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Introduction

Libraries should support knowledge-driven society through generating new knowledge and building capacity to access and share existing expertise, repositories of global knowledge and adapt that knowledge to local use for sustainable development; this can never be possible without proper knowledge management. In Nigeria today, it is observed that there is discrepancies among library and information science (LIS) professionals, on their understanding of Knowledge Management (KM) as a concept which to a large extent affects the level of knowledge management practices for sustainable development. Knowledge management being an emerging field of specialization in a number of professions, including Library and Information Science has remained an issue of concern. Wiig (1997) assert that effective
Knowledge management will be the foundation of success of any organization in the 21st century. The growing value of information and knowledge in social systems, and the way of managing them has created unique challenges for the organizations, information institutions, managers, and workers (Roknuzzaman & Umemoto, 2009). In responding to the exciting and emerging phenomenon of KM, library practitioners must embrace KM as a means of uplifting their service, hence, this demands for an understanding of its ramifications and relevance to their work.

According to White (2004) knowledge management is the process of creating, storing, sharing and reusing organizational knowledge (know how) to enable an organization to achieve its goals and objectives. In this regard, it becomes apparent that knowledge management is concerned with the process of identifying, acquiring, distributing and maintaining knowledge that is essential to the organization. Through KM, organizations seek to acquire or create potentially useful knowledge and make it available to those who can use it at a time and place that is appropriate for them to achieve maximum usage and maximal impact on organizational performance (King, 2007). Thus, the true value is created by fostering innovation in the organization. In this respect the organization must consider knowledge management as strategic assets, and these organizations should capitalize on knowledge management tools to improve and build up an intellectual assets base, as an attempt to gain a competitive advantage (Alrawi & Alrawi, 2011).

With all the benefits of knowledge management to library and information professionals yet, not adequate attention has been given to it in most developing countries including Nigeria. For example, Nazim and Mukherje (2011) while reporting the case of Indian Library and Information Professionals with regards to knowledge management, they stated that, Indian library and information professionals are still involved in the traditional practices of knowledge organization and information management. Malhan (2006) also reported lack of understanding of various dimensions of KM and a lack of necessary competencies among library and information professionals to develop and apply KM tools and techniques. This is not different with the situation of academic librarians in Federal Universities in Northwestern States of Nigeria. Ironically, academic libraries being a constituent of the parent university should rethink and explore ways to improve their services and become learning organisations in which to discover how to capture and share their most valuable assets (knowledge) within the library. Hence, the changing role of academic librarians as knowledge managers emphasises the need to constantly update or acquire new skills and knowledge to remain relevant to the today’s library environment (Maponya, 2004).

Therefore, the importance of this study is to explore the available formal Knowledge Management structures used by academic Librarians, level of understanding of knowledge management as a concept and factors militating against knowledge management practices among academic librarians in Northwestern States of Nigeria. For any library or information center to ensure full exploration of its most potential asset and utilization for sustainable development, it becomes so imperative to ensure proper understanding of knowledge management in all it ramification since Knowledge management is based on applying the fullness of an organization’s knowledge to its decisions and this requires working hard to represent it, transfer it, make it accessible and encourage its use only through this we can ensure sustainable development.

2 Problem Statement

The dynamism in library and information science profession in the digital era begin to transform and shape the profession, making Library and Information Science (LIS) professionals and their services more demanding and more challenging. One of the most challenging areas being faced by (LIS) professionals during the last decade was the emergence of Knowledge Management (KM) and it integration into daily routine of library and Information Professionals. To attain sustainable development, the roles of library and information professionals in Knowledge management cannot be neglected.
Malhotra (1998) puts knowledge management in the context of environmental changes, which bring organizations to the need to find ways to survive and increase competence. "Knowledge management caters for the critical issues of organizational adaptation, survival, and competence in the face of increasingly discontinuous environmental change. Essentially, it embodies organizational processes that seek synergistic combination of data and information processing capacity of information technologies, and the creative and innovative capacity of human beings (Malhotra, 1998) in order to ensure sustainable development. The only way to ensure Sustainable development is through meeting the social, economic and technological needs of the present without endangering the ability of future generations to meet their own needs and this can never be realized without access existing repositories of global knowledge through best practice in knowledge management.

