

The Role of Knowledge Management in Ensuring The Quality of Higher Education An Applied Study in The Iraqi Private Universities

Aldurrah Waleed Khalid ^{1, a}

¹PhDStudent, University of Craiova.

a)Corresponding author email: w.aldurra@yahoo.com

Article History: Received:19 August 2021; Revised:20 August 2021; Accepted: 23 August 2021; Published online: 28 August 2021

Abstract: We do not have to stand in the era of knowledge and be surprised by the boom brought about by knowledge and its value, which has become one of the value of water and air for the life of any person or system in this society that is built, continues and thrives with knowledge. The complexity of which is directly in line with the need for knowledge, and the significant increase in interest in knowledge and the expansion of its roles is an optimum evidence and another strong confirmation of the best knowledge for humanity to reach this degree of thinking and civilized sophistication, where knowledge - as a priority of priorities - is targeted, applied and managed as well. Knowledge management is not something new, because the exchange and sharing of knowledge has been known since time immemorial, and books, education and training were among the tools for its delivery by those who would like to publish it, but what is new here is the great and surprising interest in knowledge management in the last two decades in particular, with the increasing acceleration in the movement of innovation And scientific and technological creativity, which has turned into an organized knowledge activity of an institutional nature, where realizing the importance of knowledge and owning it is not a criterion for excellence, but rather it is a wise act with it so that it becomes useful. Thus, knowledge management came to the present, ready to fly with its distinctive applications for the future, especially when the computer began to identify it after it was only fluent in the language of data and information. What is knowledge management? Can knowledge actually be managed? Especially in light of its intangibility and the fact that the person who owns it is not a means for conducting experiments, it is the goal for which experiments are conducted. Why this sudden interest in her? What are its documents, principles, strategies, operations... and other questions that we are trying to answer in order to understand the peculiarities of knowledge management, starting with an attempt to know the background of the remarkable transformation that resulted in knowledge management.

Keywords:knowledge management, quality.

1. Introduction

Knowledge management has become one of the vital topics in management science. This was helped by the opportunities and risks created by globalization, in addition to the communications revolution, which formed a catalyst for the spread and expansion of knowledge management, as it provided a lot of information that led to a wide spread and a great understanding of the concept of customer needs. Business organizations have become increasingly focused on building a competitive structure for intellectual capital assets in the world of business organizations, as it is an effective competitive weapon in the light of the knowledge economy.

Business organizations are constantly working to achieve their goals and maintain their survival and growth, and this pushes them constantly towards developing and modifying their strategies in line with modern developments. Inside or outside the institutions, and these efforts lead to finding new opportunities, and to achieving progress and continuous development.

Where knowledge is meant in the context of the world of business organizations as a comprehensive mixture "a comprehensive mixture of experience, values, forward-looking information and expert insights that provide a framework for assessing and deciding new experiences and information."

Given the importance of knowledge in the world of business organizations, the importance of its management has emerged, as knowledge management is the systematic process of directing the balance of knowledge and achieving its advancement in the company. It is an entrance to add and create value through the mix and synthesis between the elements of knowledge in order to find better knowledge combinations than it is as data, information or single knowledge. Where the importance of knowledge management in business organizations has emerged to achieve the following goals:

1. Building and developing the capabilities required to deal with changes and increasing the identification and anticipation of change problems at an early stage to allow management to prepare to confront them.
2. Unleashing the intellectual energies and mental abilities of individuals at all levels, and contributing to raising the efficiency of operations and improving productivity.
3. Creating opportunities for the growth and development of the institution, and indicators commensurate with its capabilities.
4. Achieving integration between the capabilities of creative human resources with knowledge on the one hand, and the requirements of communication and information technologies on the other hand.
5. Supporting the administration in initiating the processes of intellectual renewal by spreading the old concepts and methods and acquiring the new ones through receiving new concepts, experiences and techniques and following them and describing them in the organization's operations.
6. Providing a positive atmosphere that motivates the knowledgeable workers to release their latent knowledge and make it available to the institution, as it assures them that the knowledge level is the basis for determining their job rank and the powers and privileges they enjoy.
7. Supporting the organization's efforts to restore its balance in the event that it is exposed to crises and problems or facing major opportunities that upset the organization's balance.

