Job Satisfaction, Awareness and Knowledge Sharing Methods of Debre Markos and Assosa Universities Libraries Employees' in Ethiopia

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Abstract:

  The objective of this study was investigating the job satisfaction, awareness and knowledge sharing (KS) methods of Debre Markos and Assosa Universities libraries employees' in Ethiopia. The subjects of the study were all Debre Markos University Library (DMUL) and Assosa University Library (ASUL) employees including the library directors. Questionnaires were used to collect data from the DMUL and ASUL employees and interviews were also used to collect data from the library directors. Data was analyzed using qualitative and quantitative methods. Descriptive statistics (frequency and percentage) were used to analyze quantitative data. The results revealed that only 34.9% of the respondents were satisfied with their current job but the remaining 65.1% of the respondents were not satisfied with their current job; because there was lack of further education, lower salary, lack of reward or recognition poor acceptability of the people for the profession and others. And according to the DMUL and ASUL respondents, more than half of the respondents had awareness about knowledge sharing and its benefits. And also based on DMUL and ASUL respondents there were few existing knowledge sharing methods in DMUL and ASUL among

employees to share knowledge with each other for their day to day work improvement and for the success of the library. The study concludes that the library managers should consider the job satisfaction, awareness and knowledge sharing methods of employees to success their mission.

Key words: Job Satisfaction, Awareness, Knowledge, Knowledge sharing, Knowledge sharing methods, Information Science, library employees.

1. Introduction:

Knowledge is a very important resource for preserving valuable heritage, learning new things, solving problems, creating core competences, and initiating new situations for both individuals and organizations in this world now and in the future (Liao et al., 2004). Therefore sharing of this knowledge enables individuals and organization to become successful in any directions.

Most employees especially from developing countries like Ethiopia may not be interested on their field of study, because they forced to join to the program without their interest. This might enable the employees to become dissatisfied on their job. Job dissatisfaction also might rise from the poor acceptability of the profession by the people; for example in Ethiopia, most of the people think that to become a librarian is considered as the least worker, lower salary taker and un respectable worker compared with any other profession. Awareness of employees about knowledge sharing is important for each employee to perform or to do his/her work effectively and efficiently by sharing knowledge with his/her colleagues. There are different knowledge sharing methods or ways among employees in an organization to transfer knowledge. Informal communication is the most known knowledge sharing method among employees in the library or in an organization.

Objectives

⇒ To identify job satisfaction of DMUL and ASUL employees
⇒ To find out awareness of employees about the knowledge sharing and its benefits in DMUL and ASUL
⇒ To identify existing Knowledge sharing methods used by employees of the DMUL and ASUL

2. Literature Review

2.1. Knowledge Sharing

Knowledge exists in the minds of employees, which cannot be clearly observed or understood. Due to this to manage this knowledge become difficult in knowledge management (KM). Knowledge in the mind of individuals or tacit knowledge is essentially an unconscious cognitive ability, and it is highly personalized knowledge that is acquired by individual experience. Therefore, it is through sharing that enterprises manage this knowledge well, and promote its sharing among staff to enhance competitive advantages.

The old paradigm, which is, "knowledge is power" is changed, and it needs to be explicitly understood that sharing knowledge is power (Gurteen, 1999). Performing activities in an organization requires a collaborative effort. If you try to work alone you are likely to fail, you need not only the input from other people but also their support. Therefore, being open with them, and sharing with them helps you achieve your objectives. According to Al-Hawamdeh (2003), KS is the communication of all types of knowledge including explicit knowledge (information, know-how) and tacit knowledge (skills and competency).

KS can be defined as a social interaction culture, involving the exchange of employee knowledge, experiences, and skills through the whole department or organization (Hogel

et al., 2003). The authors also explained that KS occurs at the individual and organizational levels. For individual employees, KS is talking to colleagues to help them get something done better, more quickly, or more efficiently. For an organization, KS is capturing, organizing, reusing, and transferring experience-based knowledge that resides within the organization and making that knowledge available to others in the business.

KS is, the process that, intended to exploit existing knowledge. To enhance the reusability of knowledge, first the KS process identify existing and accessible knowledge, in order to transfer and apply this knowledge to solve specific tasks better, faster and cheaper than they would. They also described that KS is more than the closing of performance gaps and the sharing of stocks of knowledge. It is also about bridging situations of organizational interdependencies and thereby supporting ongoing organizational activities. The goal of KS can either be to create new knowledge by differently combining existing knowledge or to become better at exploiting existing knowledge (Christensen, 2007).

