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KM Education in LIS Programs

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Abstract

This paper investigates the perceptions of the heads of 12 LIS schools about KM education. The heads from North America, Europe and Pacific region who consented to participate in this study had either been offering KM courses or had an apparent interest in these programs. Data about perceptions were gathered around the nature of their KM coursework, KM positions their graduates might target, interdisciplinary partnerships, strategic partnerships with industry, and practical difficulties in the introduction of KM courses. They were asked to pinpoint difficulties in the areas of faculty availability, student enrollment, resource availability, creation of partnerships, working with professional associations, and interactions with industry. There existed a strong interest in offering KM courses, cultivating collaborations with business and computing schools, and developing strategic partnerships with industry. These heads identified those problems that hindered their progress.

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KM Education in LIS Programs

Introduction

Several universities from different parts of the world have started offering knowledge management (KM) programs in the form of degrees, specializations or courses. These programs are offered in the schools of business, information systems, computer science, and library and information science (LIS). A number of surveys suggest that inter-disciplinary settings provide a better context for academic programs in the area of knowledge management. One of the natural domains for offering KM programs has been the setting of library and information science schools. Broadbent noted that librarians had excellent skills in codifying sources and making them available. Since KM is not owned by any single group, profession or industry, librarians needed to understand the multiple perspectives of other players [1]. Loughridge observed that many aspects of KM practice bear a close resemblance to well-established practices in librarianship and information management. However, in KM a greater emphasis was placed on knowledge elicitation, creation, group work, and greater involvement in organizational strategy development, which were the crucial capabilities for preparing librarians for wide-ranging and multi-role careers [2]. A hallmark study, known as TFPL Report [3], explored what roles and skills were required for effective implementation of knowledge management. The study was based on in-depth case studies, expert interviews, and consultation with approximately 500 international organizations. It was found that the involvement of information professionals in KM implementation at a strategic level was extremely rare, as the professionals lacked business understanding, breadth of required experience, and the needed mindset. They also lacked in initiative and risk-taking ability. They were more concerned with external information and to some extent the management of records and documents. In order for them to thrive in a KM environment, they had to develop confidence to apply their skills in unfamiliar situations; develop understanding of organizational strategies and challenges; comprehend the complex array of knowledge information available within an organization; develop new skills for working with knowledge teams; and, acquire attributes needed to succeed in knowledge culture.

LIS, since early 1990s, has traditionally been active in information management (IM) and has added these competencies to its curricula. However, LIS community has been unclear about the relationship of IM to KM. Davenport and Cronin viewed that majority of information professionals termed it as a semantic shift and did not comprehend the differences in the substance of the two disciplines [4]. Loughridge noted that differences in librarianship, information management, information resource management, and knowledge management had not been clearly conceived by information professionals [5]. Oxbrow & Abell and Southon & Todd reached similar conclusions about the prevalent confusion about IM and KM in professional ranks [6-7]. Broadbent clarified that KM enhances the use of organizational knowledge through sound practices of information management and organizational learning [8]. According to this view, KM is at least partial reincarnation or resurrection of familiar library and information management processes and procedures [9-10].

Realizing the need for developing specialized competencies among information professionals for playing effective role in KM, Srikantiah and Koenig compiled contributions from KM academics and practitioners. A common denominator was that there were distinct areas in which these

professionals could play an effective role [11]. Koenig, in another paper, discussed the possible settings of formal KM education and developed a checklist of those areas that could be better taught in LIS environment [12]. Koenig and Srikantiah observed that business organizations were now getting to realize the contribution these professionals could make in certain areas of knowledge management [13]. Heczel discussed the changes happening in the workplace for information professionals and proposed sets of knowledge, skills and personal attributes as these were related to the possible contributions of these professionals for their emerging roles, responsibilities, and rights in the KM era [14]. St. Clair asserted that information professionals faced an uncertain future and charted out a possible course for managers in information and knowledge management for targeting performance-centered learning in the new roles [15]. Conolly and Matarazzo asserted that shared collection knowledge of an organization was creating new values and the corporate information professionals were now charged with the mission to explore and implement new and innovative methods to encourage sharing and to better manage information [16]. Koenig also investigated the reasons why the KM systems had a high failure and disappointment rate and found that more than half of the failures were attributed to inadequate user training and education. He recommended that the librarian could play a vital role in user education and training as part of three KM strategies (i.e., harvesting, hunting, and harnessing/hypothesizing): teaching database searching; teaching database mining; training users on the use of current awareness services; and teaching the use of groupware [17].

