

KNOWLEDGE MANAGEMENT SYSTEM: RELEVANCE IN SOCIAL SCIENCES

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Knowledge Management (KM) is a formal process of managing the intellectual assets of any organization, so as to promote all knowledge processes from knowledge generation to its networking. KM is a business concept and is quite interestingly adopted by almost every corporate organization for excelling in their customer services. As far as the Knowledge Management System (KMS) in the academia in general and that of Social Sciences, in particular, is concerned, the concept at this point is new but needs to be implemented in order to manage the intellect of any knowledge producing institute. For so, knowledge providers, knowledge seekers, and knowledge managers must be aware of the concept. The study takes a form of a survey, of School of Social Sciences at the University of Kashmir. For the sake of research, the questionnaire was used to gather the data from different kinds of respondents viz: Faculty Members, and Research Scholars. The present paper is an attempt to know the awareness in regard to the KMS and its applicability in Social Sciences. An overall finding from the study provides a great insight about the concept of KMS among all the knowledge dealers of the institute under study. The results will also form a base for the development of the Knowledge based systems in the academic world.

Keywords: Knowledge Management Systems; ICT; Social Sciences.

INTRODUCTION

Man's quest for knowledge has led to the creation and augmentation of the tremendous amount of information and knowledge. For the benefit and welfare of the public and the society, the knowledge generated through different processes needs to be managed and for such a notion the concept of Knowledge Management has been evolved. "Knowledge Management is the organized method of identifying, capturing, and transferring information and knowledge that people can use to make, compete, and get better" [1]. Knowledge Management has evolved from technocentric to intellectual Capital-centric applications and revolves around the concepts, of Ikujiro Nonaka, Hirotaka Takeuchi and many other authors who brought formality to the managing of knowledge. With the help of Information and Communication technology the flow and management of knowledge have become easier and is delivered through Knowledge Management Systems that act as a platform which promotes all knowledge processes from its generation to dissemination. KMS "is actually an ICT based system that combines and integrates functions for the contextualized handling of both, explicit and tacit knowledge, throughout the organization. It promotes Knowledge creation, construction, identification, capturing, acquisition, selection, valuation, organization, linking, structuring, formalization, visualization, distribution, retention, maintenance, refinement, evolution, accessing, search, and one of the most important elements is its application, anytime anywhere which aims to support the dynamics of organizational learning and organizational effectiveness" [2].

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The study has been conducted to know the Relevance of KMS in Social Sciences through a survey conducted in the School of Social Sciences at the University of Kashmir. The results out of the study are quite useful in context to the development of the practical dynamic Knowledge Management System in Academia, particularly in the field of Social Sciences covering different domains of human interests.

OBJECTIVES

The main objectives of the study are as follows:

- To study the concept of KM and KMS.
- To investigate the awareness of KMS among the faculty members and research scholars of the School of Social Sciences.
- To find out the relevance of KMS in Social Sciences.

METHODOLOGY

The data was collected from Faculty Members and Research Scholars of the School of Social Sciences at the University of Kashmir. The invigilators because of limitations of time confined the number of departments to 4, which were chosen by simple random sampling namely Sociology, Mass Communication, Education, and Psychology. Out of 300 questionnaires distributed among respondents, 280 responded and the conclusions were drawn solely on the basis of data gathered from them.

DATA ANALYSIS AND RESULTS

The data which were collected from faculty members and research scholars of School of Social Sciences using a structured questionnaire having five-point Likert Scale has been ordered under different headings and tabulated, analyzed, interpreted by using tables of percentages.

Table 1: Awareness and Usage of KMS

Questions	Yes	No
Are you aware about KMS	60%	40%
Have you ever used KMS	45%	55%
Knowledge Management System is useful for managing Intellectual output produced by research institutes.	100%	-

