

The Universality of Knowledge Management—A Postprint of the Exclusive Interview with Professor Ge Xinquan, Director and Chief Expert of Beijing Knowledge Management Research Base, from Knowledge Management Forum

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Abstract

The “Beijing Knowledge Management Research Base” (<http://km.bistu.edu.cn/>) was established in 2006 as a Beijing Philosophy and Social Science Research Base affiliated with Beijing Information Science and Technology University. With the mission of “advancing theoretical innovation and application of knowledge management in China,” the research base actively engages with cutting-edge knowledge management theories and advanced practices worldwide, continuously promoting innovation in knowledge management in China. In this issue’s “Expert Interview” column, we had the privilege of interviewing Professor Ge Xinquan, Director and Chief Expert of the Beijing Knowledge Management Research Base.

Professor Ge has been focusing on and researching knowledge management since the late 20th century, proposing a series of innovative and influential academic achievements including knowledge economy and sustainable development, egalitarian management thought, methods for measuring the contribution rate of scientific and technological progress to employment, bubble economy models, time-lag production function model families, and regression model techniques. Professor Ge currently serves as Dean of the School of Economics and Management at Beijing Information Science and Technology University, and concurrently as a doctoral supervisor at Beijing Jiaotong University and the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. He enjoys the State Council Government Special Allowance, is recognized as an expert with outstanding contributions in Beijing, and has been selected for the Beijing Hundred-Thousand-Ten Thousand Talents Program and the High-Level Talent Funding Program.

This interview primarily focused on topics such as the construction of the knowledge management base, the relationship between knowledge management and big data, and recommendations for knowledge management research and practice. Professor Ge provided us with a refreshing perspective on universal knowledge management from the unique viewpoint of economics, explaining complex concepts in an accessible yet profound manner.

Full Text

Preamble

Knowledge Management is Universal—An Interview with Professor Ge Xinquan, Director and Chief Expert of Beijing Knowledge Management Research Base

Interviewers: Du Xingye, Liu Yuanying, Wang Zheng

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Professor Ge has been focusing on knowledge management research since the late 20th century, producing a series of innovative and influential academic achievements, including ideas on the knowledge economy and sustainable development, equal management concepts, methods for measuring science and technology progress’s contribution to employment, bubble economy models, time-lag production function model families, and regression model techniques. He currently serves as Dean of the School of Economics and Management at Beijing Information Science and Technology University, and is also a doctoral supervisor at Beijing Jiaotong University and the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. He enjoys the State Council Special Allowance, is recognized as an expert with outstanding contributions in Beijing, and has been selected for Beijing’s Hundred, Thousand, and Ten Thousand Talents Program and High-Level Talent Funding Program.

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Interviewers: Editorial Department of *Knowledge Management Forum* (here-

inafter referred to as KMF): Du Xingye, Liu Yuanying

Transcript: Wang Zheng

Interviewee: Professor Ge Xinquan, Director and Chief Expert of Beijing Knowledge Management Research Base

Interview Date: October 24, 2016

Interview Location: Beijing Information Science and Technology University

1. Origin, Construction, and Development

KMF: Professor Ge, thank you very much for accepting our interview. We know that you have been focusing on knowledge management research since the late 20th century and have published many influential research findings. You are also the chief expert of the Beijing Knowledge Management Base. We are very interested in this platform specifically named after knowledge management, as it is rarely seen elsewhere in the country. Could you first introduce us to this knowledge management base?

Ge Xinquan: The birth of this platform can be traced back to the late 20th century when the knowledge economy was just emerging. At that time, we were researching the knowledge economy together with renowned economists Mr. Li Jingwen and Mr. Zhang Shouyi, both academicians of the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences. From the perspective of the knowledge economy, knowledge is the primary factor, just as important as land in the agricultural economy era and capital in the industrial economy era. This led us to realize that knowledge management is crucial. Our Knowledge Management Base was established against this backdrop and was successfully selected as a Beijing Philosophy and Social Science Research Base in 2006.

