

The Role of Librarians in Knowledge Management Practices for Effective User Service Delivery in Academic Libraries in North-Eastern Nigeria

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Abstract

The study explores the Role of the Librarian in Knowledge Management Practices in academic libraries in North-Eastern Nigeria using a Descriptive Survey Design, the data collected was analyzed with descriptive and inferential statistics using SPSS 16.0 software. Census sampling technique was adopted on the total 121 professional librarians; valid returned rate of 89 (73.6%) questionnaires was used for the analysis. The study found out that Knowledge Management has high level of awareness, practice and is supportive by the professional librarians (70.3%), with only two Knowledge Management tools Enterprise portal Web sites and E-Learning tools software applicable to academic libraries. The study found out that the role of professional librarians in KM practices include IT role, Dissemination of Shared Knowledge (3.16 mean mark) and the role of Communication and Creativeness (3.87 mean marks) while KM enhances effective user service delivery through enhancing Knowledge Innovation Management of tacit knowledge (3.33 mean mark) and facilitating knowledge sharing using technologies without any geographical limitation (3.85 mean marks). The Linear Regression Analysis shows a very strong correlation between the Roles of Professional Librarians in KM practices and the benefits of KM practices in enhancing effective user service delivery in academic libraries ($r=0.953$ p value<.05).

Keywords: Knowledge Management, Academic Library, KM Tools, KM Practice

1.0 Background to the Study

The ability to manage knowledge is becoming a herculean task in academic libraries. The creation, organization and dissemination of knowledge have become increasingly an important factor in the library. The new role of libraries in the 21st century is becoming a learning and knowledge center for their users as well as the intellectual commons for their respective communities. As a learning and research organization, libraries should provide a strong leadership in knowledge management and develop resources access and sharing strategies from printed to electronic and digital resources in concert with the mission of academic libraries.

Durham (2004) defined Knowledge management as a discipline that promotes an integrated approach to identifying, capturing, evaluating, retrieving, and sharing all of an enterprise's information assets. Knowledge management theorists Probst, Raub and Romhardt (1999) and Dixon (2000) maintain that effective practices of the management of explicit and tacit knowledge acts to increase the effectiveness and profitability of an organization. Knowledge is simple mean an understanding derived from experiential learning which can be either tacit or explicit; Tacit knowledge is personal, known by an individual, context specific, highly experiential and difficult to document and communicate while Explicit knowledge is more formal can be easily codified, documented, transformed and conveyed in a systematic way.

Academic libraries exist to support their academic parent institutions' objectives. According to Raja et al., (2009) Academic libraries are established in support the mission of their parent institutions to generate knowledge, and people equipped with knowledge in order to serve the society and advance the well-being of mankind". Library and Information Science Professionals with better personal, professional and technological competencies in addition to better Knowledge Management skills have great opportunities in academic libraries. Continuous staff training on emerging technologies is essential to improve and develop various kinds of professional skills, knowledge and competencies. Professional competencies can be thought of as flexible knowledge and skills that allow the librarian to function in a variety of environments and to produce a coherent value-added customized information services that cannot be easily duplicated by others but can be managed for the efficient service delivery in the library.

Observably, Academic Libraries lack the means of capturing all tacit knowledge of professional competencies that are useful to their users, their organizations, and to the internal operation of libraries. The knowledge and accumulated experiences of library staff form the intellectual assets of any library should be valued and shared through the principles and tools of knowledge management. Knowledge Management tools such as the internet

should be used by the library to develop a website to serve as a portal for all relevant knowledge and information of various types both tacit and explicit and must carefully analyze the needs of their users and develop co-operative acquisition plans to meet these needs, a vast talent of knowledge in staff are sometimes stored as tacit knowledge that need to be properly managed in order to tap the potentials.

