Knowledge Management, Leadership and Decision Making: A Case of Academic Libraries

Priti Jain
Department of Library & Information Studies
University of Botswana
Gaborone, Botswana
E-mail: jainp@mopipi.ub.bw

Abstract:

Over the past three decades like other organizations libraries are going through fundamental changes aimed at increasing their operational efficiency, and contributing towards knowledge economy using Knowledge Management (KM) tools and technologies to acquire, build, share and apply knowledge. Several factors contribute towards successful execution of knowledge management; good leadership is decisive among others. Key to knowledge management, an organizational culture that emphasizes cooperation, sharing, and innovation can only be established under strong leadership and commitment from the library managers and top management, who can influence an organization's knowledge sharing efforts in a positive way. Knowledge management facilitates informed and sustainable decision making, since decision making is knowledge intensive. This paper examines the role of leadership in knowledge management in academic libraries; highlights the importance of knowledge management in decision making and provides a framework for the desired leadership for a library manager. The paper is based on the latest knowledge management literature and the author's own experience and it is exploratory in nature.

Key words: Knowledge management, academic libraries, Leadership and knowledge management, Knowledge management and decision making.

1. Introduction

Increasingly, twenty-first century leaders are confronted with numerous challenges for being effective in the global knowledge economy, such, as crisis management, human resource development, keeping pace with ever-changing customer needs, just in time customer services and change management. When managers began to connect the electronic capture of KM elements with knowledge sharing, performance, and strategic learning, the advantages of KM began to fall into place (and, importantly, to be recognized as corporate advantages) (Stanley, 2013). All these advantages began to make even more sense when senior managers began to recognize the futility of speaking about "managing" knowledge and put their interest in knowledge development and knowledge sharing in more practical terms (Stanley, 2013). Academic library leaders (senior management staff in libraries) are not an exception to this. Academic libraries are going through fundamental transformation and true paradigm shift; library leaders are always on the lookout for better solutions to keep pace with ever changing information environment and provide customer-focused services.

In the beginning, knowledge management began to gain attention among leaders in the business and management community. Today, knowledge-based competition has penetrated into all sectors of the economy including universities, research institutes, Government and libraries. Global knowledge-based economy has brought new challenges to academic library leadership. The major challenges comprise of: transition to digital Content, intellectual capital management; technological–trauma and infrastructure; change management; financial constraints; new scholarly communication and continuously demonstrating their value to the academic enterprise (Murphy, 2012; Jain, 2013; Storer, 2014). According to Scharmer (2001:137), leaders must be able to see the emerging opportunities before they become manifest in the marketplace. Leaders, who do not understand the value of actionable knowledge, limit opportunities; while savvy leaders appreciate that sharing knowledge creates value. One of great challenges for any leader is to break down cultural tendencies that foster silo-centric thought patterns (Myatt, 2011). An organizational culture which emphasizes cooperation, sharing, and innovation can only be established by strong leadership and commitment from the library director and a shared vision by the library staff (Ongwen, 2012). Using KM tools such as, system tools, Social Media tools and customer relations management tools, academic library managers can provide knowledge management leadership in various ways and make informed decisions on improving library services and contribute to knowledge society. In the above background, this paper intends to explore how academic library leaders can spearhead and facilitate successful execution of knowledge management and through it sustainable decision making by providing excellent library services and as a result, enhance organizational productivity. This would provide sustained competitive edge to academic institutions, they aim for. In this paper, university and academic institution are used interchangeably. To accomplish the above purpose, the paper pursues the following objectives:

- Conceptualize KM in an academic library situation
- Highlight the importance of KM in academic libraries
- Examine the role of leadership in knowledge management with specific focus on academic library leadership

- Highlight the importance of KM in sustainable decision making
- Provide a framework for desired leadership and competencies in an academic library.

