

Chapter 1

Knowledge Co-Production and Sustainable Socio- Economic Development: An Engaged Scholarly Approach

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ABSTRACT

This chapter illuminates the significance of researcher-practitioner engagement in knowledge production and the impact it has on socioeconomic development. Knowledge production and sharing have a significant impact on the transformation of society. It highlights the importance of knowledge co-production through engaged scholarship research that achieves the twin goals of rigor and relevance. Engaged scholarship research creates a more pleasant relationship between scholars, non-academic practitioners and communities in creation of knowledge. This research approach however, is rarely applied in many research institutions and universities. Engaged scholarship research approach is therefore preferred because it empowers local communities to participate and contribute in making decisions that affect their lives. The chapter concludes by reiterating collaboration and stakeholder involvement that generate knowledge based on practical experiences and which are mutually beneficial and relevant in solving society problems.

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INTRODUCTION

Societies world over, have rested on knowledge production, and knowledge has always played an important role in prosperity and social well-being of people. Barge and Zalabak (2008) argue that knowledge production has been at the center of growth and development of society since time immemorial. Knowledge production is the process of generating knowledge that is evidenced based from the real world rather than merely reflecting on the scientist views (Tweheyo, 2018). In Africa, people are constantly struggling to maintain their rights, their heritage/traditions and their facts, in a system still dominated by western views. The work of Barge and Zalabak (2008) reveals that knowledge creation helps people to understand, make sense of, and apply the information available to solve problems. Empirical data reveals that some countries (especially Scandinavian and western European countries, have moved toward becoming knowledge-driven societies and surpassed African countries in development (World Bank 1998; United Nations 2005). This is due to the fact that African countries still believe and depend on foreign knowledge other than trusting their own indigenous knowledge.

BACKGROUND

The Concept of Knowledge

Knowledge is a concept that has been debated with regard to who possess it and how it is used and also with regard to issues of evidence, authority and expertise of the owner (Holland et al, 2010; Lloyd et al, 2005). Knowledge may be regarded as a public good: one person's use of a particular piece of knowledge does not preclude the use of that same knowledge by others, and when a piece of knowledge is already in the public domain, it is difficult for its creator to prevent others from using it. As Abdelrahman and Papamichil (2016) put it, knowledge is so important but cannot be effective unless it is shared, utilized and integrated in any given organizational culture. In reality, knowledge, cannot be easily acquired and applied individually. It has to be shared with others. Bock et al (2005), refer to knowledge sharing as a voluntary process of transferring and disseminating knowledge from one person to another or group of persons in an organization.

Tacit Knowledge and Explicit Knowledge

Knowledge is broadly categorized as tacit and explicit. Tacit knowledge is a mix of mounted experience, values, contextual information and expert insights that

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