According to Riesenberger (1998), KS is very important in organizations success since it enables: to learn about customers, to seek best practices, to recognize internal competencies and products, to discover emerging market trends, and to find competitive intelligence.

3. Methodology

3.1. Description of the Study Area

The study was conducted in DMUL and ASUL; Debre Markos University is one of the thirteen universities which were established by the federal democratic republic government of Ethiopia. Its foundation stone was laid in 1997 E.C/ 2005 G.C. The university is located two kilometers east from the central square of the town. It is laid out on 100 hectares. It is situated

in north western part of Ethiopia at Debre Markos town. Assosa University is one of the nine new universities which were established in 2003 E.C. It is found in the regional State of Benishangul-Gumuz located in Assosa Town in the western part of Ethiopia. The university is 2.5 KM in the west with the North of Assosa Town.

Library is an organization which is the center of knowledge; DMUL is found in Debre Markos University for the purpose of storing knowledge and giving service for the staffs and students of Debre Markos University or generally for the community of Debre Markos University; similarly ASUL is in Assosa University for the purpose of storing knowledge and giving service for the staffs and students of Assosa University or generally for the community of Assosa University.

3.2. Research design

The main objective of this study was investigating job satisfaction, awareness and existing knowledge sharing methods of DMUL and ASUL employees. To understand this, cross sectional surveys was employed because this was suitable to assess the job satisfaction, awareness and existing knowledge sharing methods of DMUL and ASUL employees. It also enabled the researcher to collect the necessary non obsolete data and information from respondents through questionnaire and interview; analyze them and draw inferences in more simplified form; made the results and discussion. Above all, this type of research design particularly helped to identify the gap between existing trends in order to solve the prevailing problems and bridge the gap.

3.3. Population of the Study

The population for the study were included all employees of the DMUL and ASUL. The two university libraries had a total of 190 employees. Out of this there were 148 employees in DMUL

and 42 employees in ASUL when the data collection was undertaken.

3.4. Sampling Techniques and Sample Size

Purposive random sampling method was used in the selection of DMUL and ASUL to find out the job satisfaction, awareness and existing knowledge sharing method of DMUL and ASUL employees.

3.5. Data Source and Data Type

The researcher used two sources of data to fulfill the objective of the study, i.e. Primary and secondary sources of data.

3.5.1. Primary data

Primary source of data used to gather relevant, adequate and accurate data. The primary data was collected from heads of the Library or Library Director through structured interview and from all available employees during data collection through questionnaires from DMUL and ASUL. The researcher used both closed ended and open ended questions in order to gather available data.

3.5.2. Secondary data

Secondary data was collected from the available reports, records, published and unpublished documents from the concerned offices mainly from the library directorate office. Internet was also used to search research related works and documents required to this study.

3.6. Method of Data Collection

The data collection was conducted by the data collectors in the presence and supervision of the researcher. The data collection tools specifically questionnaire was made; pretested and necessary modifications were made before the actual data

collection. The whole data collection procedure was closely supervised by the researcher.

3.6.1. Data collection tools
Both quantitative and qualitative data were gathered through data collection tools such as questionnaire, interviews, documents and observations.

3.7. Data Analysis
The collected data was processed using Statistical Package for Social Science (SPSS) version 20 software and it was analyzed using descriptive statistics (frequency and percentage) to identify the job satisfaction, awareness and existing knowledge sharing methods of employees in selected university libraries. Qualitative data was obtained through interviews from the library directorates of DMUL and ASUL and then results of the findings of qualitative data was displayed in the form of narrations or interpretations.

4. Results and Discussion

4.1. Job Satisfaction
The employees of DMUL and ASUL job satisfaction was assessed based on the employees' satisfaction or dissatisfaction with their current job who were worked there during the time of data collection. The result is displayed in figure 1 below:
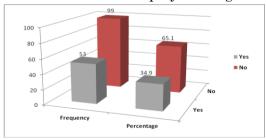

Figure 1: Job satisfactions of DMUL and ASUL employees

It is evident from the above figure 1 that only 53 (34.9%) of the respondents were satisfied with their current job, but the remaining 99 (65.1%) of the respondents were not satisfied with their current job. The reasons for the dissatisfaction of respondents in their current jobs are listed in the following table 2.