2. Concept of KM in academic libraries

Knowledge has been defined in various ways as the inherent capacity of organizations to act (Sveiby, 1997); "justified true belief that increases an entity's capacity for effective action"(Nonaka, 1994:15); "a mix of fluid experiences, values, contextual information and intuition" (Davenport and Prusak , 1998:5); and a "set of tools, techniques, methods, ways of working, even behaviors – that are all designed to help an organization to be more effective" (Collison, 2010). However, the central idea behind KM is that it is to create, codify and share knowledge valuable to the organization and KM shifts the focus from process to practice (Ghani, 2009). For the purpose of this paper, KM is defined as a purposeful management process to capture, exploit, share and apply both tacit and explicit knowledge for the benefit of the employees, the organization and its customers. KM provides accessibility to organizational valuable information by turning both internal and external knowledge into action and it is a ceaseless activity. Being part and parcel to learning institutions, university libraries can play a key role in human, economic and national development. According to Rowley (2000), there are four key objectives of KM in the universities:

i. Creating and maintaining knowledge repositories;
ii. Improving knowledge access;
iii. Enhancing knowledge environment; and,
iv. Valuing knowledge.

Information management has long been regarded as the domain of librarians and libraries. Librarians and information professionals are trained to be experts in information searching, selecting, acquiring, organizing, preserving, repackaging, disseminating and serving (Kumar, 2010). Kumar further underscores that knowledge management attempts to depend on librarians' strong visionary leadership from the very beginning to extreme end, from bottom-up to bottom-down (Kumar, 2010). The main functions of all academic libraries are to support the mission, vision and objectives of their parent institutions. Academic institutions are changing due to transformation in education system. To realize their function, academic libraries have to evolve as their parent institutions' mission, vision and information needs change.

2.1 Importance of KM in academic libraries

Today, customers are paramount in all types of organizations and libraries are essentially customer-oriented organizations. Their main objective is to provide the right information in the right format at the right time to the library customers. KM provides academic libraries numerous opportunities to rise from stereo-type status and change their service delivery approach by establishing new alliances with students, academic staff and researchers in new creative and dynamic spaces to create a customer-centered environment. According to Roknuzzaman and Umemoto (2009), the major drivers of KM are increased value of knowledge in the knowledge economy; the library itself as a knowledge-based organization;

the dynamics of technological advancement; and, opportunities for improved library practices. Knowledge generation and management is a collaborative process and social networking applications have provided ample prospects for both internal and external collaboration. Incorporating networked knowledge networks, librarians can create, manage and share tacit knowledge. Kaane (2009) has appropriately portrayed the importance of KM in academic libraries how they can improve their services through KM: by creating an organizational culture of sharing knowledge and expertise; change their values, focusing on creating and using intellectual assets (tacit, explicit and potential knowledge); restructure their functions; and expand their roles and responsibilities. Kaane (2009 further suggests for adopting the leadership that empowers individuals; organizational culture that appreciates all forms of knowledge, and, open communication culture that supports networking (Kaane, 2009). All these can be used to improve library services using KM.

Also, due to librarians' vast experience and inbuilt capabilities librarians have strong desire to be knowledge managers. The contemporary academic library management is all about change management. Therefore, Maury (2012) describes a library as a living force because of its continuously evolving services to accommodate ever changing user needs; a catalyst for innovations; and as a learning and social place, where information and knowledge transmit for teaching and learning. Thus, KM has gained increased popularity in academic libraries today.