Knowledge management has been seen as a survival factor for libraries to overcome the challenges library professionals face in the changing and competitive environment (Sinotte, 2004; Wen, 2005). Respondents in a study by Sarrafzadeh, Martin, and Hazeri (2010) agreed by strong majority that knowledge management can contribute to an improvement in the future prospects of libraries for sustainable development. Libraries can also improve their knowledge-based services for internal and external users through creating an organizational culture of sharing knowledge and expertise within the library (Roknuzzaman & Umemoto, 2009; Teng & Hawamdeh, 2002). Sarrafzadeh, Martin, and Hazeri (2006) reported that if library professionals remain reluctant to gaining new skills they will become irrelevant to their organization and will probably lose out in competition for employment to people from other fields. Meanwhile, the success of academic libraries entirely depends on their ability to utilize information and knowledge of its staff to better serve the needs of the academic community. Lee (2000) pointed out that “the knowledge and experiences of library staff are the intellectual assets of any library and should be valued and shared”.

However, preliminary investigation by the researcher on academic librarians in Federal Universities in Northwestern States of Nigeria revealed that with all the numerous advantages of KM still, there is very few formal knowledge management structure used by academic librarian, as well as reluctance by the academic librarians to fully utilised the various knowledge management structure in sharing their knowledge. Similarly, there are few evidences of practical applications of knowledge management among academic librarians. Even though several studies reported that the most important knowledge management enabling factors are technology, structure and organizational culture (Gold et al, 2001) yet, literature on available knowledge management structure, its applications and use as well as Library and Information Science Professionals’ on perceptions on their level of understanding of knowledge management as a concepts, and their perceived challenges have also been neglected. These to a large extent affect best practices and hinder the exploitation of repositories of organizational knowledge in most University Libraries in Northwestern State of Nigeria. At this point This scenario has created a gap. Therefore, this study is set out to explore the available formal KM structures used by academic Librarians, level of understanding of knowledge management as a concept and factors militating against knowledge management practices among academic librarians in Northwestern States of Nigeria, in order to fill up the existing gap.

3 Research questions

The study focused on the following research questions:

i. What are the available formal Knowledge Management structures used by academic librarians in Federal Universities in Northwestern States of Nigeria?
ii. What is the level of understanding of KM concept among academic librarians in Federal Universities in Northwestern States of Nigeria?
iii. In what ways do academic librarians acquire skill and understanding of KM in Federal Universities in Northwestern States of Nigeria?
iv. What are the factors militating against Knowledge Management practices among academic librarians in Federal Universities in Northwestern States of Nigeria?
4 Review of Related Literature

In the 21st century information and knowledge era, knowledge has increasingly become a vital resource for competitive advantage. As organisations faced with competition and increasingly dynamic environments, they are beginning to realise that there is a vast and largely untapped asset diffused around in the organisation – knowledge for sustainable development (Gupta, Iyer & Aronson, 2000).

Sustainable development is efficient management of resources for human survival, taking into consideration both the present and future generations (Adejumo & Adejumo 2014). Therefore, to achieve sustainable development, the world summit on sustainable development suggested that countries must ensure the full participation of their citizens in development programmes and strengthen the capacities of citizens to access and utilize timely information (Goodluck, Iwu-James, & Adebayo 2016). Hence, the need for knowledge management has become so imperative. Knowledge management (KM) has been an issue of discussions and debates in the last two decades. The term has been described from different perspective by different scholars. A body of literature reported views of experts about KM and considers librarians from more positive viewpoints and call for full involvement of LIS people in KM (Abell & Oxbrow, 2001; Broadbent, 1998; Butler, 2000; Correll, 1998; Southon & Todd, 2001) Bouthillier and Shearer (2002), reported that, there seems to be a close relationship between Library and Information Science (LIS) and KM. Hawkins (2000), explain that KM is an old concept and a new name for what librarians or information professionals have been doing for years. In line with this, librarians as an embodiment of Knowledge, information and practices serving a wide spectrum of information seekers, has a critical role to play in the facilitation of knowledge generation; hence, an exchange of ideas and access to knowledge is essential in a development process so as to allows organizations to generate value from their intellectual and knowledge-based assets (Santosus & Surmacz, 2001), and makes it possible to get the right information into the hands of the appropriate people at the time. These dreams can never be realized without proper understanding of knowledge management concept as well as KM implementation challenges. In an effort to achieve this, this resulted in the approval of the Knowledge Management Section as IFLA section in December 2003 (IFLA, 2009). The KM section is a unit in IFLA Division IV (Bibliographic Control). With this approval, the Library and Information Science professionals have continued to express the need for a deeper understanding of KM's many dimensions and its relevance to the profession. To successfully achieve this, training and retraining of library staff in form of workshop, seminars, conferences, and extensive reading of literature sources is highly important (Siddike, Kalam, & Munshi, 2012).