Southon and Todd also noted that the concept of KM was reasonably familiar to most library professionals. KM was perceived to be complex, holistic, involving organizational issues and human and social processes [18]. In a subsequent paper, based on the same research, Southon and Todd identified what understandings were required if these professionals desired to have an effective KM role [19]. Loughridge viewed that KM differs significantly from the theory and practice of librarianship, information management, and information resource management. He maintained that KM required a new set of skills among LIS professionals if they wished to have any effective role in this domain [20]. Butler pointed out that many KM initiatives were seemingly concentrated in the familiar territories of LIS, but had not been initiated by the library professionals [21].

Ajiferku investigated the role of information professionals in knowledge management programs in Canadian companies. It was found that about 59% of the information professionals worked in organizations that had KM programs with about 86% of these professionals being involved in them. Many of them played key roles such as the design of the information architecture, development of taxonomy, or content management of the organization's intranet [22]. Marouf, in a similar study of the six leading companies in the United States, analyzed the contribution of information centers to KM initiatives. She reported that these centers were involved in taxonomy building, use of intranet for networking, creation of portals, development of best practice database, design of new search tools, and creation of virtual library. Many of these centers reported having a greater emphasis on literacy programs, extensive search services, variety of activities for information architecture, creation and maintenance of knowledge repositories, design of research portal, and development of comprehensive directories [23].

Davenport and Cano explained that knowledge work was about the acquisition, creation, packaging or application or reuse of knowledge. They pointed to the need of taking a process approach to knowledge work. He maintained that people involved in KM initiatives typically showed attributes of ambition and risk taking. These are not, by general consensus, the

characteristics of many people currently in the LIS profession. The fragmentation of the LIS profession and the diverse roles and activities associated with the management of enterprise-wide information, has resulted in the skills of the profession having little impact on KM environments [24].

Butler pointed out that many KM initiatives seemingly concentrated on familiar territories of LIS but had not been initiated by the library professionals. The following checklist of activities made a clear case:

- Creation of databases, such as best practices, expert directories and market intelligence

- Process management of knowledge gathering, storing and disseminating

- Development of knowledge centers

- Introduction of collaborative technologies such as Intranets or groupware

- Knowledge webs -- networks of experts who collaborate across and beyond the organization's functional and geographic boundaries [25].

Abram argued that only the knowledge environment can be managed and here librarians could play a vital role as a key catalyst in the knowledge continuum, a role of "transformational librarianship" [26]. Abell & Oxbrow linked knowledge management competencies to information management skills, highlighting the following:

- Identifying and acquiring internal information sources (information audit).

- Structuring organization's internal information.

- Sourcing, acquiring and evaluating external information.

- Integrating internal and external information.

- Enabling the timely delivery of relevant and usable information [27].

Against this expression of diverse views, it was considered imperative to examine how the LIS schools had responded to these developments related to KM. There was a need to examine if any of these schools had initiated imparting KM competencies to their graduates. Also, how these schools were preparing themselves for interdisciplinary collaboration and creation of strategic partnerships with industry. Additionally, it was pertinent to investigate the problems these schools faced if and as some of them undertook initiatives. Heads of the LIS programs were assumed to be most competent to reflect on these issues and this study was designed to analyze perspectives of the academic leadership of LIS about the instruction of KM in these schools.

Research Questions

This study was designed to analyze the perceptions and perspectives of the heads of LIS programs about offering of KM degrees/courses. Besides gathering information about the initiatives these programs had in KM education, a number of vital areas of KM education were

targeted for gathering input of these heads. Following specific questions were formulated for this study:

1. Which degree programs, coursework clusters/concentrations or courses related to KM are being offered by these schools?

2. Which KM positions would be targeted by the graduates of these programs?

3. What are the other strategic partners on campus with whom the LIS programs would like to collaborate for offering joint programs in KM?

4. What are the best methods and media for developing strategic alliances with knowledge intensive organizations where the students could have practical experience/exposure?

5. What problems do the LIS programs have in introducing KM education with regard to faculty, student enrollment, resource availability, cultivation of partnerships, working through professional associations, and interaction with business and public enterprises?

Procedures

Invitation for participation was sent to LIS deans and directors in North America, UK, and selected countries of the Pacific region. Since the study would interest only those heads of schools that are either currently having KM programs or they are seriously contemplating about taking such an initiative, the study was based on voluntary participation. Five heads expressed their desire to participate, yet they had constraints that inhibited their participation. Twelve heads, all located in universities, participated in the study. Three participants came from Pacific region, one was heading a British school, and all others headed schools in North America. It is apparent that these participants had an active interest in KM education programs within the fold of LIS programs. Even though the number of participants is small, the voluntary nature of participation and a common interest in the area of knowledge management make the results of this study interesting and useful. Names of the participant institutions are concealed for the sake of confidentiality.

