, A. A.	2007	“Knowledge management adoption and implementation readiness: a case study of the National Library of Malaysia”	KM has the potential of helping libraries restructure their activities to provide better services to users
Jain, P.	2007	“An empirical study of knowledge management in academic libraries in East and Southern Africa”	Majority of libraries are practicing information management
Kavulya, J. M.	2007	“Digital libraries and development in Sub-Saharan Africa: A review of challenges and strategies”	Libraries in sub-Saharan Africa should take advantage of the digital era and map up knowledge management strategies to boost services

Roknuzzaman, M., and Umemoto, K.	2008	“Knowledge management's relevance to library and information science: an interdisciplinary approach”	Advocate for the incorporation of KM into library and information science education and library practices
Jain, P.	2009	“Knowledge management for 21st century information professionals”	Information professionals should contribute to KM by getting themselves acquainted with the concept
Roknuzzaman, M., and Umemoto, K.	2009	“How library practitioners view knowledge management in libraries: A qualitative study”	Most librarians have a limited understanding of KM
Ezema, I. J.	2010	“Competencies for successful knowledge management applications in Nigerian academic libraries”	Cultural skills, leadership skills, strategic skills, and restructuring skills are all required for successful knowledge management applications
Kumar, S. A.	2010	“Knowledge management and new generation of libraries information services: a concept”	KM necessitates more efficient information handling, information transfer, and information linking to individuals and their activities. It necessitates the development of library patron-centred information systems and services, as well as the personalization of information at the individual level
Mavodza, J.	2010	“Knowledge management practices and the role of an academic library in a changing information environment: the case of the Metropolitan College of New York”	Metropolitan College of New York (MCNY) library practices were not designed with KM in mind
Sarrafzadeh, M., Martin, B. and Hazeri, A.	2010	“Knowledge management and its potential applicability for libraries”	The library and information science community is enthusiastic about introducing KM to libraries so that it could help them subsist

Aharony, N.	2011	“Librarians’ attitudes toward knowledge management”	KM enhances knowledge sharing in order to support and streamline organizational focus. Participants' knowledge sharing in the organization is influenced by their personality and situational characteristics
Nazim, M., and Mukherje, B.	2011	“Implementing knowledge management in Indian academic libraries”	KM in academic libraries is supported by professional education and training programs, communities of practice and information technology
Yaacob, R. A., Jamaluddin, A., and Jusoff, K.	2011	“Knowledge Management and Challenging Roles of Academic Librarians”	A well-planned strategy, which includes the library and administration of the institution might give noteworthy impact to realize the KM goals
Daneshgar, F., and Parirokh, M.	2012	“An integrated customer knowledge management framework for academic libraries”	Improvement in existing library services
De Pablos, P. O.	2012	“Knowledge in universities and research centres: proposed indicators for measuring relational capital”	The creation, use, and dissemination of knowledge are the foundations of the knowledge economy and society.
Siddike, M., and Munshi, M. N.	2012	“Perceptions of information professionals about knowledge management in the information institutions of Bangladesh: An exploratory study”	Libraries and information centres are confronted with challenges in implementing KM systems effectively due to infrastructural, institutional, organizational, and psychological obstacles
Sheeja, N.K.	2012	“Knowledge management and open access e-theses: Indian initiatives”	KM is a requirement for national advancement
Gireesh Kumar, T. K., and Jayapradeep, M.	2013	“Knowledge Management and Electronic Theses and Dissertations in Libraries: Perils and Solutions in Indian Perspective”	Professionals in the fields of library and information science should take KM seriously

