

Perception of Knowledge Management among Academic Libraries Employee' in Western Province Universities, Saudi Arabia

Jumaan Abdulqader Alzahrani*

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Abstract

The current study aimed to find out the perception of academic libraries employee' in Western province Universities, Saudi Arabia about Knowledge Management and its integration into their job in the library practices.

The study conducted over survey by using an electronic survey. A well-structured open-ended and closed questionnaire distributed into 42 academic libraries employee'. The results of the study show that academic libraries employee' attitudes about Knowledge management diverse and their perceptive of Knowledge management concepts also varied from person to person. The majority of them were of the view that Knowledge management delivers huge opportunities for academic libraries employee'. The study shows an overview of the perception of knowledge management among academic libraries employee', and approved that knowledge management skills should pass on among academic libraries employee', so that they can expand their understanding, adjust their long-lived plans, and to administrate a rounded way to design of knowledge management system and libraries field practices.

Keywords: Knowledge Management Library practices, Academic libraries employee' Perception, Western province universities, Saudi Arabia.

Literature review

Commences of the Knowledge Management' concept have been used for more than thirty years, when it used in the business field. Business domain documented the importance of knowledge in the worldwide economy of the knowledge age. In the new knowledge economy, the growth of important and strategic knowledge and its endless renewal allow commercial area to receive high incomes. Despite a link between knowledge management and information management, some scientist attempted to distinguish knowledge management from teaching institutions and information management (Bedford, 2013). According to Girard “Knowledge Management is the management process of creating, sharing and using organizational information and knowledge” (Girard,

2015). According to Suravee knowledge management can convert institutions into active learning institutions intended at stratify knowledge-based activities with institutional goals (Suravee & Michael, 2015). The utilizations of knowledge management have now attained to other fields, including Governmental units, Research and Development section (Mohapatra, Agrawal, & Satpathy, 2016). Knowledge management is a group of procedures that rule the making, broadcasting, and use of knowledge in an organization (Abu Bakar, Yusof, Tufail, & Virgiyanti, 2016). Regarding the knowledge management effectiveness, the factors produce high performance are knowledge management leadership, Processes, People, knowledge management Outcomes. (Abu Naser, Al Shobaki, & Abu Amuna, 2016). There is significant relationship between knowledge management and staff member's authorization knowledge management divine the aspects of employee empowerment in institutions of higher education (Hasani & Sheikhesmaeili, 2016). to the International competition and fast changes in technology demand more innovation depends on developing the skills of researchers and providing them with knowledge management support that accelerates (Beyerlein, et al., 2017). Masa'deh said The essential findings were linked to supported the hypotheses that were related to examine if there were relationships between the Knowledge management, represented by replacement measures, namely, knowledge identification, knowledge creation, knowledge collection, knowledge organizing, knowledge storage, knowledge dissemination and knowledge application (Masa'deh, Shannak, Maqableh, & Tarhini, 2017). The recognize usefulness is considerably connected with the assumption for knowledge creation and discovery, storage, and sharing. Moreover, the expectations for knowledge storage and sharing have a relationship with the perceived usefulness. Furthermore, innovativeness, training and education are connecting with the ease of use perceptions. The study suggested that educational institutions may encourage adoption of cloud computing in education by enlarge the awareness of knowledge management practices (Arpaci, 2017). Nevertheless, implicit knowledge, establish in minds of persons with a complete knowledge of rules and regulations, work procedures (Alias, Mansor, Rahman, Ahmad, & Samsudin, 2018). Generality of the authors suggest knowledge management as a paradoxical expression (Carlos & Oscar, 2018), and some of the academics perceives it as a technique of management. It contains the managing of obvious knowledge and sharing of implicit knowledge. In library, clear knowledge shaped in the organization, for example meetings, dissertations, notes' rules, reports, it can also achieved from external sources, such as articles, databases, government information, books. Implicit and explicit knowledge, both considered as the very significant sources of knowledge of library, the administration of which ought to be finished with most extreme consideration (Larkey, 2019). Some of academic libraries employee' notice

knowledge management differently, and the current literature proposes that there is no worldwide agreement of in what way and to what level knowledge management linked to information science. Regarding There are problems to knowledge management such as a shortage of policies, funding and time for research, reward mechanisms, frequent leadership changes, resources, data, a lack of a knowledge sharing culture and research repositories.