Inadequate funding, advancement in technology, staffing and exponential growth in research activities are among the prominent evidence that academic libraries most engage in knowledge management in order to remain relevant in the global academic advancement, these have to start with defining clearly the role of the librarian. A great amount of valuable knowledge is possessed by library staff and users, both in and outside the libraries. In universities such expertise is abundant, un-indexed, and not searchable and accessible in any form of databases created and maintained by libraries. It is against this background that this study becomes imperative to investigate the role of the librarian in the management of knowledge in academic libraries in order to develop research based theories for effective practices of knowledge management in academic libraries in Nigeria.

1.1 Problem of the Study

The utmost goal of knowledge management is to provide users with sufficient ways of satisfaction and various quality services in order to improve the communication, use and creation of knowledge. Libraries and librarians should adopt the practices of knowledge management in order to have an effective user service delivery. Lee (2005) opined that the librarian is also in the library with the aim of satisfying the information need of the users, these services should be tailed toward the interest and need of users. University Libraries in North-Eastern Nigeria has little culture for sharing of knowledge and expertise, few staff members who share their tacit knowledge and experiences are not impacting it in writing, publishing, or mentoring. Academic libraries need to determine the roles of librarians in best practices of knowledge management due to the fact that the concept is still new to many librarians, therefore, the need to define the role of the librarian in the context of knowledge management. Knowledge must be renewed and expanded to prevent it from becoming stagnant.

1.2 Research Purpose and Objectives of the Study

The main purpose of this study is to explore the Role of the Librarian in Knowledge Management Practices in Academic Libraries in North-Eastern Nigeria. To meet this purpose, the objectives of this study are to:

1. Examine the level of Knowledge Management awareness and practices in academic libraries in North-Eastern Nigeria;
2. Ascertain the Knowledge Management Technologies employed for practicing Knowledge Management in academic libraries in North-Eastern Nigeria;
3. Determine the Role of the Librarian in Knowledge Management practices in the academic libraries under study; and
4. Explore the benefit of Knowledge Management practices for effective user service delivery in academic libraries in North-Eastern Nigeria.

1.3 Research Hypothesis

The research presented a broad assumption to be tested in order to validate the outcome of the investigation;

Null Hypothesis

H₀₁ The Roles of Librarians in Knowledge Management Practice in Academic Libraries has no Statistical Significant Correlation with the Benefit of Knowledge Management Practice for Effective User Service delivery in Academic Libraries.

1.4 Ethical Consideration Issue

Anonymity was guaranteed to all the participating libraries and librarians; hence, no individual library's findings were disclosed in this study.

2.0 Review of Related Literature

2.1 Knowledge Management in Academic Libraries and the Role of the Librarian

The academic libraries being the knowledge-intensive institutions have adopted Knowledge Management and expanded the existing roles of librarians in managing both the human and material resources in their libraries. By utilizing traditional skills, university librarians are playing a crucial role in dissemination and exchange of knowledge among students and teaching staff in order to enhance learning, teaching and research activities. All of this contributes towards a knowledgeable and learned society. Knowledge Management in academic libraries may include:

- A process of collecting, organizing, classifying and disseminating information throughout a library, so as to make it purposeful to those who need it;
- Its aims are to capture the tacit and explicit knowledge that staff really have but are needed by the library and the users in the library repository and filter the surplus out.

- It involves identification of categories of knowledge needed to support the overall library activities by combining indexing, searching and technology to help libraries in organizing data stored in multiple sources and deliver only relevant information to users.

According to Sinha (2014) the cardinal role of the professional librarian in Knowledge Management practice include librarian dealing with new technologies, generating new knowledge and sharing knowledge without any geographical limitation. Nazim and Mukherjee (2011) established the major tools of these Knowledge Management practices as professional education and training programs, communities of practice, information technology and knowledge sharing. Sinha (2014) further stresses the major role of academic libraries in Knowledge Management as basically inclined to Knowledge Dissemination and Knowledge Application management that help libraries to share knowledge recourses and expertise.