The applications of knowledge as a concept are not limited to productive business organizations, but apply to various service sectors, and education is one of the important service sectors, and the focus will be on the characteristics of the teaching staff and the characteristics of the information technology infrastructure in the Iraqi private universities.

In view of the expansion of the university education sector in Iraq during the past two decades, as the number of universities in Iraq reached 80, 45 of which are private universities (the official website of the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research)

The subject of knowledge as capital for universities and the management of this knowledge has become of great importance to achieve the highest possible level of quality to enable us to compete with other universities inside and outside Iraq.

Therefore, this research comes to determine the nature of the relationship between knowledge management in private Iraqi universities and the levels of quality in them. The focus of this research will be on measuring the impact of a very important variable of knowledge management in raising quality levels in Iraqi private universities.

Research Methodology

1- Research problem:

Although knowledge is one of the old concepts used in the world of thought and philosophy, the implications of this concept have evolved and expanded to include other aspects that overlapped with modern administrative methods, and became an essential component of business organizations strategies. In the 2004 evaluation, 500 universities were selected, and the list did not include any Arab university, and the reason for this is because the bases adopted in the evaluation of Western universities follow contexts far from the foundations of Arab universities.

And based on the increasing importance of knowledge management and the acceleration of its application in private Iraqi universities and the challenges these universities face and the intensity of competition and their quest to reach competitive advantage through achieving gains and increasing customer satisfaction and improving the quality of their educational services and raising the level of their faculty members In addition to raising both the

research services it provides and the service of the surrounding communities, it is necessary to adopt the knowledge management approach because of its importance in achieving universities for a competitive advantage and high value.

2- Research Hypothesis

In light of the research problem and its questions, the following main hypothesis was formulated, which will be tested, and conclusions and recommendations drawn:

(There is no statistically significant relationship between the characteristics enjoyed by faculty members (people of knowledge) and quality assurance in private Iraqi universities)

3- Research objectives and importance

The importance of the research is due to the fact that there is an increasing trend in companies and institutions in general, and in particular in business companies in the current period, which is to transform their businesses that are knowledge-based businesses and transform their own companies into knowledge-based companies or knowledge-creating companies such as educational institutions as these companies have proven A remarkable success in its management of knowledge, and the result of this good management was superiority, progress and competition with major companies in their fields.

4- The main objective of this research is to:

Explanation of the effect of applying the concept of knowledge management in ensuring quality in the Iraqi private universities, depending on the characteristics of the teaching staff working in them and the characteristics of the information technology infrastructure in those universities.

Therefore, the importance of this research is:

1. Opening the way for those concerned and workers in the administrations of Iraqi higher education institutions, to apply the concepts of knowledge management in improving the quality of education in Iraqi higher education institutions.
2. Statement of the relationship of the characteristics of the teaching staff in quality assurance in the Iraqi private universities.
3. Explaining the relationship of the information technology infrastructure in quality assurance in the Iraqi private universities.
4. It is hoped that this research will produce a set of recommendations aimed at clarifying the importance of knowledge management with its specific variables in improving quality levels in Iraqi private universities.

conceptual aspect

Origin and development of knowledge management:

Knowledge management is a modern term that appeared for the first time in the titles of research papers published in international journals in 1986, and the observer does not fail to note that this term was born at the beginning of what is called the era of information and communication, and it grew and grew steadily with its growth and prosperity. But we find that the authors' writings trace the roots of the talk about knowledge management to the thirties of the last century in terms of mental processes, cognitive activities and problem solving, but the proposal was theoretical at the time. its successful initiatives. Regarding its theoretical beginnings, we find that the first person to use the term "Knowledge management" was "Marchand Don" at the beginning of the eighties as "the final stage 1 of the hypotheses related to the development of information systems." This is a reference to a turning point in information management, but the concept It remained ambiguous because it did not include knowledge management procedures, and at the same stage Drucker Peter predicted that "the typical business will be knowledge-based, and that organizations will be knowledge makers who direct their performance

through feedback to their colleagues² and from clients” i.e. shift work in Organization into knowledge work. (Al-Ali et al.: 56:2009).

The concept of knowledge management:

The concept of knowledge management is one of the modern concepts in management science, which increased interest in it during the last two decades, which led to the emergence of many definitions of that concept, which differed according to the researchers’ specializations and their different points of view. 83)

A- Informational entrance: includes data processing activities, information flow management, database development, and documentation of business activities in the organization.

