

Knowledge Capturing and Service Delivery in Public Polytechnic Libraries in South-South, Nigeria

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INTRODUCTION

Knowledge capturing is the identification and acquisition of existing knowledge. Capturing involves collecting documents, presentations, spreadsheets, records, processes, software source, images, audio, video, and other files which can be used for innovation, reuse, and learning (Garfield, 2016). According to Janus (2016), knowledge capturing involves the process of converting the knowledge or experience that resides in the mind of an individual into an explicit representation, whether in print, electronic, or multimedia form. Libraries capture the tacit knowledge within the organisation and those outside the organisation to organize, store and disseminate them with the intention of satisfying the information needs of their potential users. Capturing knowledge focuses on collecting all the relevant documents and organizing them in a meaningful manner to make it useful to its users. However, many aspects of knowledge are not recorded in formal documents; hence capturing knowledge may require more proactive methods such as conducting interviews with selected individuals or groups. The library is a client centered organization; hence every practice is tailored toward providing services that will meet users' satisfaction and users will be satisfied if they are recipients of quality service delivery.

Service delivery entails the provision of goods and services from the provider to a client, customer or users. It is a component of business that defines the interaction between providers and clients where the provider offers a service, whether that be information or a task, and the client either finds value or loses value as a result (Staff, 2020). Effective service delivery implies the provision of resources and services, which satisfy users' expectations and perceptions. It is often times considered as quality service delivery or good service delivery. It is when the provider of service provides the client(s) with an increase in value, a better service or services that meets the users/clients' satisfaction. Service delivery exists in various profession and organization and the form may differ based on the services that the organization provides. The concept of service delivery in libraries entails the act of providing library users with the necessary professional assistance/services required to meet their information needs (Igbinovia, 2022). Most libraries in advanced countries are acquainted with this idea, thus they strive to be more flexible and stimulate innovation to deliver quality services. Consequently, service delivery has always been central to every library's operation as the sustainability of libraries is to a significant measure dependent on the quality of service they deliver to their clients (Igbinovia, 2022, Gyau, et al, 2021).

Statement of the Problem

Knowledge capturing is one of the indices of knowledge management. The concept is fast gaining popularity globally as proper knowledge management is meant to help the librarians and para-professionals in the library to provide effective and quality service to their patrons. The librarians are expected to know the intrigues of knowledge capturing and those skills will make them to be more creative and innovative to deliver services that meet users' expectations. However, many academic libraries claim to be practically involved in knowledge capturing when they are asked, but some of them are not really conscious of it and that may not affect their services as expected. The case in mind is the public polytechnic libraries where the researcher observes that there is uncertainty of knowledge capturing and whether the practice of Knowledge capturing in those libraries affect service delivery. A close discussion between the researcher with librarians in the area under study invariably show that there is no certainty as regards how the practice of knowledge management in public polytechnic libraries has affected effective service delivery. Few literatures exist in some geopolitical zones (south-east, south west, north-west and north east) in Nigeria but none exist in south-south, Nigeria and no research has been

conducted, to the best knowledge of the researcher, on knowledge capturing and service delivery in public polytechnic libraries in south-south, Nigeria. This is a gap in knowledge that this study intends to fill.

SERVQUAL Theory (Parasuraman et al, 1985): SERVQUAL theory was used in the study. The theory was developed by a team of academic researchers; Parasuraman, Zeithami, and Berry. It is a multi-dimensional research instrument that is built on the expectancy-disconfirmation paradigm which, in simple terms, means that service quality is understood as the extent to which consumers' pre-consumption expectations of quality are confirmed or disconfirmed by their actual perceptions of the service experience. In this theory, service quality is defined as the difference between customer expectations and customer perception of service received. The "gap" in service quality occurs when the perception of service received is less than what is expected. The theory is related to this study in that library users have their expectation of what they should get from the library. Specifically, users in academic libraries have great expectations to acquire from the library, every kind of knowledge that will help them in their research, learning and other aspects they would need knowledge for. There is no doubt that libraries want to survive in a competitive environment where other knowledge disseminators seem to offer their potential clients with various scholarly information and knowledge that they so desire.