According to a study carried out by Sarrafzadeh, Martin, and Hazeri (2010), 82.2% LIS professionals regarded KM as a survival factor for libraries to respond to challenges they face in a continuously changing environment. This is attributed to the fact that KM equips academic libraries with ample tools to accommodate the changing library's customer needs. In another study undertaken by Roknuzzaman and Umamoto (2009), knowledge economy was considered to be one of the important drivers for libraries' movement towards KM. Hayes (2004) strongly maintains that "A university can be viewed as a knowledge factory creating new knowledge through research and by educating knowledge workers, both of which are essential for the modern academic advancement". All the above studies have noted that the value of Knowledge Management has always been central to the library practices. Gakuya (2012) further emphasized that librarians/libraries in the digital and knowledge age should be in charge of Knowledge Management in their respective organizations in order to leverage the intellectual assets and to facilitate knowledge creation.

2.2 Relationships between Information Management and Knowledge Management

The concept of Information Management and Knowledge Management is seen with little ambiguity especially in the context of the librarians' role in the library. However, some librarians are still inclined to use information and knowledge interchangeably. According to McKnight (2007) Knowledge Management is about people, how they create, share and use information, whereas Information Management is often associated with the information technology systems that help to create, store and share information. From a wider perspective and the authors' understanding the comparison and distinctions between these two ambiguous concepts can be summarize as:

2.2.1 Comparison between Information and Knowledge Management

- Information and Knowledge management are very important to the library and the librarians and a prerequisite that ensures effective service delivery to users.
- Both concepts are multidisciplinary in nature and are organized and disseminated using modern technology.
- Both Information and Knowledge Management are used to expand libraries role in administration and support services.
- Both Information and Knowledge Management have strategic goals, involve their users, and recognize technology application for effective user service delivery in the library.

2.2.2 Distinction between Information and Knowledge Management

Information Knowledge	Knowledge Management
Information Knowledge is more easily identified, organized and disseminated in the library	Knowledge Management identification is a complex activity both within and outside the library
IM emphasizes human involvement working with objects and depends on organizing, storing, retrieving and disseminating Information	KM emphasizes human involvement in capturing, sharing, learning and contextualizing Information
No analytical skill is required to gain information because it includes the analysis of only explicit knowledge	KM is complex that need analytical skills because of the presence of both tacit and explicit knowledge
Information is a flow of messages that can be disconnected from the bearer	Knowledge is created by that very flow of information anchored in the beliefs and is always connected to the bearer especially the tacit knowledge

3.0 Methodology

This study adopted a Descriptive Survey Design and the data gathered in the study was analyzed using both descriptive and inferential statistics. The descriptive statistics was used to analyze the research objectives while the inferential statistics of Linear Regression Analysis on SPSS 16.0 was used to analyze the hypothesis of the study. The choice of this design was adjudged appropriate because it involves collecting data on the existence of Knowledge Management practices and how they affect user service delivery in academic libraries in Nigeria. A closed-ended structured questionnaire containing 23 items was designed for data collection.

Professional Librarians of the six Federal University libraries in the North-Eastern states of Nigeria constitute the population of the study. The six federal university libraries were purposively sampled even though there are other state owned university libraries in the region, their mode of operation and management appears to be similar, for example they are regulated and funded by the government of Nigeria; as a result, they will have similar policy and program for resource management and development.

Table I

S/No	Name of University	Professional Librarians
1	Abubakar Tafawa Balewa University, Bauchi	26
2	Federal University Wukari, Taraba State	13
3	Federal University Kashere, Gombe State	6
4	Federal University Gashua, Yobe State	12
5	ModibboAdama University of Technology Yola	13
6	University of Maiduguri, Borno State	51
Total		121

Source: Academic Division of Each Institution (2017)

4.0 Data Analysis and Interpretations

4.1 Demographic Analysis

A total of 121 questionnaires were distributed to the respondents and the analysis revealed that 32 (26.4%) of the questionnaires were returned unfilled or missing while 89 (73.6%) questionnaires were returned and found useful which was used for the analysis in this study. Majority 51 (42.1%) of the valid respondents were male and female constitutes only 38 (31.4%) of the response rate. This is evidence that there are more male professional librarians in Academic Libraries than female librarians.