Research Objectives

The purpose of this study is to evaluate the perception of academic libraries employee' towards the Knowledge Management, and its applications in the growth and progress of library field. The following are the main objectives of this study:

1. Investigate the perception of academic libraries employee' of Western province Universities, Saudi Arabia towards Knowledge Management.
2. To know the academic libraries employee' views on Knowledge Management.
3. To recognize the views of academic libraries employee' on Information Management is just another side of Knowledge Management.
4. To test the chances and barriers for academic libraries employee' as shown from Knowledge Management.

Research Methodology

To find out the perception of knowledge management from the viewpoints of academic libraries employee' an electronic questionnaire was designed for data collection purpose. The electronic questionnaire included 12 statements to be measured on Likert scale (1- Strongly Disagree; 5- Strongly Agree).

Sample and Population

Representative population for current study was academic libraries employee' working in western province Universities in Saudi Arabia.

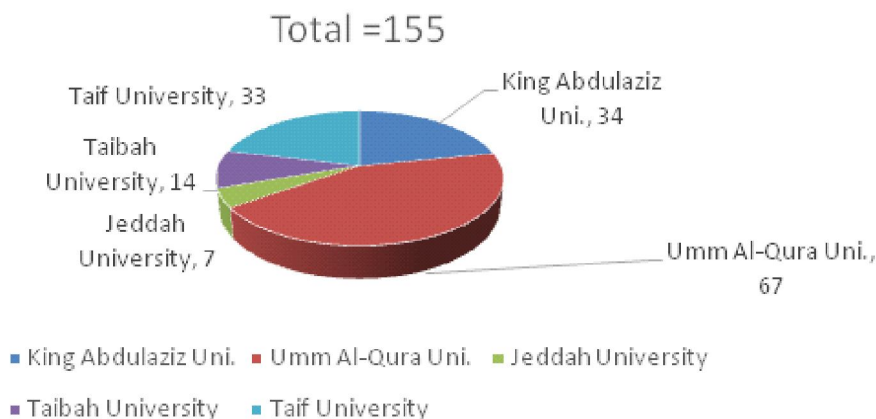
The random sampling method was applied to identify the academic libraries employee' with the following standard as:

- Those western province Universities having library website.
- Those departments, which have mention e-mail ID of academic libraries employee' in their websites.

There are total Three Universities in the western of Saudi Arabia, which are King Abdulaziz University, Umm Al-Qura University, Jeddah University, and Taif University.

Table 1: Total of population.

No	University	Male	%	Female	%	Total	%
1	King Abdulaziz Uni.	30	19.35%	4	2.58%	34	21.94%
2	Umm Al-Qura Uni.	37	23.87%	30	19.35%	67	43.23%
3	Jeddah University	7	4.52%	0	0%	7	4.52%
4	Taibah University	10	6.45%	4	2.58%	14	9.02%
5	Taif University	16	10.33%	17	10.97%	33	21.29%
Total		100	64.52%	55	35.48%	155	100%

**Figure 1:** Total of population.

The entire Academic libraries employee' were considered for the study to get most accuracy in the results. So, the sampling method was used, as there was no selection of sample as the entire population was included in the study. As table 1 and (fig1) above, there are 155 employee' working in academic libraries at western province of Saudi Arabia were contacted to be a part in the study during e-mail. Information about the Western Universities was collected from the Universities websites.

Institutional websites show towards contacts of Academic libraries employee' working in those Universities. 83 out of 155, were responded to the survey after getting email reminders and visit.

Results and Discussions

The data which were collected from the academic staff of western province Universities of Saudi Arabia through an electronic questionnaire, have been organized, analyzed and interpreted by using tables of percentages. Regarding of the responses received through electronic questionnaires, the data were analyzed and interpreted as following:

Background of Respondents (n=83)

1. Gender of respondents:

Table 2: Gender of respondents.