Concept of Knowledge Management (KM)

Knowledge management (KM) emanated as a business concept intended to enhance and improve services of an organization to gain profits and competitive advantage. Its practice was later adopted and applied by non-profit organizations to improve their services to meet their users' needs. Academic libraries are not lagging behind in this race as KM is recognized as a survival factor and a better way of satisfying their users. Nazim and Mukherjee (2013) have it that the concept of KM emerged in the mid-1980s and was mainly applied in the corporate organisations, and with the advent of new knowledge producers in the education sector, academic institutions started to apply KM practice to support every part of their mission. Increasingly, library and information professionals are currently being referred to as knowledge managers and libraries and information centres, as knowledge centres (Jain, 2013). The International Federation of Library Associations and Institutions (IFLA), as a response to interest of knowledge management among Library and Information Science practitioners, created a separate section for knowledge management unit in December, 2003 with the aim of creating a deeper understanding of knowledge management practices and its relevance (Husain and Nazim, 2013).

According to IFLA (2012), knowledge management is a process of creating (generating, capturing), storing (preserving, organizing, integrating), sharing (communicating), applying (implementing), and reusing (transforming) organisational knowledge to enable an organisation to achieve its goals and objectives. IFLA further clarified that the term knowledge is not limited to published information; it also covers tacit knowledge (expertise), implicit knowledge, explicit knowledge, and procedural knowledge.

- i. **Tacit Knowledge:** This type of knowledge is found in the minds of people. It includes cultural beliefs, values, skills, expertise, capabilities, intuition, experience, attitudes, mental models, etc. It is a distilled wisdom that a person possesses and it is acquired through experience. The knowledge is a problem-solving expertise that is gained more from one's experiences than from other sources, and it emanates in the form of intuition, ruling, subjective insight, perception, inspiration, skills, body language and innovation. The person that possess this knowledge may not know about it until the person is specifically questioned about it. This knowledge can be captured by proper documentation through means like; mentoring, training and surveys (Becerra-Fernandez and Sabherwal, 2010; Rusuli, 2014; Sampath, 2018; Saufi et al., 2012 and Tandale et al., 2011).
- ii. **Explicit knowledge:** This is the type of knowledge that is formalized and codified. It is the most basic form of knowledge and it is easy to pass along because it is written down and accessible. It is fairly easy to identify, store and retrieve (Wellman, 2009). Explicit knowledge is found in databases, memos, notes, documents, etc. (Botha et al, 2008).
- iii. **Implicit knowledge:** This is a knowledge that is gained through incidental activities, independent of conscious attempts to learn and largely in the absence of explicit knowledge. This type of knowledge is gained without awareness that learning is occurring.

iv. **Procedural knowledge:** This refers to the knowledge of how to do something. It is sometimes called “knowledge by acquaintance” or knowledge of subject-specific skills.

Knowledge management is not a completely novel discipline but a re-branding of Librarianship/Information Management (IM). Librarianship has long existed as a discipline that deals with the collection, organization, storage and dissemination/sharing of recorded or explicit knowledge which has been the primary focus of libraries. However, libraries/librarians have developed/adopted and applied new principles and techniques in reference, cataloguing, information storage and other library services to encourage the use of knowledge (Husain and Nazim, 2013). Librarians have served as knowledge managers since the earliest days of libraries, according to Lastres (2011), by maintaining the scrolls at the library of Alexandria and creating the catalogue for the House of Wisdom (a Ninth Century Islamic Library). Librarians have also developed and applied several KM principles in library services to encourage the use of knowledge (Ralph and Ellis, 2009; Agarwal, 2017). They have always performed roles as intermediaries between people who have knowledge and those who need the knowledge (Sarrafzadeh et al., 2010). This justifies the fact that, KM is not a new concept for librarians since they have been involved in the management of knowledge for a long time.