3. Role of leadership in knowledge management

Leadership plays an important role in knowledge management and decision making. Leadership in knowledge organizations is particularly relevant, when knowledge workers perceive leaders as actively engaging and committing to supporting knowledge and learning activities (DeTienne et al., 2004). Leadership means different things to different people. According to Covey (2004: 217), "Leadership is creating an environment in which people want to be part of the organization and not just work for the organization. Leadership creates an environment that makes people want to, rather than have to do …". The main function of a good leader is to influence followers' behavior, individually and as a group and empower them to reach their potential abilities to achieve desired objectives. This paper views leadership from three different perspectives with specific focus on library manager leadership:

1. Library/library manager leadership and commitment; who can lead the successful execution of knowledge management projects in a number of ways from the planning to implementation;
2. Organizational top management leadership; who can influence knowledge management efforts in a positive way by providing adequate KM infrastructure and resources and,
3. Knowledge manager leadership, who can promote the knowledge agenda; develop the infrastructure; connect, co-ordinate and communicate; provide leadership and strategy and measure KM outcomes (Kok, 2003).

3.1 Library leadership: Librarians can take leadership roles in planning, establishing, organizing, facilitating, archiving and evaluating social knowledge exchanges as well as assume an entirely new role as academic librarians and still remain relevant in this new information environment (Stranack, 2012). Librarians can assume the role of a knowledge manager in their academic organization. A study carried-out by Jain (2013), in Southern African Development Community (SADC) university libraries revealed that of the fifteen KM practicing university libraries, only in eight libraries KM was owned by libraries, while librarians and information professionals should be seen to be in the forefront in University KM projects. Being information management experts, librarians should not take a back seat in the initiation of KM projects instead they should be in charge of knowledge management in their respective organizations. Therefore, "The academic libraries are called upon to play a crucial and leading role over other types of libraries by transforming their information management skills, techniques, practices and resources. Such transformations at the present age create new functions for professional librarians, and if they do their best, it will promote the quality of library services" (Mottaghi-Far, 2012:1476). As information intermediaries they have key role to play in their organizational knowledge management and development.

On the role of academic libraries in knowledge management, Ongwen (2012) stressed, that charged by the mission to expand the access of knowledge for their users, academic libraries should set their knowledge management goals high. Ongwen (2012) believes that an organizational culture which emphasizes cooperation, sharing, and innovation can only be established by strong leadership and commitment from the library director and a shared vision by the library staff. The above author suggests that as a learning organization academic libraries should:

- Allocate annual funding to provide continuing education and staff training to all staff members.
- Renew and expand knowledge to prevent it from becoming stagnant.
- Encourage the transfer of knowledge and experience from experienced staff to new staff members.
- Put in place informal seminars and brownbag sessions, where staff can interact and exchange ″lessons learned″, ″best practices″ and other specific experience. Special interest groups and chat rooms can be created through intranet.
- Assume driver's seat applying professional skills, experience and knowledge to lead knowledge management project for their parent institutions.
- Work together with IT professionals and other relevant departments to develop the appropriate knowledge management systems.
- Strive to be a knowledge enabler and facilitator by mobilizing all its efforts and resources (Ongwen, 2012).

All of these call upon university librarians to take a strong leadership in their organizational KM initiatives. On the other hand, the best knowledge creators are academics. As a learning and knowledge organization, universities should also empower their libraries to develop campus-wide knowledge management systems. It is now time for (Ongwen, 2012).

Competencies for academic librarian leadership: Based on an empirical study carried-out in Nigeria, Ugwu & Ezema (2010) have suggested the following competencies and skills for academic librarian leadership: participative decision making skills, building trust among staff skills; collaborative skills, change management skills, innovative skills and good communication skills.

3.2. Top management leadership: Importance of top management leadership is extensively discussed in knowledge management literature. Top management leads the knowledge management project by providing adequate infrastructure and resources. "Knowledge-oriented leaders champion the development of KM channels and initiatives for both knowledge exploration and knowledge exploitation and promote best KM practice in the organization through an effective KM leadership style, motivation, communication, and staffing (Donate & De Pablo, 2015: 263). While leaders across all the levels of organization have unique and important role to play in managing knowledge, it is particularly important for the chief executive officer to be involved in knowledge-sharing processes (Kluge et al., 2001). Thus, Ongwen (2012) has appropriately emphasized that for any library to succeed in implementing knowledge management will require a strong leadership and vision from the top administration, which can influence the organization's knowledge sharing efforts in a positive way.

