



## **A multilevel analysis for knowledge activities of academic librarians in Taiwan**

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### **ABSTRACT**

Knowledge management is implemented in many working environments; however, it is difficult to measure the effect of knowledge management and to distinguish the typology of knowledge activities. The aim of this study is to explore knowledge activities of information professionals from both individual and organizational level. Though information professionals include archivist, librarian, record manager, information system analyst, and so on, academic librarians are our main research target in this study.

After reviewing many literatures and interviewing several experts, a pre-test questionnaire with 76 questions was developed. The pre-test questionnaire was filled out by 237 e-news readers of Library Association of the Republic of China. The result of exploratory factor analysis deducted the number of questions and extracted the core factors in both levels. At the individual level, six factors were identified, which include knowledge acquisition, knowledge absorption, knowledge share, negative knowledge (knowledge hoarding, shirking, and appropriation), knowledge transfer, and knowledge diffusion; and contained a total of 25 questions. At the organization level, four factors were identified, which include knowledge growth, knowledge integration, knowledge depth, and knowledge width; and contained a total of 25 questions. In addition, creative organizational climate comprised by 18 questions were adopted to test the concurrent validity. The aforementioned questions comprised the formal questionnaire. Responses from 309 college librarians which were from 54 college and universities were used to conduct confirmatory factor technique. The scale from both individual level and organizational level demonstrated robust psychometric properties, with acceptable levels of reliability and validity.

The result of t-test analysis at the individual level indicated that directors and librarians with master degree showed higher level of knowledge acquisition, knowledge absorption, knowledge share, and knowledge transfer but lower level of negative knowledge than staff and librarians with bachelor degree. In addition, those people work more than five years showed higher level of knowledge transfer but lower level of negative knowledge than those people work less than five years. Creative organizational climate positively related to knowledge growth, knowledge integration, knowledge depth, and knowledge width in the organizational level.

This study also conducted the survey for the content of knowledge database in academic libraries. Over half of respondents report the following items included in their knowledge base, which include standard operating procedure, training materials, information sharing after attending a conference, patron's comments, etc. However, less than half of respondents check the following items, including the novice's manual, problem-solving cases and the improvement of quality assurance process.

Consequently, this study developed the scale for assessing knowledge activities, which could provide the overall picture of the effect of knowledge management of academic libraries in Taiwan. The measurement items needs to be re-examined in other working environment in the future in order to validate the generalization of the scale.