In highlighting the perception of librarians about KM, Southon and Todd (2001) conducted a survey where they investigated the perceptions held by experienced LIS professionals about knowledge Management in the library and information sector in Australia. The results suggest a lack of understanding of knowledge management among LIS professionals and a considerable variation in the levels of awareness of with regards to the term knowledge management. Ali and Khan (2015); Nazim and Mukherje (2011) found discrepancies in librarians knowledge and understanding of KM in India. Nazim and Mukherje (2011) further stressed that librarians' perceptions of KM in India are shallow dealing with the management of only explicit knowledge or information management rather than sharing and using tacit knowledge embedded in employees. Another study regarding library specialists' views of knowledge management and its incorporation in to library practice was conducted by Roknuzzaman and Umemoto (2008), the results of their study showed that the ways of knowing and understanding knowledge management concepts were varied among the library specialists from different countries and that most of them focused on a limited perception of knowledge management for its incorporation in the library activity. Among the reasons for responding to knowledge management there can be mentioned increased value of knowledge in the knowledge economy, library itself is a knowledge-based organization, opportunities for improved library practices.

With all the relevance of KM to library and Information professional very few of these projects focus on managing knowledge as an asset that can add value or produce a return on investment (Gandhi, 2004).
Most KM initiatives in libraries have not followed a systematic and logical approach/process to identify, organize, or share internal knowledge or best practices to improve the operational effectiveness of the library (Jantz, 2001). According to Roknuzzaman and Umemoto (2008), Reluctances and level of library practitioners response to KM is comparatively slow and they are reluctant to incorporate KM into library practice because of their traditional mind set as well as reluctant on the part of to share their knowledge and ideas with their seniors, because they feel that there is no benefit of it. Some librarians do not take any initiative for positive changes in their libraries. In another related study McKnight (2007) reiterated that lack of clearly defined guidelines on KM (KM strategies) implementation, pose a challenge in most of the universities in UK. KM initiatives in libraries have a long way to go and have tremendous potential for improvement (Gandhi, 2004). It is clear that, full understanding of KM and identification of challenges affecting proper implementation of KM will no doubt ensure sustainable development. However, several steps other steps must be undertaken by libraries and information professionals to ensure successful knowledge management for sustainable development in the 21st century.

5 Methodology

This study adopted descriptive survey research design. The populations of the study consist of 200 academic librarians in the seven (7) Federal Universities in Northwestern state of Nigerian. These universities comprise Ahmadu Bello University Zaria, Bayero University Kano, Usman Danfodiyo University Sokoto, Federal University Dutse, Federal University Dutsinma, Federal University Birnin Kebbi and Federal University, Gusau. Questionnaire was the instrument used for data collection. A reliability test of the instrument was conducted using split-half method, where reliability coefficient of 0.87 was obtained, which indicates that the instrument is reliable as postulated by Ponterotto and Ruckdeschel (2007) that, a reliability coefficient of 0.8 and higher is generally considered to be good. With regards to the sample for the study, total enumeration technique was employed where the entire population was considered in the study. Two hundred (200) copies of questionnaires were administered to academic librarians in the area covered by the study, in which 179 were duly completed and found usable for the study. The data collected were presented and analyzed using descriptive statistics (simple percentage). The analysis was done using Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) version 16. The choice of this software was based on its high descriptive and multivariate statistical power for quantitative data analysis (Dulle, 2010).