In recent days, knowledge management (KM) has been perceived as another potential practicable rejoinder to the challenges that the Library and Information Science profession is facing in a continuously changing environment (Sarrafzadeh, et al, 2010). To determine what KM is, it is necessary to look at some definitions. Kaane (2009) opined that knowledge management is the explicit and systematic management of vital knowledge and its associated processes of creating, gathering, organizing, diffusing, use and exploitation. It requires turning personal knowledge into corporate knowledge that can be widely shared. He added that 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. According to Srinivasan (as cited in Raja, et al, 2009), knowledge management refers to a collection of process, technologies and principles that serve to promote a learning environment supportive of the search community goal. Tandale, et al. (2011) defined KM as a creation of a process of valuing the library’s intangible assets in order to best leverage knowledge internally and externally. Knowledge management according to Rao (2018), is an emerging field, much hyped since late 1990s, and encompasses knowledge creation, knowledge acquisition, knowledge repackaging/capturing, knowledge storage, knowledge sharing and knowledge application or reuse. Sood and Chaubey (2011) stated that, knowledge management is an audit of "intellectual assets" that highlights unique sources, critical functions and potential bottlenecks which hinder knowledge flows to the point of use.

Knowledge management mostly has to do with the processes of converting data to information, information to knowledge and knowledge to wisdom. Figure 2.3 shows the concept of knowledge management.

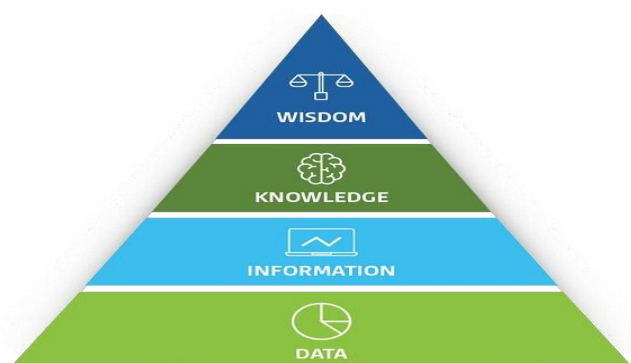


Figure 2.3: Concept of Knowledge Management

Source: Moore (2019)

Data is usually stored in structured records in some sort of technology system e.g., a database, a spreadsheet, a document, captured in various departments/unit. Data becomes information when value is added to it. Knowledge is a fluid blend of experience, values, appropriate information, and professional insight that provides a framework for evaluating and incorporating new experiences and information. In organizations, it is often

imbedded not only in the documents or repositories but also in organizational routines, processes, and practices. They develop over time and changes constantly. Knowledge is often seen as experience, concepts, beliefs, or information that can be communicated and shared (Kaane 2009 and Kumara and Narasimhaiah, 2016). For knowledge to be transferred to wisdom it will involve systematic process of finding, selecting, organizing, storing and presenting a concise, appropriate, timely, accurate and up-to-date information in a way that users can easily comprehend. Hence, the need for knowledge management to ensure the creation, capturing, storage, dissemination and adequate utilization of knowledge that is easily understood.

Knowledge management, according to Poonkothai (2016), is considered as one of the most useful solutions for academic libraries that can be adopted in order to improve their services to become relevant to their parent institutions in the present competitive and challenging environment.

Knowledge Capturing (KC)

Capture reflects collecting documents, presentations, spreadsheets, records, processes, software source, images, audio, video, and other files which can be used for innovation, reuse, and learning. However, knowledge capture tends to mean something more as it involves making tacit knowledge explicit. Knowledge capturing is one of the five practices of knowledge management and it focuses on turning knowledge that is resident in the mind of the individual into an explicit representation available to the organisation (Garfield 2016). According to Becerra-Fernandez and Sabherwal (2010), knowledge capturing is the process by which knowledge is converted from tacit to explicit form (residing within people, artifacts or organizational entities) and vice versa through the sub-processes of externalization and internalization. The authors further explained that the knowledge being captured might reside outside the organizational boundaries including consultants, competitors, customers, suppliers, etc. workers tacit knowledge can be captured so that they can be documented, verbalized and shared. Knowledge capturing can also be conducted outside an organization (Becerra-Fernandez and Sabherwal 2010).