B- Technical approach: It is concerned with building and developing knowledge management systems based on information technology, such as data mining systems, data warehouses, expert systems, online analytical processing systems, web-based information systems and others.

C- Cultural approach: It is concerned with the behavioral or intellectual dimensions of knowledge management by addressing the fields of collective learning, continuous learning, and building organizations seeking to learn. In all of these entrances, knowledge management seeks to provide solutions to management by investing knowledge resources, building a memory of knowledge, and focusing on knowledge exchange and participation in it through a systematic approach.

According to Delong (6:2004, 2004) that knowledge management is: “the system of administrative activities based on containing, assembling and formulating everything related to the critical and important activities of the organization in order to raise the efficiency of performance and ensure the continuity of the development of the institution in the face of the surrounding variables.” In other words: “It is a process An organization that aims to coordinate and integrate data and information processing operations, technology used, human resources, and factors surrounding the organization.

Al-Aklaby, 2008:26, concluded a definition of knowledge management as: “that management that works to identify what individuals (whether employees, consultants or beneficiaries) have of complete knowledge in their minds and minds, or to collect and find the knowledge that appears in records and documents.” And organizing them in a way that facilitates their use and participation among the employees of the institution in order to achieve raising the level of performance and making work successful in the best methods and at the lowest possible costs.

. Al-Zamil (2006) defined it as: “a set of activities and processes that help the organization to generate, obtain, select, use, organize and disseminate knowledge, and work to transform knowledge, including data, information, experiences, trends and capabilities into products (goods or services) and use the outputs of knowledge management in the industry. Decisions, solving problems, drawing learning processes, and building an integrated system for strategic planning.

Importance of knowledge management:

From the results of a study prepared by Consulting XPMG, using a questionnaire distributed to 423 organizations in the United Kingdom, Europe and USA. 81% of the managers in these organizations said that they have knowledge management programs, while 38% and 30% of the respondents indicated that they are in the process of implementing knowledge management programs and in the process of preparing these programs, while there are 13% of managers ² who said they are doing now Examines or analyzes the need for knowledge management software.

The previous example shows the sweep of knowledge management every organization that seeks to stay in the racetrack, not only as a concept, but as actual practices that have proven infinite merit in those organizations. The importance of knowledge management in the organization and its consequences can be summarized in the following points:

Knowledge management is a systematic and integrative process for coordinating the organization's activities in the direction of achieving its goals.

Enhance the organization's ability to improve organizational performance based on experience and knowledge, while motivating the organization to renew itself and face environmental changes.

Knowledge management is a tool for effective organizations to invest their intellectual capital by making access to implicit knowledge accessible.

It is a stimulating tool for organizations to encourage the creative capabilities of their human resources.

It is an opportunity that supports the utilization of all tangible and intangible assets, and leads to reducing costs and obtaining a permanent competitive advantage for the organization.

- Knowledge management encourages managers to define strategic goals related to creativity and innovation in order to survive, and to move from individual knowledge based on intelligence to collective knowledge through the exchange and valorization of knowledge.

Contribute to maximizing the value of knowledge itself by focusing on the content.

- According to "Ermime. LJ", knowledge management suddenly imposed itself in the reality of the organization, as knowledge represents intellectual capital of economic value, a strategic source for improving competitive advantage, and a factor for the stability and survival of the institution in a climate characterized by intense competition, where transfer, dissemination, and communication are carried out. Knowledge of using new technologies applications, as it is a long-term program based on strategic management that works on evaluating the knowledge available in the institution.

- The issue of knowledge management in the organization is an issue of struggle for survival, which is determined by its ability to renew its knowledge instead of outdated ones, so knowledge here becomes the disease and the cure. (Najm: 2006:43)

Knowledge management goals:

Knowledge management aims to help organizations achieve the following basic goals:

Building and developing the organization's ability to deal with changes and increase its sense of harbingers of change and its anticipation at an early time that allows management to prepare for confrontation, whether by investing opportunities or avoiding threats.

Creating opportunities for the organization's growth and development at rates commensurate with its capabilities and available opportunities, by deepening the use of the results of science and renewable technology products as well as the accumulated experience of its members.

