Research Paper

Evolving A Learning Organization Culture In Academic Libraries: Guide To Research Materials Gathering And Writing

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Abstract
The paper describes the university and its library as learning organizations, detailing the attributes and principles of a learning organization. The library as a facilitator of research is central to the university's creation of new knowledge through research. The paper discusses the meaning of research, types of research and its importance. The paper highlights steps in research, sources of gathering research writing materials. It gives details of what constitutes plagiarism. It explains the importance of citations in research, referring to proper referencing as "safety valves" in research process.A hybrid of sources of information gathering for research as well as a listing of useful online sources of materials in all fields are highlighted.
Keywords: *Learning Organization; Research; Research materials Gathering; Research materials Sources; Research Writing; University Library Learning Organization.*

I. Introduction:

The concept of the university library as a learning organization is no longer new. This does not attract a debate because the library in a university is central to the purpose of the university; and of the myriad of higher education institutions, none can operate without a library,(Soyinka and Omagbemi, 2002). The university library is eminently visible in the university's skilled creation of knowledge, learning, teaching, and studying activities; as well as in the acquisition, and transfer of knowledge, to modifying its behaviour to reflect new knowledge and insights. Knowledge is more available, shareable,and accessible than it has ever been in the twenty first century.Academic libraries are now more concerned than ever with the acquisition, availability, access, and the need for knowledge sharing, thereby building up learning organization culture. This is because learning organizations depend on effective flow of information. Senge(1990) defines a learning organization as "Organizations that encourage adaptive and generative learning, encouraging their employees to find the best answers to any problems. This definition given by Senge, aptly describes what a university and its library represent.This is encapsulated by Foote(1993)when she says: "A university is just a group of buildings gathered around a library. The library is the university "

What Is A Learning Organization?

In 1990, Peter Senge published a book titled "The Fifth Discipline: The Art and Practice of the Learning Organization" This publication set in motion a whole new approach to organizations that focus on learning, service and in particular the "learning organization"

A learning organization is an organization that acquires, organizes and shares information and knowledge, and uses the new information and knowledge to change its behavior in order to achieve its objectives and improve its effectiveness. It follows therefore that learning organizations must have structures, and systems established which must help in selecting, acquiring, processing, coding, storing and disseminatingimportant information and knowledge in order to make these available to those who need such and when they do need such information. Through this, a learning organization is able to transform itself by

acquiring and disseminating new knowledge and skills throughout the organization. The result of this is that the capacity of its members to learn, adapt and change its culture are enhanced.

Also embedded in this concept is the ability to make sense of and respond to the surrounding environment.

Saks and Haccoun (2003) argue that organizational values, policies, systems and structure support and accelerate learning for all employees in a learning organization. This learning results in continued improvement in work systems, products, services, team work, management practices – leading to a more successful organization.

Senge (1990) in his ground breaking work identifies five "disciplines" as guiding principles to becoming a learning organization. The five disciplines are:

➢ Personal mastery: Individuals must be open to others and willing to learn on a continual basis. People with personal mastery are always in a learning mode. This essential in a learning organization as organizations only learn if individuals in them learn.

➢ Building a shared vision: This entails the development of a picture and vision of the future which everyone can agree to and are committed to

➢ Mental Model: This refers to the images assumptions which people have about themselves and the world. People have to be able to examine their mental models and be aware of how they influence their behavior. This is because such models can thwart or inhibit learning and people must understand them and hold them up to scrutiny

➢ Team Learning; Learning takes place in teams through dialogue, discussion, and "thinking together" people need to be able to learn and act together

➢ Systems Thinking: This discipline integrates the others and has to do with viewing the organization as a whole and being able to see and understand how its parts are interrelated

Learning organizations have a number of important principles and these are explained below.

❖ First, everybody is considered to be a learner

Employees recognize the need for learning and are actively involved in both formal and informal learning programmes

❖ Second, is the multiple learning mode

Employees learn or acquire knowledge through formal and informal programmes. This may be through the invisible college, or through listening or observation. There is mutual and cooperative learning in a learning organization

❖ Third, learning is regarded as a change-tool as well as a process. Being open to learning enables the employee to value the need for change. Learning and change are therefore closely linked and correlated

❖ Four, continuous learning is regarded as a hallmark of learning organization. This entails continued self-development, both formal and informal. This is seen as a responsibility of every employee

❖ Fifth, learning organizations recognize that the employee is a human capital. Training, learning is therefore seen as an investment in the employees which often yield great dividends

Ultimately, research has established that there is a positive relationship between learning and a positive firm's financial performance. This investment often leadsto intellectual capital. Intellectual capital means more than knowledge. It tends towards intelligence, and intelligence refers to the ability to create knowledge. This includes studying, learning, reasoning and the ability to be productive through imagination new insights, generating alternative ideas and wise decision making.