KC involves the process of acquiring the tacit knowledge gained and built through years of experience in an organization. Tacit knowledge is a distilled wisdom that a person possesses and it is acquired through experience. The knowledge is a problem-solving expertise that is gained more from one's experiences than from other sources, and it emanates in the form of intuition, ruling, subjective insight, perception, inspiration, skills, body language and innovation. The person that possesses this knowledge may not know about it until the person is specifically questioned about it. Also, this knowledge can be captured by proper documentation through means like; mentoring, training and surveys (Plyasunov, Kudryavtsev, and Kokouulina, 2017; Rusuli, 2014; Sampath, 2018; Saufi et al., 2012; Tandale et al., 2011). KC enables an organization to achieve its goals and objectives through the process of capturing value, knowledge and understanding of corporate information in order to maintain and promote re-use of that knowledge. Becerra-Fernandez and Sabherwal (2010) argued that capturing knowledge is a difficult process because tacit knowledge is often difficult to articulate. To handle this situation, Sampath (2018) offered some strategies of capturing knowledge in an organisation;

- i. Establishing organisational culture that incentivizes knowledge-sharing behavior.
- ii. Setting up mentorship programs.
- iii. Encouraging workplace collaboration.
- iv. Conducting brainstorm sessions and debriefing meetings.
- v. Creating forums and informal groups.
- vi. Organizing/sponsoring trainings, workshops, conferences and meetups, and
- vii. Exploiting the advantages of professional and social networks.

Libraries can also use information communication technology (ICT) to capture knowledge and store them in a structured manner like user guides, manuals, how-to-books, policies, tutorials, etc.

Formal processes for capturing knowledge can include collating internal profiles of academic librarians and also standardizing routine information-update reports. Lending desks folders of frequently asked questions (FAQ) can be created to enable librarians not only to provide an in-depth customized reference service but also to become knowledgeable about handling different enquiries (Dalen, 2011). Apart from explicit knowledge, libraries should also develop means to capture all that tacit knowledge that is of importance to their users, their organizations, and to the internal operation of libraries. Academic libraries can develop ways to:

- i. Capture their internal knowledge (e.g. type of reference enquiries, frequently used questions, handling different enquiries, etc.).
- ii. Identify staff's expertise and share through.
- iii. Collate internal profiles of librarians and standardize routine information-update reports.
- iv. Access external information such as online databases.
- v. Establish links or network with other libraries and institutions.
- vi. Encourage staff to attend training programmes, conferences, seminars and workshops, subscribe to online virtual communities of practice.
- vii. Buy knowledge products or resources in the form of manuals, reports, etc., to meet their users' insatiable knowledge needs.

Also, knowledge generated from faculties/schools in the institutions are usually captured and stored so as to make them accessible to the users. The focus of KC is on knowledge as a concept and on the tacit knowledge which are derived from people's experience, proficiency, visions/perceptions, beliefs, expertise, skills and competence. This embedded knowledge is very useful as they enhance knowledge rich relations and promote development and innovation in the library; thus, making it to be up to par and updated enough to meet the insatiable and ever-changing knowledge needs of its clientele. To effectively capture knowledge from individuals, some special tools must be employed. That include tools like; interviews, blogs, feedback forms on web site, surveys, call-centers, sentiment analysis, content analysis, surveys, focus groups, questionnaires, task trackers; Wiki; brainstorming sessions, seminars/webinars (design thinking tools), etc. (Zandbergen, 2013).