- Supporting the administration in initiating the process of intellectual renewal by discarding the old concepts and methods and acquiring the new ones, i.e. leaving the old intellectual framework Unlearning, then receiving good concepts, experiences and techniques, absorbing them and employing them in the operations of the organization, thus achieving organizational learning.

Providing the vital knowledge necessary to activate the enablers in the models of quality and excellence so that the desired results are achieved.

Providing an appropriate climate that motivates knowledge workers to release their latent knowledge and make it available to the organization, as well as push them to develop and develop their knowledge, which confirms that the knowledge level is the basis for determining job grades and the subsequent powers and benefits.

- Supporting the organization's efforts to restore its balance in the event of any confusion, and in its renewed knowledge balance lies alternative solutions using advanced and guaranteed methods.

- Unleashing the intellectual energies of the organization's members at all levels, and this leads to the efficiency and skill of the organization and gives it a competitive advantage

. From the above, if these and other points serve as goals and objectives that the organization seeks to achieve, then knowledge management here is the best way to achieve and embody them, so the practice of all its applications is all aimed at achieving those goals, so that if we take into account the advantages and characteristics of knowledge, dealing with them in itself, it requires conditions and principles that everyone who wishes to effectively and correctly implement them must be guided by in order to reach the level of best practices. (Al-Aklabi, 2008:27).

Knowledge Management Principles:

Knowledge management principles are rules that should be recognized in order to guide dealing with knowledge management, but these principles are not necessary and fixed rules, but rather they represent lessons learned by practitioners in this field, and they constitute the keys to the successful implementation of knowledge management projects.

- The essence of knowledge management is to invest in knowledge assets through a set of processes that represent a life cycle for that knowledge in the organization in order to achieve the largest possible return, and many leading organizations spend a respectable percentage of their wills in this regard.

From this investment, we await a combination of solutions that must be integrated from the human and technical point of view, because knowledge has a social and technical context.

- Knowledge management has a political content - despite the abstraction of knowledge - where politics meets knowledge as a result of the fundamental transformation of power from matter to knowledge and from muscles to mind.

It is not possible to invest knowledge without the presence of a team of managers who undertake the tasks and processes of knowledge management, not only this, but also to create the infrastructure and superstructure of the organization for the best practices of knowledge management.

- As we mentioned more than once about the complexity of the phenomenon of knowledge, any attempt to model and frame it in mathematical or quantitative templates is doomed to failure. It is true that these models are useful, but they cannot surround the movement of knowledge and its environmental relations, and instead of these static models, knowledge management benefits from models of insight into knowledge. Its flow paths and cluster points are like knowledge maps.

- One of the important points in the issue of knowledge management is participating in it, which is more difficult than its production, especially those related to the experience and individual skills gained, and is the biggest challenge for the organization, where all its interests and plans are directed to it in order to overcome the psychological obstacles that prevent participation in it.

- Access to knowledge is only the beginning. Knowledge management cannot perform its tasks without an incubating environment and an organizational culture that encourages communication and sharing of knowledge with transparency and ease. This is a condition that precedes the work of knowledge management and must be the beginning of it in all organizations.

- Knowledge management activities do not have tangible and visible ends, unlike other departments (production management, marketing management...) that have clear boundaries, which are mainly represented in clear and targeted operations inputs and outputs, simply because the nature of the knowledge management process is structurally intertwined with the process Administrative and with every functional activity carried out by the organization.

- From the point of view of economists, they emphasize the difference of knowledge management from the management of material resources; They are not depreciated when used according to the law of increasing returns,

unlike the law of diminishing returns applied to material resources. Investment in the management of material resources usually turns into physical and tangible assets that remain within the institution, while investment in knowledge management usually turns into moral assets embodied in the head Intellectual or cognitive property. In the past, the management of material resources deals with knowledge as a tangible asset according to the criterion of intangible economic return owned by the institution, which provides a measurable material value, as is the case in patents, privileges, reputation or goodwill, which makes it possible to estimate its value in accounting. However, with knowledge management, the concept of knowledge as an intangible asset has become much broader than that, as it also includes the experiences and intellectual capabilities of workers, and their relationships within the regulatory environment and the competitive environment.

The aforementioned principles precisely define the basic lines of knowledge management, but they are not sufficient alone to achieve knowledge management, as this requires, in the first place, the availability of a set of necessary elements that are the engine of knowledge and its management at the level of the organization. (Obeid: 60:2010).