Table 2: Reasons of job dissatisfaction

Reasons for dissatisfaction in current job	Frequency	Percentage
Lack of further education or training	24	24.2
Lower salary	60	60.6
Lack of reward and recognition	5	5.1
Culture and structure of the library	6	6.1
Poor acceptability of the people for the profession	4	4
Others	-	-
Total	99	100

Table 2 shows the case of job dissatisfaction of DMUL and ASUL employees with their current job. The main cause of job dissatisfaction were lack of sufficient salary (60%), lack of further education or training (24.2%), culture and structure of the library (6.1%), lack of reward and recognition (5.1%) and poor acceptability of the people for the profession (4%). From the above one can say that the main problem of the job dissatisfaction of DMUL and ASUL employees was the lack of sufficient salary.

The researcher wrote the following what one of DMUL respondent told him during data collection.

The management is very strict and there is no individual freedom and motivation at the same time employees have higher workload. Even the administrative body does not recognize the workload and there is no incentive or benefit what we work (without fair salary). The duration of work time in the library is not convenient for the librarian and lack of good governance. In short, unlike developed country, being librarian is not recognized well even by the government, but it is a respectful work for me.

4.2. Awareness of DMUL and ASUL Employees about Knowledge Sharing and Its Benefits

The awareness of DMUL and ASUL employees about KS and its benefits is important to the success and competency of the library or the organization. The main purpose of knowing the awareness of DMUL and ASUL employees about knowledge sharing and its benefits used to clarify their perceptive level about knowledge sharing and its benefits in their day to day working activity. Table 3 shows DMUL and ASUL employees' response about the awareness of knowledge sharing and its benefits. Each statement is measured based on a five level Likert scale as a value of 1 was assigned to 'Strongly disagree', 2 'Disagree', 3 'Neutral', 4 'Agree', and 5 'Strongly agree'.

Table 3: DMUL and ASUL employees' response about the awareness of knowledge sharing and its benefits

Awareness of KS and its benefits	Frequency	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Knowledge sharing is the activity in which knowledge is exchanged among employees	N	6	17	36	64	29
	%	3.9	11.2	23.7	42.1	19.1
I share my know-how, information and knowledge to my colleagues	N	9	14	26	63	40
	%	5.9	9.2	17.1	41.5	26.3
I share my working experience to all my colleagues	N	10	14	34	62	32
	%	6.6	9.2	22.4	40.8	21.0
My colleagues are willing to share information with other colleagues all the time voluntarily	N	17	22	45	50	18
	%	11.2	14.5	29.6	32.9	11.8
I communicate with my colleagues in teams or groups for sharing information and knowledge	N	3	27	30	53	39
	%	2.0	17.8	19.7	34.9	25.6
Through knowledge sharing; innovation and discovery increases	N	15	17	18	58	44
	%	9.9	11.2	11.8	38.2	28.9
I get satisfaction from knowledge sharing	N	12	20	17	60	43
	%	7.9	13.1	11.2	39.5	28.3
Through knowledge sharing; knowledge is developed and re-used by many people	N	9	16	19	56	52
	%	5.9	10.5	12.5	36.9	34.2
There is knowledge sharing culture in library	N	30	34	33	38	17
	%	19.7	22.4	21.7	25.0	11.2
		8	16	11	61	56

If knowledge sharing developed the library become more effective, competitive and give quality service	N %	5.3	10.5	7.2	40.1	36.9

As it is shown in the above table 3, 29 (19.1%) of the respondents strongly agreed and 64 (42.1%) respondents agreed on the statement 'knowledge sharing is the activity in which knowledge is exchanged among employees' but 17 (11.2%) of the respondents disagreed and 6 (3.9%) respondents strongly disagreed and also 36 (23.7%) of the respondents were neither agreed/strongly agreed nor disagreed/strongly disagreed.