Service Delivery in Library

Service delivery in libraries is measured by how the services meet users' information needs accurately, timely, appropriately, exhaustively, expeditiously, and in the format/form they appreciate. According to Iwhiwhu and Okorodudu (2012), library services are effective when the adequacy/quality of the services rendered to users are capable of solving their information/knowledge needs. In a nutshell, the fulfillment that users derive from the library by using the various types of resources and services proves if the service is effective or not (Tiemo and Ateboh, 2016). As a matter of fact, any concept, style or structure that an academic library adopts must be such that will enhance effective services delivery. In the bid of this, libraries now focus on knowledge management with the keen interest to harness knowledge not only to stay competitive, but also to become innovative and provide effective service delivery to their clients. The implementation of knowledge management in academic libraries is expected to promote their traditional functions which include acquisition, cataloguing, classification, abstracting and indexing, processing and dissemination of information (Reddy, 2017; Sigma, 2020). Considering all these, it clearly signifies that knowledge management is tailored toward helping libraries to provide effective services.

Empirical Review

Che-Rusuli, et al (2013) conducted a study on "relationship between knowledge management practices and library users' satisfaction: a preliminary result of Malaysian university libraries". The study focused on Knowledge Creation, Knowledge Acquisition, Knowledge Capturing, Knowledge Sharing, Knowledge Record and Knowledge Preserving. PhD candidates were respondents and researcher developed questionnaires was used

for data collection. SPSS software was utilized to analyze research data using reliability analysis and Pearson correlation. Results showed that Knowledge Management Practice has positive influence on the Library Users' Satisfaction. Jain (2013) conducted a similar study on knowledge management in academic libraries and information centres, focusing on university libraries. The study presented a partial finding of a study carried out to investigate and explore KM practices in Southern African Development Community (SADC) university libraries. The findings revealed the main reasons for practicing KM to improve library services: to improve library services and productivity, produce more with less, avoid duplication of efforts and leverage existing knowledge. Similarly, Sawe (2017) conducted a study on the effect that Knowledge Management have on service delivery. The study was conducted in a South African insurance firm. The study used both quantitative and inferential statistics to determine the effect of independent variables. The study highlighted five method that can be used by an organization to be; employees training, construction of knowledge repositories, conducting information informal knowledge fairs of employees and spur of communities of practices, contracting research and development of talk room for the employees to air out current Knowledge Management practices and ways to raise their performance. Also, Chebet and Njuguna (2020) conducted a study on knowledge management practices and service delivery at Oxfam International, Kenya. The study used descriptive research design with 65 staff of Oxfam international headquarters as population. The study used census to determine the sample size, primary data was collected by use of semi-structures questionnaires comprising: Likert type scales ranging from 1-5. The study also used close-ended questions which provided more structured responses to facilitate tangible recommendations. The study concluded that knowledge management practices (knowledge creation, knowledge capturing, knowledge storage, knowledge dissemination and utilization) had a significant and to a great extent affected the service delivery at Oxfam International in Kenya.

METHODOLOGY

Descriptive survey research design was adopted in this study. The purpose of the study was to examine the influence of knowledge capturing on service delivery in public polytechnic libraries in south-south, Nigeria. The study was carried out in Public (Federal and State Government owned) Polytechnic libraries in south-south geo-political zone of Nigeria. These polytechnics are: Federal polytechnic, Ukana (Akwa Ibom State); Akwa Ibom State Polytechnic, Ikot Osurua (Akwa Ibom State); Federal Polytechnic, Ekowe (Bayelsa State); Delta State Polytechnic, Ogwashi-Uku (Delta State); Delta State Polytechnic, Otefe-Oghara (Delta); Auchi Polytechnic, Auchi (Edo State); Federal Polytechnic of Oil and Gas, Bonny (Rivers State); Ken Saro-Wiwa polytechnic, Bori (Rivers State) and Captain Elechi Amadi Polytechnic, Rumuola (Rivers State). The population of this study comprised of 102 library staff (librarians and para-professionals) that are working in the libraries of the institutions under study, during the 2024/2025 academic session. A census sampling technique was used with the total population of 102 librarians and para-professionals working in the libraries of the institutions under study, considering that the population is small. The instrument for data collection was researcher developed questionnaire titled "Knowledge Management and Effective Service Delivery Questionnaire (KMESDQ). The questionnaire comprised three sections with selected questions tailored at bringing out the best response from the respondents. The instrument was subjected to validation and reliability test. The data obtained were analysed using descriptive statistics while dependent t-test was used to test how knowledge capturing affects service delivery in Public Polytechnic libraries in south-south, Nigeria.

