

# **First International Interdisciplinary Conference**



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**Conference Theme: Knowledge and  
Technological Innovation for Global**

# **Knowledge Management Practices: Catalyst for Development of University Libraries in Kenya**

**By**

**\*Murumba, Joan Wakasa**

*Kenya Methodist University, [jwakasa14@gmail.com](mailto:jwakasa14@gmail.com)*

**Ndukuh Kilei**

*South Eastern Kenya University, [n.mwalili2030@gmail.com](mailto:n.mwalili2030@gmail.com)*

# Outline of the Paper

- Introduction
- Framework
- KM in University Libraries in Kenya
- Objectives
- Methodology
- Results and Discussions
- Conclusion
- Recommendations



# Introduction, Definitions

## □ Knowledge

- According to (Abell & Oxbrow 2001) knowledge is the expertise and capability of staff, integrated with processes and corporate memory.

## □ Knowledge Management (KM)

- Can be said to be the capabilities by which communities within an organization capture the knowledge that is critical to them, constantly improve it and make it available in the most effective manner to those people who need it, so that they can exploit it creatively to add value as part of their work.

# Knowledge Management (KM)...

- KM is a process that helps organizations identify, select, organize, disseminate and transfer important information and expertise that are part of the organization's memory and that typically reside within the organization in an unstructured manner.
- KM focal point is on organizational objectives which are geared towards growth and development, competitive edge, creativity and innovation, operational excellence, information/knowledge sharing and organizational learning.

# Introduction....

- KM is hitting the world very explosively and rapidly ....many organizations have to embrace if they have to stay competitive.
- KM calls for a major paradigm shift in the organization's way of thinking and commitment in all aspects and levels to make it work, it needs a very **supportive organization**, good environment for its success.
- It is a component that is paramount to an organization to bring it to a level that can solve any problem in the entire world if only the right KM practices are in place or use.

# Rowley's Definition of KM

- KM is concerned with the exploitation and development of the knowledge assets of an organization with a view to furthering the organization's objectives.
- The knowledge to be managed includes both explicit and tacit, subjective knowledge.
- Management entails those processes associated with the identification, sharing and creation of knowledge.
- This requires systems for the creation and maintenance of knowledge repositories, and to cultivate and facilitate the sharing of knowledge and organizational learning.

# **KM Perspectives according to Davenport, Thomas, et al**

- **To create knowledge repositories**, which store both knowledge and information,
- **To improve knowledge access and transfer**: Here the emphasis is on connectivity, access and transfer.
- **To enhance the knowledge environment** so that it is conducive to more effective knowledge creation, transfer and use.
- **To manage knowledge as an asset** and to recognize the value of knowledge to an organization



# Knowledge Management and Libraries

- Libraries are faced with exceptional challenges in today's age.
- According to (Mahmood, 2003) the changing environment of libraries life demands new competencies as a result the knowledge expertise of librarians needs to be seen as the library's greatest asset.
- The role of libraries and IC's will become more pronounced in an approach which takes ICT and KM as the two sides of a coin than in an approach which views **ICT infrastructure as the only requirement to achieve development.**

# Knowledge Management and Libraries...

- The concept of KM is a valuable resource for development .....made up of tacit and explicit knowledge components.
- Given that tacit knowledge is now regarded as of equal value to explicit knowledge, it is important for libraries to have systems in place which attempts to tap it.
- **Challenge!!!!**
- Improved knowledge sharing culture, HRM and organization restructuring.
- IC's in Africa have to be more actively involved in than in the past.

# Goal of KM in Libraries...

- Control the available knowledge that may help libraries to carry out tasks more efficiently and effectively.
- To extend the role of the Information managers to manage all types of information, both tacit and explicit
- KM can help transform the library into a more efficient, knowledge sharing organisation. (Jantz, 2001)
- To avoid duplication of efforts, libraries have to determine and manage their knowledge assets

# Libraries

- A library is a solidified memory of a society. It is a collection of materials which has been arranged in a certain order for easy retrieval of both physical object and its intellectual content.
- Libraries collect, analyse, store, inspire, inform, and disseminate knowledge to its users through their information holdings.

# Application of KM Practices in University Libraries

by Earl, 2001

Leadership

Knowledge  
Creation,  
Capture &  
Acquisition

Training &  
Mentoring

# Application of KM Practices in University Libraries

by Earl, 2001

Policies and  
Strategies

Communications

Incentives

# Application of KM Practices in University Libraries...

- Capturing knowledge is crucial to the success and development of the library & the institution as a whole.
- In many incidences organisations have lost valuable experts through retirement, dismissals from work, resignations, .....

**Q. WHAT IS THE SUREST WAY TO AVOID THIS COLLECTIVE LOSS? A**

***Have we done these in our libraries?***

- Latest information technology should be used as an enabler.
- Collaboration.