Information from academic heads of LIS programs was sought through a web questionnaire about different aspects of KM education. It was assumed that their perspectives would be significant in analyzing the overall situation that prevailed about KM education and the possibilities about the conduct and collaboration of these programs. Additionally, web sites of these schools were examined to find out if these had any specific offerings in the KM area.

Analysis

1. KM Initiatives in LIS Programs

First question of this study was related to KM education initiatives these schools had taken. Web sites of the schools were also analyzed to find out if these programs contained any KM component at any level. Results have been tabulated and presented in Table 1.

Table 1

Knowledge Management Instruction in LIS Programs

N = 12

Academic Program	Number of Schools
Master's degree in KM	3
KM specialization in Master's degree (a number of courses in the KM track)	1
Coursework in Master's program	3
Graduate diploma	2
Content/modules in undergraduate degree programs	3
No KM coursework	4

Table 1 shows that 7 of the 12 LIS programs had graduate level degrees or coursework in knowledge management. Two of them also had a graduate diploma in KM. Three of these schools had KM components in their undergraduate courses.

It is worth mentioning that three schools, two of which had reported of having no KM offerings, reported that KM content was embedded into the coursework of their Master degree. One of these programs indicated that their students had to work on KM project in one of the enterprises as part of their Master's degree requirements.

One school that was not offering any KM degree or coursework indicated that it was expecting a change in its status in the near future. One school that was offering KM courses in their Master's program indicated that they were collaborating with another university for developing an interdisciplinary certificate in KM that might be converted into a Master degree program in KM at a later stage.

2.   KM Positions

Second research question pertained to KM positions that the LIS graduates might target after graduation. KM positions were listed in the areas of content management, knowledge editing, knowledge navigation, knowledge organization, and knowledge architecture.

Four heads mentioned that information/knowledge architecture and portal design positions appeared to be the primary target. Three of them identified positions related to knowledge organization and content management and codification. Two others listed knowledge navigation as the primary area. Three respondents viewed that the LIS graduates could compete for all the listed positions. One added that they needed to have the drive and personality that really mattered

in career options. One respondent noted that there were no clear KM job titles and the graduates needed to focus on broad information and knowledge capabilities for this market.

Interestingly, three heads had no specific answer for this question. One had the confusion what KM really meant in the context in which the question arose. Another observed that each of the KM position titles listed in the question required clear definition for a meaningful answer.

3.   Strategic Partnerships on Campus

The next research question was to identify those strategic partners on campus with which LIS programs could develop meaningful collaboration for offering joint KM programs. Heads of these departments were given the names of few possible partners of business, IT, computing, and information systems for their consideration.

Nine of the twelve heads mentioned school of business. Two heads mentioned MIS, one listed information systems, and another specified industrial engineering from the domain of business schools. Three heads also specified IT programs for possible collaboration. One of them commented that though computer science is a related area, but it is too technically oriented and not enough knowledge-oriented. One respondent mentioned the only program of communication for such collaboration. Another respondent noted that KM pervades all fields and business, IT, and information systems are the core fields. However, that school would like to work with sciences, health sciences, engineering, etc. One head commented that though they had been trying to collaborate with business and computing faculties, they found it prudent to seek collaboration with faculty of education that had programs in adult education and organizational learning.

These heads made comments on the difficulties that inhibited collaboration. One mentioned that they had been collaborating with business and IT programs, but it was never easy to achieve a meaningful relationship. One participant maintained, "Inter-faculty rivalries and more mundane operational considerations can often get in the way of what in theory sounds like sensible alliance." One head noted that KM in public sector context is in wider public interest and the KM aspect here would largely proliferate. One head mentioned that collaboration with college of business seemed to fit well, but their own contribution to KM was not clear. Little experience had been gained for joint teaching with computing, though it was no more in practice. One participant mentioned that they were offering elective modules in business and computing schools, a possible ground for mutual collaboration in future.