Miller (1999) believes that when an organization increases the general level of intelligence of its employees, it creates a new knowledge which results in new products, services processes as well as creating a competitive edge.

An organization equally requires other types of intellectual capital which include

(i) Human capital

(ii) Renewal capital – patents, copyrights, licenses, innovations etc

(iii) Structural capital – channels of communication routines and information systems

(iv) Relationship capital – refers to relationship with clients; good relationship results in trust, integrity and competitive advantage.

From the foregoing it is explicit that an organization is like a living organism that must be nurtured. The human capital therefore remains the most important asset, that must be allowed to flourish, using their initiatives, creativity, talent, skills and experience in an unobtrusive manner to aid the flow of work and result.

A learning organization must therefore empower the employees intellectually in order to enhance the feeling of self efficacy among the organizational members through the identification of conditions that foster powerlessness. These could be removed through formal organizational practices or informal techniques by providing adequate information.

The library exists as an information system. Its proper support and equipment therefore remains an investment that will always yield multiple results; hence the need for employees to be involved in research.

The library as an organization is expected to give every user the content they require in the format they prefer. It is to ensure the users and library employees are on same page. Wilhelm(2017) says what is common about successful organizations is their foundation of solid basic principles and value; as well as their continuous learning to keep them thinking and acting ahead of their competitors. This is equally true of academic libraries as they evolve as learning organizations

What is Research?
Introduction:
The modern society is often referred to as a knowledge economy or society. This translates to the ability of man to practically apply his/her knowledge as a product to enhance and promote human advancement. All human development and advancement are therefore heavily dependent on research.
Knowledge is a growing organism; and as more people continue to enjoy the opportunities provided by the book-culture, the frontiers of research will also continue to advance. Research is not an end in itself as they often present opportunities of linking the past to the present, thereby combining facts from the past and the present to predict the future.
The word "research" conveys more than one meaning.
In the first sense it may mean retrieving and using information gathered from the library which everyone may have access to. This means having information which could be read, understood and making a judgement thereof to produce knowledge from information acquired. This kind of research is generally referred to as "practical research". The second kind of research is that which establishes a new knowledge, a discovery, a total departure from existing knowledge or an addition to it, and it is termed original research according to (Odusanya and Omagbemi; 2004).
This may also be referred to as scientific research. Practical research could therefore be described as the base of original research or scientific research engaged in by universities, research institutes, industries and government establishments.

What is Scientific Research?
The web definition sees scientific research "as questions posed by scientific theories and hypotheses; systematic investigation to establish facts". Big Science defines it as "research that requires massive capital investment but it is expected to yield very significant result". The Business dictionary defines it as "application of scientific methods to the investigation of relationships among natural phenomenon, or to solve a problem, medical or technical problem"
Scientificresearch is an organized, systematic search and investigation meant to increase the sum of human knowledge. The objective being to discover, reinforce and refine knowledge, scientific research remains the main source of generating and advancing the frontiers of knowledge. It may relate to skills, development and training as well as the development of expertise for manpower. Engaging in scientific research entails using other people's ideas or expression in arriving at one's own idea.
Using another person's ideas, expressions in your writing without acknowledging the source constitutes plagiarism. Derived from the Latin word "plagiaries" ("kidnapper") Plagiarism refers to a form of intellectual theft – Joseph Gibaldi, MLA style Manualand Guide to scholarly publishing.

What then is Plagiarism?
- ✓ Copying verbatim words from published sources without adequate documentation or acknowledgement
- ✓ The use of language, expression or ideas from other sources without proper documentation
- ✓ The purchase of a pre-written work or paper and claiming ownership
- ✓ Allowing someone else to write a paper for you without being the originator of the ideas expressed
- ✓ Claiming ownership of someone else's published or unpublished work
- ✓ In doing research, plagiarism must be avoided

Basic Steps in Research Process
(A)   Evaluating Type of Sources
All sources of information vary greatly in terms of

(i)how carefully the work has been researched(ii)written and presented (iii) edited (iv) reviewed for correctness and accuracy (v)Quality of the author (vi) Biases and agenda of content.

Ultimately, when evaluating a source one may consider (i)-(vi) above as well as ones personal and overall impression of the source. Research is about critical thinking, an author's idea must not be accepted simply at face value.

Questions must be asked to determine the value of each source.