6. Results and Discussion

This section presents the findings of the study in line with the research questions raised.

Formal Knowledge Management Structure Available in Libraries Studied

Respondents were asked about the knowledge management structure available in their libraries in table 1:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>Formal Knowledge Management Structure Available in your Library (mechanism, flat forms and tools recognized formally by Authorities of the libraries)</th>
<th>Frequencies</th>
<th>Percentages (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>29</td>
<td>16.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>150</td>
<td>83.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td></td>
<td>179</td>
<td>99.99</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The finding in Table 1: indicates that majority of the respondents 150 (83.79%) stressed that they have no formal Knowledge Management structure available in the libraries covered by the study only 29 (16.20%) acknowledge that they have formal knowledge management structure. This shows that academic librarians lack formal KM structure for knowledge creation and sharing in the area covered by the study. This implies that despite the need to create knowledge management structure that would identify, capture, organize, retrieve and apply knowledge to ensure sustainable development yet, little attention is given to this area. Table 2 presents the responses depicting the level of understanding of Knowledge Management concepts among academic librarians in Northwestern States of Nigeria.

Table 2: Levels of Understanding of KM Concept among Academic Librarians in Northwestern States of Nigeria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>Level of Understanding of KM Concept</th>
<th>Ratings (number &amp; percentage)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Strongly Agree</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>I believe km will fade away in favor of enhance information management</td>
<td>64 (35.8%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>I have heard about KM it doesn't sound like new jargon</td>
<td>79 (45.4%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>for me I see KM as something that has always been there it is now labeled</td>
<td>67 (37.5%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>KM is a term with meaning</td>
<td>70 (40.2%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>I am familiar with Knowledge management strategy</td>
<td>5 (2.79%)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Knowledge management is a process of creation, assimilation, retention and utilization of knowledge</td>
<td>63 (33.5%)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Result arising from table 2 on the examination of the level of understanding of KM shows that, majority of the respondents 153 (87.9%) strongly agree or agree that, they "have heard about KM it doesn't sound like new jargon." Also, 147 (84.5%), of the respondents strongly agree or agree that, KM is a term with meaning. Similarly, 105 (57%) opined that, Knowledge management is a process of creation, assimilation, retention and utilization of knowledge. While, 116 (64.9%) indicated that, they see KM as something that has always been there it is now labeled. Worthy to mention is the fact majority of the respondent lacks extensive knowledge on Knowledge management strategy with 161 (92.5%) responses. Lastly, 106 (59.3%) of the respondents believe km will fade away in favor of enhance information management.

The finding arising from the study indicates some level of understanding of KM concept among the academic librarians in the area covered by the study, even though the respondents indicated some level of understanding and familiarity with KM, their understanding hinged mainly on KM as a concept, they lacked extensive knowledge on Knowledge management strategies. The finding of this study supported
those conducted by Nazim and Mukherje (2011); (Roknuzzaman & Umemoto, 2008), who reported that majority of the respondents covered by their study, lacked extensive knowledge on KM strategy which to a large extent affects it incorporation into library activities. In order to ascertain the ways information professional acquire their skill and understanding of knowledge management option were provided in table 3.

**Table 3:** Ways in which Information Professionals Acquire Skill and Understanding of Knowledge Management

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>S/N</th>
<th>Ways in which Information Professionals Will Acquire Skill and Understanding of KM</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Literature</td>
<td>67</td>
<td>37.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Attended workshop</td>
<td>49</td>
<td>27.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Take any course</td>
<td>28</td>
<td>15.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Colleagues</td>
<td>35</td>
<td>19.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>179</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Analysis from table 3 indicated that most of the respondents read about KM in the literature with 67 (37.5%) responses, the result also revealed that 49 (27.4%) of the respondent get to know about KM through the workshops they attended. While 28 (15.6%) the respondents, stressed that they took cause on KM. The analysis arising from the findings implies that even though knowledge management is one of the emerging trends in the area of librarianship, little attention is given to it by most of library professionals in the Northwestern States of Nigeria.

This research findings is in line with that of Siddike et al. (2012) who reported (90%) of the respondents of the survey read about KM in the literature, only 5% attended workshop on KM.

