Knowledge Management as an Academic Discipline: An Assessment ⊗

Jyotshna Sahoo (Sambalpur University, India), Bharati Pati (Sambalpur University, India), and Basudev Mohanty (Indian Institute of Technology Bhubaneswar, India)

Cite Chapter ❯   Favorite ★

View Full Text HTML ❯

(/gateway/chapter/full-text-html/174326)

View Full Text PDF ❯

(/gateway/chapter/full-text-pdf/174326)

Abstract

The very purpose of the paper is to explore, assess and to determine the elements of knowledge management as an academic discipline. At the beginning, the paper explains the concepts of knowledge, knowledge management and the characteristics of an academic discipline. A structured framework with six criteria suggested by Kuhn (1996) outlining an academic discipline has been applied to evaluate and to put forward a comprehensive understanding Knowledge Management (KM) as an academic discipline. In order to gather relevant data as per the criteria, many sources have been relied upon. Findings reveal that KM meets and supports all the laid down criteria as it has its own body of knowledge, specialized journals, academic curricula, professional societies and can be considered as a progressive academic discipline and scholarly field of study with its own tradition and history.

Request access from your librarian to read this chapter's full text.

Full Text Preview

Introduction

Since the dawn of human civilization, knowledge has been recognized as a prime resource for the advancement of the human society. There is no single and precise definition of knowledge which is universally acceptable to all, as a result of which scholars who are interested in the study of knowledge have given their own definitions to suit their lines of studies. In simple words, what is known to the society and is held in its collective memory is knowledge. In other words, the society is the preserver and conserver of knowledge. Daniel Bell, the Professor of Sociology of Harvard University who opined 'knowledge' as the moving force of the Post-industrial Society, has given a comprehensive definition of knowledge as: "… an organized set of statement of fact or ideas, presenting a reasoned judgment or an experimental result, which is transmitted to others through some communication medium in some systematic form. Knowledge consists of new judgments (Research and scholarship) or presentation of older judgments as exemplified in text books, teaching and learning and collected as library and archival material." Hence, it can be interpreted that, knowledge is a highly organized intellectual product of humans that includes personal experience, skills, understanding of the different contexts in which human beings operate their activities. In other words it can be conceptualized as meaningful and value added information which has been filtered by human minds. According to Grover and Davenport (2001), "When data, information and knowledge are arranged in a single continuum, knowledge has the highest value, the greatest relevance to decisions and actions, the greatest dependence on context, and requires maximum amount of human involvement". Knowledge is also typically classified as either tacit or explicit. (Alavi & Leidner, 2001; Nonaka & Takeuchi, 1995; Polanyi, 1997). Tacit knowledge is personal knowledge that may or may not be expressed by an individual. In contrast, explicit knowledge is that which has been articulated, codified and formalized in some electronic or physical form. Explicit knowledge is that which is expressed to others, orally or in a recorded form. However tacit knowledge is as important as explicit knowledge. In the new discipline of Knowledge Management, it is this tacit knowledge, which is valued very highly, constituting the real strength of an organization. It is this knowledge of individuals that need to be extracted by various means and methods, to build up the organizational strength. Whether tacit or explicit, knowledge emerges as a primary strategic resource for all kinds of societal development. Hence, it is imperative for the organizations to concentrate on maintaining and developing the knowledge capital that they possess in order to provide innovative service, to obtain competitive advantage and to achieve success. Managing this knowledge is a difficult task and knowledge management is all about managing organization's knowledge effectively.

Knowledge Management (KM) is about applying the collective knowledge of the entire workforce/team to achieve specific organizational/institutional goals. It is about ensuring that people have the knowledge they need, when they need and where they need it – the right knowledge, at the right time, in the right place. It is a form of expertise-centred management which draws out tacit knowledge and making it accessible for specific purposes to improve the performance of organizations. Scholars opine that though KM has a relatively short history to its current growth and development, it is still a turbulent and "noisy" field which is used to refer many things. A large number of working definitions of knowledge management is avaliable in the literature and around companies worldwide (Kakabadse, Kakabadse & Kouzmin, 2003). Due to the relative infancy of this emerging field, various definitions and frameworks of knowledge management exist which have resulted in a "less coherent and more fragmented" view of this domain (He, Lee & Hsu, 2003).

Continue Reading (/gateway/chapter/full-text-html/174326)

References

Follow Reference   Alavi M. Leidner D. E. (2001). Review: Knowledge management and knowledge arrangement systems: Conceptual foundations and research issues.Management Information Systems Quarterly, 25(1), 107–136. 10.2307/3250961

Follow Reference   January 28). Discussion of facilities management as an academic discipline. Facilities, 32(1/2), 67–79?> Antje J. Olsson N. (2014). Discussion of facilities management as an academic discipline.Facilities, 32(1/2), 67–79. 10.1108/F-10-2012-0078

Follow Reference   Brian Squire P. D. (2006). Supply chain management: Theory and practice – the emergence of an academic discipline.International Journal of Operations & Production Management, 26(7), 697–702. 10.1108/01443570610672194

Follow Reference   De Burgh H. (2003). Skills are not enough: The case for journalism as an academic discipline.Journalism, 4(1), 95–112. 10.1177/1464884903004001484

Follow Reference   Fellingham J. C. (2007). Is Accounting an Academic Discipline?Accounting Horizons, 21(2), 159–163. 10.2308/acch.2007.21.2.159

Granite State College editorial team, Library & Research Commons. (n.d.). Retrieved October 22, 2015, from http://libguides.granite.edu/libresearch (http://libguides.granite.edu/libresearch)

Follow Reference   Grossman M. (2007). The emerging academic discipline of knowledge management.Journal of Information Systems Education, 18(1), 31–38.

