

Qualitative article analysis

Business



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management is an extremely significant facet of developing innovation in modern organizations. Knowledge drives innovation, and as such, it is essential to manage knowledge for the benefit of an organization. This article analyzes Rodney McAdam's qualitative research paper on Knowledge management as a catalyst for innovation within organizations (2000).

McAdam (2000) sets out to study the role played by knowledge management in marshaling innovation within an organization. The core purpose of this research was to inductively build theory using the grounded theory developed by Glaser and Strauss in 1967 (McAdam, 2000: 5). The grounded approach employed in this study by McAdam was that of Social Constructionist workshops.

In order to animate the study, groups of managers from enterprises involved in knowledge management were selected as participants. These workshops were then run by asking the managers to discuss the four generic areas of knowledge management. The four areas of knowledge management in relation to innovation discussed were knowledge construction, knowledge embodiment, knowledge dissemination and knowledge use. Cumulatively, five workshops were done with twenty five different organizations from all sectors represented. The quantitative realm of the study involved the use of questionnaires to survey the scope of knowledge management in relative to key trends (McAdam, 2000).

The findings of the study were documented as per the four facets of knowledge management as a driver of innovation. Firstly, on the role of knowledge construction on innovation, it was established that the area of knowledge construction was a key driver of innovation as new knowledge

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developed was incorporated back into the organization. In addition it was explicitly verified that knowledge construction which lead to elevated innovation was contingent upon both scientifically constructed, as well as, socially constructed knowledge.

Secondly, on the role of knowledge embodiment on innovation, it was discovered that for new knowledge to lead to innovation then it must be incorporated within the organization. Not only did participants consider innovation resulting knowledge embodiment as being reflected in the organization's structure, but also an essential part of organizational culture. In addition, the participants recognized that the role of a knowledge worker was essential to embodiment of knowledge and consequently innovation.

Thirdly, on the role of knowledge dissemination on innovation, it was realized that it is key to disseminate knowledge after its construction and embodiment so as to fuel innovation. Additionally, it was established that collaboration and intricate knowledge worker network were central to disseminating innovation through knowledge in an organization.

Finally, on the role of knowledge use in spreading innovation, it was found out that using constructed, embodied and disseminated knowledge was essential to driving innovation. Further, it was established that without the use of knowledge, companies fail to develop new products or services, which is a great threat to their survival as independent entities.

From this analysis, it is explicitly clear that knowledge management is very essential to the development and growth of organizations in the 21st century. Enterprises must therefore, endeavor to construct, embody, disseminate and use knowledge in order to accelerate the pace of innovation. Innovation is the only way through which an organization can

survive competition from other enterprises and also impress the demanding consumers of modern times. It is essential for managers to encourage employees to study and come up with new knowledge that can yield innovative products and services.

References

McAdam, R. (2000). Knowledge management as a catalyst for innovation within organizations: a qualitative study. *Knowledge and process management*, 7(4), 233-241.