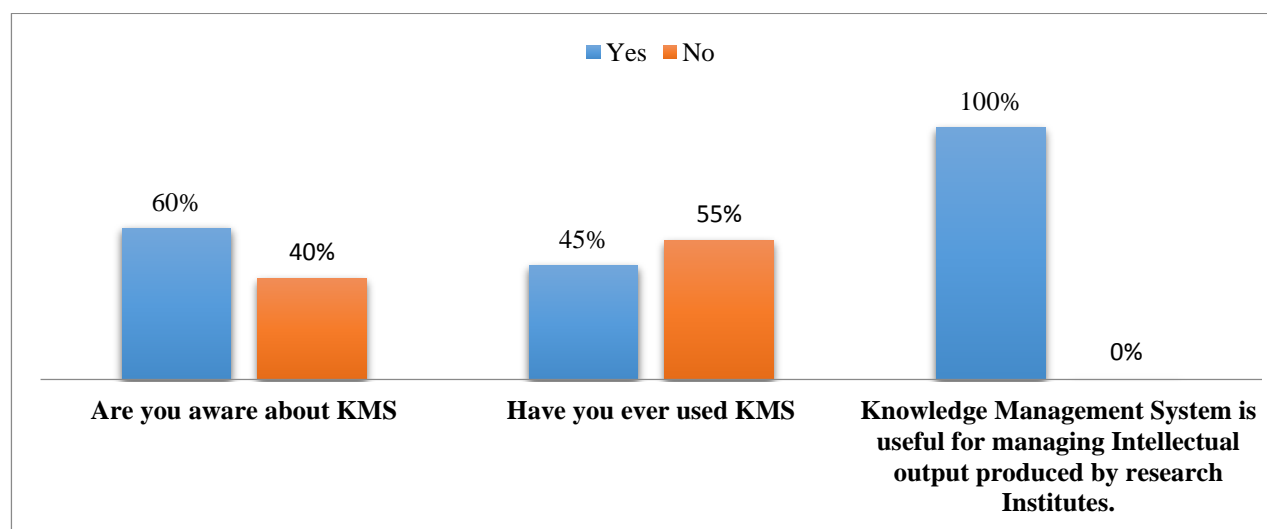


Figure 1: Awareness and Usage of KMS

Awareness of Knowledge Management System

Before the implementation of anything, one must be aware about the same to increase in his domain of knowledge. Knowledge Management is fundamentally a business concept, so it can be presumed that the concept of KMS in academics is not uniformly known to all. The data collected from the study shows that 60% of respondents are aware about KMS while as 40% are not aware about the same. The result is quite surprising from the research community and that too in the present technical era.

Usage of KMS

The collected data shows that 45% of total respondents have used KMS; while as remaining 55% have not used any kind of KMS yet. It may be because the concept of KMS is not known much to academicians then those working in the corporate world. No doubt the academicians may have a clear view of KMS but very few of them have gone through the practical dynamic KMS.

Management of Intellectual Output

From last few decades, the libraries have witnessed a drastic change in all its operations, as well as in the management of Knowledge. In present times, technology speaks much louder than that of the traditional ways of managing and acquiring knowledge. KMS is such a platform which can be used by Research institutes for facilitating all knowledge processes in the same way as the business organizations are doing. The collected data shows that 100% of respondents agreed to the fact that Knowledge Management System is useful for managing Intellectual output produced by research institutes.

KMS and Social Sciences

The collected data in table 2 highlights an assortment of the importance of KMS for different subjects falling under the domain of Social Sciences.

Table 2: KMS and Social Sciences

Questions	Respondents ratings				
	Strongly Agree	Agree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Disagree	Strongly Disagree
KMS can help to improve research collaboration in Social Sciences	80%	15%	5%	-	-
KMS in Social Sciences will be helpful to solve the problems by having advice from the global research community	83%	14%	3%	-	-
KMS is useful for the researchers and other information seekers working under different domains of Social Sciences	86.2%	13.8%	-	-	-
KMS in Social Sciences must be developed	91%	9%	-	-	-