Follow Reference   Grover V. Davenport T. H. (2001). General perspectives on knowledge management: Fostering a research agenda. Journal of Management Information Systems, 18(1), 5–21.

He, J., Lee, J. N., & Hsu, C. (2003). *The Evolution of Knowledge Management: Current and Future Application in China.* Paper presented at the Pacific Asia Conference on Information Systems, Adelaide, Australia.

Follow Reference   Holand G. A. (2008). Information Science: An interdisciplinary effort.Journal of Ocumentation, 64(1), 7–23. 10.1108/00220410810844132

Follow Reference   Jasimuddin S. M. (2006). Disciplinary roots of knowledge management: A theoretical review.The International Journal of Organizational Analysis, 14(2), 171–180. 10.1108/10553180610742782

Follow Reference   Kakabadse N. K. Kakabadse A. Kouzmin A. (2003). Reviewing the knowledge management literature: Towards a taxonomy.Journal of Knowledge Management, 7(4), 75–91. 10.1108/13673270310492967

Follow Reference   Kiwuwa Lugya F. (2014). What counts as a science and discipline in library and information science?Library Review, 63(1/2), 138–155. 10.1108/LR-08-2013-0103

Krishnan, A. (2009). *What are Academic Disciplines?* NCRM Working Paper Series, 3/9.

Follow Reference   McAlpine S. (2014). Concept Mapping Model, Academic Disciplines and Interdisciplinarity.International Journal of Interdisciplinary Studies, 2(1), 7–12.

Murray, J. (Eds.). (n.d.). *Oxford English Dictionary*. Retrieved October 22, 2015, from http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/discipline (http://www.oxforddictionaries.com/definition/english/discipline)

Networked Digital Library of Theses and Dissertations. (n.d.). Retrieved October 2, 2015, from http://www.ndltd.org/resources/find-etds (http://www.ndltd.org/resources/find-etds)

Follow Reference   Nonaka I. Takeuchi H. (1995). The knowledge-creating company: How Japanese companies create the Dynamics of Innovation. New York: Oxford University Press.

Follow Reference   Polanyi M. (1997). The Tacit Dimension. Knowledge in Organisations. Boston, MA: Butterworth-Heinmann.

Follow Reference   Sagsan M. (2009). Knowledge Management Discipline: Test for an Undergraduate Program in Turkey.Electronic Journal of Knowledge Management, 7(5), 627–636.

Scopus Database. (n.d.). Retrieved October 12, 2015, from http://www.scopus.com/ (http://www.scopus.com/)

Follow Reference

Serenko A. Bontis N. (2013). The intellectual core and impact of the knowledge management academic discipline.Journal of Knowledge Management, 17(1), 137–155. 10.1108/13673271311300840

Follow Reference

Shariq S. Z. (1997). Knowledge Management: An Emerging Discipline.Journal of Knowledge Management, 1(1), 75–82. 10.1108/EUM0000000004582

Shodhganga. (n.d.). Retrieved October 3, 2015, from http://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/ (http://shodhganga.inflibnet.ac.in/)

Follow Reference

Singh M. (2012). A Framework for Teaching Knowledge Management as a College Course.International Journal of Humanities and Social Science, 2(6), 193–203.

Web of Science Database. (n.d.). Retrieved October 15, 2015, from https://www.webofknowledge.com (https://www.webofknowledge.com)

Request Access

You do not own this content. Please login to recommend this title to your institution's librarian or purchase it from the IGI Global bookstore (/chapter/knowledge-management-as-an-academic-discipline/174326).

Username or email:

Password:

Log In >

Forgot individual login password? (/gateway/login/reset-password/)

Create individual account (/gateway/login/create-account/)

Research Tools

Database Search (/gateway/) | Help (/gateway/help/) | User Guide (/gateway/user-guide/) | Advisory Board (/gateway/advisory-board/)

User Resources

Librarians (/gateway/librarians/) | Researchers (/gateway/researchers/) | Authors (/gateway/authors/)

Librarian Tools

COUNTER Reports (/gateway/librarian-tools/counter-reports/) | Persistent URLs (/gateway/librarian-tools/persistent-urls/) | MARC Records (/gateway/librarian-tools/marc-records/) | Institution Holdings (/gateway/librarian-tools/institution-holdings/) | Institution Settings (/gateway/librarian-tools/institution-settings/)

Librarian Resources

Training (/gateway/librarian-corner/training/) | Title Lists (/gateway/librarian-corner/title-lists/) | Licensing and Consortium Information (/gateway/librarian-corner/licensing-and-consortium-information/) | Promotions (/gateway/librarian-corner/promotions/) | Online Symposium Series (/gateway/librarian-corner/online-symposium-series/)

Policies

Terms and Conditions (/gateway/terms-and-conditions/)

(http://www.facebook.com/pages/IGI-

Global/138206739534176?ref=sgm)

(http://twitter.com/igiglobal)
(https://www.linkedin.com/company/igiglobal)

(http://www.world-forgotten-
children.org)

(https://publicationethics.org/category/publisher/igi-
global)