Quality Assurance Concept:-

Quality assurance is one of the modern concepts that emerged in the eighties in the field of quality control of the produced goods or services provided and the integrated control of production.

This concept focuses on consumer or customer satisfaction, gaining his loyalty and increasing his confidence in the products provided to him by both industrial and service organizations. Or the servants are evaluated, are they usable, that the production process falls within the limits of control and the permissible limits, and that the procedures, instructions and policies for the proper completion of work at all stages.

There are many definitions that dealt with quality assurance, as it is defined as the producer's readiness for goods or services in the undertaking that the goods he produces or the services he provides conform to the design, specifications and standards established in terms of quality and that they meet the requirements of the consumer and satisfy his needs and desires. Satisfaction is achieved, or it is all the planned and regular activities that are carried out within the quality system that prove when needed to provide sufficient confidence that the entity has fulfilled the quality requirements. The entity can be a process, product, organization or any combination of them.

Shiba (1993) defined it as "those organized or planned actions necessary to give adequate confidence that the product will meet the quality requirements".

In order to achieve quality in products and services, the institution that provides people with products and services must take various measures to ensure that the product or service is of good quality. These measures aimed at achieving good quality are called "quality assurance".

(Al-Tai and others, 2008) showed that the concept of quality assurance is based on operational processes and joined, and it consists of three main elements:

1- Setting standards for the product or service. A standard is a specific statement that is required for a product or service, and is used as a basis for measuring the level of quality. And product or service specifications may include several standards to be adhered to.

2- Implementation of production or provision of service so that a product or service is obtained according to previously established standards on a regular basis.

3- Creating confidence in the customer or the user of the products and services, as a result of the previous two elements, that what was promised will always be fulfilled (that is, everything that the production was carried out or the service provided).

Quality in higher education institutions:

The concept of total quality in education has two meanings, one realistic and the other sensory. Realistic is the educational institution's commitment to achieving real, well-known standards and indicators, such as promotion rates, quantitative internal efficiency rates, and education cost rates. As for sensory, it is based on the feelings and

feelings of the recipients of the educational service, such as students and parents. Their affairs, i.e. the extent to which the beneficiary is satisfied with the level, efficiency and effectiveness of the educational service. The concept of quality management in the educational process is based on the management and control of employees in the facility or the entity based on the educational process to ensure quality at each stage of the educational process. The concept of total quality of education has been affected by recent changes such as international economic competition, high rates of enrollment in education, the emergence of modern technologies in information systems and production methods, and the increased contribution of the private sector to education with a profitable business view. Quality control in the educational process means "identifying weaknesses after completing the educational process through external and internal tests, writing reports and preparing studies by noting errors that may occur in the educational process."

In general, total quality management in education is in the status of the beneficiaries of the educational process, and emphasizes the values and visions, and the management of the educational process closely, with attention to managing people, granting powers to teachers, and raising their pride in working in this educational institution. Education is a profession that requires professionalism and necessary standards and conditions. To practice it, with a review of the economic situation of the teacher and the appropriate social status for him, and the incentives that attract the best qualified human competencies for this profession, with the adoption of the licensing system for the profession of teaching and its renewal after a specified period of time, and increasing their internal concern for the future of this institution, and that the information is based on On facts and away from rumors. (Abu Fara, 2004: 3-5 .)

The application of quality management in higher education:

Public education needs higher levels of quality to achieve the needs and trends appropriate to the society, and the industrial field was the first beneficiary in the application of such standards. Then, the health and educational field followed the same steps after changing the name from the national awards for quality to the international recognition certificates in the field Health, by other names in the educational field. The educational sectors in the United States of America, for example, used the Malcolm Boulderge model used in industry with a slight modification to it to apply it in education, as well as in Europe, where the European model of quality was used and used in the field of industry after making the appropriate adjustments.