4.2 Research Objective Analysis

Research Objective One: the users were asked to rate their level of awareness and practice of KM and their responses were presented on table II below:

Table II

Level of Awareness and Practice of KM * Gender of Respondents Cross-tabulation					
		Gender of Respondents		Total and %	
		Male	Female		
Level of Awareness and Practice of KM in Academic Libraries	Not Applicable	0	8	8	9.0
	Low Extent	0	18	18	20.2
	Moderate Extent	8	12	20	22.5
	High Extent	43	0	43	48.3
Total		51	38	89	100

Table II above represent a crosstabulation analysis of the level of awareness and practice of Knowledge Management in academic libraries and gender response rate of the respondents. The research used crosstabulation to determine the level of awareness of KM between male and female professional librarians. 43 male respondents have high extent level of awareness and 8 respondents moderate while no male respondent has low level of awareness of Knowledge Management. Out of the 38-female response, 8 responses indicated that KM is not applicable to them, 18 responses have low extent level of awareness while only 12 responses have a moderate extent level of awareness. The percentage level of awareness shows that majority 43 (48%) of the respondents rated high extent level of awareness and practice of Knowledge Management in academic libraries, 20 (22.5%) rated it moderate extent while 18 (20.2%) rated it low extent. The analysis further revealed that only 8 (9.0%) responses rated that KM is not applicable to them in their libraries. This analysis revealed that Knowledge Management is widely practice in academic libraries and is evident that only less than 9% of the respondents rated that Knowledge Management is not applicable in the academic libraries but an overwhelming 91% admitted that Knowledge Management is visible and is being practiced in academic libraries.

Research Objective Two: The respondents were given a range of KM Technology tools as applicable to academic libraries. The responses are presented on table III below:

Table III

S/No	KM Technology Tools in Academic Libraries	Mean	Std. Deviation	Decision
2	Groupware technology that facilitate collaboration and sharing of library information	1.5393	.69177	Reject
3	Workflow tools that allow the representation of processes associated with the creation, use, and maintenance of library knowledge	1.5393	.69177	Reject
4	Content Management Systems that automate the process of creating web content and/or documents.	1.0000	.00000	Reject
5	Enterprise portal Web sites that aggregate information across the entire organization	3.0112	.46452	Accept
6	E-Learning that enables the library to create customized training and education software	3.7978	.40395	Accept
7	Tele-presence that enables individuals to have virtual "face-to-face" meetings	1.8315	.66120	Reject

From the analysis presented on table IV above, only two Knowledge Management Technology tools are applicable to academic libraries under study. Enterprise portal Web sites that aggregate information across the entire organization or for groups such as project teams and E-Learning that enables the library to create customized training and education software have mean marks of 3.01 and 3.80 respectively are accepted as Knowledge Management Technology Tools in academic libraries. Groupware technology that facilitate collaboration and sharing of library information and Workflow tools that allow the representation of processes associated with the creation, use and maintenance of library knowledge have 1.54 mean mark each are rejected as KM Technology Tools in academic libraries. While all the respondents rated Content Management Systems that automate the process of creating web content and/or documents not applicable KM technology tool in the libraries and Tele-presence that enables individuals to have virtual "face-to-face" meetings was also rated very low as a KM tool with mean marks of 1.83 and are therefore rejected as KM technologies in the libraries.

