



Identifying knowledge-sharing requirements in academic libraries

Knowledge-sharing requirements

107

Mehri Parirokh

*Department of Library and Information Science,
Ferdowsi University of Mashhad, Mashhad, Iran*

Farhad Daneshgar

*School of Information Systems, Technology and Management (SISTM),
University of New South Wales, Sydney, Australia, and*

Rahmatollah Fattahi

*Department of Library and Information Science,
Ferdowsi University of Mashhad, Mashhad, Iran*

Received 19 January 2007
Reviewed 10 February 2007
Revised 15 May 2007
Accepted 30 May 2007

Abstract

Purpose – The purpose of this paper is to provide an evaluation of the existing state of practice in knowledge sharing in university libraries.

Design/methodology/approach – This is survey research which is based on an electronic questionnaire.

Findings – Results reveal that the majority of libraries investigated are quite friendly towards knowledge sharing, and the majority of librarians value the importance of knowledge sharing. Results also confirm that the knowledge that they mostly use is mainly intangible knowledge.

Originality/value – If knowledge-sharing requirements of librarians while collaboratively performing reference and information services can be acknowledged, guidelines for enhancing conceptual collaborative process would be suggested.

Keywords Knowledge sharing, Reference services, Knowledge management, University libraries

Paper type Research paper

Background

In today's knowledge economies knowledge is the driving force for economic and social development. The attention of the society to information and knowledge is rising as a result of higher demand for information and knowledge by knowledge workers in today's societies. Along with the growing interest in knowledge management (KM), the literature on different aspects of KM is extensive. Many researchers from various disciplines have stressed the significance and impact of KM research on sustained organizational success in the new era (Devlin, 1999; Stewart, 1997). This recent emphasis on KM has provided a good environment for the development of libraries and librarians (Wang, 1999). The authors of this paper demonstrate that this situation is leading to a dramatic shift in the role of university libraries in managing knowledge, from a traditional, strictly informational role to a resource-based and collaborative role. This in turn would require much of the librarians' tasks to be performed collaboratively. We envisage that the knowledge-sharing capabilities of academic libraries will eventually become one of their major critical success factors.

A version of this paper was previously presented at the 72nd IFLA Conference in Seoul, Korea in August 2006. This work was funded, in part, by the John Metcalfe Memorial Grant for innovative research in the field of Library Science.