Effective leadership can certainly improve the success of KM initiatives in an organization. According to Mohanan (2013) a knowledge leader can improve the success of knowledge management by:

- Translating the organization's vision and mission into a KM vision and mission (Mohanan, 2013);
- Helping people realize that knowledge management is a behavior not a project (Mohanan, 2013);
- Understand the need for KM from the leadership perspective and define tangible targets (Mohanan, 2013);
- Working in close co-ordination with the human resource department (Mohanan, 2013);
- Being a good adopter and change manager (Mohanan, 2013);
- Conveying the importance of KM to employees, and maintain employees morale (Mohanan, 2013);

- Leaders influence employees′ innovative and creative behavior both through their deliberate actions aiming to stimulate idea generation and application as well as by their more general, daily behavior (Hubbard et al., 2002; de Jong & Hartog, 2007; Raisch & Birkinshaw, 2008). Individual innovation helps to attain organizational success and is central to total quality management.
- Info-structure is one of the important initiatives from organization's top management to instill knowledge management culture and change management program in the universities (Mohayidin, et al, 2007).

- Top level support and provision of rewards/incentives also have a key role in the success of knowledge management as perceived by 65% and 53% of library professionals respectively (Nazim & Mukherjee, 2011).
- Leaders play dual roles in knowledge management both as developers and facilitators of KM who plan knowledge processes and foster their implementation through reward systems (Ho, 2009; Ongwen, 2012).

3.3 Knowledge manager leadership: A knowledge manager formulates knowledge management strategy and coordinates all the related activities organization-wide. He provides knowledge management strategic vision, motivates others, acts as a change agent, model good practices, and carry out the knowledge agenda and explains knowledge management goals to everyone to achieve them (Debowski, 2006). Knowledge managers raise KM awareness, align knowledge actions with business priorities, promote a knowledge sharing culture, engage senior leadership, manage the infrastructure, and support all knowledge workers (Garfield, 2014). Garfield (2014) has comprehensively suggested the following tasks to be performed by a knowledge manager to lead the knowledge management project:

- Improve business results by institutionalizing a knowledge sharing culture.
- Define, maintain, and execute the KM implementation plan for the organization.
- Define, communicate, and implement people, process, and technology components for learning, sharing, reusing, collaborating, and innovating as the core elements for the KM program.
- Define KM measurements and rewards for the organization and KM goals for all relevant members to align individual and organizational objectives.
- Report regularly on the organization's performance against KM metrics to let the leadership know about the KM progress.
- Implement action plans for people, process, and technology projects as the detailed implementation plans.
- Lead the organization's KM teamsthe program staff, the core team, and the KM community.
- Manage the organization's KM communications to keep all users informed on the program.
- Actively participate in communities. Model the desired behaviors by being visible as a leader and member of multiple internal and external communities.
- Network with other KM leaders. Demonstrate the use of social networks to stay current in the field of knowledge management

A knowledge manager's leadership can be summarized as below:

- Develop KM strategy and strategic vision
- Manage, coordinate and lead the whole KM project and activities
- Act as a change agent
- Model KM best practices and implement them
- Train people in KM
- Develop and implement a knowledge friendly cultural infrastructure that facilitates knowledge sharing

- Act as a knowledge champion or appoint a knowledge champion, who can spread KM success stories and influence people behavior towards KM and knowledge sharing practices
- Advocate enterprise-wide knowledge practice
- Establish communities of practice
- Measure KM outcomes against the set objectives

4. Knowledge Management, KM tools and technologies and sustainable decision making

In this knowledge based economy productivity is highly dependent on informed and sustainable decision making. All managers have to make decisions. An individual's problem solving and decision making capability is limited by the knowledge available (Noman & Aziz, 2011). Hence, relevant and updated data are important for effective decision making (Bowett, 2009). There is a close relationship between decision making and knowledge management. Knowledge sharing is the key to knowledge management, which allows knowledge exchange among colleagues and enable informed and participative decision making. Knowledge sharing involves gathering and disseminating internal as well as external knowledge within an organization. Employees' participation in decision making process can also help an organization to improve its performance by meeting the goals in an efficient way (Danish et al 2013).