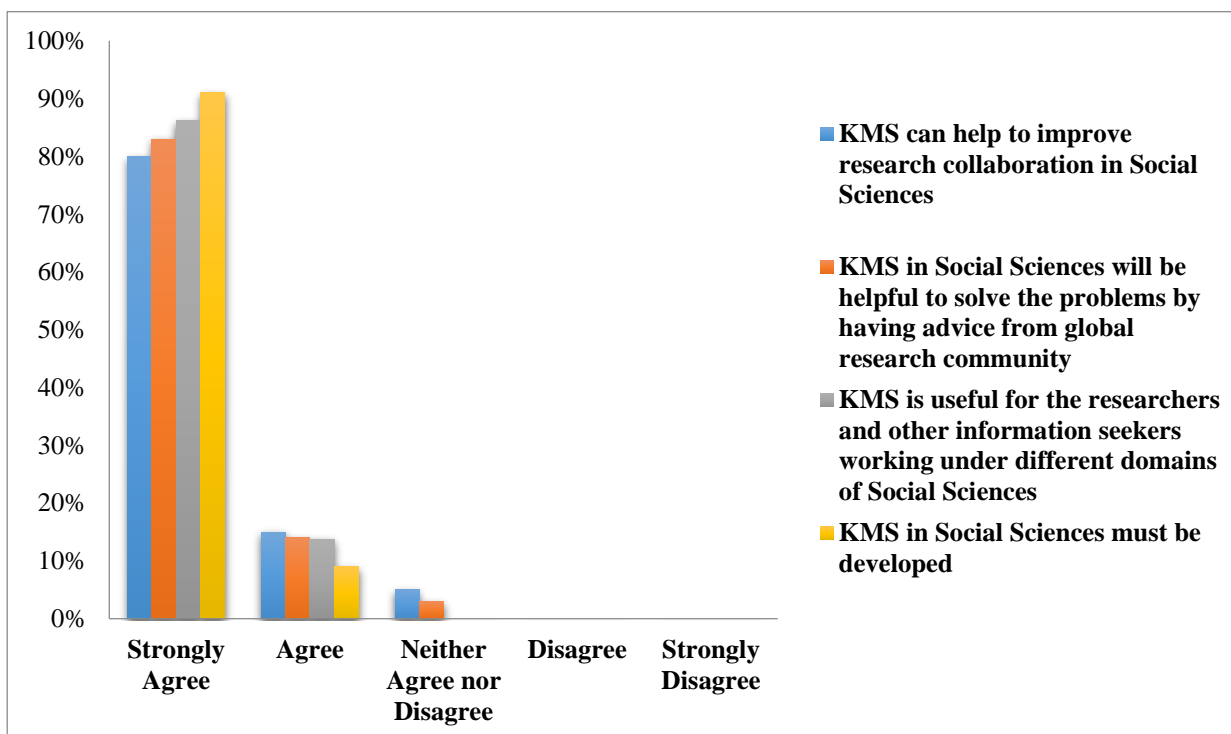


Figure 2: KMS and Social Sciences

KMS and Collaborative Learning

As we all know with the change in time in almost every sector of life, education has also witnessed a tremendous change in terms of knowledge acquisition to its delivery. Gone are the days when a researcher used to write a letter or personally used to travel a long distance to meet an expert or any colleague for research collaboration or having any advice. Now a day's with the intervention of technology in research has changed the scenario. KMS is one such platform that facilitates collaborative learning. The collected data shows that 80% of respondents strongly agreed that Knowledge Management can help to improve research collaboration, followed by 15% who agreed and 5% respondents neither agreed nor disagreed with the same. From the results, it can be said that KMS is useful for the budding researchers to excel in their respective fields of knowledge.

KMS and Decision Making

KMS as aforesaid is the platform that promotes the mutual learning and understanding with the help of technology. In regard to Social life, to make any decision for any social cause the collaboration of different opinions is must, so that to

come to a concrete solution. KMS in Social Sciences plays a great role in neutralizing the issues of the social life by providing a platform for different opinions from all around the globe that is virtually connected. The collected data shows 83% of respondents strongly agreed that KMS in Social Sciences will be helpful to solve the problems by having advice from the global research community, followed by 14% respondents who agreed and 3% who neither agreed nor disagreed respectively

KMS and its Utility

KMS is a platform supported with a number of features and is considered as a hot topic for research in the present times. Its implication is much required in almost every sector of academics. Out of the collected data, it was highlighted that 86.2% of respondents strongly agreed that KMS in Social Sciences is useful for the researchers and other information seekers, followed by 13.8% respondents who agreed on the same respectively.

KMS in Social Sciences

Social Science disciplines are having a direct influence on society, so the knowledge pertaining to the field must be well organized and managed thus

promoting tacit and explicit knowledge sharing on a single platform. In the study conducted, respondents were asked about the development of KMS in Social Sciences and it was quite satisfying that overall 91% of them strongly agreed that KMS must be developed in the field of Social sciences, while as 9% among all agreed on the same. The intellectuals working in different domains of Social Sciences are much aware of the need for such a platform.

CONCLUSION

KMS, with no doubt, has its great implications in the business sector, but its usefulness in the academia also can't be denied. Many big business corporations have implemented the KMS for the smooth flow of knowledge created in their domain to retain their customers. In academics too KMS results in inputs from people of different fields e.g. Management, Sciences, Social Sciences, Law, etc. Knowledge Management can be a mystifying name for many; however, its roots are ingrained in many fields of Social Sciences whether it is Sociology, Education, Economics, and others related to Social life. To the best of our Knowledge, Social Science is considered to have a more vital responsibility for the development of humankind; as of its much importance to human beings than the other fields. To whatever capacity, the knowledge acquired through different means pertaining to the field must be managed and made available to the global community. Out of the results of the study, the concrete base can be put forth into the development of responsive KMS in academia in general and that of in Social Sciences in particular.

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