


Chapter 20

Absorptive Capacity and Smart Library

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ABSTRACT

The current competitive environment is significantly modifying the libraries' learning processes due to an information explosion, allowing this to be transformed into knowledge. This opportunity has been exploited in the past by the tools of "business intelligence," but integrating it into libraries is still a daunting task. Absorptive capacity was applied to smart libraries from Schöpel's multidimensional model's perspective. Literature was thoroughly reviewed from credible sources such as ISI Web of Knowledge and Scopus. The contribution to the literature is smart library development through absorptive capacity. This approach aims to create a library intelligence model that aims to explain the absorptive capacity process that leads to smart services, people, place, and governance. This chapter presents a unique integration of various concepts: the concept of absorptive capacity and smart library. This allows the development of better library practices by obtaining benefits from these investments and facilitating intelligence creation inside libraries.

INTRODUCTION

Learning has evolved into a vital element of daily life. People must learn in order to advance in life, and libraries, too, participate in many types of learning. This has prompted the development of principles that improve learning in organizations. Absorptive capacity (ACAP) is one such concept that can enhance learning.

ACAP is defined as an organization's ability to perceive the value of external knowledge (environment), acquire and integrate it within its scope, and use it inside its operations (Garzón, 2015). In other words, it is the rate at which an organisation can learn and implement scientific, technical, or other knowledge that is available outside of the organization (Oxford Review, 2021). Undoubtedly, ACAP has increased considerably over the last few decades and lingers till today (Apriliyanti & Alon, 2017). As a

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result, it is an enthralling idea to comprehend how libraries gain the ability to learn inside and outside of themselves, retain that information, and eventually utilize it to improve their decisions and services.

Organizations with outstanding ACAP are expected to outclass others through higher performance and effectiveness, as well as by fuelling the internal strategy implementation, which has become a key factor of success (Khan et al., 2017). ACAP, in particular, is seen to be a type of organisational learning (OL). It highlights the importance of sending and receiving information from the outside world while also emphasising intrinsic learning through experience and present actions (Easterby-Smith et al., 2008).

According to Lichtenthaler (2016), literature stresses the relevance of ACAP in knowledge development, open innovation promotion, strategic alliance management, strategic diversity creation, and financial performance enhancement. It is also an essential aspect of OL (Saraf et al., 2013), a facilitator of novel behaviour (Kang & Lee, 2017), and a critical part of innovation.

During the past decades, libraries have seen significant changes as a result of the digital era's rise, which has made ACAP study even more important in order to obtain highly creative competence (Duchek, 2015), which allows external knowledge from the environment to be utilised inside the organisation (Schweisfurth & Raasch, 2018), making it a significant predictor of innovation and knowledge transmission (Zou et al., 2018). As a result, there is a need for traditional libraries to evolve by learning through ACAP to meet up with the technological age. One of such technological transformations in libraries is known as smart libraries.

Smart libraries are intelligent libraries that strive for smartness in their services, people, place, and governance (Adetayo, 2022). Furthermore, a smart library is a modern library that is equipped with technologies and is open to patrons even when it is not manned. The system enables remote administration of library facilities such as automatic doors, illumination, self-service stations, and public PCs. This enables library to significantly extend operations, allowing more people to use the library conveniently (Cao et al., 2018). It employs cutting-edge technology to gradually integrate readers and libraries (Yu et al., 2019). It is people-oriented and tends to minimize the cost of both human and material resources. Smart library is being handled with a heavy emphasis on technology (Merino Moreno, 2007) and tactical consultancy techniques engaged in huge data analysis, opening the path for companies to be capable of gathering, storing, and comprehending huge data (Cano, 2007). Markus Aittola proposed the first smart library (Aittola, Ryhänen, & Ojala, 2003), which may be tricky and complex, and many libraries may not be prepared to implement it. However, with the potential benefits that smart technology may provide for libraries, today's libraries cannot afford to be left behind. Putting these analytics solutions in libraries necessitates several capabilities and habits, which can be found in ACAP.

The main goal of this chapter is to contextualize the use of ACAP in smart libraries. Other specific goals include exploring the value of ACAP, examining the benefits of implementing an ACAP process, identifying ACAP strategies for enhancing learning in smart libraries, identifying challenges in implementing ACAP strategies in smart libraries, and recommending ACAP strategies to assist traditional libraries in transitioning to smart libraries.

LIBRARIES AND LEARNING

The information market is extremely competitive, and librarians cannot continue to be professional armchair librarians stuck with mundane tasks. Information is a commercially available commodity, and there are many competitors fighting for customer attention. These rivals in the information sector are

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