No	University	Male	%	Female	%	Total	%
1	King Abdulaziz Uni.	16	19.28%	2	2.41%	18	21.69%
2	Umm Al-Qura Uni.	25	30.12%	14	16.87%	39	46.99%
3	Jeddah University	5	6.02%	0	0%	5	6.02%
4	Taibah University	4	4.82%	2	2.41%	6	7.23%
5	Taif University	9	10.84%	6	7.23%	15	18.07%
Total		59	71.08%	24	28.92%	83	100%

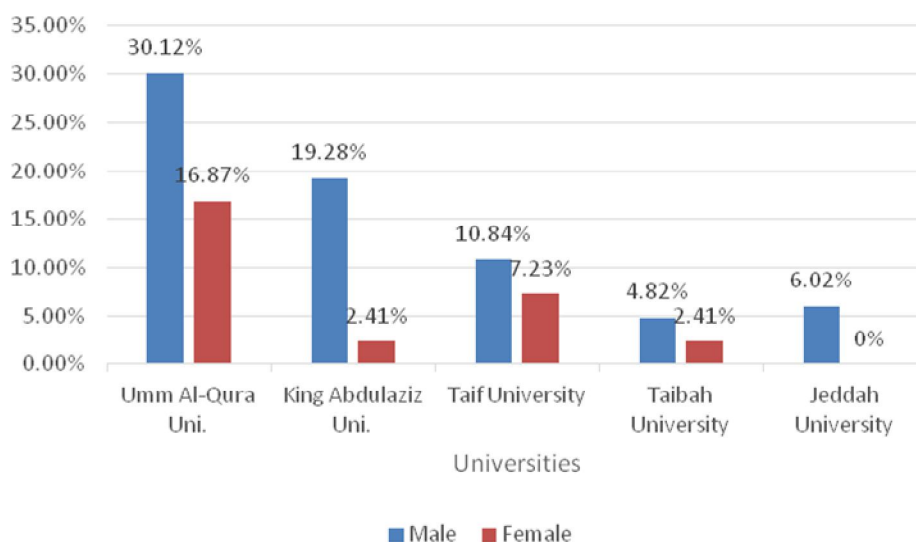


Figure 2: Gender of respondents.

As seen at table 2 and (fig2) above, most of the respondents (68.42%) are male and (31.58%) are female, which is normal male academic staff and availability to access male academic staff dominate thought as the profession, while it's prohibited to meet females. In relation to educational background, all of population have bachelor degree at least where chosen for current study.

2. Awareness of employee about Knowledge Management

In order to know the realization of employee about knowledge management, if they are aware about knowledge management or not, because current study discuss the perception of employee about knowledge management.

Table 3: Awareness of employee about Knowledge Management.

Awareness	respondents	%
Yes	83	100%
No	0	0%

Results in table 3 above show that all respondents answer the question “do you know about knowledge management” ‘yes’ which means they are aware about the concept of knowledge management.

3. Knowledge Management definitions' as the employee preferred.

This study has selected a many of definitions of Knowledge management. Respondents were required to choose that definition which is suitable for them.

Table 4: Knowledge Management definitions' as the employee preferred.

No	Definitions of Knowledge management	Respondents	%
1	The establishment and management of an environment that support knowledge to be generated, participated and learned, improved, organized, for the advantage of the organization and its customers.	32	38.55%
2	The gain, distribution and use of knowledge in the organization, including learning procedure and management information systems.	31	37.35%
3	The process of taking value, knowledge and realizing of organization information using information technology systems for maintain, reuse and distribute that knowledge.	13	15.66%
4	The ability of an organization to create new knowledge, expand it and shape it in products, services and systems.	7	8.44%

Table 4 above, describe the percentage of the appropriate definition of the knowledge management by academic libraries employees. (75.90%) of respondents chose two definitions of knowledge management as most appropriate definition (1) and (2) respectively. (15.66%) of respondents chose definition (3) as most appropriate and only 8.44% of respondents marked fourth definition (4) as the most preferred definition among the others.

4. Perception of academic libraries employees about Knowledge Management

Academic libraries employees were asked to specify how much they disagree and agree about several statements on Likert scale. The statements were dependent on the previous literature.