Husain, S., and Nazim, M.	2013	“Concepts of knowledge management among library & information science professionals”	Information professionals should work hard to understand the various concepts under KM to aid them in providing good services to users
Jain, P.	2013	“Knowledge Management in Academic Libraries and Information Centres: A Case of University Libraries”	Leveraging existing knowledge, averting the duplication of efforts and maximizing efficiency were the core motives for practicing KM to enhance library services.
Nazim, M. and Mukherjee, B.	2013	“Knowledge management competencies required among library and information science professionals: An Indian perspective”	Development of management competencies by information professionals
Syysnummi, P., and Laihonon, H.	2014	“Top management's perception of knowledge management in a vocational education and training organization in Finland”	Knowledge is the foremost important resource that can make an institution superior than what it is today and better than what it will be tomorrow. The skills and knowledge base of an institution is the premise for its projection to higher levels
Islam, M. S., Siddike, M. A. K., Nowrin, S., and Naznin, S.	2015	“Usage and applications of knowledge management for improving library and information services in Bangladesh”	Lack of awareness about KM, lack of knowledge sharing, and lack of technological infrastructure are the primary barriers to KM use and application
De Bem, R. M., Coelho, C. C. D. S. R., and Dandolini, G. A.	2016	“Knowledge management framework to the university libraries”	Libraries should endeavour to have KM framework to serve as a guide
Enakrire, R. T., and Ocholla, D. N.	2017	“Information and communication technologies for knowledge management in academic libraries in Nigeria and South Africa”	Inadequate ICT infrastructure hinders KM practices in academic libraries

Sarkhel, J. K.	2017	“Strategies of Indigenous Knowledge Management in Libraries”	Library professionals must be proactive in developing strategies for the management and preservation of knowledge
Marouf, L.	2017	“Are academic libraries ready for knowledge management”?	All of the other factors, aside from human resource practices, had a significant impact on librarians' attitudes toward knowledge sharing. Furthermore, librarians' attitudes toward knowledge sharing were found to have a significant impact on academic libraries' readiness to adopt KM
Ebisi, E. M., and Arua, G. N.	2018	“Knowledge Management in Libraries in the 21st Century”	Libraries gets to be increasingly vital with the improvement of knowledge economy
Islam, M. A., and Agarwal, N. K.	2020	“What is the impact of library and information science on knowledge management research”?	KM practices are not implemented in libraries. Some libraries are yet to understand the whole concept of knowledge management
Islam, M. N., Islam, M. S., and Razzak, A.	2020	“Problems of knowledge management practices in libraries and information centres of Bangladesh”	Clients in most of the libraries and information centres are not mindful of the positive impact of KM and so find it difficult to contribute effectively towards it.
Kaffashan Kakhki, M., Modiramani, P., Aminpour, F., Sadeghi-Gourji, S., and Ebrahimzadeh, E.	2021	“The dance of knowledge management strategies in libraries: The case of the libraries of the Iranian universities of medical science”.	Keeping up the status quo, was the overwhelming strategy of the KM system some Iranian libraries

Discussion

There is a high consciousness among librarians and information professionals on their potential commitment to knowledge management (Sarrafzadeh et al., 2006). Several papers have been authored on knowledge management over the last two decades, however, there appears to be a gap in knowledge management literature on knowledge management strategies for libraries and

information centres. The critical examination of the 42 selected research publications revealed some knowledge management approaches and barriers that prevent these strategies from being implemented. A study by Islam et al., (2020) in Bangladesh revealed that, KM practice has just begun in libraries. Jain (2013) acknowledged that steady budget decrease, inadequate training of staff and lack of expertise, lack of knowledge management strategy, inadequate information and communication technology infrastructure and the absence of knowledge sharing culture were the major challenges in practicing knowledge management. These findings also corroborate the results of Nazim and Mukherje (2011). It is important to note that well-arranged strategy which involves the library and management of the institution might give critical impact to realize the KM goals (Yaacob et al., 2011). In the view of Lee (2005), there is a need for a knowledge management performance index in institutions because of the assumption that organizations are provided with the necessary orientation towards the accumulation and application of knowledge to create the needed economic value and competitive advantage. The creation, use, and dissemination of knowledge are the foundations of the knowledge economy and society.

Institutions play a crucial role in the creation and transfer of knowledge (De Pablos, 2012). Many businesses are turning to knowledge management to harness their workers' intellectual capital (Gandhi, 2004). According to Kavulya (2007), information centers should take advantage of the digital era to ensure smooth gathering and transfer of knowledge. Sheeja (2012) acknowledges that knowledge management is a requirement for national advancement. The library and information science community are enthusiastic about knowledge management practices by libraries since it is the only way to deal with the growing difficult environment (Sarrafzadeh, 2010). All the other factors, aside from human resource practices, had a significant impact on librarians' attitudes

toward knowledge sharing. Furthermore, librarians' attitudes toward knowledge sharing were found to have a significant impact on academic libraries' readiness to adopt KM (Marouf, 2017). Libraries must restructure their operations and expand their services, roles and responsibilities to contribute effectively and meet the needs of a large and diverse community of users, this will enable libraries gain a significant competitive advantage by utilizing knowledge, which can result in better service to users (Hamid et al., 2007; Jantz, 2001).