Knowledge management provides several techniques and technologies for informed decision making. For instance, spread-sheets are widely used for 'what if' simulations. Decision Support Systems are used for effective decision making. The computer does not take decisions; managers do. However, it helps managers to have quick and reliable quantitative information about the business (Bowett (2009). There are a wide range of IT tools to create, codify and share knowledge, such as, web 2.0 technologies, decision support and knowledge management systems. Ghani (2009) provides a comprehensive list of KM tools available to support the functionalities and processes of KM. ***Tools to access knowledge,*** provide access to explicit knowledge that can be shared and transferred through the enterprise information systems, for example, Convera is a tool used for retrieval ware. ***Tools for semantic mapping***, support presentation of information, analysis and decision making. Ontology tools enable users to organize information and knowledge by groups and schemata that represent the organizational knowledge base. Anacubis is a ground-breaking visual research and analysis software. ***Tools for knowledge extraction***, support structured queries and replies. They help mining text by interpreting relationships among different elements and documents, for example, ClearForest Text Analysis Suite. ***Tools for expertise localization***, enable quick location of the knowledge holders in the enterprise and facilitate collaboration and knowledge exchange, for example, ActiveNet maintains a continuous and real-time view of organizational activities. ***Tools for collaboration work***, enable teams to globally share dedicated spaces for managing the project lifecycle; editing and publishing materials; conducting live discussions and interactions; and maintaining a repository of materials associated with every step of the process, for example, QuickPlace and jabber for real time collaboration among geographically dispersed participants (Ghani, 2009). All the above KM tools and technologies facilitate informed and knowledge-based and sustainable decision making.

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5. Discussion & conclusion

Thus, all the above discussed leaderships are important. However, because of their inherent information management abilities and experience and understanding their users' information needs, libraries can really make distinctive contribution to knowledge management. Indeed, being part of learning organizations, libraries are rightly placed to support their parent organization's mission, vision and mandate of teaching, learning and research. As discussed earlier, academic librarians can spearhead their organizational knowledge management initiatives in several ways: i. Librarians can lead the KM project throughout the information and knowledge management life-cycle from acquiring, organizing to application of knowledge. Since librarians are closely related with their user-community; they understand their users' information needs. ii. Librarians can lead as a knowledge manager; and, iii. Librarians can also act as a knowledge champion or play dual role of a knowledge manager and a knowledge champion. Librarians are good in modern information management technologies and techniques, such as taxonomies, meta data writing and scholarly communication and they can certainly be good knowledge management leaders and provide the right information to the right person at the right time using the right format and right attitude.

However, libraries' contribution depends on the top management leadership. Without top management commitment, support and good leadership, libraries cannot implement knowledge management in isolation. Ongwen (2012) posits that for any library to succeed in implementing knowledge management, it will require a strong leadership and vision from the top administration, which can influence the organization's knowledge sharing efforts in a positive way. According to Benbya (2008), the impact of top management leadership and support is greater for knowledge management since KM is an emerging discipline. Also, employees may need the additional incentives from their organizations' top management and leadership for employees' total commitment towards knowledge management. Top management support also influences other factors, which are critical to the success of knowledge management, such as organizational culture. Top management plays an important role in fostering trust and promoting a knowledge-sharing culture. The top management is responsible for providing information technology infrastructure necessary for the knowledge management programme and strategic alignment of organizational overall objectives and knowledge management strategy. Top management leadership plays an central role developing required knowledge necessary for organizational business. Top management insights are necessary to integrate with organization's strategic priorities. Also, effective management of an organization during the crisis depends on the knowledge and behavior of top managers to manage crisis (Cania & Korsita 2015).