Quality has become a slogan and a demand, and educational institutions are under great pressure to use quality as a standard for the educational product as a result of the internal orientation towards quality after the establishment of the idea of education economics and considering education as an investment and not a consumption. The American National Institute defines quality standards in education as "the knowledge base that the graduate of the educational process uses to solve issues related to the problems of the field of work through the functions of the administrative process, which are planning, organizing, staffing, directing and controlling." (Al-Rabi'i: 2008: 60)

Quality management standards in education:

It is important to adopt international standards for the application of quality in public education through specific standards, some of them for the administrative field, others for the educational field, based on the administrative standard that is summarized in the mission and goals, represented in:

- Universal quality system, and it is a feature of modern times
- Quality is linked to productivity and production improvement.
- The quality system is comprehensive in all fields.
- Strengthening the quality of the school improvement process.
- Develop leadership and management skills for tomorrow's leaders.
- Increasing work and reducing waste or wastage.

- Optimal use of material and human resources.

Among the educational and pedagogical standards are the following:

- Standards related to students: including: the ratio of the number of students to teachers, the average cost per person, and services provided to them.
- Standards related to teachers: such as the extent to which they contribute to community service, their professional culture, and their respect to their students.
- Standards related to the curriculum: such as the quality of the curriculum, its level and content, and the extent to which the curriculum method is related And his style in reality.
- Standards related to school administration: such as: leaders' commitment to quality, good human relations, and the selection of administrators and their training.
- Standards related to educational administration: such as: delegation of authority, and choosing the right man in the place Appropriate, and away from tribal and regional.
- Criteria related to material capabilities: such as: the ability of the building to achieve the goals, and the extent to which students benefit From the school library, devices, tools and techniques.
- Standards related to the relationship between the school and the community: such as: the extent to which the school fulfills the needs of the surrounding community and participates in solving its problems, and the interaction between the school with its human and intellectual resources and the community with its productive and service sectors.

The quality system is able to shift from the familiar traditional administrative pattern that focuses on individual work to the modern administrative pattern that depends on institutional work through the work team and focuses on new and innovative work methods in order to satisfy the beneficiaries. (<https://mawdoo3.com>)

References.

- 1- Al-Ali, Abdul-Sattar, and others 2009: "The Introduction to Knowledge Management", second edition, Dar Al-Maseer Amman, Jordan.
- 2- Al-Aklabi, Ali Theeb 2008: "Knowledge Management in Libraries and Information Centers", Al-Warraq Publishing and Distribution Corporation, Amman, Jordan.
- 3- Al-Zamil, Reem 2006: "Knowledge Management for an Arab Society Capable of Competitiveness", Digital World Magazine, No. <http://search.suhuf.net.sa/digimag/> (16).
- 4- Najm, Abboud 2005: "Knowledge Management Concepts, Strategies and Operations", Al-Warraq Publishing and Distribution Corporation, Amman, Jordan.
- 5- . Nagham Hussein Nima Obeid / Master of Business Administration / College of Administration and Economics - University of Baghdad / Ph.D. in Business Administration / College of Administration and Economics - University of Baghdad, 2010
- 6- Al-Tai, Al-Abadi, Total Quality Management in University Education, Amman: Dar Al-Warraq for Publishing and Distribution, 2008.
- 7- Youssef Seif Ahmed Abu Fara, "An Analytical Study of the Reality of Quality Assurance of Education at Al-Quds University", a scientific paper prepared for the Conference on Quality in Palestinian University Education, Ramallah, Al-Quds University, July, 2004
- 8- LaahKhalaf Al-Rubaie, "Total Quality in Higher Education and the Possibilities of Its Application in Iraq", Unpublished Master's Thesis, Iraq, University of Baghdad, 2008.
- 9- Jamil Al-Barbari: "Developing the competencies of academic supervisors in university education in light of the concept of total quality management in Palestine." A scientific paper prepared for the Conference on Quality in Palestinian University Education, which was held by the Education Program and Quality Control Department at Al-Quds Open University in Ramallah during the period 3 5/7/2004.
- 10- Tammam Ismail Attia: New horizons in developing educational curricula - in light of the challenges of the twenty-first century, Cairo, Dar Al-Huda for Publishing and Distribution, 2000, p. 105
- 11- Maayah, Adel (2006): "Knowledge Management in Higher Education Institutions: International Experiences", Journal of Information Studies, No. (3), (pp. 143-157).

12- <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki>

13- <https://mawdoo3> .

14- Malhotra, Yogesh (2000): "Knowledge Assets In The Global Economy" Assessment of National Intellectual Capital, Journal of Global Information Management, July-Sep.