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# Instrument development for assessing knowledge management of quality assurers in Rajabhat universities, Thailand

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## ABSTRACT

This research was conducted for the purpose of developing a valid and reliable instrument to evaluate knowledge management of quality assurance personnel in tertiary institutes. The literature review on knowledge management discovered that 15 items were used to classify 4 latent variables. From this literature review, a knowledge-management instrument was created. The content validity of the instrument was 0.70–1.00, and the internal consistency reliability of each latent variable was 0.82–0.89. The knowledge management instrument was used to collect data from 126 quality assurers in 40 Rajabhat universities using simple random sampling, with a response rate of 83.33 percent. The results of instrument quality analysis showed that the loading of total variables passed the criterion at 0.79–0.92 with an indicator reliability of 85 percent. Cronbach's alpha coefficient revealed each latent variable was valued at 0.784–0.904 with a reliability at 0.867–0.933, passing both convergent and discriminant validity tests. The analysis of the second order model showed a high level of prediction coefficient in 2 latent variables (knowledge dissemination and knowledge application), while the other 2 (knowledge conversion and knowledge acquisition) were at an average level. The total effect size of all variables, reflected via knowledge management elements, was significant at .01.

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## Introduction

To meet the global standard and to enhance competitive ability in the world market, the state and private sectors are expected to develop their administrative efficiency based on the Thailand Quality Award (TQA) criteria. The criteria used from 2010 to 2015 focused on knowledge management at both the individual and organizational levels, particularly Section 4, concerning measurement,

analysis, and knowledge management. The main content emphasizes roles in selecting, collecting, analyzing, managing, and improving information for the administrative improvement of the organization (Thailand Quality Award Office, 2010, 2011, 2013). The latest criteria applied in 2014–2015 state that knowledge management requires a process of collecting and sharing knowledge of the individual and applying excellent practices in operating and developing the organization into a genuine learning organization. The operation of Section 4 is directly related to Section 5 (highlighting the workforce and leader development). Learning and development systems within the organization are needed in completing the requirements of the organization and the development of the individual.

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The Royal Decree on rules and procedures of good governance B.E. 2546, Code 11 states that the government sectors should function in regular knowledge development of the organizations by creating a system of information perception, processing knowledge for accurate application, encouraging and developing the knowledge and ability of the government officials to be up to date to maximize contributions and virtues in work performance, and to build up participant culture in knowledge sharing among government servants. Work performance, therefore, can be effectively developed under the systematic application of new public sector management administration.

In accordance with the National Education Act, B.E. 2542, the revised 2nd issue, B.E. 2545, and the ministerial regulations on systems, criteria, and educational quality assurance methods, B.E. 2533, Rajabhat universities developed a unit responsible for internal and external quality assurance ([Office of the Higher Education Commission \[OHEC\], 2011](#)). The knowledge management principle is widely employed for tracking the progress of quality assurance. There have also been networks established for sharing knowledge management ideas among institutes and faculties with the major purpose to effectively accomplish a quality assurance plan.

#### Objectives

1. To identify knowledge management factors and their indicators for quality assurance personnel in Rajabhat universities.
2. To affirm the quality of knowledge management factors and their indicators of quality assurance personnel in Rajabhat universities.

#### Literature Review

Many educators have defined the meanings of knowledge management in a variety of ways. [Debowski \(2006\)](#) stated that knowledge management was the process of specifying, selecting, systematizing, and publicizing intellectual knowledge, which would have a long-term impact on the operation of the organization. [Wunram \(2000\)](#) pointed out that systematic knowledge management aimed at the application of internal and external knowledge of the organization. The knowledge (either tacit or explicit) would lead to the construction of knowledge, value, innovation, and operational improvement. For [Ichijo and Nonaka \(2007\)](#), knowledge management was defined as creating and sharing knowledge assets. Similarly, Thai educators like [Lorsuwanrat \(2008\)](#) defined knowledge management as creating, assessing, publicizing, and applying knowledge for more effectiveness in operation. [Vicheanpanya \(2004\)](#) explained that knowledge management was the system of assessing data, information, ideas, performances, and personal experiences. Knowledge or innovation created was stored and easily accessed via different channels that the organization prepared for the application of the personnel. This encouraged knowledge sharing, transferring, and finally circulating existing knowledge within the

organization in a balanced way for production and organizational development. The [Office of the Public Sector Development Commission \(2012\)](#) noted that knowledge management was a systematic process in obtaining, creating, exchanging, and applying data in developing the proficiency of the personnel and their working performance in order to achieve the objectives of the organization.

To summarize, knowledge management is a process of acquiring, assessing, disseminating, exchanging, and applying knowledge in working effectively. Supportive systems, therefore, should be provided in order to create a knowledge management atmosphere within the organization.

This research followed the conceptual framework of [Jafari, Akhavan, and Nikookar \(2013\)](#) and [Cheong and Tsui \(2011\)](#), who suggested two levels of a new trend in knowledge management—personal knowledge management and organizational knowledge management. Personal knowledge management is required as the first step of knowledge management as the organizational personnel are specialists and investors of intellectual capital that would be beneficial for the organization. However, previous studies focused on organizational knowledge management rather than its personal aspect. [Frاند and Hixon \(1998\)](#) pointed out that personal knowledge management was a strategic process in knowledge accumulation of the organization. The knowledge applied in each job was selected and collected from different sources of information by the individual whose continual application affected the knowledge management of the organization. Personal knowledge management was, therefore, a branch of organizational knowledge management. Similarly, the concept of the application of information in knowledge management of [Davenport \(2007\)](#) suggested the importance of personnel as direct performers of activities. For that reason, the organization should motivate its personnel to apply internal and external information and knowledge in improving personal productivity. [Cheong and Tsui \(2011\)](#) added that personal knowledge management was crucial for the individual, the organization, and society, as it showed information management skill in the improvement of personal working proficiency which would be reflected in the achievements of the organization over the long term.

This study focused on four steps of personal knowledge management in quality assurance based on the classification of [Thanyasunthornsakun \(2011\)](#) and [Úbeda-García \(2012\)](#) as follows:

- 1) Knowledge acquisition—aiming at the pursuit of, or construction on, new knowledge related to job descriptions. In this step, knowledge arises with relationship, cooperation, and interpersonal communication among the personnel.
- 2) Knowledge conversion—being the process of documenting the latent knowledge of the individual or knowledge spread both in and out of the organization to be accessible and usable knowledge.

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