Table 5: Perceptions of Academic libraries employees, ratings on Likert scale.

Perceptions about Knowledge Management	Respondents ratings				
	Strongly disagree	disagree	Don't Know	agree	Strongly agree
1 Knowledge management is another management trend such as quality management.	13 (15.66%)	19 (22.89%)	0	43 (51.81%)	8 (9.64%)
2 knowledge management is a new expression for what academic libraries employees have evermore done	5 (6.02%)	15 (18.07)	0	41 (49.40%)	22 (26.51%)
3 It is very difficult to tell the variation between Information Management and Knowledge Management	13 (15.66%)	22 (26.51%)	12 (14.46%)	36 (43.37)	0
4 knowledge management can assist make academic libraries more connected to their principle organization and their user	4 (4.82%)	0	0	38 (45.78%)	41 (49.40%)
5 Information Management is another part of knowledge management	4 (4.82%)	18 (21.69%)	7 (8.43%)	39 (46.99%)	15 (18.07%)
6 Knowledge management is a warning to the situation and future of the academic libraries' employees	11 (13.25%)	47 (56.63%)	8 (9.64%)	17 (20.48%)	0
7 Knowledge management has raised job opportunities for academic libraries employees	0	9 (10.84%)	7 (8.43%)	39 (46.99%)	28 (33.74%)
8 Knowledge management can persuade academic libraries employees to obtain new skills	0	0	7 (8.43%)	52 (62.65%)	24 (28.92%)
9 academic libraries employees should concentrate on their own Competencies and disregard Knowledge management	8 (9.64%)	13 (15.66%)	12 (14.46%)	36 (43.37)	14 (16.87%)
10 Knowledge management can participate to an improvement in the future chances of libraries	0	0	12 (14.46%)	49 (59.04)	22 (26.51%)
11 Knowledge management can support to enhance cooperation at different sections of the library	0	13 (15.66%)	7 (8.43%)	47 (56.63%)	16 (19.28%)
12 academic libraries employees' organizations should make the upgrading of Knowledge management a priority	0	12 (14.46%)	12 (14.46%)	47 (56.63%)	12 (14.46%)

1. Knowledge management is another management trend such as quality management

It is clear from the data analysis that majority of the respondents believe that Knowledge management is another concept like quality management.

As shown in table (5) above, the majority of respondents (61.45%) agreed (combining agree and strongly agree) with the statement that Knowledge management is another management type such as quality management, while (38.55%) of respondents disagreed and some of them are strongly disagree (15.66%) with the idea. Nobody has chosen for the (Don't Know) possibility.

2. Knowledge management is a new expression for what academic libraries employees have evermore done

As shown in table (5) above, majority of the respondents (75.91%) agreed with the statement, (combining agree and strongly agree) that knowledge management is a new expression for what academic libraries employees have evermore done. While (24.09%) of respondents are disagreed with the statement. From the data analysis, It is understood that majority of the respondents perceives knowledge management as a new term for what academic libraries employees have always done.

3. It is very difficult to tell the variation between Information Management and Knowledge Management

As shown in table (5) above, (42.17%) disagreed (combining strongly disagree and disagree) with the statement 3 as indicated. However, (43.37%) of respondents agreed with the idea. Only (14.46%) of respondents were selected for the "Don't Know" option. It is apparent from the data analysis that there is a difference in the views of the respondents about the difference between information management and knowledge management. They were unable to observe the difference between information management and knowledge management. Some important variances between knowledge management and information management are:

- Dissimilar in knowledge management, knowledge creation and knowledge sharing in information management given less importance (Girard, 2015).
- Various information management, knowledge management deals with unarticulated/tacit knowledge (Masa'deh, Shannak, Maqableh, & Tarhini, 2017).
- Knowledge management deals with people; information management deals with objects (Bedford, 2013).