**Factors Militating against Knowledge Management Practices among Academic Librarians in Northwestern States of Nigeria**

The respondents were asked about the factors militating against knowledge management practices in Federal University Libraries in Northwestern state of Nigeria in Table 3.

**Table 3:** Factors Militating against Knowledge Management Practices among Academic Librarians in Northwestern States of Nigeria

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SN</th>
<th>Factors Militating against Knowledge Management Practices among Academic Librarians in Northwestern States of Nigeria</th>
<th>Frequency</th>
<th>Percentage (%)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>lack of cooperation among juniors and seniors staff</td>
<td>32</td>
<td>17.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Tracking the materials from departments is time consuming</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Inadequate staff training</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>11.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Limited expertise in KM</td>
<td>10</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Lack of clearly defined guidelines on KM implementation and Practice</td>
<td>41</td>
<td>22.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Lack of trust and incentives</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>7.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>A lack of knowledge sharing culture</td>
<td>27</td>
<td>15.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Constant budget decline</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>11.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Insufficient Technology to harness the benefit of KM</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>4.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>179</strong></td>
<td><strong>100</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The result in table 4 indicates that, 41 (22.9%) of the respondents stressed that, the most challenging factor experienced by the libraries covered by the study is lack of clearly defined guidelines on KM implementation and practice. Worthy to mention is the fact that 32 (17.9%) of the respondents indicated lack of cooperation among junior and senior staff as a challenge to KM practice. Similarly, inadequate staff training and constant budget decline also hindered librarians from KM practices with 20 (11.2%) responses respectively. The least problems responded to, were tracking materials from departments and insufficient technology to harness the benefit of KM with 8 (4.5%) responses respectively.

The implications of the findings arising from the study suggest that information professionals being custodian of knowledge right from their generation, processing, storage and dissemination in the 21st century have lots to do in overcoming the challenges identified. Academic libraries need to consider restructuring their functions, expand their roles and responsibilities to effectively and efficiently contribute and meet the diverse needs of university community.

The findings of the study is in line with those conducted by Nazim and Mukherje (2011), McKnight (2007) who reported lack of cooperation among staff and lack of clearly defined guidelines on KM implementation as hindrance to successful KM practice.

8 Conclusion

Academic librarians have a long history towards supporting teaching, learning, research activities and development of culture in sharing and imparting knowledge in order to maximize the impact, effectiveness as well as achieving the overall objectives of the their parent institutions through effective service delivery, best practices and sustainable development. With the advancement in ICT academic librarians in federal universities in Northwestern states of Nigeria need to deploy and exploit numerous benefit of km through various km tools. With all the advantages of km, yet anecdotal evidence indicates that potentialities of km is not fully exploited by academic librarians in most of the federal universities in Northwestern States of Nigeria as most of the libraries in the area covered by the study have no formal KM structure. This indicates that km platforms are less explored in Northwestern States of Nigeria due to the absence of the KM structures in the libraries covered by the study. Universities libraries in Federal Universities in Northwestern States of Nigeria still have a long way to go towards ensuring better knowledge management practices. As km holds a greater promise towards ensuring full exploitation of both tacit/explicit and knowledge, academic librarians need to take advantage of the potentialities of km through the deployment of various km tools in improving their service as well as ensuring best practices, sustainable development and continuous improvement.

9 Recommendations

Based on the findings arising from the study, the following recommendations are made;

i. The library management should create more knowledge management structure using social media as flat form to exploit the potentialities of organizational knowledge. The structure when put in place should be made known to the academic librarians through sensitisation/awareness campaigns in form of workshop, seminars and training.

ii. The library management should consider redesigning jobs situations, so also continuous education courses and regular training programmes like seminars, workshops to help academic librarians to extensively understand knowledge management, its strategies and application in order to manage their knowledge for sustainable development is equally.

iii. Library management needs to consider preparing appropriate policies to support the academic librarians to understand knowledge management and its potentials. So also the policy should consider motivation and incentives to encourage open access knowledge, support systems to alerted mind and creative people, team membership, mentoring and leadership development programs are all needed.
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