In "Strategies for Gathering Reliable Information" ten questions which a critical researcher must ask include:

• Is this type of source appropriate for my purpose? Is it a high-quality source or one that needs to be looked at more critically?

• Can I establish that the author is credible and the publication is reputable?

• Does the author support ideas with specific facts and details that are carefully documented? Is the source of the author's information clear?

• Does the source include any factual errors or instances of faulty logic?

• Does the author leave out any information that one would expect to see in a discussion of the topic?

• Does the author's conclusions logically follow from evidence that is presented? Could one see how the author got from one point to another?

• Is the writing clear and organized, and is it free from errors, clichés and empty buzzwords?

• Is the tone objective, balanced and reasonable?

• Are there any obvious biases or agenda?

• Are there hidden facts?

• Are graphic information useful, easy to comprehend?

• Are the sources organized, easy to comprehend? Are the sources organized, easy to use, friendly and in case of websites, should be easy to navigate, free of clusters like flashing adverts and other distractions?

• Is the sources contradicted by information trend in other sources? Identify reasons for contradictions and remain convinced on which position to take. Be suspicious of sources which present facts that cannot be verified or confirmed.

In summary, the critical thinking skills used in evaluating research sources as a student are equally valuable when conducting research on the job. There are periodical and websites which consistently provide reliable information. Blogs and online discussion groups are useful in identifying new trends and topics in research in various fields. These sources are not to be fully relied upon for substantial research.

Various Sources of Materials for Research

There are various sources which a researcher can explore to obtain materials which are relevant and current for research. The library which has continued to take in added or expanded definition remains a reliable source of information as it has information already processed and made available for research and borrowing purposes depending on the type of library in different formats for the ease of use. The materials that can be accessed in the library or information centre can be grouped into two main sources. These are:

(a) Primary Sources, which are in form of interviews, questionnaires, letters, diaries, manuscripts, memoirs among others

(b) Secondary Sources, which include, books, journals, encyclopedias and other reference materials. The secondary sources are ofmore relevance in research work.

Some of the components of the secondary sources are given below:

(i) Books

(ii) Journals

(iii) Periodicals, Indexes, Abstracts

(iv) General Reference Books

● Dictionaries ● Encyclopedia ● Directories   ● Yearbooks and Almanacs   ● Handbooks

(v) Biographical References Books e.g. Who is Who- covers eminent living individuals while Biographical Dictionary deals with dead people containing mainly evaluative account on them.

(vi) Atlases, Maps and Gazetteers

(vii) (1) Bibliographies- List various types of publications

There are three main types of bibliographies

(a) Bibliography of Bibliographies- e.g. Besterman, Theories: A world Bibliography of Bibliographies- contains books, manuscripts, and patent abridgements.

(b) Bibliographic Index- current source of information on available bibliographies on any subject, topic or individual.

(2) General Bibliography- These are natural trade or translations bibliographies of very good books, rare materials, theses and dissertations, Bibliographies identifying holdings in large libraries.

(3) Subject Bibliographies- These are guides to available materials and sources of information in various fields for research and other purposes.

(vii) Non-Book/Print Materials- Television, e-resources, the internet, are all sources.

Seven Tips of Research Process
Step 1
Identify And Develop Your Topic:
Arriving at a topic for research could sometimes be challenging. This may require using the library sources extensively in order to ensure that the topic is not obsolete.

State the topic as a question. If one is interested in investing the challenge of use of drugs among undergraduates in Nigerian Universities. The question posed may be - What effect does the use of drugs have on undergraduates in Nigerian University? Identify the main idea or concepts or keywords in the question.

Step 2
Find Background Information:
Look up your keywords in the indexes to subject encyclopedias. Read articles in the encyclopedias to set the context for the research. Take particular attention of any relevant items in the bibliographies at the end of the articles. Further background information could be found in textbooks, related journal articles.

Step 3
Use the Library Catalog to find Books and Media:
Guided keywords should be used to find materials by topic or subject print or write down citation – author, title, and the call number. Note the circulation status of the material. When the book is retrieved from the shelf, scan the bibliography for additional sources. Seek information from book-length bibliographies, annual reviews on your subject, which often list citations to hundreds of books and articles in one subject area. Check the standard subject headings.

OPAC(online Public Access Catalogue) is an online bibliography of a library collection that is made available to user; and this could be remotely accessed. With the advent of the internet, most libraries now make their resources accessible to users all over the world.