4. Knowledge management can assist make academic libraries more connected to their principle organization and their user

As table 5 above shown, the majority of respondents (95.18%) were agreed (combining agree and strongly agree) with the statement that knowledge management can help make libraries more relevant to their main institution and their employee as shown in Table III. Only 6.25 percent of respondents strongly disagreed with the statement. As cleared from the analysis that majority of library professionals sees benefits in knowledge management for the library and information science profession. the final objective of knowledge management within libraries is to combine the obtainable knowledge that might help academic librarians to implement their works more efficiently and successfully (Maponya, 2004).

5. Information Management is another part of knowledge management

In answer to the term Information Management is simply another side of knowledge management. A total of 62.5% of respondents agreeing (combining agree and strongly agree) that information management is only other aspect of knowledge management. Moreover, 25 percent of respondents disagreed and 6.25 percent of respondents strongly disagreed with the statement. Only 6.25 percent of respondents choose “Don’t know” option. From the analysis, we can conclude that most of the respondents count that information management is merely another aspect of knowledge management.

6. Knowledge management is a warning to the situation and future of the academic libraries' employees

A total of 75 percent of respondents disagreed (combining strongly disagree and disagree) with the statement that knowledge management is a threat to the status and future of the library and information science profession as shown in Table III. Only 18.75 percent of respondents agreed with the notion and 6.25 percent of respondents choose “Don’t Know” option. It is revealed after the analysis of data majority of library professionals strike down that knowledge management is a threat to the status and future of the library and information science profession.

7. Knowledge management has raised job opportunities for academic libraries employees

It appears that 81.25 of the respondents (integrated agree and strongly agree) perceived that knowledge management has increased job opportunities for library and information science professionals as shown in Table III. Only 12.5 percent of respondents disagreed and 6.25 percent respondents opted for “Don’t Know” option. Large majorities of the respondent strongly believe that

knowledge management has increased job opportunities for library and information science professionals.

8. Knowledge management can persuade academic libraries employees to obtain new skills

in response to the statement knowledge management can encourage library and information science professionals to gain new skills a total 93.75 percent of respondents agreed (combining agree and strongly agree) that knowledge management can encourage library and information science professionals to gain new skills as displayed in Table III. Only 6.25% of respondents choose for “Don’t Know” option, however no respondents disagreed with the thought. From the analysis, it is clear that library professionals think that knowledge management can encourage library and information science professionals to gain new skills.

9. Academic libraries employees should concentrate on their own Competencies and disregard Knowledge management

As demonstrated in Table III, in response to the statement library and information science professionals should focus on their own Competencies and ignore knowledge management, 37.5 percent of respondents agreed and 12.5 percent respondents strongly agreed that library and information science professionals should focus on their own Competencies and ignore knowledge management. However, a total 37.5 percent of respondents disagreed (combining disagree and strongly disagree) with the statement. Only 12.5 percent of respondents chose don’t know option. there are variations in the views of library and information science professionals. approximately half of the respondents perceived that library professionals should focus on their own Competencies and. ignore knowledge management.

10. Knowledge management can participate to an improvement in the future chances of libraries

It is interesting that a total of 87.50 percent of respondents agreed (combining agree and strongly agree) statement knowledge management can contribute in the future prospects of libraries as shown in Table III. Merely 12.5 percent respondents opted for the “Don’t Know”.

From the analysis, it is found that most of the respondents see knowledge management can contribute to an in the future prospects of libraries.

11. Knowledge management can support to enhance cooperation at different sections of the library

A total of 68.75 percent of the respondents perceived that knowledge management can help to improve cooperation in different section of the library as present in Table III. Only 25 percent of respondents disagreed with the statement and 6.25 percent of respondents choose “Don’t Know” option. It is obviously from the data analysis most of the respondents approve that knowledge management can assist to develop cooperation within different part of the library.

12. Academic libraries employees' organizations should make the upgrading of Knowledge management a priority

A total of 75 percent of respondents agreed with the statement that library and information science professional bodies should make the promotion of knowledge management a priority, as demonstrated in Table III. Only 12.5 percent of respondents chose the “Don’t Know” option. It is observed from the enquiry majority of the library professionals think that library and information science professional bodies should make the promotion of knowledge management a priority.

Major Findings of the Study

Following are the major findings of the study, carried out on the library and information science professionals to discover their perception related to the Knowledge Management.