At that time, some experts and scholars in academia did not approve of the name “knowledge management,” but facts have proven that our development over the subsequent decade has benefited precisely from this platform. Compared with other philosophy and social science research bases that tend to focus on literature, history, and philosophy, our base integrates natural sciences, social sciences, engineering technology, and computer science particularly well. This is extremely important for researching complex socio-economic phenomena and management issues, which require interdisciplinary approaches. It was precisely because of this interdisciplinary strength that our team won the second prize of the National Science and Technology Progress Award in 2008.

KMF: What are the main research areas currently being pursued at your Knowledge Management Base?

Ge Xinquan: Our research team currently has more than 30 members. Initially, we focused primarily on knowledge management theory and application. Building upon this platform, we have since extended our work in several directions. First, as we know in economics, once the “rational person” assumption

is broken, psychological and behavioral factors of humans become the focus. In economics and management, any issue is a game phenomenon among different stakeholders. Therefore, we introduced game experiments into our base, using psychological experimental methods and establishing an experimental economics laboratory to study human psychological behavior in economic and management issues through experimental approaches.

Second, building on the base and our 2008 National Science and Technology Progress Award, we developed a circular economy direction after 2010, focusing on critical issues in ecological civilization construction such as urban household waste reduction, recycling and utilization of waste electronic products, reduction of toxic and hazardous pollution, and prediction and early warning of green industrial development. This work has received support from the National Natural Science Foundation of China. Furthermore, leveraging our university's strengths in big data disciplines, we established a key laboratory focused on circular economy and green development, which has now become a key direction for our university.

In summary, our Knowledge Management Base currently has three major research areas: knowledge management, game experiments, and circular economy.

2. From Knowledge Management to Big Data

KMF: Your Knowledge Management Base is hosted by the School of Economics and Management at Beijing Information Science and Technology University. From the university's name, we can see that there is a strong focus on "information," which has a natural connection with "knowledge." From the perspective of data, information, and knowledge, how do you view knowledge management?

Ge Xinquan: Beijing Information Science and Technology University was formed through the merger of the former Beijing Mechanical Industry College and Beijing Information Engineering College. Currently, the university emphasizes research and application of information and information technology, integrating it into various disciplines and majors to highlight its information characteristics. We are currently collaborating with Beijing TRS Information Technology Co., Ltd. and Shandong Inspur Cloud Service Information Technology Co., Ltd. to apply for the Beijing Key Information Laboratory (Think Tank)—Green Development Big Data Decision Laboratory. Data, information, and knowledge are the most fundamental concepts in knowledge management. I believe that data is an important and universal representation of information, while information and knowledge have a relationship that is neither mutually inclusive nor completely separate. For example, the stock market screen displays information, not knowledge; the theories applied by stock market analysts are knowledge, not information; stock market commentary is both knowledge and information. Knowledge management is about extracting or mining new knowledge from data and information, and of course, this extraction and mining

process itself is an application of knowledge. This shows that Beijing Information Science and Technology University has a unique advantage in researching knowledge management.

KMF: That's excellent—deep cooperation with frontline practitioners to provide support from the technical application level.

Ge Xinquan: Last year, I participated in the China Knowledge Management Alliance Committee organized by Dr. Wu Qinghai. At the general meeting, my impression was that overall, knowledge management applications in China are ahead of theory. We need to continuously summarize and elevate practical experience to drive theoretical research. In knowledge management research, we have produced more practical results in applications and technical services targeted at government departments and enterprise needs. In recent years, our research base has recruited many outstanding PhDs and postdocs, which has greatly improved our theoretical research capabilities. We apply theories, techniques, models, tools, and methods from economics, psychology, sociology, and computer science and technology to study knowledge management issues. For instance, few others have used economic models to study knowledge management as we have.

KMF: This Green Development Big Data Decision Laboratory you are applying for indeed aligns well with current big data research and practice trends.

Ge Xinquan: Yes. Green development is closely related to all of us—government, enterprises, and individuals—from green design, green manufacturing, green logistics and sales, green consumption, to green recycling and reuse. To achieve this, using big data is an inevitable choice. The opportunity we now face is that for massive amounts of data, whether from government departments, social organizations, or enterprises, there is indeed a need to strengthen the collection, organization, processing, analysis, and utilization of information to address problems. Big data not only provides data support but also provides valuable theories, techniques, methods, and tools for processing this data in combination with practical problems.