Correspondingly 40 (26.3%) of the respondents strongly agreed and 63 (41.5%) respondents agreed on the statement 'I share my knowhow, information and knowledge to my colleagues' but 14 (9.2%) of the respondents disagreed and 9 (5.9%) respondents strongly disagreed and also 26 (17.1%) didn't choose either of agree/strongly agree or disagree/strongly disagree. 32 (21.0%) of the respondents strongly agreed and 62 (40.8%) respondents agreed on the statement 'I share my working experience to all my colleagues' but 14 (9.2%) of the respondents disagreed and 10 (6.6%) respondents strongly disagreed and also 34 (22.4) of the respondents did not agree/strongly agree or disagree/strongly disagree. 18 (11.8%) of the respondents strongly agreed and 50 (32.9%) respondents agreed on the statement 'my colleagues are willing to share information with other colleagues all the time voluntarily' but 22 (14.5%) of the respondents disagreed and 17 (11.2%) respondents strongly disagreed and also 45 (29.6%) of the respondents did not agree/strongly agree or disagree/strongly disagree. 39 (25.6%) of the respondents strongly agreed and 53 (34.9%) respondents agreed on the statement 'I communicate with my colleagues in teams or groups for sharing information and knowledge' but 27 (17.8%) of the respondents disagreed and 3 (2.0%) respondents strongly disagreed and also 30 (19.7%) of the respondents neither agreed/strongly agreed nor disagreed/strongly disagreed.

Accordingly 44 (28.9%) of DMUL and ASUL employee respondents strongly agreed and 58 (38.2%) respondents agreed on the statement 'through knowledge sharing; innovation and discovery increases' however 17 (11.2%) of the respondents disagreed and 15 (9.9%) respondents strongly disagreed and also the rest of the respondents were neutral. Likewise 43 (28.3%) of the respondents strongly agreed and 60 (39.5%) respondents agreed on the statement 'I get satisfaction from knowledge sharing' but 20 (13.1%) respondents disagreed and 12 (7.9%) respondents strongly disagreed and also 17 (11.2%) respondents chose neutral. 52 (34.2%) of respondents strongly agreed and 56 (36.9%) respondents agreed on the statement 'through knowledge sharing; knowledge is developed and re-used by many people' but 16 (10.5%) respondents disagreed and 9 (5.9%) respondents strongly disagreed and also 19 (12.5%) respondents chose neutral. In another way 30 (19.7%) of the respondents strongly disagreed and 34 (22.4%) respondents disagreed on the statement 'there is knowledge sharing culture in my library' but 38 (25.0%) of the respondents agreed and 17 (11.2%) respondents strongly agreed and also 33 (21.7%) respondents were neutral. While 56 (36.9%) of the respondents strongly agreed and 61 (40.1%) respondents agreed on the statement 'If knowledge sharing developed, the library become more effective, competitive and give quality service' but 16 (10.5%) respondents disagreed and 8 (5.3%) respondents strongly disagreed and also the remaining 11 (7.2%) of the respondents chose neutral.

To get additional information on this the researcher had approached the heads of the library or library directorates. The researcher wrote the following from the heads of the library or library directorates what they explained about knowledge sharing and its benefits during the interview.

Knowledge sharing is the exchange of information (data) between employees, branches, head and librarian in order to achieve the mission and vision of the library. The benefits of

knowledge sharing with library perspective: to enhance customer satisfaction through exchange of information between them, used to make a competitive library through well-organized data and well informed librarian, employer will upgrade their knowledge by exchanging their knowledge each other, employees develop team working, and employees develop the way what they can communicate each other.

In general table 3 shows that more than half of the respondents had awareness about knowledge sharing and its benefits but it does not mean that it is enough what these employees know about knowledge sharing and its benefits; it needs more work so that all employees know about it. In contrary more respondents disagreed/strongly disagreed on the statement 'there is knowledge sharing culture in the library'; this indicates that DMUL and ASUL culture has a problem on knowledge sharing.

4.3. Existing Knowledge Sharing Methods

Existing knowledge sharing methods were the methods used by DMUL and ASUL employees when this data were collected. The following table 4 shows that the agreement and disagreement of respondents for the existing knowledge sharing methods among DMUL and ASUL employees in the library; correspondingly each statement is measured based on a five level Likert scale as a value of 1 was assigned to 'Strongly disagree', 2 'Disagree', 3 'Neutral', 4 'Agree', and 5 'Strongly agree'.