Step 4

Use Indexes to find Periodical Articles:
Use periodicals and indexes and abstracts to find citations to articles indexes and abstract may be in print or electronic formats or both. A researcher should decide which format best suits the particular topic. The reference desk in the library could be approached for assistance in determining which index or format will be most suitable. Articles could be sought by author, title or keywords using the periodical indexes. If the full text is not available or linked in the index, write down the citation from the index and search for the title of the periodical for mother sources. Such sources may list the print and electronic versions. You may goggle "How to find periodical Indexes".

Step 5
Find Internet Resources:
Use appropriate search engines. A research guide may be created by a library to assist. You may use finding information on the internet: Tutorial.
Step 6
Evaluate What You Find:
You may see (1) How to critically Analyse information sources and distinguish scholarly form non-scholarly periodicals: A checklist of criteria. This will assist in evaluating the authority and quality of the books/articles located. You may watch on YouTube:Identifying substantive new sources. You may broaden or narrow your topic.

Writing Academic Papers And Factors to consider:
To get ones research work published starts with the first written word. The first problem may be that of organization.

Malcom(2005) describes all writing as creative he identifies the underlisted as salient points which a researcher may need to answer.

(i)   Why am I writing? The probable answers are it is required. I have something to say to document. I am thinking and involved in research. I am writing for pleasure.

(ii)   What is the purpose of writing? The answers could be. To describe, to explore or explain. To advocate or to have a critique.

(iii)   For whom am I writing? This could be for a defined audience. A mixed audience or for myself.

(iv)   What is the genre "voice" This could be to suit publishers. To suit the audience. It may be to evolve an idea.

The ability to address some of these salient questions will help the researcher to start off on the right path.

Types of Academic Papers:
Academic writing is a special kind of writing. Understanding the types of paper available may assist a writer in understanding the criteria required:
*   The empirical/experimental research report
*   The position/opinion paper
*   The analysis/critique paper
*   The review paper

Writing the Paper:
Do not get discouraged if your first attempt at getting published turns out to be a nightmare. Note that everyone who got where he/she is, started for where he/she was.

Step 7 Cite what you find using A Standard Format:
Referencing serves more than one purpose:

i)   It helps to authenticate the need for a particular research

ii)   It helps the reader to know the source or authority behind a borrowed fact under reference.

Odusanya&Omagbemi (2004) opine that referencing could be likened to "Safety Valves" in a research work. It helps to keep contributions alive as long as they continue to be cited in research work. Credit must be given where due, cite your sources using appropriate referencing style. Refworks is a web-based programme available on-line that allows one to easily collect, manage and organize, bibliographic references by interfacing with databases.

Refworks also interfaces directly with word, making it easy to import references and incorporate them into ones writing, properly formatted according to the style of choice. There is also "Guide to citation tools and styles"

You may get familiar with the underlisted:

i)   Psychlit, PsycINFO – Online databases that archive contents from journals in psychology and psychiatry

ii)   Google Scholar

iii)   LibGuides

iv)   Researchgate

v)   Academic.edu

vi)   Web of Science

vii)   Scopus

viii)   MEDLINE,PubMED, archives articles in medicine and health

ix)   EBSCOhost – General database

x)   ProQuest

xi)   Business Source Complete

xii)   New York Times Index

xiii)   Microsoft Academic

xiv)   Science Open

xv)   SCI-HUB

xvi)   Library Genesis

In conclusion, having completed writing a paper remains a major hurdle surmounted. The essence of writing and doing research is to get published. Efforts should be made to go over the whole work before submission for publication. The following measures are suggested towards polishing writings before they are submitted for publication.

*   Use the criteria earlier established to assess your article as one may be able to observe some pertinent inputs

*   Identify a sympathetic friend, colleague, or associate, who can sacrifice time, energy to read your work and offer suggestions.

- You must identify someone with an analytical mind who reasons differently from you not necessarily in your field to equally go through the work. This may show your level of communication with your audience who are not restricted to your field.
- You must invest time on the paper by being reflective in thought.
- Get the work edited for correctness in English Language, paying attention to spellings, punctuation, grammar, paragraphing, tables and figures presentation, alignment and flow of ideas among others.
- Having done all these, set the work aside for a week or two after which you may go over it again, doting the "I" and "t" which may not have been apparent earlier. The research work must now be ready!
- Identify a journal which editorial policy and criteria are compatible with your writing. One may be sure of having his/her research work published.

Ultimately, this paper has been able to give a concise overview of the essence of research, importance of continuous training in organizations as well as information and knowledge sharing. It has shown the need for research, and how to evaluate sources of information and steps in writing the actual paper and ultimately getting published. It equally gives insight into useful indexes and data bases. The evolvement of modern academic libraries as learning organization has been brought to the fore as university libraries are central to the purpose of their universities.

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