Today's massive data is overwhelming. When you publish a piece of information today, it may be submerged in an instant. But as individuals, with such large volumes and fast flows of data, how to extract the information we need indeed requires sharp and agile methods and tools. This is also an important component of knowledge management.

In fact, I believe that big data methods and tools can be divided into broad and narrow senses. Traditional statistical methods are broad sense, while the narrow sense method that truly reflects big data should be the complete set method, which I believe has not yet truly emerged. Of course, statistics is essentially the idea and tool for data extraction and processing analysis. The function of statistics is to process raw data (non-decision-making information) and extract it into decision-making information (knowledge).

3. The Essential Requirement of Big Data: Describing Individual Heterogeneity and Respecting Individual Heterogeneity

Ge Xinquan: In the past, our statistical research approach was that if we wanted to study a population of 100,000 people, we didn't need to study each of the 100,000 individuals one by one. Instead, we would aggregate the 100,000 people into a "1" representing the whole population and study this aggregate. But now it seems this "1" is too comprehensive and neglects many individual differences. The research results can deviate significantly from the true research subjects.

I mentioned game experiments earlier, which study individual heterogeneity. The principle of "people-oriented, respecting each individual" should remain unchanged. Therefore, dividing research subjects into different categories based on differences and understanding each category to provide targeted solutions is what creates value. In the past, we only described the aggregate "1," but it was impossible and unnecessary to understand each individual. Now, with big data and more powerful computing and analysis technologies, we can understand major categories and further subdivide them into more categories, allowing us to better grasp individual differences. Through understanding these differences, we can achieve understanding of the overall population.

Therefore, I believe the essence of big data is individual heterogeneity, which consequently requires respecting people and respecting each individual. Using big data, information processing is faster and can more closely approach individual heterogeneity differences. So I feel this aligns perfectly with the essential requirements of knowledge management. Knowledge management respects human differences. For example, when I interact with someone who is introverted and doesn't like jokes, I need to respect them and not try to change them. Only in this way can our relationship be long-lasting.

4. From Big Data to Big Knowledge

Ge Xinquan: Based on this understanding of big data, we can generate deeper knowledge. Knowledge is created by humans and is the result of human brain labor. You cannot succeed without being "people-oriented," and you cannot succeed without understanding human differences. No matter how unique a person is, you must respect them to cooperate with them. I think the concept of "respecting people" and "people-oriented" conveyed by big data and knowledge management is particularly valuable. When you master this knowledge and understanding, whether you are a leader or a team member, you can achieve mutual understanding, cooperation, respect, and equality.

5. Equal Management is the Inevitable Trend of Enterprise Knowledge Management Development

KMF: You just discussed moving from big data to big knowledge and back to knowledge management, with the essence being respect for individual differences and respect for people. This reminds us that you published an article in 2003 discussing how equal management is an inevitable trend in enterprise knowledge management.

Ge Xinquan: Yes. When I studied knowledge management, I proposed the concept of equal management and defined the concept of the responsibility chain. I believe that in any organization, people have different divisions of labor and perform different responsibilities, which we call the responsibility chain. Each person bears different responsibilities and is a node in the organization's responsibility chain. Two connected nodes form a chain. Only when all responsibilities (nodes) and responsibility relationships (chains connecting two nodes) in the responsibility chain function effectively can the organization complete its tasks. The responsibility chain concept separates the person from their responsibilities. Responsibilities differ and have interrelationships, but people are equal. This helps create a cultural atmosphere conducive to knowledge innovation. For example, in a university, the president performs presidential duties, the dean performs dean's duties, and teachers perform teaching duties. Everyone is a node in the responsibility chain, and their relationships are the chains within the responsibility chain. Only through collaborative work can the university's functions be realized, but in terms of human attributes, everyone is equal. Despite different responsibilities, there should be mutual respect, and knowledge innovation and knowledge application are equal.