Research Objective Three: This objective sort to analyses the nature of the role of librarians in KM practices in academic libraries. In order to address this objective, the respondents were asked to rate the nature of their role and was presented on table IV below:

Table IV

S/No	Role the Librarian in KM practice	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Decision
8	The librarian regards knowledge sharing as important but hardly supports it	89	1.6292	.80315	Reject
9	The librarian is supportive in the beginning but has now lost interest in knowledge management practices	89	2.2135	.85907	Reject
10	Librarians in academic libraries does not play the knowledge pool approach that uses different channels to disseminate new knowledge and enhance the management of diversity and variation of library staff and users.	89	1.6292	.80315	Reject
11	Librarians manage information flow that is in the direction of top-down level in the library to accommodate effective user service delivery	89	3.5730	.67230	Accept
12	Dissemination of knowledge as an integral part of KM is adopted by professional librarians to share knowledge recourses and expertise.	89	3.1573	.86470	Accept
13	Librarians play the role of creativeness. But ideas among them to use initiatives to make decisions has to be with the university librarian's approval	89	3.1573	.86470	Accept
14	Librarians are not free to communicate their ideas to top library management and play less shared knowledge communication role	89	1.7528	1.16073	Reject
15	Librarians always achieve results in a non-conventional manner, probably because of the nature of flow of information within the library	89	3.4607	.65810	Accept
16	Librarians are allowed to bring initiatives even though the library's policies are well – defined	89	3.8652	.34348	Accept
17	Librarians are able to use search engines and find quality online resources. Play IT role	89	2.7303	1.04190	Accept
	Valid N (listwise)	89			

From the analysis on table IV above, item 8, 9 and 10 with mean marks of 1.63, 2.21 and 1.63 respectively are rejected base on the decision rule of the study. They are not roles of librarian in Km practices in the library. Also item 14 with mean mark 1.75 is rejected as the respondent are of the opinion that Professional Librarians play a communicative shared knowledge role to achieve effective user service delivery. All the remaining items

11, 12, 13, 15, 16 and 17 with mean marks of 3.53, 3.16, 3.16, 3.46, 3.87 and 2.73 are accepted as the roles of professional librarians in KM practice in academic libraries. This implies that KM is supportive and highly practiced by the professional librarians in academic libraries for effective user service delivery.

Research Objective Four: This is the dependent variable of the study where respondents rated the roles of Knowledge Management practices in enhancing effective user service delivery in academic libraries in Nigeria. The data obtained was analyzed and presented on table V below:

Table V

S/No	Benefits of KM practice in enhancing Effective User Service Delivery in Academic Libraries	N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Decision
18	KM practices lead to Knowledge Innovation Management that supports to create an effective management system for operation procedures of academic libraries such as Online – Real Reference services and tacit knowledge management	89	3.3258	.80869	Accept
19	The KM practices allow Librarian to have the ability to work with resources within different units and manage work effectively and efficiently with a lot of technical skills in the library.	89	2.7191	1.02235	Accept
20	Km practices provides ways for the library to be in position to map both internal and external knowledge that assist in increasing efficiency in user service delivery	89	3.6966	.64675	Accept
21	With Knowledge Management, libraries are transformed from traditionally try to be doing everything to everybody and tends to be very focused and selective in improving operations	89	2.7528	1.18974	Accept
22	KM practices provides ways of perceiving and reorganize the perception of superiors, equals and subordinates within the library in understanding and managing both tacit and explicit knowledge	89	3.6180	.76136	Accept
23	Recognizing how the various functions of the library depend on one another through having conceptual skills of knowledge management	89	2.0899	1.08335	Reject
24	KM practices provides a supervisory experience in understanding the values, personality, perception and attitudes of librarians and library patrons	89	3.0337	1.11242	Accept
25	KM practices provide a controlling role which consists of actions and decisions to ensure that the actual results are consistent with desired results	89	2.4607	1.15853	Reject
26	KM practices deal with new technology, generating new and shared knowledge without any geographical limitation	89	3.8539	.35517	Accept
27	Librarians play the role of managing knowledge as an asset to recognize the value of knowledge to the library	89	4.0000	.00000	Accept
	Valid N (listwise)	89			

From the analysis of the descriptive statistics presented on table V above, item 18 to 27 with mean marks of 3.33, 2.72, 3.70, 2.75, 3.62, 3.03, 3.85 and 4.00 respectively were all accepted as the benefits of Knowledge Management practices in enhancing user service delivery in academic libraries except item 23 and 25 with mean marks 2.09 and 2.46 respective was rejected by the respondents that recognizing the various functions of the library depending on one another and KM practices provide a controlling role which consists of actions and decisions to ensure that the actual results are consistent with desired results are among the benefits of KM practices in enhancing the effective user service delivery in academic libraries in Nigeria.