- The study reveals that all the library and information science professionals are informative with the concepts of knowledge management.
- There is an asunder diversification among the library professionals in perceiving knowledge management and majority of them sees knowledge management as “the acquisition, sharing and use of knowledge within institution, including studying processes and administration information systems”. majority of library and information science professionals are positively inclined towards knowledge management and incorporation of knowledge management practices in libraries can conglomerate libraries and their Parent organization.
- most of respondents believe that knowledge management is another management such as like total quality management.
- Most of the librarians strongly believe that knowledge management offers enormous opportunities for library and information science professionals, and it encourages library and information science professional to gain new skills.

- For most of librarians, information management is another stage of knowledge management. knowledge management is commonly used as an information management exercise of the library.
- the majority understand that knowledge management is not a barrier to the status and future of libraries, but it can improve the future of libraries and conjoin the different sections in the library.

Suggestions and Recommendations

according to data analysis and findings, following recommendations and suggestions are listed below:

- The Saudi ministry of education may take steps to frame knowledge management policies for university libraries in the country.
- Regular training programs/workshops or similar activities on knowledge management may be organized by libraries to make awareness about knowledge management practices on regular intervals of time.
- There must be proper ICT equipment's within the library system so that practices of knowledge management can be exploits in a better way.
- Library employee should be qualified to hold knowledge management practices at whole case and there should be continued training programs for the library personnel.
- To encourage knowledge management practices within the central university libraries, there must be proper incentives should pay for the librarians to create Knowledge sharing culture.

Conclusion

The aim of the study was to explore the perception of libraries employee' in Western province Universities about knowledge management. The outcome of the research show that majority of the library professionals are having knowledge about the concept of knowledge management. The perceptions of knowledge management among library and information science professionals vary from person to person, but they all are positively inclined towards knowledge management. the majority of the respondent's views that knowledge management offers potential opportunities for library and information science professionals and it can enhance the status of library and information science professionals within the parent organization. In order to better exploit the knowledge management practices within the library system, there must be training programs organized by the librarian related to knowledge management to assist the library personnel. The limitation of the current study is that it was conducted only in Western province Universities in Saudi Arabia. To generalize the impact of the findings, it is recommended that this study may replicate in all

Saudi state Universities, thus gaining a more thorough perception of Knowledge management among library and information science community.

تصوّر إدارة المعرفة لدى موظفي المكتبات الأكاديمية في جامعات المنطقة الغربية بالمملكة العربية السعودية

جمعان عبد القادر الزهراني، قسم علم المعلومات، جامعة أمّ القرى، المملكة العربية
السعودية.

ملخص

هدفت الدراسة الحالية إلى معرفة تصور موظفي المكتبات الأكاديمية في جامعات المنطقة الغربية بالمملكة العربية السعودية لإدارة المعرفة وإمكانية دمجها في ممارسة أعمالهم.

أجريت الدراسة باستخدام منهج المسح، وذلك من خلال توزيع استبانة إلكترونية بأسئلة مغلقة ومفتوحة النهايات، حيث وزعت على 42 من موظفي المكتبات الأكاديمية. وقد أظهرت نتائج الدراسة أن اتجاهات موظفي المكتبات الأكاديمية حول إدارة المعرفة متنوعة، كما أن إدراكهم لمفاهيم إدارة المعرفة يختلف أيضاً من شخص إلى آخر، حيث وجد أن معظمهم يرون أن إدارة المعرفة توفر فرصاً كبيرة لهم، كما أظهرت الدراسة لمحة عامة عن تصور إدارة المعرفة لديهم، وأكدت النتائج أن مهارات إدارة المعرفة يجب أن يتم تداولها بين موظفي المكتبات الأكاديمية، حتى يتمكنوا من توسيع مداركهم، وتعديل خططهم الطويلة الأمد، وإدارة خطط مستمرة لتصميم نظام إدارة المعرفة والممارسات الميدانية للمكتبات الأكاديمية.

الكلمات المفتاحية: ممارسات إدارة المعرفة بالمكتبة، تصور موظف المكتبات الأكاديمية، جامعات المنطقة الغربية، المملكة العربية السعودية.

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