4.   Developing Strategic Alliances

The next question was related to the media and mechanics these departments were using for creating strategic alliances with knowledge intensive organizations so that their students gain exposure to business cultures and peculiarities. Responses of the heads of LIS departments were quite insightful in this area. There is unanimity of views that internship and practicum are the most significant media for interacting with those organizations that are active in KM implementation. One head expressed that when the students did their practicum, the LIS faculty had to interact with these organizations through mandatory supervision that proved to be an effective instrument for useful exposure and exchange. Ten of them listed it as their top choice for this purpose. One of them elaborated that the mission of their school was to have practice-based education and research. It was one of the primary strengths of the school that it had relationships with business, industry, and the professions. The respondent noted that: "One of the most effective methods is to get out and meet people, show them what LIS people have to offer

and work from there. We've had access to organizations for KM research and students have no difficulty in securing placements and projects with organizations." Another respondent had similar observations and noted that the issue of perception of LIS graduates was problematic. However, the perceptions of the industry tend to change dramatically once they find out what our good students are capable of doing. The same respondent maintained "We have done little to change public perception of librarians even though it has been a major thrust of the field for the past 40 years." Another head also expressed similar views about the poor perception the LIS graduates had in business organizations.

Another head noted that the best way of creating alliances was to invite people from external organizations as visiting speakers. Two heads noted the significance of working collaboratively on funded research projects, but one of them maintained that it had been difficult to sustain. Another head wished if LIS faculty members tried to have consultancies in business enterprises. Two heads proposed the use of adjunct teachers from outside organizations for creating grounds of collaboration.

5. Implementing KM in LIS Program

One research question was related to the problems these heads could anticipate in implementing KM in their programs. They were asked to provide their input around the following areas: faculty availability and preparedness, student enrollment, availability of resources, inter-disciplinary partnerships, relations with professional associations, and interactions with business and public enterprises. In the following sections, we will take each of these six elements and analyze their perceptions.

Availability of Faculty and its Preparedness: Interestingly, responses of the heads presented quite a contrast—three of them indicated that they had no problem and they had been able to do it while the other nine expressed serious reservations. One of the three who had done it indicated that they had to do it in a hard way, yet they accomplished it. Those who had faced problems delved into the nature of these problems. Two mentioned that they could not offer KM courses while dropping other courses. Faculty members were not quite eager to take on new courses. Three of them mentioned that their faculty lacked skills; one stating that they had no interest in KM, and another asserting that they had no background in KM, did not know what it meant or entailed, and could not differentiate between knowledge management and information management.

One head noted that they had to recruit new faculty in this area while another found that having adjunct faculty from professionals practicing KM would be the right strategy. One respondent observed that incentives played a great part in having the right faculty. "If the culture of LIS permitted, we need to have opportunities for fractured employment," the head maintained. The comment of another head is worth quoting:

LIS people are conservative and engage in KM only half-heartedly or because they think that their competitors are doing so. There has been a considerable cultural struggle within our School to get people to agree on the need for and value of KM, and the related difficulties have by no means disappeared.

Student Enrollment: The next problem area was related to student enrollment. Five of the twelve heads maintained that student enrollment posed no difficulty for them; one noted a variation in student perceptions; while six of them expressed a number of issues. One of those who found enough interest among students noted that KM provided them the greatest financial reward. Another head added that KM module they had introduced in all degree programs was becoming increasingly popular and they are adding additional modules. The third head said that students had been more open-minded than the faculty. One head feared that KM courses would fracture their traditional student population.

Four of the six heads who noted problems in student enrollment expressed the need for making students more aware of what KM meant and what career opportunities did it offer. One said that either students were unaware or they did not think that LIS was the right place for this program. Another head noted that it was not easy to market KM as a program of full-time studies, but the distance education option had been gaining popularity among practitioners. All these heads pointed to the need of launching an awareness campaign to make the students aware of what the KM was and what potential did it offer as a career choice. One of the respondents maintained that students cared more about 'bread and butter concerns' and would care for KM courses only if they had the understanding what it might offer to them. Without a clear understanding, 1,228 students of that School had shown little interest in the course they had been offered about competitive intelligence. One head made it a point that the KM could not be appropriately taught at the undergraduate level and needed to be offered only at the graduate level.

Availability of Resources: Five heads were categorical in stating that they had no problem in having resources for introducing KM programs. Another respondent did not specify a problem, yet noted that the existing resources were more geared toward bibliographic setup of LIS schools. The seventh head also noted that availability of resources depended on the LIS priorities and how did they interact with academics of other fields. One other head noted that KM did not pose any problem as it was not a resource-intensive specialty. One head commented that resources could only be a problem in the beginning, but once students were attracted, resources would follow. One respondent noted the difficulty in having the right human resources and observed that there was a need to recruit people who were academically qualified and also had practical experience, especially in KM applications. One head explained that the School needed to add one more course of CI to the existing basic course on KM in order to have a well-rounded specialty that was not considered to be any problem. From the responses of the 12 heads, it is apparent that resources were not perceived to be any real obstacle in introducing KM courses.

