

FROM KNOWLEDGE TO KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT IN BUSINESS ORGANIZATION

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ABSTRACT

This paper addresses the issue of truth and knowledge in management and KM in particular. It points out and conceptualizes the fundamental dimension of knowledge that is generally ignored in the literature. It also emphasis on the four forms of knowledge- propositional, experimental, per formative and epistemological. The paper also explores the characteristics and implication of KM in today's business environment. Our paper emphasize on bringing together Nonaka's knowledge – creating various theories. We need to realize the importance of Knowledge Management. Knowledge building may occur in an organization in an ideal situation when people interact with each other using shared digital artifacts, so that organization learning takes place. For this purpose different technologies are used like social tagging systems, wikis and pattern based task management. New concepts related to Knowledge Management are emerging including knowledge workers, knowledge economy and knowledge culture. An analysis of the theoretical foundation of KM scrutinizes a strong arena with clear directions for future work.

Keywords: *KM, Organization Learning, Knowledge Forms, Knowledge Culture, theories.*

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INTRODUCTION

Is KM being done in organization? The answer is 'yes', since it's a natural function in a human organization and it is being done all the time in an informal way. In this paper, we will begin by providing an account of our view of KM, its forms and associated concepts. We will then continue by analyzing the role of KM in the process of organization learning. It will be concluded by drawing out the implication of KM in business organizations. But before it begins it is very necessary to mention the difference between information and knowledge.

Information is a non-random structure within a system indicating future interactive potentialities, either originating along with it or acquired or developed by it in the course of its interaction with environment [Bickhar 1999]. Learning provides us with an opportunity to eliminate our errors in information and to create new information that synchronizes our efforts and experience.

Knowledge is a tested, evaluated and surviving structure of information that helps an organization to develop and adapt.

KM- THE NEED OF HOUR

KM is the need of corporate for excellence. It is the ability of an organization to compete in the global village and is defined by its ability to manage its knowledge and knowledge workers. It is believed that only those organization can survive and grow that are able and willing to create, acquire and retain a culture for KM. a very large proportion of the literature on KM and organizational learning. Is developed by and aimed at commercial business and firms. Many organizations in the corporate sector look to KM as a solution to new challenges of the information age. Knowledge and information are becoming crucial assets for business who have to learn to handle these assets in a new way. Organizations are shifting from utilization of already known knowledge to the creation of new knowledge from pure technology based KM applications to also include process applications.

Knowledge is a fluid mix of past experiences, values, relevant information and expert intellect that provides a basis for evaluating and implementing new experiences and information. It originates and is applied in minds of the knower. In organization KM often becomes embedded not only in documents or repositories but also in organizational routines, processes, practices and norms. In the present competitive scenario, not organization can think to survive or grow without proper KM systems. This article will give an insight into the two major issues. The first issue is

to create a learning environment. How to retain knowledge and knowledge workers is the second major issue.

EVOLUTION OF KM

The introduction of the KM and the emergence of the term explicit knowledge were new in 1980s. It was a natural emergence brought up by many exogenous and endogenous factors. The growths that have led to present perspective on Km come from many areas. Some are intellect based; some are pragmatic while others are self innovative. KM can be described as the need of the hour. It is the most afresh evolution from managerial focus. The three concepts that have contributed at the most in development of KM systems are – information management, quality sense and competitive environment. In broad sense, KM shares information management's user perspective and delivers the information in the most efficient manner which fulfills the criteria for success of business organization in today's playfield.

FORMS OF KNOWLEDGE

Much of the philosophical discussion of knowledge limits itself to propositional knowledge of a scientific nature. However, KM is concerned with knowledge in a wider sense. Though any form of knowledge must be knowledge of something, yet we can discover four forms of knowledge based on many different senses of the term in everyday use.

First, *propositional knowledge*- This form of knowledge is our everyday commonsense, relatively direct awareness of the world around us. It is like to know that it is raining; it is about someone at the door, etc.

Second, *Experiential Knowledge*- When we are referring to our own individual previous experience particularly of people, places, events and feelings it is experiential knowledge. It is to have a complex set of understanding, experiences, feeling and belief about that person. Much of this is tacit and difficult to express explicitly.

Third, *Performative Knowledge*- It involves having some skill or competence in order to be able to do something. It is to know how rather to know or to know that. So we can talk of knowing how to ride a bike, knowing how to cook etc.

Fourth, *Epistemological Knowledge*- It explains that things are the case towards deeper understanding of why things are as they are. It is to know why, to be knowledgeable about, to know the truth of, to be certain of, or to understand. This leads a person to think out of the b

FORMS OF KNOWLEDGE:-

Type	Object	Source	Forms of representation
Propositional			
I know its raining.	To know that X	Direct perception	Generally explicit
Experiential			
I know her well.	To know X	Personal experience	Memories which may be tacit and embodied.
Performative			
I know how to read X-Ray.	To know how to do X	Learning and training	Embodied
Epistemological			
I know what black holes are	To know why X	Formal methods of discovery	Explicit, discursive, open to debate

Source: Bhaskar's four dimensions (Haberman's validity claims)

NONKA'S THEORY OF KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT

Nonaka and Takeuchi interpreted the Japanese Management system with their knowledge creating theory. (Nonaka and Takeuchi, 1995). Their studies focused on how to make human labour more effective at work. Barnard (1938) discussed formal organization and the authority of executives, identified the responsibilities of the managers and pointed out that the main task of managers is decision making. Drucker, however, emphasized as the main means for management. Managers in 21st century require not only entrepreneurship, leadership and their personal abilities in decision making and judgement but also about KM- what they should do and how to do it effectively and efficiently. Drucker emphasizes the knowledge work done by knowledge workers and their productivity, while Nonaka argues that everyone in the Organization should be involved in knowledge creating activities. In Jackson's recent research he takes creative and holistic perspective using social theory to explore the underlying philosophies and hypotheses of various management theories to gain an insight into what management is and reach a new stage of KM i.e. the organization and management of various

knowledge about business knowledge in the form of system methodologies and the practice of managing business knowledge.