I believe the future direction of knowledge management is to pursue equal management that facilitates knowledge innovation, separating responsibilities from people. As a teacher, I am equal to you as the president. It's just that within the university's functions, I perform teaching duties while you perform presidential duties. Only when everyone fulfills their own responsibilities and performs their own duties can the university achieve its functions of talent cultivation, scientific research, social service, and cultural inheritance. In a city, when you serve as mayor, you fulfill mayoral duties, and when I serve as a citizen, I fulfill citizen duties. Making the city better requires everyone's joint efforts.

In the past, we did not separate people from responsibilities and the knowledge corresponding to responsibilities, causing inequality between people due to unequal responsibilities. This is also related to Chinese culture, which traditionally has a misconception that if I manage you in terms of responsibilities, I manage your entire person and every aspect of you. This culture emphasizes control, but now we should focus on openness to allow everyone to innovate fully in a relaxed environment without pressure or constraints.

Therefore, whatever we do, we must respect people and respect each individual. Only on this basis can we stimulate people's creativity. Everyone has different understandings of knowledge management, and my understanding is also related to my disciplinary background.

6. Understanding Knowledge Management from an Economics Perspective

KMF: You mentioned your disciplinary background. We know you have been conducting research and working in economics for a long time. Could you please discuss your understanding of knowledge management from an economics perspective?

Ge Xinquan: As I mentioned earlier, we began researching the knowledge economy with senior experts Li Jingwen and Zhang Shouyi from the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences, publishing a series of works such as *Knowledge Economy and Knowledge Products*, *Knowledge Economy and Sustainable Development*, *Introduction to Knowledge Economy*, *Principles of Knowledge Economics*, and *Micro Knowledge Economy and Management*. One of my mentors, Mr. Zhang Shouyi, had a great regret that he had always advocated for the inclusion of “knowledge economy” in government documents, but it was never realized. However, this year's government work report at the Two Sessions mentioned the “sharing economy,” which is actually a new phenomenon under the knowledge economy conditions and also reflects the concept of knowledge management.

My economics background has been quite beneficial for my transition into management. When I teach students, I most frequently cite economic theories because management always involves practical problems, and economic theories can help you refine management ideas. I find this most useful. Therefore, I believe economics is extremely important. With a solid foundation in economics, you will find great value in engaging in sociology and management.

Returning to knowledge management, my recommendation for knowledge management research and practice is that you need to master some economic knowledge. From my research perspective, you cannot only see enterprises and markets. No matter how your enterprise implements knowledge management, it is ultimately closely related to national macro policies and economic trends.

Therefore, I believe that whether conducting knowledge management theoretical research or practical work in enterprises, you should broaden your knowledge base. I think economics is very important. It can be said to be the foundation for studying knowledge management. If you don't understand economics well, there are limitations to knowledge management application and research, and sometimes you may even fall short of success at the last moment.

7. Enterprise Knowledge Management is Internal Cultivation

KMF: We have previously interviewed many knowledge management experts in the industry who interpreted knowledge management from perspectives such as software development, management consulting, training, and culture. You provide yet another different perspective from economics. In your long-term research and practice, what challenges and issues have domestic enterprises faced in implementing knowledge management over the years, and what patterns have you observed?

Ge Xinquan: I have found that enterprises in China that implement knowledge management well generally meet several conditions: they are usually well-managed enterprises with relatively sound mechanisms, clear property rights, and strategic vision, and are relatively large private enterprises and multinational corporations.

I believe that in China, knowledge management is pursued by top-tier enterprises. Their income and profits are relatively stable, and they are high-end enterprises. Only then do entrepreneurs have the vision, requirements, capabilities, energy, and financial resources to support knowledge management. Knowledge management requires long-term investment to yield results and is difficult to show short-term effects. Generally, state-owned enterprises do not pursue this, not because they lack the requirements, but because their conditions and capabilities are limited. However, they should be required to have knowledge management ideas and create a cultural environment that respects people.