Inter-Disciplinary Collaboration: Only two respondents did not specify a problem when it came to inter-disciplinary collaboration—one asserting that there existed significant potential partners and the other stating that information management was part of the school and collaboration was achieved without any obstacle. The second respondent also pointed out that on a broader basis, the university had well established arrangements for redistributing resources internally, which was supportive of joint course developments across school and faculty boundaries.

Ten respondents offered rich comments about the problems and challenges they faced in seeking meaningful collaboration. Four respondents mentioned a number of structural, cultural, institutional, and personal problems that impeded collaboration. Two of these four referred to turf sensitivities; one mentioned reluctance, and one mentioned that there was a competition among

contenders who were working in the same area of portal development. One elaborated that the barriers were too significant and insurmountable. One of them referred to the university policies for resource distribution that made it difficult for them to have joint course offerings, as the funding policies inhibited such initiatives. Two of them held the view they did not have enough time to generate these relationships. One head simply stated that they did not have links for such collaboration. Another observed that such initiatives could only be successful if one of the departments took a lead role and contributed significant resources to the project. One head reported that the only collaboration initiative in which they had success was with the biotechnology department of another faculty. From this analysis, it is clear that most heads were apprehensive about the collaboration potential or initiatives. Political and turf sensitivities were among the most serious impediments.

Role and Vision of Professional Associations: The respondents were asked if they found any problems in visions and directions of the professional associations in KM implementation. Eleven heads made comments and these indicated a great deal of diversity and even confusion in their ranks. One head even commented that the associations were pretty much split over the issues involved.

One of the heads remarked that who was into KM beside SLA. The head of a British school referred to the role CILIP had in the 'adoption' of KM without "any real understanding that it was rather more than new name for librarianship. I'm not convinced that they understand, even now." There could be heated arguments about this assertion. One head referred to the ongoing interest groups of SLA and ASIS&T that provided support to KM activities. Two other heads made specific comments on the role of ASIS&T—one noting that the associations were reflective of the interests and directions of the membership. ASIS&T had found a niche in offering KM and information architecture programs, as a substantial part of the membership came from the corporate world. Other associations—more academic in nature—were less proactive in this regard.

Four respondents were critical of the dormancy of associations as they resisted change. The old guard resisted change while the new guard lacked experience to work around status-quo. One of them maintained that that there was a need that these associations agreed on a general definition of KM and also recognized that LIS profession might be a good source for the kind of recruits they were looking for. One respondent was critical that LIS associations were conservative and did not permit membership to those who were at the periphery of the traditional practice. One commented that these associations were extremely limited in their vision and their actions amounted to the same kind of conservative reaction among some of the faculty members who became defensive. One head made the point in this assertive tone "Most LIS associations are having to reinvent themselves so the climate is conducive to an expanded vision provided that LIS associations are prepared to collaborate with other professional associations that have a stake in KM and acknowledge that no one profession 'owns' KM." These comments make it amply clear that there is a great deal of confusion in the ranks of LIS associations about the role of KM. Likewise, other associations that have a definite role in KM, are not as clear or eager to engage these LIS associations in any meaningful exchange. However, most of the initiatives are clearly market-driven and these associations are going to pursue visions and directions that might be dictated by the market forces.

Interaction with Business and Public Enterprises: Eleven heads responded to this question. One of them referred to internship as the primary medium for engagement. Of the remaining ten, five noted that these interactions were deficient. One made a categorical statement that the LIS faculty did not have the competence to handle such partnerships. Another added "the problem was not them but us," as business organizations were eager to interact, but the traditional faculty members inhibited these interactions. Two others stated that LIS schools needed to do better in this area and one of them claimed of taking initiatives in that direction.

Two heads noted that it was up to the managers of private and public enterprises to understand what LIS graduates could offer in KM. The other stated that it was failure on the part of these enterprises to recognize LIS programs as partners in the KM field. Two other heads referred to the location of these enterprises. They maintained that if the LIS programs were located in urban setting, surrounded by these enterprises, the likelihood of interaction was much stronger.