KM IN ORGANIZATIONAL LEARNING

For KM in business, organization must have clear objectives- the efficient and effective management of existing organizational knowledge for achieving organizational goals. This will help the companies to generate, communicate and leverage their intellectual assets. In business organization, management has two facets, administrative efforts in relation to existing explicit knowledge- *Substance knowledge* and facilitative initiatives to enable the dynamic process of tacit or implicit knowledge flow among knowledge workers- *Process knowledge*.

Management of both *static substance knowledge* and *dynamic process knowledge* is required to manage organizational learning. Managing substance knowledge means managing the activities of developing, creating, capturing, codifying, organizing and utilizing knowledge generally carried out by knowledge workers. As dynamic process knowledge is viewed as a human activity system, therefore, KM in essence means to manage organizational human activity systems.

The Corporate Sector has embraced KM and learning with the aim of improving organizational efficiency- measured in metrical figures of production and “profit”. In the development sector, organizational efficiency is also important, but it is far from the only aim. For the development of the organization, it’s important to have knowledge of the field in order to boost their legitimacy and influencing power. KM caters to the critical issues of organizational adaption, survival and competence in face of increasingly discontinuous environmental change. Essentially, it embodies organizational processes that seek synergistic combination of data and information processing capacity of information technology and the creative and innovative capacity of human beings.

MAJOR OBSTACLES IN IMPLEMENTATION OF KM IN BUSINESS ORGANIZATION

- **Top management involvement:** - Sometimes in organization, top management does not invest enough time and attention in educating employees. Therefore, it becomes difficult to institutionalize values and norms and create learning culture.

- **Cross-functional Ownership:** - The HR department needs to be actively associated with the organizational strategies and KM system so that an organization can deliver best presentation according to the requirements of markets and customers.
- **Obstructive Organization Structure:** - In hierarchical organization, information flow from bottom to top level is hindered. This kind of structure limits the contribution of lower level employees in knowledge sharing.

KM CULTURE FOR KNOWLEDGE WORKERS

The article gave excerpt on how KM systems and knowledge workers could be integrated and how an effective culture for KM can be created. Organization who wants to recruit and attract superior knowledge workers should place them as organization which value knowledge creation and knowledge retention. KM requires people to be self-motivated. As a part of performance appraisal and review also, people should be added what new knowledge they have acquired and how they used it. Not only employees, at a practical level, organization should facilitate the acquisition of skill and competencies to generate and use valid knowledge. KM is a discipline in itself and workers need to be educated in research methodology, which involves defining research agenda, examining the knowledge gap, defining objectives, building hypothesis, collecting data, analyzing and validating the hypothesis. Organization can specifically provide incentives for purchasing books and journals and like in academic institutions, a kind of symposium can be organized for its knowledge workers for knowledge generation and acquisition in organization. People need to learn to live with knowledge as a way of life. But knowledge generation involves risk and uncertainty. This risk and uncertainty can be reduced by creating a culture of care. Care can lead to mutual trust, empathy, access to help, leniency in judgment and courage. Trust facilitates people to feel empowered and comfortable to take risks. Empathy provides ability to see a situation from other's point of view. Finally, a caring environment facilitates people to have courage to share their unique and creative view point's and is different from others. Caring behaviours can be encouraged using reward system.

Knowledge needs of a knowledge worker can be defined by his/her personal vision and self-concept. By creating a shared vision, an organization can pursue learning needs and can create a learning organization for KM. Organization should spend considerable time and effort in selecting knowledge workers and existing knowledge workers should be included in the process.

Knowledge workers should be actively involved in designing KM systems. Common knowledge needs throughout the organization should be identified and prioritized. Leaders of top management of organization should identify what kind of unique knowledge the organization has and what should be nurtured.

A perfect reward system should help an organization to strike a balance between knowledge generation and knowledge usage. Knowledge generation is like basic research which requires a longer time and much interest. On the other hand knowledge usage like applied research usually has a shorter cycle time. A few large organizations give extrinsic rewards for KM related activities. They also keep record of how often people have accessed the knowledge depository. Based on some norms and procedures, those who use and deposit some knowledge into knowledge repository are also rewarded according to the frequency with which their knowledge has been referred. Such a system has the potential to motivate people to convert their tacit knowledge into explicit knowledge and deposit it in the knowledge repository.

CONCLUSION

The contribution of this paper has been primarily theoretical. KM is a new concept in library and information service. Knowledge is considered as a rich asset these days. In this paper, we have summarized the fundamental development of the concepts of KM. Based on the discussion; we conclude that KM in a business organization means managing the activities of knowledge workers.

The first part of the paper deals with the introduction and fundamental aspects of KM. It is concerned with the recognition of nature of what we can know. The second is to point out the forms of knowledge categorized in single dimension but recognized in four distinctive forms- propositional, experiential, performative and epistemological. Then comes an excerpt on the creation of various theories with special reference Nonaka's knowledge theory.

Finally the paper is concluded by giving an insight on one of the important dilemma of the organization- how to retain knowledge workers. Although this paper has concentrated on the subjective aspects of knowledge, the knowing subject and has primarily developed somewhat static categorization, we see this as only part of a much broader domain that is both processual and social. In a nutshell, knowledge is certainly a vital resource in today's world, but we must recognize its complex nature if we hope to make use of it more successfully in our organization.

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