Many enterprises in China still have institutional and mechanism problems and engage in short-term behavior. This is true for any organization. A leader needs to work in an organization for many years, such as 10 years, to treat the enterprise as their own career and achieve results. If they only serve for three years, it is difficult to do well. Universities are the same; a president needs several years, such as 10 years, to implement his concepts, ideas, and plans effectively. Therefore, after many years, you can foresee that knowledge management will encounter this problem. Knowledge management is not “window dressing” but rather internal cultivation that enhances efficiency. Only capable enterprises give entrepreneurs the vision for knowledge management, but they also need to be given time. Otherwise, because results are not seen in the short term and they are only doing the work for others, most are unwilling to pursue it. Additionally, some capable enterprises are unwilling to pursue it due to constraints from institutional mechanisms, as well as social environment and evaluation, vicious market competition, and lack of entrepreneurial spirit.

KMF: Under these circumstances, what recommendations do you have for the vast number of enterprises in China implementing knowledge management?

Ge Xinquan: I think this is related to enterprise scale. Huawei’s knowledge management is excellent, but ordinary enterprises cannot achieve that level. I

believe that ordinary enterprises should not pursue the models of large enterprises, such as Huawei's approach of establishing knowledge bases and knowledge systems. However, they can at least apply some knowledge management ideas, such as how to cherish and respect employees and bring out their enthusiasm and creativity.

From the perspective of knowledge innovation, everyone has innovative capabilities. You need to provide employees with a good environment and a relaxed, pleasant atmosphere, truly treating them as masters of the enterprise. Only then will they contribute their intelligence and talents. Moreover, intellectual labor is related to mood. When an employee comes to work in your organization, they always hope the organization will do well, and in this process, they also benefit.

Ordinary enterprises can achieve this, and with these concepts, knowledge management can be implemented. In fact, everyone has innovative activities. For example, everyone has their own unique innovative methods, but these methods are too small in effect and can only serve themselves, lacking universality and scalability. If an enterprise can extract a certain innovative method and elevate it to the height of the entire enterprise, the effect will be significant. Furthermore, if it can be elevated to the industry or even social level, the effect will be enormous.

KMF: Currently, many traditional physical economy enterprises face severe impacts from the virtual economy and e-commerce companies. How do you view the relationship between the physical economy and e-commerce?

Ge Xinquan: I recall that starting in the 1960s, Japan's real estate and stock markets were also very hot, with everyone investing money in stocks and real estate. But when everyone did this and no one engaged in the physical economy, it inevitably led to a bubble. However, Kazuo Inamori, the boss of Kyocera Corporation, insisted on sticking to the physical economy, saying that he only did practical things and earned real money. When Japan's economic bubble burst in the early 1990s, those bosses who had shifted from the physical economy to real estate and stocks all collapsed, while his persistence built two Fortune 500 companies. The virtual economy should emerge to serve the needs of the physical economy and cannot develop independently of it; otherwise, the physical economy cannot support it, and bubble burst becomes inevitable.

Regardless, the network is indeed a technological platform that truly shortens time, space, and distance—this is the advantage of networks. However, the network is ultimately a tool. If everything becomes e-commerce without physical stores, the network and physical entities lose balance, and more importantly, culture is lost.

I believe physical stores should still exist because they provide an environment for human interaction, a form of social activity, and a cultural atmosphere. If you let physical stores all collapse, it will certainly be a disaster because too many things will be destroyed. Let me give an example: a wife wants to buy

a pair of shoes for her husband, so the couple takes their child shopping. This process is also a way to cultivate family bonds and a process of family and social interaction. Beyond the act of buying things, it satisfies other needs and simultaneously generates other demands. If relying solely on e-commerce, many things will be destroyed. I believe humans have two attributes: one is natural attributes, such as birth, aging, illness, and death—doing what is appropriate at each age; the other is social attributes, such as maintaining family, society, and nation. This attribute should not be destroyed.

Therefore, I believe the state should have overall planning for both physical and e-commerce, with guidance as well as restrictions.

8. Knowledge Management and Education, Humanities

Ge Xinquan: I just mentioned that humans have natural and social attributes. As a social person, you cannot fully understand society by staying at home. Families are becoming increasingly personalized now, and individual differences in needs are also significant. But no matter how strong your personality is, you must consider others. A person cannot be so willful when entering society; your words and actions have an impact on society.