One respondent acknowledged the school was trying to build relationship slowly. Some organizations regrettably saw KM as a quick management fix like MBO, TQM, and business process reengineering. Initial enthusiasm with KM died quickly and it has taken KM some time to be seen as something more fundamental to regain their support. One head was enthusiastic that they had positive and strong interaction with business and public enterprises, as their students worked for practicum and research projects in KM area. This way they were able to show what LIS could offer to KM.

Responses to this question reveal that most of the LIS schools lack the needed rapport with these enterprises due to one reason or the other. Lack of initiative was reported by a number of heads. There prevails an understanding and eagerness about the vitality of this interaction.

Conclusion

Several studies have highlighted that LIS Schools can play a crucial role in realizing the potential of knowledge management for information professionals. These studies stress that clarity of knowledge management functions and required competencies among the professionals will help in deploying appropriate strategies for incorporating KM component in the existing LIS curriculum. The analysis of perceptions of participants of this study indicates diversity of views and perspectives of the academic heads of LIS programs. The responses indicate that inclusion of KM component in a small number of LIS programs may be attributed to various factors. Majority of these responses revealed that there generally there was a lack of realization of the importance of this new field or the need for separate set of skills and competencies among LIS graduates to handle knowledge management functions. It was further noted that many respondents seemed to be reluctant in introducing KM course due to lack of resources or faculty expertise in these schools.

The results of this study also indicate that the scope of knowledge management--as it relates to job market for LIS graduates--is also perceived in a limited context. Majority of these heads is not cognizant of the career possibilities their graduates might have in KM domain in public and private enterprises. Most of the participants did not include career prospects in the areas of information architecture and content management in their responses. This constrained view of the potential job market might be one of the reasons for the absence of strong enthusiasm in many LIS schools.

Collaboration and strategic partnerships are considered key strategic thrusts in knowledge management. Though a majority of participants was positive toward possible collaboration and strategic partnership with business schools, they did not indicate strong support for the feasibility of meaningful cooperation. Need for strategic alliances and active liaison with the industry was supported by majority of the participants. They considered that the following means would be effective in strengthening ties with the industry: internships and attachments, guest lectures from industry, consulting by LIS faculty in business and industry, joint research, and collaborative industry projects. In our view, each of these measures has its value. However, it requires a great deal of conscious effort in finding ways and means to establish these collaborative mechanics. Also, this would necessitate the availability of faculty members with expertise in relevant areas and appropriate initiatives for making these inroads.

Mixed reactions were observed among participants about the availability and preparation of faculty to teach KM courses. Again, we interpret it as an indication of the lack of clarity about the scope of the KM field and absence of a reward system for people who are willing to adventure into new areas. Best practices in existing KM programs suggest that flexibility to allow inter-school joint appointments and involvement of practitioners as adjunct and visiting staff may help overcome this problem. The respondents of this study also seem to have diverse views about attracting students to KM courses. We think this is linked to marketing LIS programs with strong KM component to audience outside the traditional groups. Our experience suggests that KM can attract students from business and IT fields that in turn will help introduce more diversity and, as a result, will enrich the learning environment. This may however create new challenges for LIS faculty requiring them to change their teaching styles. Majority of the participants was clear about the resource requirements to run KM courses. They agreed that KM is not resource-intensive and making adjustments in resource allocation does not pose a serious threat.

Research suggests that collaboration seems to be the most important strategy in making the KM courses successful. Surprisingly, most of the participants were apprehensive about the collaboration potential. They cited political and turf sensitivities as the most serious impediments. They also expressed concerns about lack of vision and understanding of the role of KM in the ranks of professional forums. Responses regarding interaction with business and public enterprises were also not encouraging. Responses indicated a general feeling that LIS faculty was not ready to handle such interactions. While currently there appears to be a lack of rapport with business and IT enterprises, majority of the participants displayed eagerness about the vitality of this interaction.

Despite a mixture of views, there existed an appreciation and realization of the potential of KM among academic leadership in LIS education. There appears to be ample enthusiasm in taking advantage of the opportunities made available by this new discipline for expanding the markets of LIS graduates. We feel that in order to take full advantage of the KM potential, curricula and teaching in LIS programs should be reviewed with a view of turning traditional information management skills into knowledge management competencies.

Future Work

This paper reports the results of the first phase of our study that is exploratory in nature. Participants were also asked about the possibility of personal or telephone interviews to discuss details about the issues identified in the web survey. Logistics have prohibited face-to-face and telephone interviews. We are in the process of preparing an email follow up to seek clarifications

on the responses. These are expected to provide richer data that will be helpful to put the responses in a context in order to draw more meaningful conclusions.

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