# Objectives

- To study the librarians' Leadership role in KM initiatives
- To review the available institutional infrastructure that can support Knowledge Capture and Acquisition
- To find out if KM Training & Mentoring programs are available in university libraries
- To find out if KM Policies exists in university libraries in Kenya
- To establish the available tools of Communication in university libraries in Kenya
- To determine the type of Incentives for Knowledge sharing in the university libraries



# Methodology

- Descriptive Survey Design
- Questionnaires were distributed randomly, the research captured respondents from both public & private universities.
- Used current academic literature, document analysis, author experiences of university libraries.
- The survey worked with majority (59%) of the Librarians from Private universities and only (41%) librarians from public university libraries.
- The survey found out that among the librarians sampled 88% had less than 10 years of experience and 94% of them had at least a first degree qualification.

# Results and Discussion

**Awareness of KM Practices** in the Library (82% are aware; 18% not aware)

Relevance of Applying KM (94% said it was relevant; 6%)

**Existence of KM Training & Mentoring programs**

(12% said they existed in their libraries; 88% No, **TO MEAN?**)

- In house staff training, Utilization of E-Resources, E-Publishing training for faculty & post graduates

**Knowledge Management Strategies**

- **Policy Formulation** (V. Good 18%; 35% Good; Poor 47%)
- **ICT Adoption and Use** (Excellent 6%; V. Good 47%; 41% Good; Poor 6%)
- **Staff Training** (Excellent 6%; V. Good 6%; 41% Good; Poor 47%)
- **Use Incentives** (12% Good; Poor 88%)
- **Leadership** (Good 71%; Poor 29%)

**Knowledge Management Tools**

- **Content Creation** – E.g. Blogs (Good 47%; Poor 53%)
- **Content Management** – Classification & Archival (V. Good 6%; Good 65%; Poor 30%)
- **Collaborative** – LAN & Emails (Excellent 6%; V. Good 24%; Good 53%; Poor 18%)
- **Knowledge Acquisition and Application** – E-learning Platform (V. Good 24%; Good 53%; Poor 24%)

# Results and Discussion

## Rating KM Practices

- Knowledge Acquisition
- Knowledge Preservation
- Knowledge Sharing
- Knowledge Creation
- Knowledge Capturing

## Relationship between KM and the Libraries

- Library Professionals Roles in KM (94% Agreed, while 6% Disagreed)
- Information management is an aspect of KM (76% Agreed, while 24% Disagreed)
- KM is a new term for what library professionals were already doing (65% Agreed, while 35% Disagreed)

## How KM Practices have been integrated into the university libraries core business functions

- Generation of new Knowledge (Agree 30%; Disagree 70%)
- Accessing knowledge from external sources (Agree 81%; Disagree 19%)
- Representing knowledge in documents, dbs, s/w, etc. (Agree 82%; Disagree 18%)
- Embedding knowledge in processes, products, or services. (Agree 82%; Disagree 18%)
- Transferring existing knowledge around the organization (Agree 67%; Disagree 33%)
- Using accessible knowledge in decision-making (Agree 73%; Disagree 27%)
- Facilitating knowledge growth through culture & incentives (Agree 47%; Disagree 53%)

# Results and Discussion

## Challenges

- Capturing tacit knowledge
- Misunderstanding of KM concept
- Lack of knowledge capturing and sharing culture
- Lack of rewards and incentives
- Lack of top management commitment to incorporate KM practices in the library
- Reluctance of the library professionals to accept the change
- Lack financial and IT infrastructure

# Conclusion

- Libraries preserve knowledge so that none is lost, organize knowledge so that none is wasted, and make knowledge available so that no one need is deprived in this information age, Lee (2005).
- It is important for libraries to view information as an economic resource and address the need for converting information into knowledge as one of their responsibilities.
- Librarians need to play a more active part in policy formulation geared towards turning African countries into a knowledge society continent.
- Information workers need to acquire new skills in the area of KM

# Conclusion....

- KM is as important for libraries as for the businesses minus the proprietary, and moneymaking concerns
- For any library to succeed in implementing KM will require a strong leadership and vision from the top administration, which can influence the organization's knowledge sharing efforts in a positive way.
- Libraries need not take a back seat in the development of KM. Instead, armed with the professional knowledge and experiences, librarians should be in the driver's seat.

# Conclusion...



- In the process of knowledge creation; every library should strive to be an enabler and facilitator by mobilizing all its efforts and resources.
- The best knowledge creators are **academics**. Knowledge creation is best performed by universities. As a learning and knowledge organization, universities should empower their libraries to develop **campus-wide KM systems**.
- It is now time for libraries to reposition themselves in the central stage of and as a leading player in KM.



# Recommendations

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- Pilot Project
- Researching Needs
- Retooling and Retraining of Information Workers
- Incentives
- Collaboration
- ICT Infrastructure
- Change Management

**EAT THE KM APPLE!**

**THANK YOU!!!**

**Q & A**



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