4.2 Research Hypothesis Analysis

This analysis is done on Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS) 16.0 version software. In order to understand the correlations between the independent variable (Nature of Role of Librarians in KM Practice) on the dependent variable (Benefits of KM Practice for Effective User Service Delivery) the researcher used the Linear Regression Analysis on SPSS to determine the relationships between the ordinate variables and present them on the tables below based on the hypothesis of the study.

H₀₁ The role of Librarians in Knowledge Management practice in academic libraries has no statistical significant correlation with the benefit of Knowledge Management practice for effective user service

delivery in academic library

Table VI

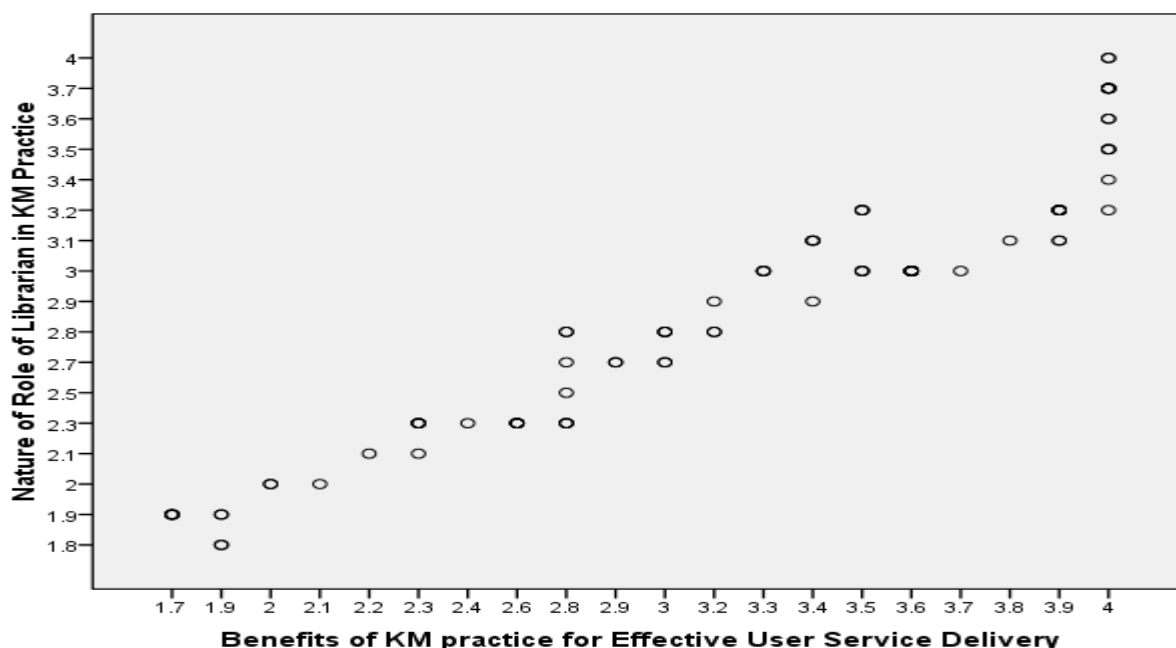
Model		Coefficients ^a			t	Sig.
		Un-standardized Coefficients		Standardized Coefficients		
		B	Std. Error	Beta		
1	(Constant)	-.380	.122		-3.108	.003
	Role of Librarian in KM Practice	1.251	.042	.953	29.484	.000

a. Dependent Variable: Benefits of KM Practice for Effective User Service Delivery

Table VI above represents the Linear Regression Analysis for the Role of Librarian in KM Practice and the Benefits of KM Practice for Effective User Service Delivery. The analysis revealed that the correlation is significant at 0.01 level of confidence and the correlation is positive with coefficient of **0.953**. This reveals a very strong significant relationship between the role of the librarian and KM practice for effective user service delivery. This means that increase in role of librarian in KM practice lead to more Enhanced benefits of KM practice for effective user service delivery.