China's social education is lacking. From childhood, children are made to recite Tang poetry and study 奥数 (Olympiad mathematics), which is actually unnecessary. What is most important in early childhood is teaching them the principles of being upright, honest, trustworthy, and courteous. This is the most basic social knowledge. Therefore, I say that using knowledge management to study early childhood education is also very valuable.

Our society currently lacks knowledge about integrity. The biggest characteristic of a market economy is contract and trust, which is precisely what we lack. This is particularly detrimental to private enterprises, which cannot retain talent. Employees leave without even saying goodbye, lacking this basic integrity. We once hosted the director of an accounting firm who told me that interns from all schools now universally have a weakness: lack of credit.

This is related to our education. Children should learn these knowledge from kindergarten and elementary school, but now elementary schools focus on teaching 奥数, which is unbalanced. The education of only children is even more worthy of reflection. Knowledge management should study education from this perspective, researching what basic knowledge people should possess at each stage.

KMF: What you are talking about has risen to the level of cultural education.

Ge Xinquan: Those of us in education know that the direction of continuing education in China now has biases. Lifelong learning is indeed correct, but under current environmental pressures, everyone is forced to pursue various

certificates. Logically, after graduating with a bachelor's, master's, or doctoral degree, one should be able to adapt to and be competent for work in their chosen professional field. Of course, new knowledge needs to be learned at work, but there is no need to require certificates. Instead, learning should be combined with actual work, which is one aspect of lifelong learning. Fortunately, many certificate requirements have now been canceled, but I believe the effort should be intensified.

Knowledge management emphasizes the importance of "learning by doing." Everyone has their own career interests chosen through personal preference, and their career will grow through effort at work. The other aspect of lifelong learning, I believe, is free learning during leisure time. Everyone chooses according to their interests—some like dance, some like painting, some like reading, some like traveling, some like sports. Only such continuing education and lifelong learning have value, improving national quality, literacy, character, and hobbies, which helps enhance national life attitudes and quality, creates a favorable ecological culture, and contributes to building a harmonious society. But now it's all professional education and certificate pursuit, which creates biases and also affects life emotions and quality.

Therefore, lifelong education should allow everyone to learn what they like, improving their literacy and inner self, without being too utilitarian.

Not only continuing education but also graduate education has biases. The gold content of master's and doctoral training in universities indeed needs improvement. For doctoral training, we emphasize innovation and require publishing papers. However, doctoral dissertations often reflect insufficient literature reading and comprehension. Students claim to innovate after only understanding, but not necessarily mastering, the tip of the iceberg of literature. The conclusions are predictable. From a knowledge management perspective, the most important aspect of a qualified doctoral dissertation is spending several years reading relevant literature, truly comprehensively understanding, comprehending, and mastering the frontiers, and innovating from a certain point while standing on the shoulders of giants. Only then will the conclusions and understanding be valuable innovations that enrich and develop theory and solve practical problems. I believe doctoral dissertations should be theoretical innovations, but the current situation is that there are many applied countermeasures lacking theoretical support. Due to limited reading and unclear understanding of the current situation, innovation is obviously unreliable.

In fact, all these issues can be traced back to knowledge management—using knowledge concepts to understand these problems, creating new knowledge while learning and mastering applied knowledge.

9. The Universality of Knowledge Management

KMF: From your perspective, what is knowledge?

Ge Xinquan: In fact, researching any problem is essentially knowledge application and knowledge innovation. When my mentor, Researcher Zhang Shouyi, and I studied the knowledge economy, we had a fundamental viewpoint: What is knowledge? We believe that only the results of human brain activity can be called knowledge. What does not exist in nature or society but is generated by the human brain is knowledge. Knowledge is created by humans.