Similarly, a knowledge manager cannot succeed without top management support and leadership. A knowledge manager within an organization plays a key role in facilitating the creation of the necessary conditions for organizational information and knowledge flow and the attendant responsiveness and adaptation to changing customer or stakeholder needs (Kelly, 2007). Top management provides necessary infrastructure and resources for knowledge management. Once knowledge becomes important in an organization; the role of the CEO can vary from one of passive support to active stimulation and to knowledge

leadership, where the CEO personally takes a leading role in making knowledge initiatives happen (Kok, 2003). Hence, Kok emphasizes that a good relationship between the CEO and knowledge leader is very important

Thus, all the three leadership are important, while top management leadership is most important. A chief knowledge manager acts as a knowledge leader and ensures that all the structures, networks and knowledge conducive culture are implemented and fostered. Top management provides all necessary infrastructure and resources for knowledge management. Librarians facilitate the acquisition, classification, editing, packaging and distribution of knowledge. Therefore, knowledge management should give importance to leaders and especially to their leadership styles in making things happen for knowledge management processes and practices to flourish (Singh, 2008). Singh views leadership as a cardinal thread that runs through the whole gamut of the knowledge management initiatives in an organization and stresses that knowledge leadership should be evident throughout the organization and it should operate at all hierarchical levels (Singh, 2008). Effective knowledge management is not a matter of having the most knowledge; but knowing how to use it. It is not enough to know modern management concepts, but how they get implemented is equally important (Ongwen, 2012).

Therefore, leadership is required at all levels of management whether top management, library management or knowledge management. Debowski (2006) suggests the following qualities for a good leader:

- Vision, good leadership, and risk-taking at all levels.
- Leadership needs to demonstrate purpose, consistency, and determination.
- Leaders need to walk the talk.
- Knowledge leaders must have a sound knowledge of knowledge management.
- Understanding of people, processes, systems and business principles, which shape business decisions in the organization.

6. A Way Forward
Based on the foregoing, the author puts forward the following framework for the desired leadership in an academic library. It has to be noted again that all three types of leadership (top management leadership, chief knowledge manager leadership and academic library leadership) are vital for the successful execution of knowledge management and sustainable decision making, but the framework below is more specific to academic library leadership.

Figure 1: A framework for the desired leadership in an academic library

MACRO LEVEL → MICRO LEVEL			
ORGANISATIONAL & LIBRARY LEVEL: Transformational & Participative leadership style	**MANAGEMENT LEVEL: Good relationship between top management, library management and knowledge manager**	**MANAGER LEVEL: Competencies and skills for an academic library leader**	**OPERATIONAL LEVEL: Establishment of a knowledge management unit headed by a knowledge manager and appointment of a knowledge champion/leader**
▪ Transform followers through inspiration and charismatic personalities by injecting enthusiasm and energy in them. ▪ Stimulate followers to view problems in new ways and help them grow to their fullest potential. ▪ Establish strong relationship between transformational leadership and organizational performance (pursuing organizational goals and knowledge generation/dissemination). ▪ Consider employees as intellectual capital (focus on their personality and innovation) and endorse effective communication. ▪ Influence subordinates' behaviour and ideas to motivate them. ▪ Participative decision making (engage staff to participate and consider their input, continuous cooperation and collaboration) (de Jong & Hartog, 2007); (Danish et al, 2013); (Rangnekar & Dalpati, 2011).	▪ There should be good relationship between the top management, library management and the knowledge manager to collaborate and complement the successful execution of knowledge management in terms of budget and other infrastructure allocation supporting achievement of organizational vision and objectives. ▪ Keep open communication to strengthen these relationship and knowledge management.	▪ Good understanding of the concept of knowledge management ▪ Technological skills ▪ Participative decision making skills ▪ Building trust among staff abilities ▪ Collaborative skills ▪ Change management skills ▪ Innovative and creative skills ▪ Networking skills ▪ Mentoring skills ▪ Ability to think analytically ▪ Good communication skills ▪ Self-Confidence ▪ Social awareness and self-awareness ▪ An exemplary character to walk the talk (Ugwu & Ezema, 2010; Zabel, 2011; Jain, 2013).	▪ Establishment of a specific knowledge management unit headed by a knowledge manager (Jain, 2013). ▪ Appointment of a knowledge champion with the vision to motivate people within organizations to engage in knowledge sharing practices (Kok, 2003) and all other KM activities. ▪ Knowledge Champion should complement and work well with library managers ▪ Clear duties to be drafted for the Knowledge Champions