If the P value significant level is < .05 we reject the Null Hypothesis. Therefore, according to this analysis the H_0 is rejected and the Alternative Hypothesis is accepted, because there is no evidence of lack of significant correlation between them. The analysis of the un-standardized coefficients in the 'B' column shows the effect in practical, for every increase in one point of the Role of Librarian in Knowledge Management Practice will increase by 1.251 in the Benefits of KM Practice for Effective User Service Delivery in the library this explore how strongly related the two variables are.

Fig. 1 below shows the direction of the slope of the scattered dots.



The direction of the slope show the level of the relationship. The dots are arranged in a single straight line running from lower left to upper right which is an indication of strongest correlation between the two variables.

5.0 Discussion of Major Findings

The methodology employed in this study was the Descriptive Survey Design which explores the level of practice of Knowledge Management by professional librarians and the benefits of KM practices for effective user service delivery in academic libraries in Nigeria.

Level of Awareness and Practice and Technology tools of Knowledge Management

The level of awareness analysis revealed Knowledge Management is widely practice in academic libraries and is evident that only less than 9% of the respondents indicated Knowledge Management is not applicable in academic libraries but an overwhelming 91% admitted that Knowledge Management is visible and is being practice in academic libraries. The analysis of the cross-tabulation revealed more than 57% of the respondents who rated awareness and practices of KM at high level are male professional librarians which is an indication that Knowledge

Management is practice more by male librarians than the female librarians. The study found out that only two Knowledge Management Technology tools are applicable to academic libraries under study which include Enterprise portal Web sites that aggregate information across the entire organization or for project teams (3.01 mean marks) and E-Learning that enables the library to create customized training and education software (3.80 mean marks) are accepted as Knowledge Management Technology Tools in academic libraries. Groupware technology (1.54), Workflow Tools (1.54), Content Management System (1.0) and Telepresence (1.83) are rejected as KM Technology Tools in academic libraries. This finding is supporting the findings of Roknuzzaman and Umemoto (2009) that academic librarians need to renovate the existing library environment and promote a knowledge-sharing culture by initiating management of best practices, change management, organizational learning, and use of appropriate knowledge-sharing technologies.

Role of Librarian in Knowledge Management Practices in Academic Libraries

The findings found out that librarians' regard knowledge sharing as important components in ensuring effective user service delivery and supported it. Information flow is in the direction of top-down level among professional librarians in the library (3.57), this limit effective practicing Knowledge Management in libraries, dissemination of knowledge as an integral part of KM is adopted by professional librarians to share knowledge recourses and expertise amongst themselves to use initiatives to make decisions are the major roles of Professional Librarians in Knowledge Management practices in academic libraries. Professional Librarians are free to communicate their ideas to the top library management has found not to be the nature of role of librarian in KM practices in academic libraries. The study found out that the libraries' policies are well defined as a result librarians achieve results in a non-conventional manner (3.46 mean marks). The findings of this study corroborate the findings of Nazim and Mukherjee (2011) where they establish the major tools of these Knowledge Management practices as professional education and training programs, communities of practice, information technology and knowledge sharing.

In summary, the major roles of the librarian in KM practice in academic libraries include the following: -

- i. The role of the Knowledge Pool Approach
- ii. The role of Dissemination of Shared Knowledge
- iii. The role of Creativeness – to bring out new initiatives
- iv. The role of IT specialist (dealing with new technologies)
- v. Communicative role but in non-conventional manner

Benefits of KM practice in enhancing Effective User Service Delivery in Academic Libraries

The major benefit of KM practice in enhancing effective user service delivery in academic libraries include KM practices lead to Knowledge Innovation Management that supports to create an effective management system for the operation procedures of academic libraries such as Online – Real Reference services and tacit knowledge management (3.33 mean mark) and dealing with new technology, generating new knowledge and sharing knowledge without any geographical limitation (3.85 mean mark). The findings of Xin Qu, (2011) also advocates that KM in University library services are important guarantees in improving the competitiveness of university libraries which will improve the services the library offers to the user.

