

Formulating Strategic Directions for Indigenous Knowledge Management Systems

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Abstract: In modern organisational structures knowledge management practices consist of knowledge generation, capture, sharing and application. The organisations emphasize on codification and documentation of implicit knowledge and transform it to explicit form. Indigenous communities however have much less codified knowledge relying mainly on oral and tacit form. The communities have their own processes of storage, leveraging, sharing and applying knowledge which is different from knowledge management processes of corporations and research organizations due to the oral and tacit structures of these processes. In this paper we present a model for formulating strategic directions for an indigenous knowledge management system. We have designed a knowledge management assessment tool for Indigenous Knowledge Management Systems (IKMS) which has been tested in remote community in Bario, Sarawak. On the bases of our assessment of IKMS, community capacity and resources, we have developed a strategic map for IKMS in Bario. This work serves as an extension to the previous literature on designing the Balanced Scorecard for IKMS.

Keywords: Indigenous Knowledge, Balanced Scorecard, Indigenous Knowledge Management System, Traditional Knowledge.

1 Introduction

In existing literature, the term indigenous knowledge, traditional knowledge, traditional ecological knowledge, local knowledge and indigenous technical knowledge are used interchangeably. In addition, some of the commonly asserted characteristics of indigenous knowledge include the following: it is generated within communities; it is location and cultural specific; it is a basis for decision making and survival strategies; [generally] it is not systematically documented, it covers critical [issues: such as] primary production, human and animal life, natural resources management[;] it is dynamic and based on innovation, adaptation and experimentation, and it is oral and rural in nature [1]. Indigenous knowledge, which has generally been passed from generation to generation by word of mouth, is in danger of being lost unless it is formally documented and preserved [2]. The rapid change in the way of life of indigenous people has largely accounted for the loss of Indigenous Knowledge (IK). Younger generations underestimate the utility of