Recommendation 1.Transformational & Participative leadership style: Since academic libraries are going through fundamental changes and changes are ever continuing. The paper recommends for transformational leadership. "Transformational leaders stimulate followers to view problems in new ways and help them to develop to their fullest potential and thus enhance creativity of followers (de Jong & Hartog, 2007). Danish et al (2013) established a strong relationship between transformational leadership and organizational performance.

Transformational leaders support generation and dissemination of knowledge at organizational level and pursue the organizational goals and direct the high organizational performance (Danish et al, 2013). Such leaders consider employees as intellectual capital and focus on their personality, individual innovative capability and endorse effective communication linkages and confidence of gathering and spreading knowledge (Danish et al, 2013:1339). In addition, transformational leaders have the aptitude to influence their subordinates and their ideas about good man power and its benefits to the organization. They have great opportunities to enhance these benefits by engaging their employees in knowledge management and developing such an environment where knowledge sharing between staff members is supported (Rangnekar & Dalpati, 2011). Most activities within libraries are team-based; hence participative leadership is most suitable combined with transformational leadership. According to participative leadership theories, the ideal leadership style is one that considers the input of others into account and leaders encourage participation and contributions from all employees and encourage them to feel more relevant and committed to the decision-making process. Knowledge management tools provide several avenues for participative decision making through continuous collaboration, interaction and knowledge sharing and innovation.

Recommendation 2. Good relationship between the top management, library management and knowledge manager: This is very important. A knowledge manager within an organization leads in creating necessary conditions for knowledge management, library management leads in the whole process of information/knowledge management from acquiring to dissemination in order to provide the right information/knowledge to the right person at the right time in the right format with the right attitude and passion, while top management leads knowledge management by providing the necessary infrastructure and resources.

Recommendation 3. Desired competencies and skills for a leader in an academic library: Desired competencies and skills for a leader in an academic library comprise of: participative decision making, mentoring, collaborative, analytical thinking, technological, innovative, creative, effective communication, partnerships and networking skills. Leaders should have good understanding of the concept of knowledge management, long term vision and ability to build trust among staff. They should have empathy, confidence, social awareness, self-awareness and an exemplary character to walk the talk; working in partnership with the faculty (Ugwu & Ezema, 2010; Zabel, 2011; Jain, 2013). All of the above skills and competencies are vital to become good leaders, knowledge workers, knowledge gatekeepers, knowledge brokers and change managers to fit into the ever changing information environment.

Recommendation 4. Knowledge management unit headed by a knowledge manager and a knowledge champion: There should be a specific knowledge management unit headed by a knowledge manager to coordinate and promote shared understanding of KM and its successful implementation (Jain, 2013). A "knowledge champion" is the initial advocate of the program and works with the executive sponsor. In addition, a project leader (KM manager) needs to be identified, and is responsible for developing a knowledge strategy and business case (Albers, 2003). A knowledge champion and a knowledge manager should have

the vision to motivate people within organizations to engage in knowledge sharing practices (Kok, 2003). Senior librarians can assume any of the above roles or carry out a dual role to lead the KM projects in their organizations and consequently facilitate informed and knowledge based decision making.

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