Table 4: DMUL and ASUL existing knowledge sharing methods among employees

Existing KS Methods	Frequency	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neutral	Agree	Strongly agree
Currently, I share knowledge with my colleagues via meeting weekly or monthly in the library	N %	29 19.1	32 21.1	37 24.3	43 28.3	11 7.2
The library employees used Phone to share knowledge occasionally	N %	37 24.3	31 20.4	35 23.0	39 25.7	10 6.6
I share knowledge informally with my colleagues	N %	18 11.8	27 17.8	36 23.7	55 36.2	16 10.5
The library management prepares training for employees to share knowledge	N %	54 35.5	28 18.5	26 17.1	35 23.0	9 5.9
I use e-mail, chat, or online communication to share knowledge with my colleagues	N %	45 29.6	19 12.5	35 23.0	35 23.0	18 11.9
My colleagues share knowledge with each other during break time	N %	20 13.2	35 23.0	30 19.7	56 36.9	11 7.2
The library has a database/website or manual manuscripts to store and share knowledge for employees	N %	58 38.2	28 18.4	25 16.4	32 21.1	9 5.9

The table 4 given above shows the existing knowledge sharing methods of DMUL and ASUL employees. It is clear that 29 (19.1%) respondents strongly disagreed and 32 (21.1%) respondents disagreed on the statement 'currently I share knowledge with my colleagues via meeting weekly or monthly in the library' but 43 (28.3%) of the respondents were agreed and 11 (7.2%) respondents strongly agreed and also the rest 37

(24.3%) neither agreed/strongly agreed nor disagreed/strongly disagreed.

In the same way 37 (24.3%) of respondents strongly disagreed and 31 (20.4%) respondents disagreed on the statement 'the library employees used Phone to share knowledge occasionally' but 39 (25.7%) respondents agreed and 10 (6.6%) respondents strongly agreed and also the other 35 (23.0%) of the respondents were not agreed/strongly agreed or disagreed/strongly disagreed. On the other hand 16 (10.5%) respondents strongly agreed and 55 (36.2%) respondents agreed on the statement 'I share knowledge informally with my colleagues' however 27 (17.8%) of the respondents disagreed and 18 (11.8%) respondents strongly disagreed and also 36 (23.7%) respondents were neutral.

54 (35.5%) of the respondents were strongly disagreed and 28 (18.5%) respondents disagreed on the statement 'the library management prepares training for employees to share knowledge' however 35 (23.0%) respondents agreed and 9 (5.9%) respondents strongly agreed and also 26 (17.1%) respondents were nonaligned regardng this statement. In the same way 45 (29.6%) respondents strongly disagreed and 19 (12.5%) respondents disagreed on the statement 'I use e-mail, chat, or online communication to share knowledge with my colleagues' but 35 (23.0%) respondents agreed and 18 (11.9%) respondents strongly agreed and also 35 (23.0%) of the respondents were neutral.

In addition 11 (7.2%) respondents strongly agreed and 56 (36.9%) respondents agreed on the statement 'my colleagues share knowledge with each other during break time' but 35 (23.0%) respondents disagreed and 20 (13.2% respondents) strongly disagreed and also the remaining 30 (19.7%) respondents were neutral. Contrarily 58 (38.2%) respondents strongly disagreed and 28 (18.4%) respondents disagreed on the statement 'the library has a database/website or manual manuscripts to store and share knowledge for employees' but 32

(21.1%) respondents agreed and 9 (5.9%) respondents strongly agreed and the remaining 25 (16.4%) of the respondents were nonaligned.

And also regarding this opinion of the heads of the library or library directorates were sought and the researcher wrote the following answers for these interview questions 'what are the existing knowledge sharing methods that employees used in the library? How does the new employee get familiar with their job?'

Knowledge sharing takes place from top to bottom; it implies experienced librarians and heads of branches share information for both non experienced and newly employed librarians. Knowledge sharing also takes place among employees with in various sections and shifts as individual ability. Employees also can get basic technical concepts from the internet about cataloging and classification and other technical issues of a library. And also new employees were familiarized in the following ways: 1. Heads or respective bosses of a new employee introduces and explains about their jobs and finally he/she were given a job description, 2. New employees were assigned with experienced once so as to learn from the experienced enployees.

In general, the responses of DMUL and ASUL employees shows that there were few existing knowledge sharing methods in DMUL and ASUL among employees to share knowledge with each other for their day to day work improvement and for the success of the library. For example, based on the respondents' answer most of the respondents were sharing knowledge informally with their colleagues and also they share knowledge about work during break time. However sharing knowledge through meeting, training and database or manual manuscript was not used much by respondents.

Conclusion

Lack of further education, lower salary, lack of reward and recognition, poor acceptability of the people for the profession, culture and structure of the library were some of the reasons for the dissatisfaction of their current job during data collection. And most of DMUL and ASUL employees share knowledge informally with their colleagues.

Acknowledgement

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