8-5-2011

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ABSTRACT

This paper seeks to establish a philosophical basis for the investigation into a flaw of the data information knowledge wisdom (DIKW) hierarchy. This flaw is typified by the requirement that knowledge be used to differentiate data from information prior to the hierarchy's own formation of knowledge. The DIKW hierarchy underlies much of the knowledge management (KM) research. However, while applications of the hierarchy have been examined extensively, the validity of the hierarchy itself has not been much undertaken. This paper illustrates that the analytic/synthetic distinction, as well as consideration of *a priori* and *a posteriori* knowledge, will contribute to the development of a philosophical framework via which the hierarchy itself might be examined. Using these concepts, the process of information formation and the hierarchical flaw are examined. Finally, the paper addresses how its resolution might be used in conjunction with various KM research programs.

Keywords

Knowledge management, knowledge management system, KMS, data, information, knowledge, wisdom, philosophical foundations, analytic/synthetic distinction.