According to Jain (2009) empowering knowledge workers, bridging the gap between acquired skills and job market, and leading the awareness in ethical and legal issues are all ways that information professionals can contribute to knowledge management. Kakhki et al., (2021) conducted a study on knowledge management strategies in libraries by focusing on libraries of the Iranian universities of medical science. The findings revealed that academic libraries should be careful in choosing a knowledge management strategy that does not support the overall management of knowledge in the parent institution. The selected strategy should in a way complement the institutions mission and goals. The study further attested that, more empirical studies are needed on knowledge management in libraries, being it academic or any type of library.

Libraries face a variety of challenges, including inadequate infrastructure and professional staff, notwithstanding, libraries have developed strategies for managing and providing services (Enakrire & Ocholla, 2017). Within libraries, tacit knowledge and explicit knowledge are recognized as important sources of knowledge but some information professionals lack the competencies in communication, human resource management, change management, and project management (Husain & Nazim, 2013), all these are needed to ensure the total attainment of a

complete knowledge management goal. Several personal characteristics may have influenced librarians' and information professionals' attitudes toward knowledge management. These characteristics may include an aptitude for human networking and an understanding of the importance of lifelong learning, as well as ambition and willingness to take risks (Sarrafzadeh, 2005). Additionally, cultural skills, leadership competencies, strategic skills, and restructuring skills are all required for successful knowledge management applications (Ezema, 2010). Knowledge management in academic libraries could be achieved by conducting a professional education and training programs, implementing communities of practice, using a modern information and communication technology, and promoting or encouraging knowledge sharing among library staff. These could also serve as some of the strategies for managing knowledge in libraries and information centers (Nazim & Mukherje, 2011).

In today's knowledge era, knowledge management is a practical way for academic libraries to advance their services (Maponya, 2005). Libraries and information centers must move from the traditional knowledge management tactics and look in the direction of more modern tactics by selecting ideal implementation strategies for the knowledge management system. A knowledge management program implemented in an organization has the potential to improve customer service. According to a KPMG study of knowledge management system implementations, the unsuccessful story of the concept is mostly as a result of inadequate trainings and education for knowledge managers (Koenig, 2003). Most librarians have a limited understanding of KM and have focused on only explicit information and/or knowledge in order to incorporate it into library practice (Roknuzzaman & Umemoto, 2009). Daneshgar and Parioikh (2012) proposed a framework to manage customer knowledge to help improve existing library services in academic

libraries since the achievement of any organization is profoundly dependent on choosing the correct strategic positioning.

Knowledge Management necessitates more efficient information handling, information transfer, and information linking to individuals and their activities. It necessitates the development of library patron-centred information systems and services, as well as the personalization of information at the individual level (Kumar, 2010). KM promotes and implements a performance-based reward system for its employees and helps to inculcate a culture of sharing (Teng & Hawamdeh, 2002). Roknuzzaman and Umemoto (2008) advocate for the incorporation of KM into library and information science education and library practices.

Conclusion

Knowledge management in libraries has been an area of concern for many researchers. Available literature on the concept focuses mainly on knowledge management in academic libraries, the role of library and information professionals in knowledge management and the importance of knowledge management in libraries. Literature is temperately silent on knowledge management strategies in libraries. There is inadequate information on that aspect in libraries and this could clearly be identified in the systematic review. This calls for extensive and thorough empirical research in this direction.

Moreover, this review supports the idea that having an effective knowledge management strategy will give libraries and information centres a significant advantage, especially in developing countries where resources are scarce. In the extension and modification of knowledge, libraries

and information centres play a critical role. As a result, libraries and information centres should devote significant resources to developing and implementing knowledge management strategies.

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