Other benefits are KM practices is providing ways of perceiving and reorganize the perception of superiors, equals and subordinates within the library in understanding and managing both tacit and explicit knowledge (3.62 mean mark). But the study rejected that KM practices provide a controlling role consisting of actions and decisions to ensure that actual results are consistent with the desired results (2.46 mean marks) as the benefits of KM practice for effective user service delivery in academic libraries. These findings also corroborate with the studies of Sinha (2014) where he stated that the cardinal role of the professional librarian in Knowledge Management practice include librarian dealing with new technologies, generating new knowledge and sharing knowledge without any geographical limitation.

In summary, the major benefits of KM practices in enhancing effective user service delivery include the following: -

- i. KM practices enhances knowledge innovation and the management of tacit knowledge
- ii. It provides technical skills in managing resources that leads to a well-focused and objectively oriented academic library.
- iii. KM practices facilitate mapping and managing both internal and external knowledge of staff and users for the betterment of the library.
- iv. Providing supervisory experience to librarians assist in understanding the values and perceptions of staff and users through Knowledge Management Practices
- v. Dealing with technologies, KM provides means of sharing knowledge with colleagues and patrons devoid of geographical locations.

Inferential Statistics Findings

The broad hypothesis of the study was tested using Linear Regression Correlation Analysis. The hypothesis has a correlation of 0.953 and the R Squared value is 0.909 which means roles of librarians in KM practices in academic libraries account for about 90.9% influences on benefits of KM practices for effective user service delivery in

academic libraries, only less than 9% are accounted for other factors. This can be deduced that the independent variables (roles of librarians in KM practices) have very strong relationship with the dependent variable (benefits of KM practices for effective user service delivery).

In summary, the Role of Librarians in Knowledge Management practices in Academic Libraries in Nigeria have strong relationship with effective user service delivery. Therefore, librarians should acquire effective KM roles and practices to become relevant in the library in order to achieve the goals and objectives of academic libraries in user service delivery.

Conclusions and recommendations

Based on the findings of this study, it can be conclude that Knowledge Management has relatively high level of awareness, it is supportive and highly practiced by the professional librarians in academic libraries for effective user service delivery with only two Knowledge Management Technology tools are applicable to academic libraries under study which include Enterprise portal Web sites that aggregate information across the entire organization and E-Learning that enables the library to create customized training and education software.

The study also concludes that the role of professional librarian in KM practices include the role of Knowledge Pool Approach, Dissemination of Shared Knowledge, IT role and the role of Communication and Creativeness – to provide initiatives while KM enhances effective user service delivery in ways of enhances knowledge innovation management of tacit knowledge, provides technical skills and facilitate mapping and managing both internal and external knowledge of staff and users. There is a very strong correlation between the nature of roles of professional librarians in KM practices and the benefits of KM practices in enhancing effective user service delivery in academic libraries. Based on these findings the study recommends the following: -

1. Academic Libraries should have written Knowledge Management policies with strategic KM goals involving their users, and recognize technology as a functional tool.
2. Libraries in Nigeria should acquire more Knowledge Management technology tools such as Groupware, Content Management Systems and workflow technologies for effective application of KM in academic libraries.
3. Academic libraries should allow possible collaborative research with similar studies to understand the concept of Knowledge Management by different organizations for effective user service delivery.
4. Librarians should be oriented on the potentials of KM practices for effective user service delivery
5. An organizational culture need to be establish which will emphasizes cooperation, sharing, and innovation of knowledge management practices in order establish strong leadership and commitment for a shared vision by the library staff.

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