Research Question: What is the influence of knowledge capturing on service delivery in public polytechnic libraries in south-south, Nigeria?

Table 1: Summary of mean and standard deviation influence of knowledge capturing on service delivery in public polytechnic libraries in south-south, Nigeria.

Variables	N	$\bar{X}$	Weighted mean	SD	Remarks
Knowledge Capturing	102	37.22	2.86	2.00	
					Influences
Service Delivery	102	65.20	2.71	3.43	

The result in Table 1 shows the mean of the influence of knowledge capturing on service delivery in public polytechnic libraries in south-south, Nigeria. The result showed that the mean for knowledge capturing was 37.22 and weighted mean of 2.86 with the standard deviation of 2.00. The mean of the influence of knowledge capturing was above the cut-off point mean criterion of 2.5 for a 4-point scale used for the instrument. This implies that knowledge capturing influences service delivery in public polytechnic libraries in south-south, Nigeria.

Hypotheses: There is no significance influence of knowledge capturing on service delivery in public polytechnic libraries in south-south, Nigeria

Table 2: The result of dependent t-test analysis of the influence of knowledge capturing on service delivery in public polytechnic libraries in south-south, Nigeria

Variables	N	$\bar{X}$	SD	Df	t-cal	P value	Decision
Knowledge Capturing	102	37.22	2.00				
				101	187.254	.021	S
Service Delivery	102	65.20	3.43				

S= significant,

The data analysis in Table 2 indicates the mean difference of the influence of knowledge capturing on service delivery in public polytechnic libraries in south-south, Nigeria to be 27.98 and t-cal as 187.25 at 101 degrees of freedom. The p-value is shown to be .021. Since the p-value is less than the critical value when compared at .05 level of significant, the null hypothesis which stated that knowledge capturing does not significantly influence service delivery in public polytechnic libraries in south-south, Nigeria is rejected. Thus, knowledge capturing significantly influences service delivery in public polytechnic libraries in south-south, Nigeria.

Influence of Knowledge Capturing on Service Delivery in Public Polytechnic Libraries in South-South, Nigeria.

The analysis of data and the result finding showed that knowledge capturing influences service delivery and significantly influences service delivery in public polytechnic libraries in south-south, Nigeria. The significant influence is attributed to the fact that polytechnic libraries always identify and capture meaningful information that needs to be retained by the librarians and also determine the best approach for storing and distribution. And they seek to share information and knowledge among the polytechnic community. Thus, the finding established that capturing prevent the loss of library memory among polytechnic libraries as internal knowledge is captured and shared. This is crucial to the success and development of knowledge based academic libraries such as the polytechnic libraries. This finding corroborates with the findings of Jain (2013) who concluded that capturing as an indices of knowledge management is no more an option, but a survival kit for university/academic librarians. This serves the role of generating knowledge and equipping people with such knowledge through capturing of tacit knowledge of professional competencies that are useful to library users and also the internal operations of polytechnic libraries in the South- South. The finding also agrees with the findings of Chebet and Njuguna (2020) who indicated that adequate management of skills and employees' experiences (knowledge creation and capturing) impacts institutional performance positively. On this note, the finding of the present study concludes that effective delivery of public polytechnic libraries in south-south Nigeria hang on knowledge capturing.

CONCLUSION

Knowledge capturing facilitates the growth of library and promotes an environment where the librarians can share information and knowledge and also gain knowledge across the polytechnic institutions which helps improve performance in the library and enhances service delivery. The study therefore concluded that knowledge capturing significantly influences service delivery in public polytechnic libraries in south-south,

Nigeria, hence the need for librarians to capture meaningful information that needs to be retained in the library and also determine the best approach for capturing their experiences and gaining insight from other staff members in order to promote effective service delivery. Also, polytechnic library staff need to stay true to their new role as knowledge managers to effectively contribute and meet the needs of a large and diverse academic community, and remain relevant in this information age.

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