New viewpoints, new methods, new tools, new models, and new theories generated when we research and solve problems are all knowledge. Formulating laws, regulations, systems, and management methods are also knowledge. Formulating plans, evaluation methods and systems, and policy recommendations are also knowledge products. In particular, culture is a knowledge product. Compared with systems that have diminishing marginal returns, culture has increasing marginal returns. People who do not engage in knowledge management also follow such a process, but those who master knowledge management can make this process more orderly. I feel that people who have studied knowledge management, mastered its theories, methods, and tools, and then research other problems are more professional and precise. They can better grasp the essence of knowledge, which is also the key to solving problems.

KMF: So knowledge management has universality. How do you extend knowledge management to other fields?

Ge Xinquan: In our School of Economics and Management, not all teachers specialize in knowledge management research, but we can consider how to combine their disciplines with knowledge management. For example, teachers researching marketing can consider where knowledge management issues are involved in marketing management, or conversely, think about which knowledge management theories and methods can be applied to marketing research. By extension, all research can be linked to knowledge management.

In fact, recalling our elementary school Chinese classes, after finishing a text, the teacher would ask: What is the central idea? What is the main idea of this paragraph? This is actually knowledge mining. You must first understand and comprehend before you can summarize and extract. Currently, whether in natural sciences, social sciences, or engineering technology, statistical inference is the most basic, effective, and universal method. It is the method of knowledge management and knowledge mining (discovery), and so will be big data in the future. Even in arts and culture, the expression of beauty and numbers, beauty and forms also has patterns, and knowledge management can also contribute.

Another point is that when we conduct projects for government departments, the biggest challenge we face is also knowledge mining and knowledge discovery. For example, writing a 30,000 or 100,000-word report is easy for researchers, but government departments require you to provide a condensed version of

3,000 words, 1,000 words, or even 800 words of core content. This tests your ability to summarize and generalize. You need to extract key knowledge, refine and express the most core 800 words, and make leaders understand it. Many people actually cannot do this. This is the ultimate application of knowledge management, reflected not only in the research itself but also in the high-level refinement of research results.

Therefore, I believe knowledge management thinking is truly valuable and can be applied in various fields. Knowledge management theories and methods have significant practical effects. Whatever work we do, we should have knowledge management awareness and apply knowledge management ideas and methods, just as we have legal awareness in a society governed by law.

10. On Knowledge Management Research

KMF: How do you view current knowledge management research? What suggestions do you have for knowledge management research work?

Ge Xinquan: Although knowledge management is not established as a discipline or major in professional directories, the National Natural Science Foundation's project directory specifically includes a knowledge management direction under the discipline of management science and engineering. Compared with 10 years ago, knowledge management research is now showing a good trend, with many universities training master's and doctoral students in knowledge management research directions under disciplines such as management science and engineering, business administration, and computer science and technology.

Due to the universality of knowledge management, it can be studied from different disciplines and professional fields. All problems can be studied using knowledge management, forming different characteristics. Some research focuses on theory, some on methods, tools, and models, and some on systems and policies.

Any research should address theoretical and practical problems from one's own strengths and from different angles. For example, our basic researches basic theories, systems, and methods and techniques. Knowledge (products) often require gathering the wisdom of many people. In recent years, our School of Economics and Management has published more than 10 top-tier Class A journal articles and won the National Science and Technology Progress Second Prize, Beijing Science and Technology Award, and Beijing Philosophy and Social Science Outstanding Achievement Award, many of which are related to knowledge management. I have been recruiting doctoral students in knowledge management at Beijing Jiaotong University since 2008 and will also recruit doctoral students at the Chinese Academy of Social Sciences' Department of Government Policy and Public Management starting next year. This is also recognition of our research results.

Interview Postscript

After 10 years of development, the Beijing Knowledge Management Base has formed its own characteristics and advantages. In this interview, Professor Ge Xinquan's interpretation of knowledge management from an economics perspective, his understanding of the essence of big data, his elaboration on the universality of knowledge management, and his elegant scholarly demeanor all left a deep impression on us. The interview took place as Professor Ge's team was applying for the Beijing Key Laboratory (Think Tank)—Green Development Big Data Decision Laboratory, which was about to enter the on-site evaluation stage. We wish them success in passing the evaluation.

Note: Figure translations are in progress. See original paper for figures.

Source: ChinaXiv — Machine translation. Verify with original.